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Kuwait Times Friday Times

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Min 33°
Max 45°

Danah Al-Safat posts profits, elects new board at AGM

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16 die as militants attack American University in Kabul

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OLYMPIC, FOOTBALL BODIES DISSOLVED

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Photo of the day



An Al-Tar is a one-sided traditional percussion instrument used in Kuwaiti music. — Photo by Kuna/Ghazy Gafaf

AT THE END OF AUGUST

By Aakash Bakaya

So here we are. We've finally reached summer's finish line. By next week, we can all breathe a sigh of relief as we look to our calendars and turn the page to September. The kids are prepped and ready for school and soon (hopefully) the weather will start cooling off enough that people can comfortably enjoy mornings or evenings at the park or at an outdoor café. Change isn't always as quick or as easy as we want and along with the great things about fall and the end of the

summer holidays in Kuwait, comes a plethora of the not-so-great.

During my school years, the last week of August was an entire week of dread. After three months of absolute freedom from school, that dreaded building designed to crumple your happiness loomed ever closer on the horizon. After starting work however, that fear has been replaced by grueling inconvenience. Summer means empty streets. I've been going to and from work very smoothly as traffic is greatly reduced because almost a quarter of the country is off on vacation.

But this will all change, as school traffic kicks back in and parents return to work. We will all be forced to wade through some of the thickest traffic snarls on a daily basis. At least we may catch a few more weeks break before the worst of it starts as public schools won't open until after the Eid holiday in September. Apart from the usual rush of morning and afternoon traffic that September brings - at least we'll have better weather to look forward to, right? Sadly, that's not the case, and in truth that was never the case. In most countries, east or west, the worst of summer lasts for two to three months, while in Kuwait it usually lasts for five. Many people I've come across have the notion that once August ends, the weather will slowly start to cool down. Meteorological data sadly proves otherwise. Historical weather data show that Kuwait has an average high of 46 degrees Celsius throughout August, while September has a 43 degree Celsius average. For comparison, New Delhi has an average temperature of 30 degrees in September.

Spending an entire summer in Kuwait this year was a real eye-opener for me. Even though I was here during the same period in 2015 as well, this year was definitely a much tougher slog because I couldn't use the same cab service I did last summer. I decided to bear the heat, much like Lawrence going back into 'God's Hammer' to rescue Qasim from his impending demise in 'Lawrence of Arabia'. It was a daily struggle that several others and I had to overcome to reach our air-conditioned destinations. Even though the worst of the heat is behind us and September brings little respite, I can take comfort in the fact that I was able to make it through with my sanity intact.

From the worst summer movie season in recent memory to the adventurous highs of 'Pokemon Go' to the successful Rio Olympics, we can take away several talking points from the summer of 2016. It's been relatively quiet in and around Kuwait, but starting the next season with a long Eid holiday break is certainly a good way to begin. Here's hoping every one of us can make the most of it!

Kaffeeeklatsch

CHEAP GASOLINE,
CHEAPER CARS: AN
ADDICTIVE MIX

By Shakir Reshamwala

shakir@kuwaittimes.net

Petrol prices are going up by up to 80 percent next month, and even though they still are among the cheapest in the world, some habits may get upended. Of course, this does not mean the end of gas-guzzling SUVs or aimless cruising on the streets, but some changes may be afoot. It is no coincidence that a major transport company has launched a carpooling service in Kuwait, a first in the state. Uber it is not, but a positive development nevertheless.

Owning a car has never been a luxury in Kuwait. One can even consider it a necessity, as public transport coverage is patchy and the weather extremely harsh. Couple this with the cheap prices of fuel and used cars and you've got a situation where car ownership is only constrained by the difficulty in obtaining a driving license. In fact, one of my friends bought a used car recently for KD 75. Yes, only 75 dinars! The car had a litany of problems and needed a lot of repairs, but he got it up and running. Obviously, you get what you pay for, and a few days later, two of the car's cylinders went bust. The guy still manages to drive it around, sputtering on its remaining four cylinders, but that's another story.

Another of my friends made a very insightful observation on the reasons why used cars are so inexpensive in Kuwait, making them affordable even for the most marginal of laborers. This is not the case in neighboring Gulf countries like Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, where used cars can fetch nearly double the price compared to Kuwait. It all depends if the product is in demand by the locals, he said. If it is coveted by Kuwaitis, its price rises, and when it falls out of favor, its price falls. Interesting...

Notably, in a country where the roads are chockfull of cars with single occupants all heading in the same direction, some kind of carpooling has always existed among expats in Kuwait. This is evident when one goes through the 'Transport Wanted' and 'Transport Available' sections of the classifieds, both printed and online. So-called 'private taxis' had also been an option for long, but rigorous crackdowns by the interior ministry and instant deportations have more or less ended this service.

As the clock ticks down to the hike in the price of gasoline, it remains to be seen what changes it brings about to a car culture that is deeply ingrained in the psyche of this nation. I believe there will be a few positive developments, but only when everyone jumps on the public transport/ carpool/ridesharing bandwagon will there be a real difference. Until then, gnash your teeth at the pump, then promptly hit the gas to go to the baqala that's just round the corner.

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Be merciful, don't maltreat animals

By Sahar Moussa

Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) said in a hadith: 'Be merciful to those on earth and the One in the heavens will have mercy upon you.' In the Bible, Matthew 5:7 says "Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy." Every Heavenly book speaks about mercy and compassion - teaching us to be kind to one another - and to respect every soul. The holy books demand us to help at all times and whenever we can.

I am not here to preach about mercy and compassion because I believe either you were raised and taught to be merciful and compassionate by your parents and the school or God has already planted the seed of mercy in your heart. There are people who are born to be kindhearted while some simply don't know the meaning of compassion at all.

But compassion and mercy, unfortunately, do not always extend to those who need it most. Let me give you an example. A few months ago, on the 8th floor of a building a puppy was left on the balcony, in searing heat, for several days in a row. The four month old animal barked for hours, desperate in the mid day heat for some water and shade.

The missing owner

As the day passed, other people in the apartment building and neighboring apartment buildings assumed that the owner would come home to at least feed and give the dog water to drink. Surprisingly, that didn't happen. The dog was still outside the balcony as the temperature soared to above 50 degrees Celsius.

Someone called the 'haris' to ask about the dog's owner. Unfortunately the owner could not be found and so the poor pup was left to suffer. Several people tried to help the animal by pouring water from an adjacent balcony.

Three days passed and still there was no sign of the owner. The poor dog's condition was getting worse. A call was made to 112, the fire station and the police station asking for help. The authorities said they

couldn't do anything because they cannot break into a private apartment without the owner's permission or a warrant. No one could help. In fact, even a local nonprofit animal shelter and the Public Authority of Agriculture and Fish Resources were unable to do anything.

After three long days and nights of the animal being left in an unshaded balcony, the owner finally returned home and allowed the dog back inside the flat. Though neighbors offered to take the dog, to care and provide for it, the owner refused.

Mistreating animals

Unfortunately, mistreating animals is a common thing in Kuwait; it is either by pet owners who abandon them and embark on summer vacation or by children who weren't raised to respect animals. Sometimes, animals are brutally abuse by people who simply don't have any sense of responsibility.

And according to a recent article by Fajer Ahmad, 'Kuwait constitution does not mention animal rights. The Kuwaiti penal (criminal law) does not specify that the abuse of animals is a crime. However, the only law that discusses the killing of an animal is Article 253 of the Criminal Law which states that - 'A person who kills an animal owned by another by giving it a poisonous or harmful substance; injures it; makes it useless or decreases its benefits deliberately and unjustifiable shall be punished up to two years of imprisonment and/or shall pay up to 2000 rupees.'

There have been repeated attacks recently against animals in Kuwait including the random shooting of dogs, the slaughter of an ancient sea turtle and numerous other incidents. I know that the first thing that will cross our mind is - how do I expect people to have mercy upon animals when people don't even have mercy on each other? No matter how bad things appeared to be, we should always try to be merciful to others - and to animals. It is our duty and our responsibility.

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Friday Times

FRIDAY, AUGUST 26, 2016



Sometimes the artist imagines a scene on existing objects, gets hold of a photo of them and shows what she imagined by doodling on them. Zouz said that doodling helps her creative thinking and innovative skills. More doodles can be found in her Instagram account @zouzthebird.

Interview with Zahra Al-Mahdi (Zouz the Bird)

By Athoob Al-Shuaibi

Known mostly for her anatomical drawings - think da Vinci or Egon Schiele - and by her nickname Zouz the Bird, Zahra Al-Mahdi is a self-taught Kuwaiti artist and among a growing body of local artists changing the face of art and culture in Kuwait. "There's no definition for myself - sometimes I feel that I'm seven years old, sometimes seventy. Goals should not be associated with age. My view of myself is always shifting," Zahra told Kuwait Times.

Zahra is a self taught artist. "When you study English Literature, you learn about philosophy, economy and sociology and get

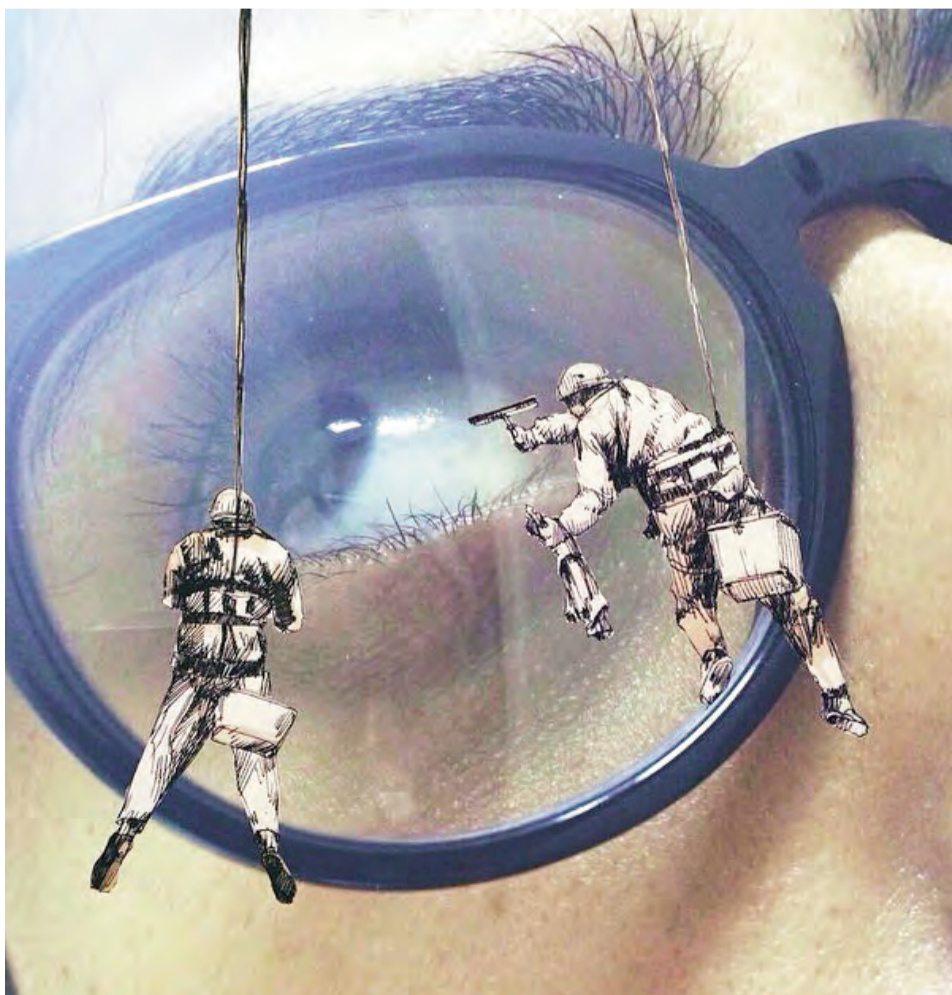
acquainted with all aspects of life, which helps an artist to communicate with others through art," she reasoned.

Good art is dynamic. It tells you new things every time you come back to see it. In reality, not all arts reach the stage of immortality. Sometimes, the artist makes a work of art to serve a particular issue in a certain time and space. "Once the artwork comes to light, public interpretation moves primarily alongside

the artist's statement," Zahra said. "Sometimes, artists paint for the plain pleasure of art and beauty. In fact, everybody can write or paint something meaningless or with a message. So how does it communicate? This goes back to the viewers. The artist will convey the message, whether intended or not."

We Are All Borrowed

Speaking of meanings, language is an



Zahra Al-Mahdi
— Photo by Athoob Al-Shuaibi

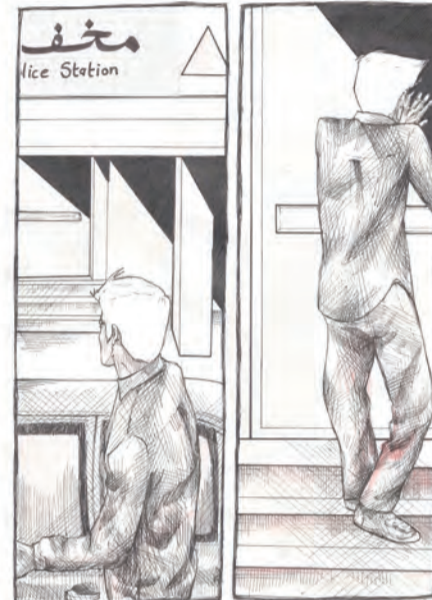
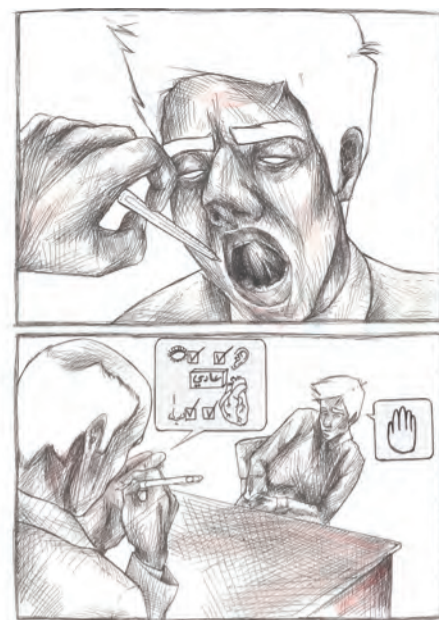
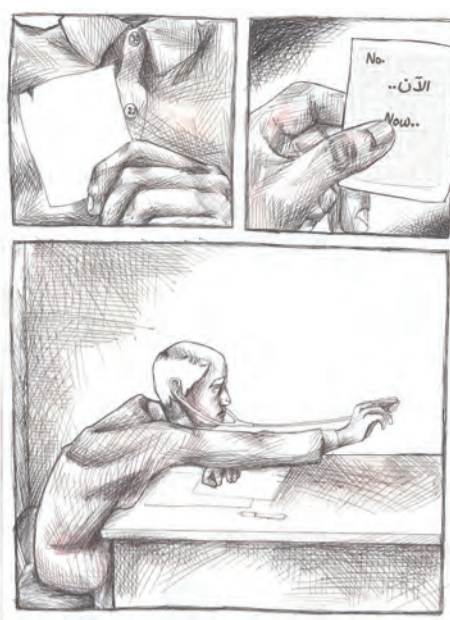
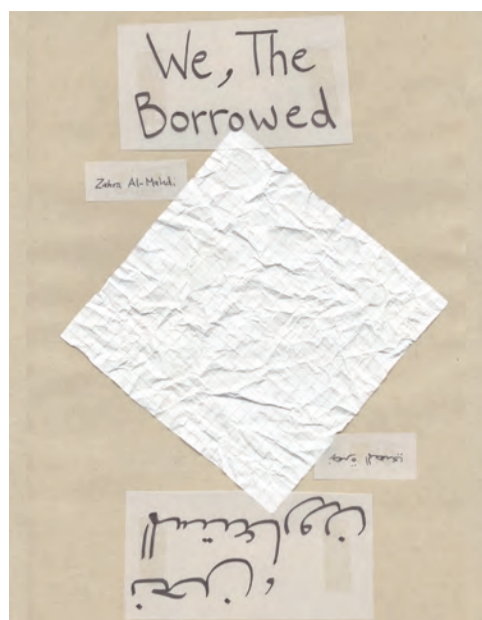
ever-changing tool of communication. In Zahra's first graphic novel 'We Are All Borrowed', she shows that our language, apparel and lifestyle are all borrowed, but we insist on finding origins and nobility. "My book is an overview of the fact that words are not possessed by anyone - we just speak them. One word stands for many things - not only in its form and context, but by the tone of voice. When I say that I went to a doctor, the first thing that pops into your head is that he is a man," Zahra explained. "My character tries to ride out of this spectrum and ends up

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My book is an overview of the fact that words are not possessed by anyone - we just speak them. One word stands for many things - not only in its form and context, but by the tone of voice.

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physically restrained after a series of bitter situations," she added.

We Are All Borrowed is written in both English and Arabic. Some pages are puzzling and some revolting, while some are laced with a tinge of dark comedy over the muddled conditions in Kuwait, which makes it not suitable for children.

Frustration is key to inspiration

"I get inspired by frustration, contradictions and things that are far from logic and wisdom, and I harness art to serve society. I can't wait for the upcoming cultural season in winter to volunteer to create murals and graffiti. Earlier this year, I had a chance to collaborate with the Abolish 153 campaign, which demands abolition of Article 153 from the Kuwaiti penal code that justifies 'honor killings' of women by their male relatives if they're found engaged in sexual acts. My work depicts women as child-making machines with a blank price tag," Zahra said.

The campaign held its exhibition in the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait with participation by artists from various Arab countries.

The eye of Einstein and Foucault

The surroundings of the artist complement the things she imagines. "I draw on the photos I take of things around me to make people visualize what is going on in my mind. My Instagram account @zouzthebird has many such examples. To me, this is hardly a practice to improve my creative thinking skill, so I view things from the perspective of Einstein and Foucault. Creativity is not merely sensational - it's a practice and you have to be disciplined in a way," noted Zahra.

Zahra is currently working on her second book and a series of exhibitions, in addition to her first YouTube animation series. "It will take me a great deal of time to write this book. However, it's going to be part of my ongoing reflection related to a series of artworks," she revealed.



Excerpt from her book, *We the Borrowed*. Copies of the book can be found at CAP Kuwait in Shuwaikh. Excerpt used with permission.



KUWAIT: The board of the Danah Al Safat food stuff company including the chairman Fahad Abdulrahman Al-Mukhaizim, third from left, held the company's annual general assembly meeting yesterday in the company headquarters. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

DANAH AL-SAFAT FOODSTUFF CO GROWS ON NEW STRATEGY, RESTRUCTURING

AL-MUKHAIZIM OUTLINES FUTURE PLANS, COMPANY ELECTS NEW BOARD

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Danah Al-Safat Foodstuff Company convened its annual general assembly meeting yesterday and elected its new board of directors. Chairman of the Board Fahed Abdulrahman Al-Mukhaizim presided over the meeting and thanked shareholders for attending the general assembly meeting which concluded on a positive note. Al-Mukhaizim, who spoke to the Kuwait Times following the general assembly meeting, said all the items on the agenda were approved and the new board received a vote of confidence.

Talking in detail about the company's performance and its future plans, in the presence of the board which was re-elected yesterday, Al-Mukhaizim said the board had a vision in 2014 and a plan for the next three years, including the restructuring of the operating units of the company. The company had a plan to review its main activities, and attempt to inject more funds into it in order to expand existing activities. Results at the operational profits level remained positive though profits marginally declined. However, the company is standing on solid grounds both at operational and financial levels.

KT: What are your future plans and do you intend to expand to other markets?

Al-Mukhaizim: In fact we have F&B Venture Holding in Lebanon, which received a trademark and began to branch into neighboring countries. Similarly, another company Egyptian Dairy Foodstuff Company (EDAFCO), which started self-production and expanded its activities significantly.

The industrial line that we are taking is very important and one of the main sources that will contribute to enhance the revenues of companies in addition to the restaurants sector which is being restructured in order give it a new look.

KT: Will the company return to the stock market following the general assembly?

Al-Mukhaizim: There is no doubt that we will, because the main reason for suspending the trading of the company's shares was over holding the general assembly meet-

ing. We will send the appropriate correspondence to resume stock market activity.

The annual report

Al-Mukhaizim read out the report of the management to the general assembly. The report said:

"Another year has passed with a performance that was driven by determined efforts and was rewarded with outstanding achievements. 2015 was a crucial year in which the company exceeded its strategic objectives by achieving results that go beyond the targeted levels helping it further strengthening its leading position as a pioneering company in the field of foodstuffs. The company also improved its market value in the local and domestic markets supported by the volume of its business and the strength of its brands.

It added, "2015 was a unique year in every measure. It saw the company resolutely face numerous challenges and make continuous efforts to improve performance with the full support from the Board of Directors, and the loyal efforts of its employees, who shared the board's commitment not only to preserve but also to enhance the company's position as an economic bastion. It represents a diversified and integrated group of companies that occupies a prominent position in the foodstuffs sector while playing a key role in providing a wide range of foodstuffs including processed and unprocessed foodstuffs through its subsidiaries by using multiple distribution channels of those companies.

The company continued its strong performance and achieved high performance in most of its activities by implementing an ambitious strategy designed to enable the company to expand its horizons further. The strategy also helped the company constructively engage in the economic development of the country by remaining the supplier of the customers' choice.

Main achievements

Al-Mukhaizim said in 2015 the company made a number of achievements despite the continuing negative effects of the financial crisis, political circumstances and oil price decline. Foremost among those achievements was the

improvement of the company's consolidated sales by 16 percent compared to 2014 (as sales benefited from the restructuring of the sales sectors of the subsidiary companies and the appointment of a number of executives of outstanding talents in those sectors as well as the launching of new products).

Geographic expansion was another key achievement

During the year, we achieved a higher level of balance and synergy among the various sectors of the company, ensuring that work is done with higher professionalism, and implementing a well-considered restructuring plan designed to ensure the achievement of sizeable surpluses in the service sectors of the subsidiary companies, with unlimited support by the parent company. It is also worth noting that the company's total assets rose by 13 percent during the year.

First: Financial Performance Danah Al-Safat Foodstuff Company

The company achieved a profit of KD 102,722 in 2015 compared to KD 458,583 in 2014. It is worth mentioning that the company had to take necessary precautionary provisions amounting to KD 2,712,544 against the background of probable economic conditions. This means that the company's profits before these provisions amounted to KD 2,815,266, with an increase of KD 514 percent over those achieved in 2014.

Earnings per share amounted to 0.36 fils in 2015 compared to 1.62 fils in 2014. Total revenues amounted to KD 36,045,126 in 2015 compared to KD 31,134,043 in 2014, reflecting an increase of 16 percent. Gross profit for 2015 rose to KD 9,982,555 against KD 7,697,072 for the previous year, representing a 30 percent improvement for the year. General and Administrative expenses for 2015 amounted to KD 3,754,334 compared to KD 3,370,878 in the previous year and shareholders' equity amounted to KD 35,345,373 at the end of 2015, rising by 2 percent over its level of KD 34,768,776 at the end of the previous year. At the end of 2015, the book value per share amounted to KD 122 fils compared to 120 fils at the end of 2014.

Subsidiary companies

In 2015, our subsidiary companies continued to deal with the difficult economic and political conditions that confronted the local markets, with a stronger determination to overcome the unfavorable effects of those conditions, for our companies enjoyed all the factors conducive to achieve success and the key elements of development.

United Fisheries of Kuwait

Sales for 2015 amounted to KD 6,471,528 compared to KD 4,665,065 for the same period of the previous year with an increase of 39 percent. These sales are the highest achieved by the company during the past 10 years. The company achieved a net profit of KD 401,219 against KD 148,055 in the previous year, rising by 171 percent for the period.

Safat Dhiafa Company

Total sales for 2015 amounted to KD 6,338,536 compared to KD 6,498,956 for the same period of the previous year. The company registered a loss of KD 2,576,352 in 2015 against a loss of KD 28,341 for the same period of the previous year.

F & B Company, Lebanon

Sales for 2015 amounted to KD 21,323,426 compared to KD 18,593,544 for the same period of the previous year, rising by 15 percent for the year. The company achieved a profit of KD 1,396,431 in 2015 against a profit of KD 1,055,576 for the same period of the previous year, with an increase of 32 percent for the year.

EDAFCO Company

Sales amounted to KD 2,817,133 in 2015 compared to KD 2,089,180 for the same period of the previous year, with an increase of 35 percent. Profits amounted to KD 226,246 for 2015 compared to a profit of KD 65,217 for the same

period of the previous year, rising by 247 percent.

Investments

The global economic crisis, which broke out at a massive scale in mid-2008 had a negative effect on the company's investment operations which suffered a substantial decline in value and prompted the company to take due and precautionary provisions, thereby impacting the company's performance.

In general, the company closely monitors the economic situation in order to seize any attractive investment opportunities related to the company's activities of all kinds that may become available depending on market conditions with due consideration to the lingering effects of the economic crisis.

Cash dividends and bonus shares

The board of directors decided not to distribute cash dividends or bonus shares and to recommend the general assembly to approve this decision.

Board of Directors' remuneration

The Board of Directors decided not to pay director remunerations and recommended the Board of Directors to approve this decision.

Governance

Keen to comply with the rules and regulations issued by the Capital Markets Authority concerning governance, the company is currently finalizing the procedure for implementing by mid-2016, according to the relevant time schedule issued by the Capital Markets Authority.

Production activity

Strongly believing in the viability of the food industries sector and its role in providing foodstuffs, the company has paid considerable attention to this sector. Within this

framework, facilities at the company's plant at Doha Port has been developed in order to achieve a positive shift in the quality of seafood offered by the company and by introducing new product lines of fresh and frozen and ready-to-cook shrimp.

The plant of Edafco Company in the Arab Republic of Egypt has also been developed and replacement and maintenance operations have been carried out for the plant equipment with a view to increasing production efficiency. In Lebanon the entire ice-cream plant has been replaced and no production equipment have been installed with higher production capacity. Other equipment have been added to the dairy plant for producing all kinds of cheese.

Future outlook

Despite the achievements made by the company, it still has many more to achieve. To do so, it has drawn a framework that regulates all available policies and plans to exploit the company's resources in an optimal manner and develop its products and services in such way as to promote diversification of its sources of income.

In his concluding remarks, Al-Mukhaizim said, "The Board of Directors has the honor to present its highest appreciation and deepest gratitude to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and the honorable government. We would also like to thank the shareholders of the company for their support and the employees of the company for their faithful efforts in implementing the company's plan. We pray to Allah Almighty to protect Kuwait and keep it safe and secure forever. The General assembly then elected Dar Al-Safa, Al-Safa company, Malik Maher Marafie, Abdullah Hamad Al-Terkait and Bader Mohamed Al-Qattan as board members.



KUWAIT: Shareholders attending the Danah Al-Safat annual general assembly yesterday in Hawally. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KUWAIT DISSOLVES OLYMPIC, FOOTBALL BODIES

KUWAIT: Kuwait yesterday dissolved the country's Olympic committee and football association, citing financial irregularities. Hamoud Fulaiteh, Deputy Director General of the Kuwaiti Public Authority for Youth and Sport, said the decision was made in a meeting yesterday and two interim administrations had been

appointed, state news agency KUNA reported. Fulaiteh said the two new commissions would be empowered to deal with all the alleged illegal activities committed by the dismissed boards. They had refused to co-operate in addressing the irregularities, according to KUNA. The International Olympic Committee suspended

Kuwait in October 2015, accusing the government of interference in its national Olympic Committee, prompting a \$1 billion lawsuit for damages in Swiss courts by the Gulf Arab state in June. The decision forced Kuwaiti athletes in this month's Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro to compete under the Olympic flag. — Reuters



MEDICAL STUDENTS TEAM ORGANIZES CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE, HUMANITY



Kuwaiti Medical graduates pose for a group photo. — KUNA photos

KUWAIT: Kuwait Medical Students Team in Ireland organized on Wednesday a conference on "science and humanity" aiming to link the academic study to the humanitarian action. Addressing the conference, Mohammad Al-Ajmi, the team's head, said this was the first activity of the team held inside the homeland, adding that the conference was part of several ones organized in Ireland since the team was established in 2014. He affirmed that the team's members seek to be an ideal example for the Kuwaiti youth and their better ambassadors abroad.

Meanwhile, Abdullah Al-Adwani, the representative of Ministry of State for Youth Affairs, stressed that the ministry has been paying much attention to back youth and their activities. He added that this is part of the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah that urge officials to provide support for young people. The conference discussed

humanitarian efforts exerted by doctors, and briefed the community on medical researches and projects provided by fresh graduates. The event, which includes other activities, was held at the National Library of Kuwait and under the auspices of Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.

Treatment abroad

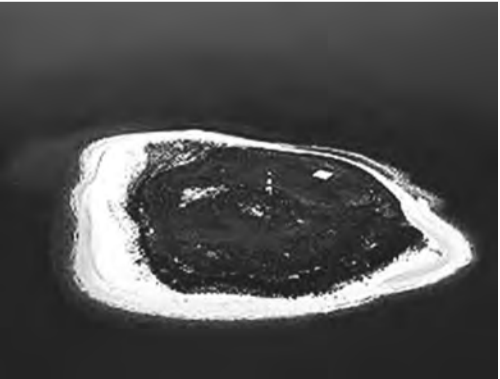
Meanwhile, Dr Abdul-Hadi has affirmed that the MoH "will not accept halting or terminating procedures for any Kuwaiti patient receiving medical treatment abroad at the pretext of drained budget specialized for that purpose." On the health insurance project for retirees, he said it would be in effect middle of October, urging the retirees to update their files with the Public Institution for Social Security to benefit from new services such as the SMS. — Agencies

KUBBAR ISLAND - A HAVEN FOR WILDLIFE

KUWAIT: Kubbar Island is one of the well-known locations in Kuwait known for being a safe haven for wildlife and a popular spot for sea enthusiast. Located in the southern region of Kuwait, Kubbar Island is situated near the marine route for oil and commercial tankers passing in the Gulf waters. The Island has a communication tower erected there and also a heliport which is mainly used by the coast guards during emergencies.

Kubbar Island is circular in shape with a diameter of 370 to 380 meters. The Island is known for its coral reefs which makes it a popular destination for scuba divers. The weather in Kubbar Island is mostly moderate in temperature, reaching about 39 Degrees Celsius during daytime in summer while dipping to about 27 Degrees Celsius during the evening. At certain seasons, the Island thrives with various kinds of birds who usually make a stop at the Island on their annual migration.

It is among nature's best spectacles. It is relatively Small Sandy Island in the Arabian Gulf located in close proximity to Fahaleel. Kubbar is located



Kubbar Island a haven for wildlife and a popular spot for sea enthusiast. — KUNA photos

approximately 29 kilometers off the coast of Failaka and 30 kilometers off the southern coast of Kuwait. The Kubbar Island is a serene getaway that gives Kuwait its pride in picturesque locations. The island is nothing short of spectacular and is unspoiled in every way. The sparkling blue waters and grainy

crystal sands make the beaches on the island so enticing for the tourists. Even though the island's infrastructure remains yet to be developed, the Kubbar Island local tourist industry is beginning to flourish; it provides boating, sailing, swimming and water sports. — Agencies

KUWAIT'S YOUTHS FACE MANY CHALLENGES IN VOLUNTEERING

KUWAIT: Volunteering has been rapidly growing among Kuwaiti youths who have shown relentless desire to help the needy abroad. Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) met with a number of male and female youths. Some of them did volunteer while others encountered many difficulties while volunteering. The two groups agreed that volunteering in Kuwait has limited fields, while helping the others abroad was usually



Athoob Al-Shuaibi - a volunteering photographer

restricted on a certain segment of people, like social media celebrities, or the rich. Volunteering is creative, they agreed, because it took you to new places, alleviating suffering of people either through financial, material or moral means. Jarrah Al-Jassar said he wanted to volunteer but NGOs have weak media. He said that he has a lot of free time and wanted to fill it up with something useful, but "I don't know to whom I should go to." Maryam Al-Faraj said she started volunteering when she was 19 years old in a hospital in the US specialized in nutrition of children. She said that she volunteered through a charity's website and this entire experience of helping the others was a blessing. She said volunteering domains in Kuwait were usually limited. "There are no websites that can guide you to an institution to apply for," Al-Faraj said. Athoob Al-Shuaibi, a volunteering photographer, said travelling at her own expense started to create a burden although she did not mind. The volunteers should be treated like social media celebrities, she believed.

Fai Al-Fahad, who started volunteering when she was in elementary school in Kuwait, said she joined a team to help the Syrian refugees in Jordan after winning her family's consent to travel. She said that after her first trip, she felt that she have found something she has been chasing for a long time, the feeling a person felt when helping the others. Al-Fahad complained that some civil society organizations, which she did not name, were not welcoming new volunteers unless he or she has a donation to give. Ameera Al-Khaldi said there were many girls who wished to volunteer either inside Kuwait or abroad, but some conservative families refused to allow the girl to travel. —KUNA



Fai Al-Fahad chats with kids



Maryam Al-Faraj



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah left to Saudi Arabia yesterday to head the Kuwaiti delegation at the 140th session of the GCC Ministerial Council. Sheikh Sabah will also take part in a broad meeting, grouping GCC ministers of foreign affairs, US Secretary of State John Kerry and Tobias Elwood, the UK secretary of state for Middle Eastern and African affairs in Jeddah. — KUNA

KUWAITI JOURNALISTS' VISIT TO BAGHDAD 'IMPORTANT'

IRAQ'S AL-HAKIM HAILS DEEP HISTORIC TIES

BAGHDAD: Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament Salim Al-Jabouri has stressed that the visit of Kuwaiti journalists' delegation to Iraq was important, adding that Iraqis realize the value of press in the State of Kuwait. During a meeting with the delegation late Wednesday, Al-Jabouri said "if we want to maintain relations, it should be focused on the popular dimension and the social depth as we have a same destiny."

He called for promoting the relations between the State of Kuwait and Iraq in many fields. On the legislative situation in Iraq, the top lawmaker said that there was a conflict between Iraq's legislative and executive authorities that has affected people badly, noting that the parliament during this session worked on achieving a common grounds. "Some people criticize the parliament saying its performance is below expectations. But the appearance of the so-called Islamic State (IS) and the issues of internally displaced persons affected the parliament's performance," he said.

The parliament sometimes solved problems and sometimes causes troubles, Al-Jabouri said. He affirmed the need to promote and cement relations with neighboring countries, saying the "isolation is harmful". Iraq should be a key player in the region, he stressed. The Kuwaiti delegation included President of the Kuwait Journalists Association Adnan Al-Rashid, Deputy Director General for Editorial Sector and Editor-in-Chief of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Saad Al-Ali, and head of local department in Kuwait daily Al-Qabas Ibrahim Al-Saidi.

Deep-rooted ties

Meanwhile, President of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq, Ammar Al-Hakim praised the historic and strong relations linking Kuwait and Iraq. This statement came during a meeting with the Kuwait journalists' delegation visit-

ing the capital Baghdad. Iraq should benefit from the Kuwaiti experience in the reconstruction of Kuwait, especially that Kuwait and Iraq are neighboring countries and have many things in common, he said. On the security situation in Iraq, the official said that Iraqis were prepared to free the province of

Nineveh from the so-called Islamic State (IS), considered to be the last stronghold for the terrorist entity. Al-Hakim stressed that extremists were to trying to ignite sectarian strife in Iraq via insidious means, adding that Iraqis were willing to defend their country against attempts to divide the people. — Agencies



Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament Salim Al-Jabouri pictured after a meeting with a visiting delegation of Kuwaiti journalists. — KUNA



President of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq, Ammar Al-Hakim poses for a group photo with the Kuwait journalists' delegation. — KUNA

Friday Times International

FRIDAY, AUGUST 26, 2016

**Burkini ban
demo held
in London**



**Welcome to
the Trump-Clinton
conspiracy
election**



**Hours-long attack
on Kabul
American
university kills 16**



AMATRICE, ITALY: Partial view of the damaged central Italian village of Amatrice, taken yesterday, a day after a 6.2-magnitude earthquake struck the region killing some 247 people. — AFP

ITALY QUAKE DEATH TOLL NEARS 250 AS RESCUERS SEARCH DEMOLISHED TOWNS

MANY BURIED UNDER RUBBLE IN THEIR SLEEP

AMATRICE, ITALY: The death toll from a devastating earthquake in central Italy reached at least 241 people yesterday and could rise further after rescue teams worked through the night to try to find survivors under the rubble of flattened towns.

The 6.2 magnitude quake struck a cluster of mountain communities 140 km east of Rome early on Wednesday as people slept, destroying hundreds of homes. The Civil Protection department officially revised the death toll down to 241 from a previous 247 given earlier on Thursday morning.

Officials said they expected to confirm more deaths as the search operation continued. Trucks full of rubble left the area every few minutes, including one in which a dusty doll could be seen lying on top of ton of debris.

Yesterday, the sun rose on frightened people who had slept in cars or tents, the earth continuing to tremble under their feet from aftershocks, hundreds of which have struck since the quake. Two

registered 5.1 and 5.4, just before dawn. "I haven't slept much because I was really afraid," said 70-year-old Arturo Onesi from the town of Arquata del Tronto, who spent the night in a tent camp for survivors and rescue workers.

On Thursday afternoon a violent aftershock measuring magnitude 4.3 sent rescuers fleeing from debris and stones that fell from the severely damaged bell tower of the 15th century church of St. Augustine in Amatrice. The aftershock, which struck fear and panic in survivors, detached the church's facade, leaving it dangerously unstable over the main street where rescuers work.

The original earthquake was powerful enough to be felt in Bologna to the north and Naples to the south, both more than 220 km (135 miles) from the epicentre. Many of those killed or injured were holidaymakers in the four worst-hit towns - Amatrice, Pescara del Tronto, Arquata del Tronto and Accumoli - where seasonal visitors swell populations by up to

tenfold the summer. That makes it harder to track the deaths. One Spaniard, five Romanians, and a number of other foreigners, some of them caregivers for the elderly, were believed to be among the dead, officials said. Aerial video taken by drones showed swathes of Amatrice, last year voted one of Italy's most beautiful historic towns, completely flattened. The town, known across Italy and beyond for a local pasta dish, had been filling up for the 50th edition of a popular food festival this weekend.

The mayor said the bodies of 15-20 tourists were believed to be under the rubble of the town's Hotel Roma, which he said had about 32 guests when it collapsed on Wednesday morning.

Girl found alive

About 270 people injured in Wednesday's quake were hospitalized, the Civil Protection department said, adding that about 5,000 people, including police, firefighters, army troops and volunteers,

were involved in post-quake operations.

Rescuers working with emergency lighting in the darkness saved a 10-year-old girl, pulling her alive from the rubble where she had lain for about 15 hours. Many other children were not so lucky. A family of four, including two boys aged 8 months and 9 years, were buried when a church bell tower toppled into their house in nearby Accumoli.

Prime Minister Matteo Renzi's cabinet was meeting yesterday to decide emergency measures to help the affected communities. "Today is a day for tears, tomorrow we can talk of reconstruction," he told reporters late on Wednesday. The death toll appeared likely to rival or surpass that from the last major earthquake to strike Italy, which killed more than 300 people in the central city of L'Aquila in 2009. While hopes of finding more people alive diminished by the hour, firefighters' spokesman Luca Cari recalled that survivors were found in L'Aquila up to 72 hours after that quake. — Reuters

EGYPT ORDERS RELEASE OF LAWYER IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

CAIRO: An Egyptian court yesterday ordered the release of a prominent rights lawyer held in solitary confinement for more than 100 days after he raised a legal challenge to a decision by the country's president to hand over two Red Sea islands to Saudi Arabia.

However, the decision to free Malek Adly was immediately challenged by prosecutors. Adly will remain in prison until the court makes a final decision, expected Saturday, said one of his lawyers, Mahmoud Belal. Adly has been held without formal charge, kept in

prison on a rolling series of administrative detention orders every 15 days since his arrest in May.

According to the state investigators, Adly is suspected of participating in meetings with Islamists to wage a campaign against the state and spread false information that the Red Sea islands were essentially sold off in exchange for much-needed Saudi financial support.

Throughout, he has been kept in solitary confinement with almost no communication

with the outside world, sleeping on a bare floor in conditions that his lawyers say amount to torture.

Supporters say that he was a victim of a personal vendetta after he essentially insulted Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi in a televised interview.

Adly was among a group of lawyers who raised a court case against el Sissi's decision in April to hand over two Red Sea islands to Saudi Arabia. The lawyers argued that the islands were historically Egypt's, while the

government said they were Saudi territory that had only temporarily placed under Egyptian protection.

The decision sparked a wave of protests that were met with hundreds of arrests. El-Sissi has repeatedly saying that all discussion of the islands issue must stop.. At the time, Adly appeared on a TV talk show with documents he said showed Egypt's sovereignty and proclaiming, "The person who gives up an inch of Egyptian soil is a traitor" seen as an implicit insult of el-Sissi. —AP

ISLAMIC STATE ATTACKS WESTERN-BACKED CAMP ON JORDAN-SYRIA BORDER

AMMAN: Islamic State launched a bomb and gun attack on a Western-backed Syrian rebel camp near the Jordanian border on Wednesday, according to the rebels, who said they had killed at least 30 of the attackers and suffered at least three casualties themselves. A suicide bomber rammed an explosive-laden vehicle into the camp belonging to the Forces of Martyr Ahmad al-Abdo rebel group in a sparsely populated desert area near where the borders of Syria, Jordan and Iraq meet, the rebels' spokesman, Saeed Saif, said. They then attacked several rebel outposts. "We repelled the attack by Daesh (Islamic State) on several areas, and they failed to make any progress and have retreated," Saif told Reuters.

The Force of Martyr Ahmed al-Abdo was one of the earliest Free Syrian Army (FSA) groups to get U.S.-made anti-tank missiles and is one of the groups aligned on the so-called Southern Front that a coalition of Western and Arab countries support. That backing is part of a strategy of preventing opposition-held southern Syria and the southeastern desert area from falling into the hands of radical jihadist groups.

The group's leader, Saleem Bakour, was killed in June by a suspected Islamic State militant. Islamic State later said in a statement by its Damascus province that a suicide bomber named Abu Hafs al-Damashi had driven his car into the headquarters of those who it called Sahwat, a term used for forces backed by the West who are viewed as apostates by the ultra-hardline Sunni militants, killing at least 19 of them. The group said simultaneous attacks on several locations within the camp also killed another seven FSA fighters and were also able seize weapons before ending their operation. — Reuters



QAYYARAH, IRAQ: Members of the Iraqi government forces and the elite counter-terrorism service (CTS) drive on Wednesday after they took key positions in the centre of the city, officials said, on the second day of an operation to recapture the northern town from Islamic State (IS) group jihadists. —AFP

IRAQ FORCES RETAKE KEY TOWN SOUTH OF MOSUL

KEY STEP IN THE FIGHT AGAINST IS

QAYYARAH, IRAQ: Iraqi forces yesterday pushed the Islamic State group from Qayyarah, a northern town considered strategic for any future offensive against the jihadists' last stronghold of Mosul. Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi hailed the victory as a key step in the fight against IS but hours later suffered yet another political setback when lawmakers impeached his defense minister. Special forces, backed by US-led coalition air strikes, wrapped up a three-day operation to retake Qayyarah, a town which lies on the banks of the Tigris river. "We control all parts of the town and managed, in very limited time, to root out Daesh," Lieutenant General Riyadh Jalal Tawfik, who commands Iraq's ground forces, told an AFP reporter in Qayyarah, using an acronym for IS.

The commander said engineering units were now clearing the town, which lies about 60 kilometers south of Mosul, of unexploded ordnance and booby traps. Residents greeted the security forces under skies blackened by huge fires IS fighters set to nearby oil wells in recent days.

The bodies of suspected IS fighters were strewn across some of the town's streets, especially around its southern entrance, which saw the worst fighting and significant destruction.

Abadi issued a statement hailing what he said was a key step towards

reclaiming Mosul, IS's de facto Iraq capital and the country's second city. "Our heroic forces achieved a big victory, an important step towards the liberation of Mosul," Abadi said. "I present my congratulations to the Iraqi people for the liberation of the strategic town of Qayyarah and neighbouring areas," he said. The prime minister's mood was unlikely to have remained upbeat very long however, with one of his key allies losing a no confidence vote by parliament moments later. The house impeached Defense Minister Khaled al-Obeidi by 142 votes to 102 and 18 abstentions-over corruption allegations.

Obeidi's downfall is the latest development in a bitter feud that erupted earlier this month with rival Sunni politician Salim al-Juburi, who is the parliament speaker.

Qayyarah residents cooperated

At a hearing in parliament, Obeidi answered graft accusations against him by saying they were trumped up because he had refused to be part of corrupt deals. He fought back with his own allegations against Juburi and other lawmakers but the speaker escaped unscathed after an integrity committee dropped the case.

Unity in Iraq's Sunni camp is seen as key to preparing an offensive against Mosul. The operation against Qayyarah

was launched on Tuesday and led by Iraq's elite counter-terrorism service (CTS). Iraqi forces had already recaptured a nearby air field and Qayyarah is expected to become one of the main launchpads for an assault on Mosul in the coming weeks or months.

Officers have said the push into Qayyarah was coordinated with small groups of armed residents opposed to IS inside the town. "The people were very cooperative, that is why none of them fled, they did not attack our forces and our forces did not hurt them," General Tawfik said.

A CTS spokesman confirmed that pro-government sleeper cells were involved in the operation but would not provide further details. IS has suffered a string of military setbacks over the past year and lost more than half of the territory it controlled two years ago, in a trend that looks irreversible.

The jihadists are vastly outnumbered and outgunned in the Mosul area but, besides the obstacles raised by a divided political class, Iraq also faces an unprecedented humanitarian crisis. Around 3.4 million people have already been forced to flee their homes by conflict since the start of 2014. The United Nations' refugee agency warned this week that an offensive on Mosul could displace another 1.2 million people and cause a major disaster. —AFP

PALESTINIAN WHO STABBED ISRAELI SOLDIER SHOT DEAD

JERUSALEM: An Israeli soldier on Wednesday shot dead a Palestinian motorist who had stabbed him and threw rocks from his car at a military vehicle in the occupied West Bank, the Israeli army said. An Israeli army spokeswoman said the assailant hurled rocks from his moving car at an oncoming military patrol vehicle, which then gave chase, forcing the car to a standstill shortly afterwards.

When the Israeli soldier approached the vehicle, the assailant stabbed him, inflicting light wounds, she said. The soldier responded by pushing the assailant backwards and shooting him, an Israeli army statement said. A picture of the dead assailant circulated on social media and seen by Reuters showed him sitting in the driver's seat. An Islamic Jihad militant source named the driver as Sari Abu Ghrab, 26, from the northern West Bank village of Qabatia. Since October, Palestinians, many of them acting alone and with rudimentary weapons, have killed at least 33 Israelis and two visiting Americans. At least 208 Palestinians have been killed, 141 of whom Israel said were assailants. Others died during clashes and protests.

Palestinian leaders say assailants have acted out of desperation over the collapse of peace talks in 2014 and Israeli settlement expansion in Israeli-occupied territory that Palestinians seek for an independent state. Most countries view the settlements as illegal. Israel disputes this. Israel says incitement in the Palestinian media and personal problems at home have been important factors that have spurred assailants, often teenagers, to carry out attacks. —Reuters



ALEPPO: A Syrian man carries a dead baby in the rubble of buildings following a barrel bomb attack on the Bab al-Nairab neighborhood yesterday. —AFP

BARREL BOMB ATTACK KILLS 11 CHILDREN IN ALEPPO

BEIRUT: Eleven children were killed on yesterday in a barrel bomb attack carried out by government forces on a rebel-held neighborhood of Syria's Aleppo city, a monitor said. "Fifteen civilians, among them 11 children, were killed in a barrel bomb attack on the Bab al-Nayrab neighborhood" in southern Aleppo city, the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitor said.

It also reported eight civilians, including two children, were killed yesterday in rebel fire on the government-held west of the city. —AFP



SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA: In this Monday, Aug. 15, 2016 file photo, Secret Service agents stand near Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton during a campaign event at the Riverfront Sports Complex. —AP

IN ISRAEL'S RELIGIOUS PRESS, HILLARY CLINTON IS INVISIBLE

BNEI BRAK, Israel: Hillary Clinton may become the president of Israel's most important ally, but her image is banished from a significant swath of the country's media: the ultra-Orthodox press whose deeply conservative readership chafes at images of women.

Clinton's nomination as Democratic candidate for the US presidency is casting light on a longstanding policy that has already applied to other female figures from Germany's Angela Merkel to Israel's own prime minister Golda Meir. But whereas the election is causing some discussion among US ultra-Orthodox media, their Israeli equivalents are digging in their heels. "For us there is no question. We will not publish pictures of women, period," said Meni Schwartz, editor of the ultra-Orthodox news site Behadrei Haredim.

About 11 percent of Israel's 8.5 million citizens are Haredi, or ultra-Orthodox. Recognizable by their black hats and long black clothes, they often lead insular lives, separated from the more secular Jewish majority and closely adhering to Jewish laws. Ultra-Orthodox women traditionally dress in long skirts and long-sleeved shirts, covering their hair if they are married. Men and women sit separately at synagogues and weddings and unrelated women and men refrain from physical contact.

Ultra-Orthodox media, which include four daily newspapers, two main weeklies and two main web sites, cater to conservative ideals that include preserving women's modesty and skipping topics involving drugs, murder and sex. Many consider showing pictures of women a violation of those values, however newsworthy the figure. — AP

IN CRIME-RIDDEN ISRAELI ARAB CITY, POLICE SEEK NEW APPROACH

CRIME RATES AMONG THE ARAB POPULATION HIGHEST

UMM AL-FAHM, PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES: On the rundown streets of Umm al-Fahm, an Israeli-Arab city of 50,000, locals in smoky cafes are reluctant to speak. Violent crime at the hands of drug gangs is rife here. Reprisals are common. Israeli Jews rarely set foot in the city. "The gangs are in control," said a man who refused to give his name, standing beneath two security cameras that he said were pointless since the police rarely came.

Cities like Umm al-Fahm illustrate a stark division within Israeli society: The growing lawlessness in parts of the Arab community, which makes up 20 percent of Israel's population and frequently complains of discrimination. With murder rates and other criminal activity far higher among Arabs - 59 percent of all murders are committed by Arabs, police records show - the government is hoping a multi-year, multi-billion-dollar plan to bolster policing will tackle the problem and put Arab municipalities on a better footing. As well as extra policing - at a cost of \$500 million - there is a proposal for a general boost in spending in Arab areas, where nearly half the population lives below the poverty line, double the national rate. In a signal of its commitment, the national police in April promoted an Arab Muslim officer to its second highest post, for the first time in its history, and has announced plans to

build more police stations and recruit more Arab officers.

But the residents of Umm al-Fahm say they have seen no change so far, and there is little optimism. Weeks after Deputy Commissioner Jamal Hakrush's promotion, two Umm al-Fahm men were murdered hours apart. Much of the crime is Arab-on-Arab. Still, new recruits to the police service say they are keen to get to grips with the problem. "One of the reasons that made me join the Israeli police is the increasing amount of violence in Arab society," said Kamal al-Asadi, a trainee at the police academy.

Too little, too late?

Ahmad Jamal, 51, sells sporting goods near the scene of one of the murders in Umm al-Fahm. A neighboring street vendor was shot in the legs last month over a parking dispute. "Police can't solve this problem. It comes from us and only we can solve it," he said. "There isn't any dialogue between neighbors any more."

Jamal has coached a local boys soccer league for decades and seen an increasing number of former players fall into a pattern of crime as they enter adulthood. He partly blames a breakdown of traditional Arab society, and some experts agree.

In Umm al-Fahm there's little confidence in the police as mediators.

Patrols within the city are rare. It's one of Israel's largest Arab cities but there are no hotels - no one wants to stay. Locals fear nighttime, describing armed men stalking the streets, drug dealers gathering in souped-up cars and bursts of gunfire in the early hours. Amnon Be'eri-Sulitzanu of the Abraham Fund Initiative, an Israeli NGO that promotes equitable policing, said crime among Israeli Arabs has been rising "gradually, but significantly". Human rights organizations say "over-and-under" policing, in which police are less responsive when it comes to Arab-on-Arab crime yet employ tough measures in response to threats against Jews, are partly to blame.

The Israeli police hope recruiting more Arabs will help. There is an effort to sign up more Bedouin, Druze and Israeli-Arab officers. But a study by the RAND corporation commissioned by the Israeli government warned diversifying the force wouldn't be sufficient. The think-tank pointed to US cities with majority black police forces that saw little improvement. So far, Arab recruitment drives have been mostly limited to increased advertising, but a police spokesman said departments would eventually meet with communities to build support. "This isn't a month-by-month effort," he said. "This will take years." —Reuters



UMM AL-FAHM, PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES: Palestinian children play on the rubble of a building after Israeli bulldozers destroyed the Palestinian homes and a community center in the southern West Bank village of Umm al-Kheir, near the Israeli settlement of Karmel, on Wednesday, after Israeli authorities said they were built without permission. —AFP



JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI: Nigel Farage, ex-leader of the British UKIP party, arrives onstage to speak at Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump's campaign rally on Wednesday. —AP

LEADER OF BRITISH MOVEMENT TO LEAVE EU JOINS TRUMP AT RALLY

JACKSON, Mississippi: Donald Trump is linking his "movement to take back the country" to Britain's surprising vote to leave the European Union. He invited Nigel Farage, an architect of the withdrawal campaign, to join him on stage at a rally Wednesday night in Jackson.

Farage, the outgoing head of the United Kingdom Independence Party, said "anything is possible" if enough people band together, and predicted that Trump's presidential campaign would "smash the establishment." Farage helped propel the Independence Party from the political fringe to a position as influential power broker. Over the past few years, the party has won over large numbers of voters from other parties by appealing to concerns about globalization and large-scale immigration. Farage, who had pushed for the June 23 referendum on whether Britain should remain in the European Union, stepped down as party leader shortly after his side won. Farage noted that his movement was an underdog in public opinion polls but ultimately triumphed. He predicted that Trump, who supported Britain's departure from the European Union, would stage a comeback and win in November. — AP

BURKINI BAN DEMO HELD IN LONDON

'BAN IS RACIST'

LONDON: Brandishing beach balls, towels and inflatables, around 50 people protested against the burkini ban in France yesterday by creating a fake beach outside the country's embassy in London. After demonstrators spread sand on the pavement outside the embassy, a woman in a burkini and a child sat playing in it. Others wore bikinis as traditional French accordion music played in the background.

Protestors carried placards with slogans such as "Burkini ban is racist" and "Islamophobia is not freedom". Many spoke of their shock at a photograph widely published by British media this week which showed a headscarved woman, surrounded by police on a beach in Nice in the south of France, who had to remove a top garment. "Yesterday when I saw the images of the woman on the beach I felt sick to my stomach," said Esmat Jeraj, one of the organizers. "In terms of this event, it was a bunch of very frustrated, very angry women coming together to demonstrate that this was unacceptable and that something needed to be done."

Rosalind Hayes, a 24-year-old student, said she had found the image "very resonant". "It's just a concern, the increasing number of different curbs on



LONDON: A woman wearing a "Burkini" joins a protest outside the French Embassy in London yesterday. —AFP

people's ability to be in society without being controlled, going throughout Europe," she said, leaning on her bicycle.

A group of three women wearing black hoods over their heads and calling themselves the Sisters of Perpetual Resistance carried a placard saying "Liberte, Egalite, Sisterhood"—a reference to France's national motto. "Clearly it's outrageous," said one of the trio, who declined to identify themselves. "I'm almost 60 years old, I've been fighting

this shit all my life. Women should wear what they want to wear, where they want to wear it, without bloody men telling them what they should and shouldn't do."

Dozens of French towns and villages have banned beachwear that "conspicuously" shows a person's religion-aimed at the full-body Islamic swimsuit but which has also been used against women wearing long clothes and a headscarf. —AFP

Kuwait Times

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CALIFORNIA LAWMAKERS APPROVE EXTENSION OF CLIMATE CHANGE LAW

SACRAMENTO: California lawmakers voted Wednesday to extend the state's landmark climate change law - the most aggressive in the nation - by another 10 years, resisting fierce opposition from oil companies and other business interests to keep the program alive at least through 2030.

Democratic Gov. Jerry Brown, a strong advocate of the state's climate initiatives, has said he'll sign the bill when it comes to his desk. The move keeps alive the legal framework that underpins California's wide-ranging efforts to fight climate change, from a tax on pollution to zero-emission vehicle mandates and restrictions on the carbon content of gasoline and diesel fuel.

SB32 passed in the Senate on a 25-13 vote, a day after it won crucial support from business-minded Democratic lawmakers in the state Assembly with encouragement from the White House. "This is a real commitment backed up by real power," Brown said at a celebratory news conference after the vote. In 2006, California set an ambitious goal to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, when the initial effort would end. SB32 sets a new goal to reduce emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. It is tied to the fate of another bill, AB197, to provide greater legislative oversight of the appointed Air Resources Board, which is responsible for executing the law. The Assembly approved that bill Wednesday, sending it to Brown.

Celebrating the victory

Democratic lawmakers celebrated the victory, saying it ensures California will continue to be a pioneer in the global fight against climate change. "We can wean ourselves from a fossil fuel 20th Century to a renewably fueled 21st Century, which is where we all know we need to get if we're going to have a planet on which to live in the decades ahead," said Sen. Mark Leno, D-San Francisco.

Passage of the bill is a major victory for Brown, who has traveled the world promoting California's climate change programs and staked his legacy on his ability to reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions.

In its journey through the Legislature, the bill got just one Republican vote, from a lawmaker who represents a strongly Democratic district in the San Francisco Bay Area. Republicans contend the law has raised prices for consumers without making a substantial dent in the volume of global climate emissions. Higher energy prices are particularly harmful in the inland Central Valley, where summers are hotter and winters colder than in the coastal cities where Democrats dominate, said Sen. Andy Vidak, R-Hanford.

"It's shameful when coastal elites have no sympathy for the middle class and the working poor who do not live on the coast," Vidak said.

Still, passage of the bill would not settle the legal or economic uncertainty surround the state's highest profile carbon-reduction effort, a tax on carbon known as cap-and-trade, which requires polluters to buy permits to emit greenhouse gases. The program is being challenged in court by the California Chamber of Commerce, which argues it's a tax that should have been approved by two-thirds of the lawmakers in each legislative chamber. Its lawsuit is pending in a state appeals court. — AP



SACRAMENTO: Assemblyman Eduardo Garcia, D-Coachella, center, discuss the passage of his bill AB197, that would add two legislators as non-voting members to the Air Resources Board, which enforces California's law targeting green-house gas reductions, during a news conference on Wednesday. —AP



LOS ANGELES: Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton talks with Jimmy Kimmel during a break in the taping of "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" on Monday. —AP

WELCOME TO THE TRUMP-CLINTON CONSPIRACY ELECTION

RUMORS AND INNUENDO DOMINATING

LOS ANGELES: It's a conspiracy: The 2016 campaign features one candidate who warned against the "vast right-wing conspiracy" and another who was a leader of the so-called "birther" movement. Donald Trump and his surrogates hint at a mysterious "illness" afflicting rival Hillary Clinton. Pushing back, Clinton warns of murky ties between Trump and the Russian government, insinuating that her Republican opponent may be a puppet of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Rumors and innuendo long confined to the far reaches of the Internet are dominating the presidential race, forcing Clinton to grapple - once again - with the kinds of whispers that have dogged her family for decades.

No comment from Clinton

Clinton has largely avoided discussing the conspiracies, leaving it to members of her campaign team or allies. But she is preparing a Reno, Nevada, address on Thursday that will accuse Trump of supporting an "alt-right" campaign that presents "a divisive and dystopian view of America." "I do feel sometimes like this campaign has entered into an alternative universe," Clinton said in an appearance Monday night on ABC's "Jimmy Kimmel Live."

She described Trump Wednesday night on CNN as a candidate who is campaigning on anger and hatred. "Donald Trump has shown us who he is and we ought to believe him," she said. "He is taking a hate movement mainstream. He has brought it into his campaign. He's bringing it to our communities and our country."

Driven by big personalities, the 2016 election has become a perfect storm for conspiracy theories. Clinton famously called her husband's opponents part of a "vast right-wing conspiracy" and her family has long been central to a cottage industry of sordid tales about her husband and family.

Trump is no stranger to conspiracies. Trump is known for peddling conspiracies and was at the center of the "birther" movement that questioned whether President Barack Obama was born in the United States (Obama was born in Hawaii). Trump, a businessman and reality TV star, has frequently tossed out rumors about Clinton's health and sleep schedule on the stump and on Twitter, aiming to discredit her fitness for office. Sensing an opportunity, Clinton's team seized upon the rumor-mongering after the GOP nominee plucked Steve Bannon, the executive chairman of the conservative website Breitbart News, to be his new campaign chairman this month.

They highlight that Trump has been informally advised by Roger Ailes, the former chairman and CEO of Fox News, which has aired segments questioning Clinton's health, and GOP consultant Roger Stone, who has pushed politically loaded innuendo about the Clintons for years. Clinton, who turns 69 in late October, is younger than the 70-year-old Trump. But her health has remained front-and-center. Much of the speculation stems from a concussion Clinton sustained in December 2012 after fainting in her final weeks as secretary of state, an episode her doctor has attributed to a stomach virus and dehydration.

During the course of her treatment, she was found to have a blood clot in a vein in the space between the brain and the skull behind the right ear. To recover, Clinton spent a few days at a hospital and took a month-long absence from the State Department for treatment.

Republican strategist Karl Rove later cast the incident as a "serious health episode" that would be an issue if Clinton ran for president, fueling a theory the concussion posed a graver threat to her abilities than Clinton and her team let on.

Former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, a top Trump surrogate, urged voters to "go online and put down 'Hillary Clinton illness,'" in a Sunday interview with Fox News. And Trump has repeatedly questioned her stamina at campaign rallies. "She gives a short speech then she goes home, goes to sleep, she shows up two days later. Remember, short circuit. Remember that, right? Short circuit," he said at a Florida rally earlier this month.

When the accusations made their way into a recent Trump foreign policy address, in which he said she "lacks the mental and physical stamina" to fight Islamic State militants, Clinton's campaign felt they had to respond. Her team put out a statement from Dr. Lisa Bardack, an internist who proclaimed Clinton in "excellent physical condition and fit to serve as president of the United States." Bardack had said in 2013 that testing showed "complete resolution" of the concussion's effects, including double vision, which had led Clinton to wear glasses with special lenses, further fueling rumors. — AP

RETRIAL ORDERED IN SUIT OVER MAN'S KILLING BY CALIFORNIA COP

LOS ANGELES: A federal appeals court ordered a new trial Wednesday in a lawsuit brought by the mother of a gang member whose killing by an Anaheim police officer four years ago sparked nights of raucous protests.

The 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the trial judge allowed harmful, inflammatory evidence that was irrelevant in determining whether the police officer used excessive force. A jury in Orange County federal court found in favor of the city of Anaheim and Officer Nick Bennallack in the fatal shooting of Manuel Diaz. He was shot in the back after running from the officer down an alley in Anaheim in July 2012.

Bennallack said he shot Diaz during a short foot chase because he thought he had a gun and was preparing to fire it. Diaz, who was not suspected of any crime at the time of the chase, was unarmed.

The shooting of Diaz and another man on consecutive days led to four nights of large street protests that included looting and bottles being tossed at riot police. Officers fired bean bags and pepper balls to disperse crowds. Diaz's mother, Genevieve Huizar, sued the city and Bennallack for excessive force and battery.

Her attorneys argued that the trial should be split into separate liability and damages phases. They also argued that evidence of Diaz's gang affiliation and drug use should be excluded because the officer didn't know at the time that Diaz was a gang member and under the influence.

In the appellate ruling, Judge John Owens said the trial judge erred in not dividing the trial into separate phases and failed to limit gang and drug evidence, which should only have been admissible to determine damages. "As a result, the jury was exposed to a copious amount of inflammatory and prejudicial evidence with little (if any) relevance," Owens wrote.

Attorney Melanie Partow, who represents Huizar, said many excessive force cases focus unfairly on the character of the person who was shot. She said she was thrilled with the opinion and Huizar was overwhelmed when she let her know. "She was crying," Partow said. "She's just thankful she gets a second chance to get justice for her son." A spokesman said the city was disappointed with the decision, but it would continue to see the case through the legal process. —AP

POLICE OFFICER AMONG 23 ARRESTED IN CALIFORNIA GANG PROBE

SAN JOSE: A months-long probe into a northern California Vietnamese crime ring resulted in nearly two dozen arrests, including that of a veteran San Jose police officer accused of leaking confidential information to gang members, authorities said Wednesday.

The multi-agency probe with the FBI and DEA netted cash, drugs, weapons, gambling machines and an alligator, San Jose police said. Officer Derrick Antonio was placed on paid leave two months ago in the middle of the investigation when investigators determined he was sharing sensitive information including police reports with gang members, San Jose Police Chief Eddie Garcia told reporters.

Authorities arrested 22 other people in the probe named "Operation Gang of Thrones," making the arrests and executing search warrants in several places, including San Jose; Anaheim, California; and in Louisiana. They were booked on suspicion of offenses including extortion, drug trafficking, illegal gun possession and conspiracy. Authorities were searching for six more suspects.

The searches netted \$200,000 in cash, 4,000 Ecstasy pills, 600 pounds of marijuana, body armor and the alligator retrieved by San Jose animal control workers after it was found. Louisiana State Police seized more than 400 pounds of the marijuana in transit from San Jose. Antonio was charged with six felony counts, including unauthorized computer access. Garcia called the allegations the officer faces deplorable, but he said they should not reflect badly on the entire San Jose police department. — AP

COLOMBIA'S PRESIDENT RUSHING VOTE ON DEAL WITH REBELS

CONGRESS WILL RECEIVE THE TEXT OF THE DEAL

BOGOTA, Colombia: Colombia's president is moving fast to hold a national referendum on a peace deal meant to end a half-century of bloody conflict with leftist rebels, saying he will give congress the text of the deal.

"Today is the beginning of the end to the suffering, pain and tragedy of war," President Juan Manuel Santos said Wednesday night in a televised address after the deal was announced in Havana, where talks went on for four years. He said he would hold an Oct. 2 yes-or-no vote on the accord with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.

He planned to make the full text of the accord public as it is formally delivered to congress, which cannot block the referendum. As Santos spoke, some 400 people gathered at a plaza in Colombia's capital to celebrate the country's best chance yet of ending decades of political violence that has killed more than 220,000 people and driven more than 5 million from their homes. Several carried candles and were dressed in white to symbolize peace while a giant red, blue and yellow national flag was carried through the crowd. "I can die in peace because finally I'll see my country without violence, with a future for my children," Orlando Guevara, 57, said tearfully.

Guarantees made

Negotiators reached the accord after working around the clock for several days to hammer out the final sensitive details. Among last-minute concessions were guarantees that the FARC's still-unnamed political movement will have a minimum of 10 seats in congress for two legislative periods. After 2026, the former rebels will have to prove their political strength at the ballot box.

"We've won the most beautiful of all battles: the peace of Colombia," the chief FARC negotiator, known by the nom de guerre of Ivan Marquez, said at the announcement in Havana. As soon as his speech finished, the emotional crowd on the plaza in Bogota sang the national anthem and shouted "Viva

Colombia! Yes to Peace!"

Congratulations poured in from the United Nations, which will play a key role keeping the peace, and regional governments. US President Barack Obama also welcomed the deal. The accord commits Colombia's government to carrying out aggressive land reform, overhauling its anti-narcotics

label them "narco-terrorists" for their heavy involvement in Colombia's cocaine trade, an association for which members of the group's top leadership have been indicted in the US. But surveys also indicate Colombians will likely endorse a deal.

Santos, an unlikely peacemaker given his role as architect of the military offen-



HAVANA: Humberto de La Calle, right, head of Colombia's government peace negotiation team, shakes hands with Ivan Marquez, chief negotiator of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, left, while Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez, center, applauds after signing an agreement on Wednesday. —AP

strategy and greatly expanding the state's presence in long-neglected areas.

The FARC were forced to the negotiating table in 2012 after a decade of heavy battlefield losses inflicted by the US-backed military. Several top rebel commanders were killed and its ranks thinned by half to the current 7,000 guerrillas. Overcoming decades of animosity will be tough: Polls say most Colombians loathe the rebel group and

sive that battered the FARC, held firm to the negotiations even as they dragged on for years and as he was called a traitor by his conservative former allies and suffered a plunge in approval ratings.

The most contentious breakthrough came last September when the two sides agreed on a framework for investigating atrocities, punishing guerrillas for involvement in those abuses and compensating victims. —AP

OFFICIAL: FBI PROBING ATTEMPTED CYBER BREACH OF NY TIMES

WASHINGTON: The FBI is investigating attempted cyber intrusions targeting reporters of The New York Times and is looking into whether Russian intelligence agencies are responsible for the acts, a US official said Tuesday. The Times reported Tuesday evening that the attempted cyber attack targeted the newspaper's Moscow bureau, and that there was no evidence that it was successful. No internal systems at the newspaper have been compromised, a Times spokeswoman said. "We are constantly monitoring our systems with the latest available intelligence and tools," Times spokeswoman Eileen Murphy said in a statement. "We have seen no evidence that any of our internal systems, including our systems in the Moscow bureau, have been breached or compromised."

CNN first reported the FBI's investigation. A US official who was not authorized to discuss the matter by name and spoke on condition of anonymity confirmed that an investigation was underway. The news comes as federal authorities contin-

ue to investigate a breach of the Democratic National Committee that outside cyber security experts have attributed to Russian intelligence agencies and that led to the posting of embarrassing internal emails.

Though the Obama administration has not publicly blamed the attack on the Russians, President Barack Obama has noted that outside experts have blamed Russia and suggested Russian President Vladimir Putin may have reason to facilitate the attack.

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and other Democratic entities have also been affected. Earlier this month, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi advised fellow Democrats not to allow family members to answer their phones or read incoming texts after a mix of personal and official information of Democratic members and hundreds of congressional staff - purportedly from a hack of the DCCC - was posted online. —AP

CHINESE ENVOY TELLS AUSTRALIAN PM TO FIGHT 'PROTECTIONISM' TOGETHER

MELBOURNE: China's ambassador told Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull that their countries should fight protectionism together during a meeting a week after two Chinese firms were blocked from buying a stake in Australia's biggest power grid, broadcaster ABC reported yesterday.

Ambassador Cheng Jingye met Turnbull on Monday, ahead of the G20 Summit in Hangzhou in early September, according to a notice on the embassy's website posted yesterday. "It is our hope that both sides would work together to stand for trade and investment facilitation and liberalization and against protectionism of all manifestations," Cheng said in a speech at the Chinese embassy, the ABC reported.

The Chinese envoy said he hoped that the two countries could build on momentum generated by last year's Free Trade Agreement, while acknowledging that both countries do hold some political differences, according to the report. "It is natural that the two countries may disagree on some issues," he said, according to the ABC. Australian Treasurer Scott Morrison last week officially rejected bids by two Chinese companies in the A\$10-billion (\$7.67-billion) sale of Ausgrid, after they failed to overcome security concerns. The decision has caused a rift between Australia and its biggest trading partner. China has accused Australia of bowing to protectionist sentiment in blocking the bid for Ausgrid, as well as an earlier one by a China-led consortium to buy cattle company Kidman & Co. —Reuters

OBAMA ADMINISTRATION TAPS KIM FOR SECOND TERM AT WORLD BANK

WASHINGTON: The Obama administration is nominating current World Bank President Jim Yong Kim for a second term leading the 189-nation international lending organization.

In making the announcement yesterday, Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew praised Kim for using his first term at the World Bank to effectively address "today's most pressing global challenges in innovative ways, from ending extreme poverty and tackling inequality to combating climate change."

Kim, the former president of Dartmouth College, was first tapped by President Barack Obama to head the World Bank in 2012. Since the creation of the World Bank after the end of World War II, its leaders have all been Americans while the International Monetary Fund, its sister lending organization, has always been headed by a European.

Kim, who took over as the 12th president of the World Bank in July 2012, is expected to win quick approval for a second term from the World Bank's executive board. During his first four years in office, Kim has marshalled World Bank resources to deal with a number of crises from the Ebola pandemic in Africa to the ongoing Syrian refugee crisis.

Kim has also generated controversy during his tenure for his efforts to overhaul the World Bank's bureaucracy. Lew praised Kim for spearheading "needed reforms at the World Bank to better leverage knowledge within the bank and enhance the use of the financial resources that shareholders provide."

In addition to serving as president of Dartmouth, Kim was the co-founder of Partners in Health and the former director of the HIV/AIDS at the World Health Organization. A medical doctor and anthropologist, Kim has been involved in international development issues for more than two decades. —AP



NEW DELHI: In this Thursday, June 30, 2016, file photo, World Bank President Jim Yong Kim speaks at a news conference. —AP



KABUL: A wounded Afghan police man (L) looks on as he receives treatment, following the militants' raid that targeted the elite American University of Afghanistan, at the Italian aid organization hospital yesterday. —AFP

HOURS-LONG ATTACK ON KABUL AMERICAN UNIVERSITY KILLS 16

PLEAS FOR HELP FROM TRAPPED STUDENTS

KABUL: Sixteen people were killed after militants stormed the American University of Afghanistan in Kabul, officials said yesterday, in a nearly 10-hour raid that prompted anguished pleas for help from trapped students.

Explosions and gunfire rocked the campus after the attack began Wednesday evening, just weeks after two university professors—an American and an Australian—were kidnapped at gunpoint near the school. No group has so far claimed responsibility for the assault, but it occurred as the Taliban ramp up their nationwide summer offensive against the Western-backed government.

The presidential office said the attack was "orchestrated" from Pakistan, Afghanistan's longtime regional nemesis often accused of harboring the Taliban. "Sixteen people, including eight students, were killed and 53 others were wounded," health ministry spokesman Waheed Majroh told AFP. "Some of the wounded are in critical condition."

The interior ministry said the fatalities included policemen, a university guard and a guard from the neighboring vocational school for the visually impaired. Hundreds of trapped students were rescued during the overnight operation, many of whom tweeted desperate messages for help. Some used classroom furniture to barricade the doors while others made a mad scramble to escape through windows.

The attack began just after dusk, when the private university is usually

packed with students, many of them working professionals doing part-time courses. "Students were pushing each other out of the classroom window," Farzana, a young student who managed to flee told AFP. "I was reluctant to jump but a fellow student pushed me and I fell down. The rest I don't remember."

Authorities refused to confirm whether any hostages had been taken. NATO military advisers helped Afghan forces to respond to the attack, a US official said, without specifying how many troops were involved. At dawn, after the assault had ended, a few women students, some of them terrified and weeping, were escorted out of the campus by policemen.

'Brutal attack'

The attack, apparently the first major militant assault on a prominent university in Afghanistan, has cast a pall on the education sector, seen as a rare symbol of hope for the country's burgeoning youth at a time of rising insecurity. The growing number of students attending university, especially women, has been hailed as a success story in Afghanistan since the 2001 ouster of the Taliban regime, which banned women's education. "Terrorist groups, by attacking civilians, educational institutions, residential areas, culverts, bridges, electricity stations... want to obstruct growth and strengthening of the values that Afghans believe in," President Ashraf Ghani said in a statement, condemning the "brutal attack".

The attack was "organized and

orchestrated" from Pakistan, his office said in a separate statement, adding that Ghani spoke to Pakistan's powerful army chief General Raheel Sharif to demand "serious measures against the terrorists".

The elite American University of Afghanistan, which opened in 2006 and enrolls more than 1,700 students, was long seen as a high-profile target for militants partly because it attracts foreign faculty members. The two foreign professors at the university were seized from their vehicle on August 7, when the kidnappers smashed the passenger window and hauled them away at gunpoint. Their whereabouts are still unknown and no group so far has publicly claimed responsibility for the abductions, the latest in a series of kidnappings of foreigners. The uptick in violence comes as the Taliban escalate nationwide attacks, underscoring the worsening security situation since NATO forces ended their combat mission at the end of 2014.

Afghan forces backed by US troops are seeking to head off a potential Taliban takeover of Lashkar Gah, the capital of the southern opium-rich province of Helmand. The turmoil convulsing Helmand, blighted by a huge opium harvest that helps fund the insurgency, has left thousands of people displaced, sparking a humanitarian crisis. The Taliban have also closed in on Kunduz—the northern city they briefly seized last year in their biggest military victory so far—leaving Afghan forces stretched on multiple fronts. —AFP



ALAHABAD, UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA: An Indian cyclist rides along a flooded road on the outskirts of Alahabad yesterday. —AFP

EASTERN INDIA STRUGGLES TO EVACUATE RELUCTANT VILLAGERS AS FLOODS WREAK HAVOC

BHUBANESWAR: Authorities in eastern India are struggling to evacuate more than 100,000 people stranded in villages after floods intensified, killing more than 300 and driving hundreds of thousands from their homes, officials said on Thursday. The heavy monsoon rains have caused rivers including the Ganges and its tributaries to burst their banks forcing over 200,000 people into relief camps in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand. The deluge has submerged thousands of villages, washed away crops, destroyed homes and roads and disrupted power and phone lines, affecting millions of people across the five states. In India's eastern Bihar state, one of the worst-hit regions, disaster management officials said villagers in some areas were not willing to be evacuated, reluctant to leave their homes, possessions and livestock for fear of looting.

"We are asking them with folded hands, please come to the relief centers. Those who do not want to leave homes, their number is very large, probably more than 100,000 people," said Bihar's Principal Secretary for Disaster Management Vyas Ji. "The water is rising downstream and we do not want people in those areas to stay in their houses," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Since the monsoons began in June, more than five million people across 26 out of Bihar's 38 districts have been affected and at least 127 people have died, mostly due to drowning. In the past week, 2.3 million people have had their lives disrupted and the death toll has reached 28. At least 107,000 people have taken refuge in government relief camps. News reports said one person died and nine others were missing in Aurangabad district after a boat carrying 18 people who were trying to flee the disaster sank in the Punpun river, a tributary of the Ganges, on Tuesday.

In neighboring Uttar Pradesh state, at least 53 people have died and more than 1.8 million people across 29 out of total of 75 districts have been hit by the disaster. Television pictures showed people wading neck-high in water in Ballia district, while others took shelter on roof tops of multi-storey buildings.

Good news

Uttar Pradesh's Relief Commissioner Dinesh Kumar Singh said rescue and relief teams from the National Disaster Response Forces had evacuated thousands of people in boats and the Indian Air Force was airdropping food packets from helicopters. "More than 90,000 people have been displaced from their homes and about 60,000 of them have taken shelter in relief camps," Singh told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

"The good thing is there has been no rain over the last three days." India usually experiences monsoon rains from June to September, which are vital for its agriculture-making up 18 percent of its gross domestic product and providing employment for almost half of its 1.3 billion population. But in many states the rains frequently cause landslides and flooding that devastate crops, destroy homes and expose people to diseases such as diarrhea.

Authorities said there was no problem in reaching flood-hit areas, but television pictures on Wednesday showed crowds of people in Bihar's Patna district blocking roads and complaining of a lack of aid. "We are in difficulty. We are not getting food," a middle-aged woman standing on an embankment told Kashish News, a local Hindi station. —Reuters

MYANMAR WEIGHS DAMAGE AFTER EARTHQUAKE RATTLES BAGAN PAGODAS

TOP TOURIST DESTINATION DAMAGED

BAGAN, MYANMAR: Myanmar took stock of toppled spires and crumbling temple walls in the ancient capital Bagan yesterday after a powerful earthquake hit the country, killing three and damaging the top tourist destination.

Two young girls and a man died in Magway region where the 6.8 magnitude quake struck Wednesday evening, cracking buildings across the centre of the country and sending tremors that were felt as far away as Bangkok and Kolkata. Yesterday Myanmar's new civilian president Htin Kyaw travelled to Bagan the country's most famous archaeological site to inspect some of the nearly 200 pagodas damaged by the quake. The ancient city is home to a vast plain of more than 2,500 Buddhist monuments that are among Myanmar's most venerated religious sites and a top draw for its growing tourism industry. Teams of government-dispatched engineers and architects spent the day surveying the wreckage, while workers cleared piles of bricks, swept the grounds and sorted through fragments of murals.

"We will take experts' opinions and then try to see what is the best way to restore it. But it will be a very lengthy process and quite expensive," the president told reporters after visiting several of the damaged stupas.

Zaw Htay, a government spokesman, said Myanmar's de facto leader and veteran democracy activist Aung Sang Suu Kyi has urged authorities "not to rush" in renovating the damaged temples. "Police are taking measures to prevent the loss of our ancient heritage and cultural art works," he added in a statement on Facebook.

Bagan's sweeping expanse of centuries-old ruins—which make for a staggering sunset vista—have survived wars, earthquakes and tropical sun. In the city's heyday, between the 9th and 13th centuries, it was the capital of a powerful kingdom and one of Asia's most important centers for learning. "It's really heartbreaking. I cannot even eat," said Tin Hla Oo, a trustee of the three-story Htilominlo pagoda, which was badly damaged by the quake. "We are suffer-

ing because this is a great loss, as these (pagodas) are priceless."

Haphazard renovation

Earthquakes are relatively common in Myanmar, which lies in a tectonically active region. The last major quake to seriously damage Bagan struck in 1975 and was followed by a controversial restoration effort under the military junta that stepped down in 2011.

Experts said the haphazard renovation work, much of it hastily done with modern materials, significantly altered the original architecture and design of some monuments. In recent years, as the country undergoes a democratic

"It takes time to know how the structures are stabilized and how bad the actual damage is—if a roof collapses, how much it affects different walls and mural paintings," said Alam.

Suu Kyi, the former political prisoner whose party swept landmark elections in November, is faced with the tough task of modernizing an impoverished country whose economy was eviscerated by its former military leaders. She is formally barred from the presidency by a junta-era constitution but has been ruling through her proxy president Htin Kyaw and her post as state counselor, a powerful position her party crafted after taking office. Travel to Myanmar used to



BAGAN, MYANMAR: The damaged ancient Myauk Guni Temple is pictured, after a 6.8 magnitude earthquake hit Bagan yesterday. —AFP

transition and opens up following decades of isolationist junta rule, UNESCO has worked directly with the government to safeguard the monuments. "We believe this time the restoration will follow international standards," said Sardar Umar Alam, the head of UNESCO's office in Yangon, Myanmar's largest city.

The agency dispatched experts to Bagan Thursday and is working directly with government ministries, he added.

be reserved for the well-heeled and intrepid, prepared to endure the travails of a country under junta rule with patchy electricity and limited communications. But foreign tourists have poured in since the military stepped down, many of them making a beeline for Bagan. This year Myanmar is on track to welcome 5.5 million tourists, nearly a million more than 2015, according to Tint Thwin, director-general of Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. —AFP

CHINA EXPRESSES CONCERN ABOUT INDIAN MISSILES ON BORDER

BEIJING: China's Defense Ministry said yesterday that it hoped India could put more efforts into regional peace and stability rather than the opposite, in response to Indian plans to put advanced cruise missiles along the disputed border with China. Indian military officials say the plan is to equip regiments deployed on the China border with the BrahMos missile, made by an Indo-Russian joint venture, as part of ongoing efforts to build up military and civilian infrastructure capabilities there. The two nuclear-armed neighbors have been moving to gradually ease long-existing tensions between them. Leaders of Asia's two giants pledged last year to cool a festering border dispute, which dates back to a brief border war in 1962, though the disagreement remains unresolved.

Asked about the missile plans at a monthly news briefing, Chinese Defense Ministry spokesman Wu Qian said maintaining peace and stability in the border region was an "important consensus" reached by both countries. "We hope that the

Indian side can do more to benefit peace and stability along the border and in the region, rather than the opposite," Wu said, without elaborating.

China lays claim to more than 90,000 sq km (35,000 sq miles) ruled by New Delhi in the eastern sector of the Himalayas. India says China occupies 38,000 sq km (14,600 sq miles) of its territory on the Aksai Chin plateau in the west.

India is also suspicious of China's support for its arch-rival, Pakistan. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will meet Chinese President Xi Jinping when he visits China next month to attend the G20 summit. Modi's government has ordered BrahMos Aerospace, which produces the missiles, to accelerate sales to a list of five countries topped by Vietnam, according to a government note viewed by Reuters and previously unreported. Modi visits Vietnam, which is embroiled in a dispute over the South China Sea with Beijing, before arriving in China. —Reuters

RUSSIA FREES JAPANESE MAN HELD ON DISPUTED ISLAND

TOKYO: Russia has released a Japanese citizen detained on a disputed island claimed by both countries, Tokyo's foreign ministry said yesterday, ahead of diplomatic talks on the long-running territorial dispute.

Tokyo and Moscow are working to resolve decades of tensions over four islands occupied by the Soviet Union in the closing days of World War II and now controlled by Russia. The man, an interpreter who has not been identified, was visiting Kunashiri Kunashir in Russian-one of the islands off northern Japan, as part of a visa-free visit program that started in 1992.

The man was detained by Russian customs ahead of his scheduled departure and accused of trying to take cash off the island illegally, a Japanese ministry official said. The Russian customs service has said on its website they found some four million Japanese yen (\$40,000) in his bags, while only \$10,000 can be taken out of the country undeclared.

The man had claimed that he was asked by a local resident to carry a package but was unaware it was cash, the official said. "After questioning, he was found innocent," the official told AFP on customary condition of anonymity, adding he was released on

Wednesday. "We understand the Russian authorities have accepted his claim." The Japanese government—which had lodged a diplomatic protest—is arranging for the man to return to Nemuro port on the country's northern main island of Hokkaido on Monday, he said.

The dispute over the islands, known in Japan as the Northern Territories and in Russia as part of the Kuril Islands, has prevented the two countries from signing a peace treaty to formally end wartime hostilities.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and

Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed in May to rekindle talks aimed at resolving the territorial dispute. On Friday in Moscow, Japan and Russia are scheduled to hold their second round of talks on the issue since the May summit.

Some Japanese media speculated that the man's fairly quick release came as the Russian side possibly tried to limit the diplomatic impact of the case. Japanese media have reported recently that Abe and Putin will hold talks early next month in the Russian city of Vladivostok, though Tokyo has made no formal announcement. —AFP



SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA: In this Thursday, July 28, 2016 file photo, protesters hold the portraits of the former South Korean sex slaves who were forced to serve for the Japanese military in World War II, during a rally against the establishment of the Japanese government-funded Reconciliation and Healing Foundation. —AP

S. KOREA OFFERS TOKYO-FUNDED MONEY TO 'COMFORT WOMEN'

SEOUL: South Korea said yesterday it will offer each surviving victim of Japan's wartime sexual enslavement 100 million won (US\$89,581) using funds provided by Tokyo, an offer quickly rejected by some of the women. The plight of the so-called "comfort women" is a hugely emotional issue that has marred relations between Seoul and Japan for decades and which, for many South Koreans, symbolizes the abuses of Japan's 1910-45 colonial rule over the Korean peninsula.

"Final and irreversible"

Last December, the two nations reached a "final and irreversible" agreement, under which Tokyo offered an apology and one billion yen (\$8.5 million) to open a foundation for the dwindling number of comfort women who are still alive.

With the disbursement of the one billion yen formally authorized by Tokyo during a Cabinet meeting on Wednesday, South Korea's foreign ministry said it expects the Seoul-based foundation to receive the money soon.

Ministry spokesman Cho June-Hyuck told reporters Thursday that a part of the money will be used for "individual" financial assistance, providing 100 million won each to the surviving victims and 20 million won for those who have passed away. "The cash provision is intended to restore the victims' dignity and to heal their wounds," Cho said. But the offer was rebuffed by some of the women, who have taken issue with Japan's refusal to accept formal legal responsibility.

"Japan refers to the money as humanitarian assistance and not legal compensation, which is why they won't take it," said Ahn Shin-Kwon, director of the House of Sharing, which is home to 10 of the ageing victims. "The government is trying to placate them with money by offering the surviving victims much more than those who have died," Ahn told AFP.

There are currently 40 surviving victims in South Korea, although that number is quickly dwindling as most of the women are in their 90s. The South Korean government has been under scrutiny by some of the victims and activists since last year's agreement. An opening ceremony of the Tokyo-funded foundation in Seoul last month was met with angry protests, with the foundation's head ending up in hospital after being sprayed with liquid pepper spray. — AFP

US ANTI-WHALING GROUP TO STOP INTERFERING WITH JAPANESE

COURT CASE BEGAN SEVERAL YEARS AGO

WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND: Sea Shepherd Australia said yesterday that a legal settlement involving the conservation group's US founder will not affect its anti-whaling campaign in the Southern Ocean. Spokesman Adam Burling said the Australian arm of the group has been deliberately independent from the US organization since the court case began several years ago.

This week, Japan's Institute of Cetacean Research and a whale ship operator announced they'd reached an agreement with the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society in the US and its founder Paul Watson. The group was made famous by the television show "Whale Wars." Typically each Southern Hemisphere summer, Sea Shepherd sends out boats to try and stop Japan's whaling fleet from catching whales in the Southern Ocean.

Burling said the Japanese fleet has a quota of 333 minke whales this summer, and Sea Shepherd Australia plans to make an announcement next week about what kind of campaign it intends to run this year. "We've got a brand-new vessel, the first ship in 40 years that has been custom-built for us, called the Ocean Warrior," he said. "We've got a long-term commitment to end whaling."

Burling said most of its budget comes from fundraising within Australia and that Sea Shepherd New Zealand also provides support for the ships at New Zealand docks. Speaking this week from his home office in Woodstock, Vermont, Watson said the settlement only prevents the group's US organization from interfering with Japanese whalers in the Southern Ocean. "What it means is Sea Shepherd USA cannot contribute money toward the Southern Ocean campaign, cannot be involved in the Southern Ocean campaign, and that's fine. We've got plenty of other campaigns to do," said Watson, who recently returned to the US "Whether Sea Shepherd Australia or Sea Shepherd Global ... if they intend to return to the Southern Ocean that's their business, it's not ours and I can't control them," he said of the settlement filed on Tuesday.

The Institute of Cetacean Research, which studies whales, also is paying an undisclosed amount to the anti-whaling group on the condition the money will

not be transferred to its affiliates elsewhere, including in Australia.

Japan welcomes agreement

Japan Agriculture Minister Yuji Yamamoto on yesterday welcomed the agreement, saying, "I take it as a positive development that would contribute to the safety of the research whaling fleet." Yamamoto, however, said that Japanese whalers should continue to use caution and be aware that there are staunch opponents of whaling. Sea Shepherd Global media director Heather Stimmler said all of its entities around the world -

charge of interfering with a shark finning operation. Watson, a dual US-Canadian citizen, was arrested in Germany but then fled to sea for 15 months when he said he heard that he would be extradited to Japan. He then lived in France for two years before he said he was allowed to come back to the US, which he did within the last two weeks.

In his office, surrounded by artifacts from his journeys, the 65-year-old Watson said he will continue to coordinate with other Sea Shepherd entities. As president of Sea Shepherd USA, he said is in touch every day with the ship cap-



WOODSTOCK, VERMONT: In this Aug. 23, 2016 photo, Paul Watson, founder of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, made famous by the television show "Whale Wars" discusses a recent legal battle over anti-whaling activities, at his home office. —AP

except those in the United States - will continue to oppose what it believes is illegal Japanese whaling near Antarctica.

The International Whaling Commission imposed a commercial ban on whaling in 1986, but Japan has continued to kill whales under an exemption for what the country says is research. Interpol lists Watson as being wanted in Japan on charges of conspiracy to trespass on a whaling ship and interference with business, and in Costa Rica on a

tains who are working on campaigns, such as with the Mexican Navy to protect an endangered fish and dolphin, and doing research on viruses and parasites among farm-raised salmon. "Japan made a big mistake because they thought by removing me they'd shut down Sea Shepherd. That's precisely why I wanted Sea Shepherd to become a movement and not something controlled by me. A lot of people think I am Sea Shepherd. No I'm not, I'm just part of it," he said. —AP

FRIDAY, AUGUST 26, 2016

Lifestyle

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In this Jan 18 2008 file photo, French fashion designer Sonia Rykiel looks on prior to the presentation of her men's fall/winter 2008-2009 fashion collection presented in Paris.—AP

'Queen of Knitwear' Sonia Rykiel dies at 86

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This file photo taken on November 09, 2001 shows fashion designer Pierre Cardin (left), Paco Rabanne (right), Sonia Rykiel (second right) and Jean-Louis Dumas (second left) president of the Hermes group arriving with the creator and founder of the fashion house, Jean-Paul Gauthier, which he has just given the legion of honor during a ceremony at le Maxim's restaurant in Paris.



This file photo taken on October 10, 1993 shows French designer Sonia Rykiel (second left) flanked by Danish model Helena Christensen (left), American Christie Turlington (right), and American director Robert Altman, acknowledges the public at the end of her ready-to-wear spring-summer 1994 fashion show in Paris.— AFP photos

'QUEEN OF KNITWEAR' SONIA RYKIEL DIES AT 86



This file photo taken on April 10, 2014 in Paris shows French fashion designer Sonia Rykiel (second left), accompanied by her daughter and CEO and creative director of the Sonia Rykiel fashion house Nathalie Rykiel (left), arriving to attend the funeral of French author Regine Deforges.



This file photo taken on April 10, 2014 in Paris shows French fashion designer Sonia Rykiel (second left), accompanied by her daughter and CEO and creative director of the Sonia Rykiel fashion house Nathalie Rykiel (left), arriving to attend the funeral of French author Regine Deforges.



In this Dec 1, 2009 file photo, models wear creations by French fashion designer Sonia Rykiel as part of her show designed for H&M, in Paris.

Sonia Rykiel, the French fashion designer known as the Queen of Knitwear, died yesterday at the age of 86 after a long battle with Parkinson's disease, her daughter told AFP. "My mother died at 5:00 this morning at her home in Paris from the effects of Parkinson's," Nathalie Rykiel said. The pioneering Rykiel was a fixture in the industry for half a century, launching her own fashion house in 1968 buoyed by the Swinging Sixties craze in London and the emerging feminist movement. Her easy-to-wear 'chic', iconic stripes and bright colours quickly came to typify a new generation of liberated women.

"She invented not just a style but an attitude, a way of living and being, and offered a freedom of movement," President Francois Hollande said in a tribute. She had made her breakthrough in 1962 with the so-called Poor Boy Sweater, a garment designed for women that had long sleeves and a shorter, fitted shape. The "Poor Boy" met resistance at first partly because of its bulky stitches.

But all that changed in December 1963 when Elle magazine featured the 19-year-old French pop idol Francoise Hardy on its front cover in a striped red-and-pink Rykiel number. It became a sensation. Brigitte Bardot and fellow singer Sylvie Vartan were photographed in Rykiel sweaters and Audrey Hepburn herself went to the shop and snapped up five of them. "She typified a new generation of designers who launched their own labels outside the established system of haute couture," her official website said. Over the decades, she branched out into other branches of fashion, but always remained true to knitwear, with fluid, innovative shapes.

'La demode'

Rykiel was born Sonia Flis in the upmarket Paris suburb of Neuilly on May 25, 1930 as the eldest of five daughters to a Romanian watchmaker father and a Russian mother. She started out her career as a window dresser in a Parisian textile store at the age of 17, but had no formal training. In 1954, she married a clothing boutique owner, Sam Rykiel, with whom she had two children and whom she later divorced. She first publicly revealed she was suffering Parkinson's in a 2012 book. Within the French fashion industry, Rykiel will be remembered as a visionary who helped cement Paris and, in particular, the Left Bank, as the capital of couture.

She described her philosophy as "la Demode", a contraction of "deconstruction" and "mode". In 2008, 30 of the world's top designers paid tribute to the flame-haired knitwear queen at an exhibition marking her 40 years in the business, offering their own take on the Sonia Rykiel look. "She abolished hemlines and linings, she invented knitwear, she made clothes that were reversible, she used layering," Olivier Saillard, who curated the retrospective of her work, said at the time. She played herself in Robert Altman's 1994 satire "Pret-a-Porter" which was filmed during Paris fashion week, and wrote several books. — AFP



This file photo taken on March 20, 1983 shows French fashion designer Sonia Rykiel (center) poses with her models during the autumn-winter's 1983 fashion show in Paris on March 20, 1983.

Malaysian rapper freed after being held for insulting Islam

A Malaysian rapper, who was arrested for insulting Islam in a music video that was filmed inside a mosque and used the word "Allah," was freed yesterday on health grounds. Wee Meng Chee, who goes by the stage name Namewee, was arrested on Sunday over the song, entitled "Oh my God," when he landed at Kuala Lumpur airport after returning from overseas. Police said he was being investigated for defiling a place of worship, with the intention of insulting religion, as part of the video was filmed in a mosque.

Namewee was held for four days in northern Penang state, where the offense allegedly took place. If found guilty, the 33-year-old ethnic Chinese musician could be jailed for up to two years and face a fine. Penang district police chief, Mior Faridalathrash Wahid, said the magistrates court had refused to extend his arrest because Namewee had health problems. "Namewee is suffering from stomach ulcers," he told AFP. "Namewee has been freed on police bail and we are still continuing with the investigations."

"They had entered a mosque to do the video," Mior added. The video features Namewee and three other singers in front of various places of worship, including a mosque as well Hindu, Buddhist and Taoist temples. The song is in Mandarin, but the lyrics include religious terms including "Allah" and "Hallelujah," as well as the Islamic

call to prayer. It is illegal for non-Muslims to use the word Allah to refer to God in Malaysia, even in reference to their own faith. Activist Mizuad Mohamad Azudin, who lodged a police report against Namewee, said the singer's "despicable behavior" had angered Muslims.

But Amnesty International condemned the arrest as "another sign of the increasing repression by the Malaysian authorities against government critics, including artists". In a video posted on YouTube, Namewee said the song was written to "promote harmony". Malaysia generally practices a moderate brand of Islam among its majority Malay community, but conservative views have gained increasing traction in recent years. Minorities-mainly ethnic Indians and Chinese-complain of what they see as Islamisation. Issues related to race, religion and language are considered sensitive in Malaysia, which witnessed deadly riots mainly between ethnic Malays and Chinese in 1969. — Nicki Minaj, Ariana Grande to perform at MTV awards.—AFP

File photo shows Malaysian rapper Wee Meng Chee, better known as Namewee, speaking during an interview with AFP at his office in Kuala Lumpur. — AFP



Celine Dion to release first album since husband's death

Canadian singer Celine Dion will release today her first album produced without direct input from her longtime manager and husband Rene Angelil, who died in January. Dion has sold more than 220 million albums worldwide since 1981 when Angelil discovered her powerful voice and helped a young girl to launch one of the most successful music careers ever. After guiding Dion's career for more than a decade as her manager, Angelil married her in 1994 when she was 26. Dion's latest album, "Encore Un Soir" ("Another Night"), is her first in French in four years. It is due to be followed up in 2017 by another in English that includes a track called "Recovering" written by US singer-songwriter Pink. "I'm already starting to work on an English album," Dion told US television show Entertainment Tonight (ET) last month.

Over the summer, she went on a whirlwind tour of France and the French-speaking Canadian province of Quebec, where she was born, that included nine sold-out shows at the Bercy arena in Paris and a dozen performances in Quebec to promote the new album. Combining piano ballads, pop-rock guitar riffs and even hip-hop rhythms, "Encore Un Soir" explores Dion's loss through lyrics about bereavement, the strength of family and the joys of living. Dion wrote and recorded the title track with longtime collaborator Jean-Jacques Goldman one month after Angelil died on January 14 from throat cancer at age 73. The ballad, which the pop diva dedicated to her late husband, was released in May. In it, she reflects on a good life, but bemoans how fleeting it is. "Celine voluntarily chose uplifting themes that focused on life and positivity," her Sony Music label said in a statement.

'The show must go on'

Six weeks after Angelil's passing, Dion had returned to her residency at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, in keeping with his wishes. In an interview with ABC television's "Good Morning America," Dion said that she thought of her late husband when singing "The Show Must Go On." She said that in their last conversation, she told him not to be concerned about her or their three children. "I started to talk to him and I said, you know what, I want you to just go in peace," she said. "I want you to not worry."

Dion's brother Daniel died of the same type of cancer two days later. Several big names in French music, including singer-songwriters Francis Cabrel and Serge Lama, slam poet Grand Corps Malade, and Jacques Veneruso-whose 2012 song "Talk to My Father" became Dion's longest-charting single in France-as well as Algerian R&B singer Zaho collaborated with her on the new album. Dion also recorded a cover of Quebec music icon Robert Charlebois's "Ordinary," delving into her Quebec heritage. And, one track on the album was chosen from 4,000 submissions she received last year from fans after Dion made a public plea for new song suggestions. It was written by Quebec actor Daniel Picard, who has lent his voice to the popular video game franchise Assassin's Creed. — AFP



Nicki Minaj, Ariana Grande to perform at MTV awards

Nicki Minaj and Ariana Grande will reunite to perform at the latest MTV Video Music Awards, the network announced Wednesday. Minaj, one of the most successful female rappers, will join Grande in the pop star's single "Side to Side" at the gala Sunday night at New York's Madison Square Garden. The pair, along with English singer Jessie J, collaborated together at the 2014 VMAs in one of the night's first and best-received performances.

Minaj again kicked off the awards in 2015 in a performance with pop superstar Taylor Swift-despite Minaj's criticism of MTV that year for passing over her "Anaconda" in nominations for Video of the Year. Previously announced performers for Sunday's awards include Rihanna, who will be presented with a

career Video Vanguard Award, as well as the rapper Future and Britney Spears, who is releasing a new album. MTV on Wednesday announced that award presenters for Sunday will include reality television star Kim Kardashian, whose husband Kanye West is up for the top prize with "Famous."

Other presenters will include New York-born hip-hop mogul Puff Daddy, R&B singing great Alicia Keys, second-generation rapper and actor Jaden Smith and British singer Rita Ora. A year after Miley Cyrus enjoyed much of the focus by presenting the awards, MTV will forego a traditional host. The gala will instead have a series of presenters including rap producer DJ Khaled, who will appear from a luxury box in the arena. — AFP



Nicki Minaj and Ariana Grande



This undated photo provided by Appiani shows a Memorie mosaic tile floor in a kitchen, which puts a contemporary spin on traditional motifs.



This April 2016 photo provided by Alena Capra Designs, shows an installation designed by Capra at McCormick Place in Chicago during the 2016 Coverings trade fair, where international ceramic tile and stone flooring manufacturers displayed their wares.



This undated photo provided by Brix shows Designer Aki Motoyama's Cloud design, which softens the grid of some traditional mosaic patterns.

Tiny mosaic tiles are a big trend

Blending art, architecture and design, mosaic tile is one of the oldest forms of wall and floor covering. Using the tiny squares known as tesserae, Ancient Greeks and Romans created detailed stories and intricate geometric patterns, and mosaic art embellishes ceilings, walls and floors from Byzantium to Barcelona. Today, artists teach and share their tile-working skills at places like the Chicago Mosaic School and the Institute of Mosaic Art in Berkeley, California.

And mosaic's creative possibilities are popular among interior designers, too. At Coverings, an industry show in Chicago this spring, tile-makers' booths were mini art galleries. Designer Alena Capra, for instance, created a peacock feather out of dozens of Ceramics of Italy mosaic tiles to showcase the range of colors and creative possibilities. "Mosaic tile lets you create amazing murals of just about anything. I've always loved doing mosaic murals, because they allow for the most creativity with tile," says Capra, of Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Murals and feature walls done in mosaic tile can bring a "wow" factor into a space; on a smaller scale, they can add design flair to backsplashes or bathrooms. Because there isn't a lot of acreage to cover there, you can have some fun with colors and patterns, and perhaps splurge a little. Modern manufacturing techniques mean the range of mosaics is greater than ever. A new type of durable material even lets today's designers put glass mosaics on the floor.

Sara Baldwin, founder of the Virginia-based design studio and manufacturer New Ravenna, notes that mosaics have inherent tex-

ture in the way they're hand-crafted, cut and assembled. "We've now focused on this, combining different materials in one mosaic," she says. "So you can find stone, glass, shell, gold, ceramic and even aluminum together, creating a dynamic textured surface." Glass or stone cut into intriguing shapes can help walls and floors tell a little story.

Flock, part of New Ravenna's Altimetry collection, places delicate glass "wings" against a creamy Calacatta marble background. Francois Grand, part of the Illusions line, stacks glass and marble shapes into a witty and slightly startling trompe l'oeil, 3-D design. And Demi Lune, a waterjet-cut mosaic crafted in aquamarine glass, has a lovely wave motif. Mosaic D'Écor's Circles design features a cascade of variously sized, small round tiles in blacks and browns, evoking a glass of fizzy cola. Kelly Wearstler's Liaison collection for Ann Sacks has mixed stone mosaics in sleek, cool shapes that form geometric kaleidoscopes. "One trend I love right now are the Mediterranean blue tiles - especially aqua as an accent color," says Capra.

Spanish maker Altoglass offers a pretty, blue-and-white mosaic printed with a traditional Portuguese pattern. For Italian tile-maker Brix, Japanese designer Aki Motoyama has created Cloud, a series of five different-size porcelain tiles in soothing neutrals. On the wall, the effect is free-form and relaxing. Appiani's Memorie collection revives several centuries-old mosaic patterns in rich colors. They nicely offset contemporary furnishings in a modern space. Metallic mosaics introduce a dash of drama. Add bling with a few gold, silver or copper

tiles; clad a larger area like a backsplash or bath wall, and the effect is spectacular. Tilebar's stainless steel Terrapin, Alchemy and Cirque collections highlight geometric shapes in stainless steel. — AP



This undated photo provided by New Ravenna shows their Hare Apparent, shown here in Absolute White and Ruby jewel glass, which is part of the Kiddo collection by Cean Irminger for New Ravenna. — AP photos



File photo shows Britney Spears arrives at the MTV Video Music Awards in Los Angeles. — AP

Britney Spears biopic coming to TV

The turbulent life of Britney Spears—who went from teenage pop idol to tabloid fodder—is becoming a television biopic. Lifetime, a US network geared toward women, said Wednesday it had given the green light to a two-hour film on the singer's life, tentatively called "Britney," to air next year. Starring as Spears, one of the most recognizable musicians of her generation, will be Natasha Bassett, a rising actress from Australia, a Lifetime representative said. Bassett, who started her own career as a child, appeared as a 1950s starlet in the latest film by the Coen Brothers, "Hail, Caesar!"

Lifetime said "Britney" will trace the 34-year-old Spears from her childhood in Louisiana, where her talent was recognized early on. Spears became one of the most successful stars

of the 1990s, topping the charts with songs that combined a squeaky-clean pop sound and undertones of teenage sexuality. But her career quickly descended amid a messy personal life that included a highly public breakup with fellow star Justin Timberlake, two marriages in 2005 alone, and being caught on camera nearly dropping one of her two children from her lap while driving. Spears has found more stability since starting a residency show in Las Vegas in late 2013. She is releasing her ninth album, "Glory," on Friday and two days later is set to perform at the MTV Video Music Awards. — AP



In these photos provided by Puerto Princesa Tourism Office, a giant pearl measuring 30cm wide (1ft), 67cm long (2.2ft) and weighing 34kg (75lb) is displayed in the lobby of the Puerto Princesa Tourism Office in Puerto Princesa city, Palawan province in southwestern Philippines yesterday.



Photo provided by Puerto Princesa Tourism Office, shows residents look at the giant pearl. — AP photos

FILIPINO FISHERMEN FIND POSSIBLY WORLD'S BIGGEST PEARL

A Filipino fisherman in western Palawan island has found possibly the world's biggest pearl, which he had hidden under a bed for more than 10 years as a lucky charm, a tourism official said yesterday. Aileen Amurao, Puerto Princesa city's tourism officer and the fisherman's relative, said yesterday the man gave her the 34-kilogram (75-pound) pearl that's 2.2 feet (67 centimeters) long and 1 foot (30 centimeters) wide last month for safekeeping because he was moving to a new place.

Amurao said the pearl was sitting on a bench in her home for weeks until she found time to check the internet, and she was shocked to learn that it could be the world's biggest. The fisherman, his father and brothers found the irregular-shaped pearl inside a giant clam that stuck to their boat's anchor when they

sought refuge from a squall on a reef, Amurao said.

The family hid the pearl in a bag under a bed, rubbing it with their hands before going out to sea in the belief it would bring them luck, she said. The fisherman did not want to be identified, she said. She said that she, the fisherman and his family decided to turn over the pearl to the city mayor, who had it displayed in a glass case in Puerto Princesa's city hall to attract tourists. The fisherman will receive a still-unspecified reward from the local government, Amurao said, adding that he never intended to sell it. Experts from the University of the Philippines have expressed interest in inspecting the pearl, but she said no date has been set for their visit. It would not be the first time giant pearls have been found off Palawan.

A 9-kilogram (20-pound) pearl, called Pearl of the King, was found in Palawan in 1939, and is on display in a hotel at the central island resort of Boracay. Local media have reported that fishermen had recovered other huge pearls in the province, including one reportedly weighing 24.75 kilograms (54 pounds). The Guinness World Records lists a 718.50 carat baroque abalone pearl as the biggest of its kind, measuring 14 centimeters (5.5 inches) in length, 8 centimeters (3.1 inches) wide and 4 centimeters (1.6 inches) thick.— AP

Paisley Park to open to fans as Prince museum

Paisley Park, Prince's state-of-the-art studio complex that held a mythic status for fans who entered it during the pop legend's life, will open to the public as a museum. The "Purple Rain" star's estate said it was teaming up for the project with the company behind Graceland, Elvis Presley's home-turned-museum in Memphis that draws more than 600,000 visitors a year. The 55,000-square-foot (5,000-square-meter) complex will open for tours on October 6, one week before fans descend on Prince's Minnesota hometown of Minneapolis for a memorial tribute concert at the new US Bank Arena.

Prince's sister Tyka Nelson said that the pop star had long hoped to allow the public into Paisley Park, which he opened in 1987 in the Minneapolis suburb of Chanhassen and where he died on April

21. "Opening Paisley Park is something that Prince always wanted to do and was actively working on," Nelson said in a statement Wednesday. "Only a few hundred people have had the rare opportunity to tour the estate during his lifetime. Now, fans from around the world will be able to experience Prince's world for the first time as we open the doors to this incredible place," she said.

A plan submitted to the city of Chanhassen said that fans would go on 70-minute guided tours that cover Prince's recording and mixing studios, his concert hall and his so-called NPG Music Club, which he kept private. In line with Prince's guidance when he threw parties at Paisley Park, the museum will serve only vegetarian food and no alcohol, the plan said. The museum will also present thousands of Prince's personal items, including his often sensational concert outfits, musical instruments, cars and motorcycles and rare recordings.

Tickets will cost \$38.50, with VIP tickets for special, smaller tours to run over \$100. Prince, fresh from the acclaim for "Purple Rain," invested some \$10 million about twice as much in 2016 dollars to build a top-of-the-line recording center at Paisley Park. Led by Los Angeles-area architects Boto Design, Paisley Park has four main studios with sound and vibration isolation so artists can record and perform simultaneously. Prince initially rented out Paisley Park to artists but a decade later made it his exclusive domain. Few fans were able to see Paisley Park for themselves, giving the complex an added aura for those who entered its gates. — AFP

This file photo taken on June 15, 1987 shows musician Prince performing on stage during his concert at the Bercy venue in Paris. — AFP



'SNL' star Leslie Jones' personal site offline after hacking

Leslie Jones, the black "Saturday Night Live" and "Ghostbusters" actress-comedian, is again the target of racist and sexist online attacks. Jones' personal site was taken offline Wednesday after it appeared hackers posted explicit photos of Jones and her driver's license and passport. The hackers also appeared to have inserted a video of deceased Cincinnati Zoo gorilla Harambe and images of Jones posing with such stars as Rihanna, Kanye West and Kim Kardashian West. A spokesman for Jones didn't respond to messages Wednesday seeking comment. And Jones hasn't posted about the incident on social media.

Several celebrities supported Jones on social media Wednesday following the incident. "Ghostbusters" filmmaker Paul Feig called it an "absolute outrage," while "Girls" star Lena Dunham asked followers to "turn our anger at trolls into love for Leslie Jones and into strategies to protect all the heroines who don't deserve this (expletive)." Jones' "SNL" cast mates also expressed outrage about the hacking. Aidy Bryant said she was "so angry, disgusted and sad about this racist violent assault on Jones." Taran Killam said the hackers are "the worst of humanity, where she is the best." The celebs' online rallying wasn't enough for Rebecca Carroll, author of such books as "Saving The Race" and "Sugar In The Raw." She said people in positions of power need to "go deeper."

"Where is the practical response to this grotesque, debilitatingly mean-spirited violence?" she wrote on theguardian.com. "It's one thing to offer her digital apologies for others' racism. It's another to actually take a stand to help eliminate it from our society." Jones briefly quit Twitter last month after facing racial slurs, obscene photos and comments about her

appearance. She called on the social networking service to do more to curb harassment on the platform. Twitter banned several users, including conservative provocateur Milo Yiannopoulos, the technology editor of the right-wing site Breitbart News.

Yiannopoulos initially posted Wednesday on Snapchat that "karma's a (expletive)" but then said "just heard about Leslie Jones" and "ignore that karma thing." "I was distressed to hear that Leslie Jones had been hacked and naked pictures of her have found their way online," Yiannopoulos said in a statement. "I know we had our differences after my review of 'Ghostbusters,' but I wish her all the best at what must be a deeply upsetting time." —AP



In this July 9, 2016 file photo, actress Leslie Jones arrives at the Los Angeles premiere of 'Ghostbusters.' — AP

Use orange juice to tame the heat in spicy shrimp dish

By Sara Moulton

Have you ever whipped up a spicy dish - chili, for example - and realized when it's too late that you somehow overdid it and added way too much of the hot stuff? Happily, there are two very simple ways to restore some equilibrium: Adding dairy and/or sugar. It's a balancing act performed all over the world. The Indians serve their vindaloo with yogurt. Mexicans tamp down the heat of their habaneros with crema or sour cream. Here in the US, we use sugar to counteract the heat in our barbecue sauce (although we then tend to overdo it in the other direction and make it too sweet).

So, how to tame the heat in this spicy shrimp? I went with sugar in the form of fresh orange juice, boiled down until it's concentrated, which then becomes the main flavor in the recipe's vinaigrette. The juice also helps to lighten up the dressing - you need less oil when one of your other ingredients is as thick and flavorful as concentrated orange juice. And by the way, grapefruit juice, which is slightly more tart than orange juice, works equally well. In an effort to cut down on the preparation time for this recipe, I've called for a store-bought creole or jerk spice mix. But feel free to conjure up your own. As long as it includes ground chipotle or hot paprika or cayenne, you'll win.

SPICY SHRIMP WITH HEARTS OF PALM, AVOCADO AND ORANGE SALAD

Ingredients

Start to finish: 1 hour 40 minutes (40 active)

Servings: 4

- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil, preferably grapeseed, divided
- 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon Jamaican jerk seasoning, creole seasoning or your favorite spicy seasoning
- 1 pound jumbo (16-20) peeled and deveined shrimp
- 1/3 cup fresh orange juice
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 1/2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 6 cups torn butter lettuce
- 1 (14-ounce) can hearts of palm, drained and patted dry, sliced crosswise 1/2-inch thick
- 1 large Haas avocado, peeled, pitted and cut into 1/2-inch chunks
- 2 medium oranges, peeled and cut into segments
- 1/4 cup toasted sunflower seeds (toasted in a 350 F oven until golden, 6 to 8 minutes)

Preparation

In a large bowl stir together 1 tablespoon of the oil and the jerk seasoning; add the shrimp and toss well to coat. Cover and chill for 1 hour. Heat the grill to medium. In a small saucepan simmer the orange juice until it is reduced to 2 tablespoons. Transfer to a small bowl; add the salt, mustard and vinegar and whisk until the salt is dissolved. Gradually whisk in the

remaining 2 tablespoons vegetable oil. Thread the shrimp on skewers and grill, turning them over once, about 2 minutes a side. Meanwhile, in a large bowl combine the lettuce, hearts of palm, avocado and orange segments. Add 1/4 cup of the dressing and toss well. To serve, divide the salad among 4 plates, top with the shrimp and sunflower seeds; drizzle with the remaining dressing. — AP



SUMMER SQUASH MAKES FLAVORFUL 'PASTA' DISH

By Sara Moulton

Summer squash reproduces so energetically that calling it prolific is understating the case. Still, why not take advantage of its bounty? Here I slice the squash into long ribbons and employ it as "pasta." Use a mandoline (be sure to use the guard that comes with it), although a Y-shaped peeler will also work. The resulting "pasta" is more flavorful and less caloric than pasta itself. I coat the sliced squash with a creamy sauce based on low-fat cream cheese, sometimes called Neufchatel, which is lower in fat and calories than full-fat cream cheese and also lighter in texture. And it's one of the few dairy products that can be heated in a sauce without curdling in the process.

Summer squash is so tender and delicate that it's easily overcooked and turned into mush. The goal is to cook it so that it retains a bit of bite, just like pasta al dente. Accordingly, cook it briefly, stirring gently with tongs. Actually, you don't even stir it; just lift it up and move it around. If you sliced the squash

with a mandoline, the "pasta" will likely be thicker than if you used a peeler and will probably require three full minutes to cook. If you used a peeler, you may need no more than two minutes. Again, you want it to turn out tender with a hint of firmness.

Summer squash gives off a lot of water as it cooks, which tends to dilute the sauce. That's why I advise you to remove the cooked squash from the skillet (to keep it from overcooking) and then reduce the sauce. Boiling off the extra water in this way helps concentrate the sauce's flavor and make it creamy. Once you've reduced the sauce, add back the squash. For a vegetarian dish, omit the prosciutto and use vegetable broth instead of chicken broth. Serve with a tossed green salad or some dressed sliced tomatoes, and a slice or two of crusty bread.



SUMMER SQUASH RIBBON 'PASTA' WITH LEMON CREAM SAUCE

Ingredients

Start to finish: 40 minutes (30 active)
 Servings: 4
 2 pounds medium summer squash (zucchini, yellow squash or a mix)
 1 cup chicken or vegetable broth
 1 teaspoon lemon zest
 6 ounces Neufchatel (1/3-less-fat cream cheese)
 Salt and black pepper
 2 ounces thinly sliced prosciutto cut into strips, optional
 1 to 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice, or to taste
 1/3 cup toasted chopped walnuts, almonds or pistachios

Freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano for garnish
 1/3 cup finely chopped parsley

Preparation

Cut off the ends of the squash and, using a mandoline or a Y-shaped peeler, slice or shave the squash about 1/8-inch thick into wide ribbon-like strips. In a large skillet, combine the chicken broth and the zest; whisk the mixture until the zest is evenly distributed. Bring the mixture to a boil, break the cheese into small pieces and add it to the skillet. Reduce the heat to a simmer, cover the pan and let simmer for 3 minutes. Remove the lid and whisk the mixture until smooth.

Add the squash ribbons, a pinch of salt and several grinds of pepper and, using tongs, very gently lift up and turn the ribbons in the sauce so they are evenly distributed. Cover and cook for 3 minutes, stirring the squash once or twice with the tongs. Remove the pan from the heat, using the tongs transfer the ribbons from the skillet to a large bowl making sure all the liquid clinging to the squash drips back into the pan. Return the skillet to the heat and simmer the liquid, whisking every so often until it is thickened, about 5 minutes. Return the squash to the skillet, along with the prosciutto and lemon juice; cook for 1 minute, stirring with the tongs. Divide the squash and sauce among 4 pasta bowls; top each portion with some of the nuts, the cheese and the parsley. — AP



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Friday Times

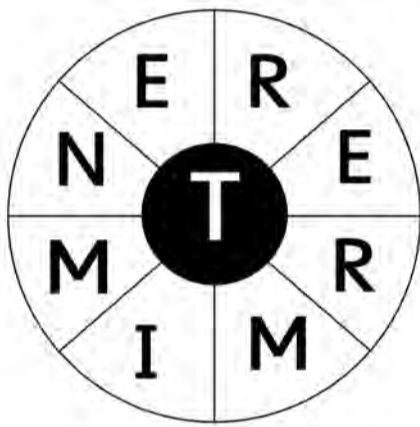
FRIDAY, AUGUST 26, 2016



Word Wheel Challenge

Your aim is to create as many words of 2 letters or more using the letters in the word wheel only once in each word, and always including the letter in the centre of the wheel. No proper names are allowed.

Can you find a 9 letter word? _____



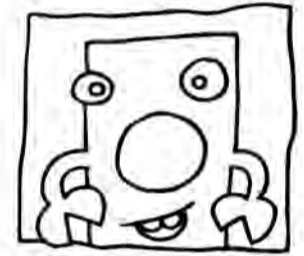
Sudoku 6x6 Puzzles - Sheet 6

Every row, column and mini-grid must contain the numbers 1 through 6. Don't guess - use logic!

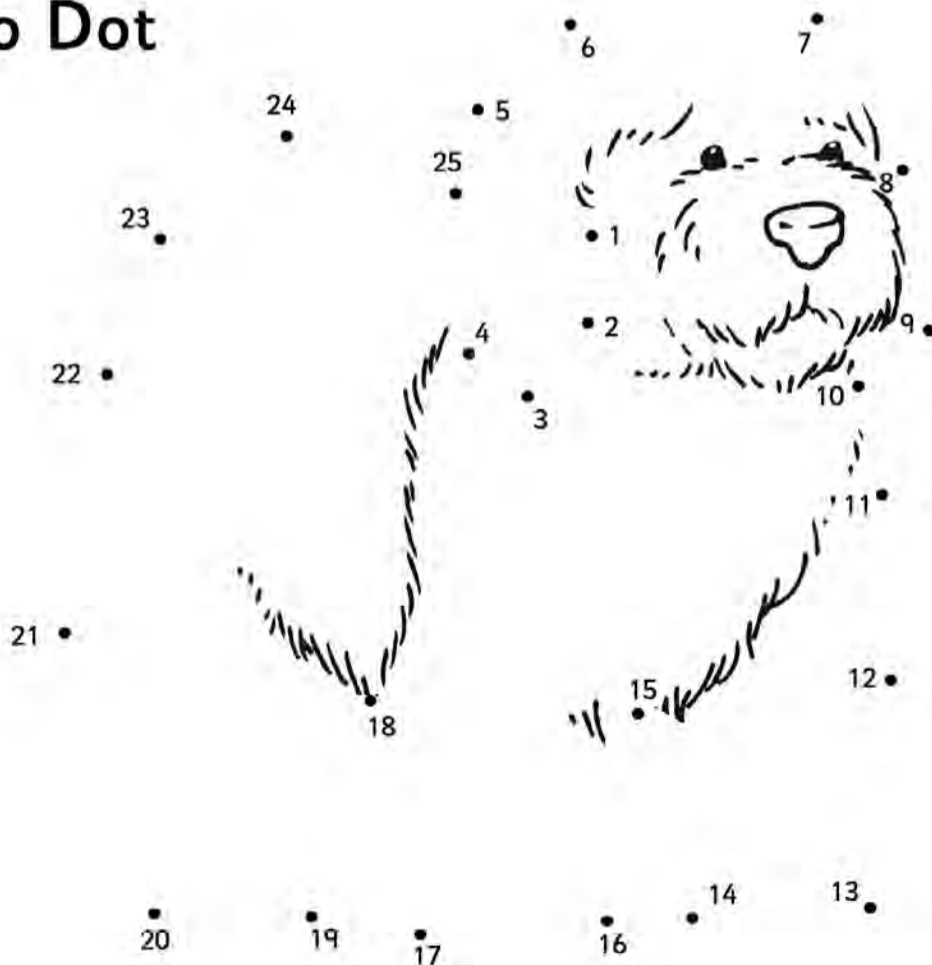
	1			3	
3					6
		4	6		
		5	3		
2					1
	6			2	

4					5
	5			3	
		5	1		
		6	2		
	3			2	
5					1

	5			2	
	6			1	
		3	4		
		6	5		
	2			4	
	3			5	



Dot to Dot



Football Word Scramble

Unscramble the football themed words and join them to the pictures on the right. We've done the first one for you!

repostpur

supporter

lofabot

crafts

alog

phyort

thilwes

labferloot

ritsh

stobo

prekeglaoe

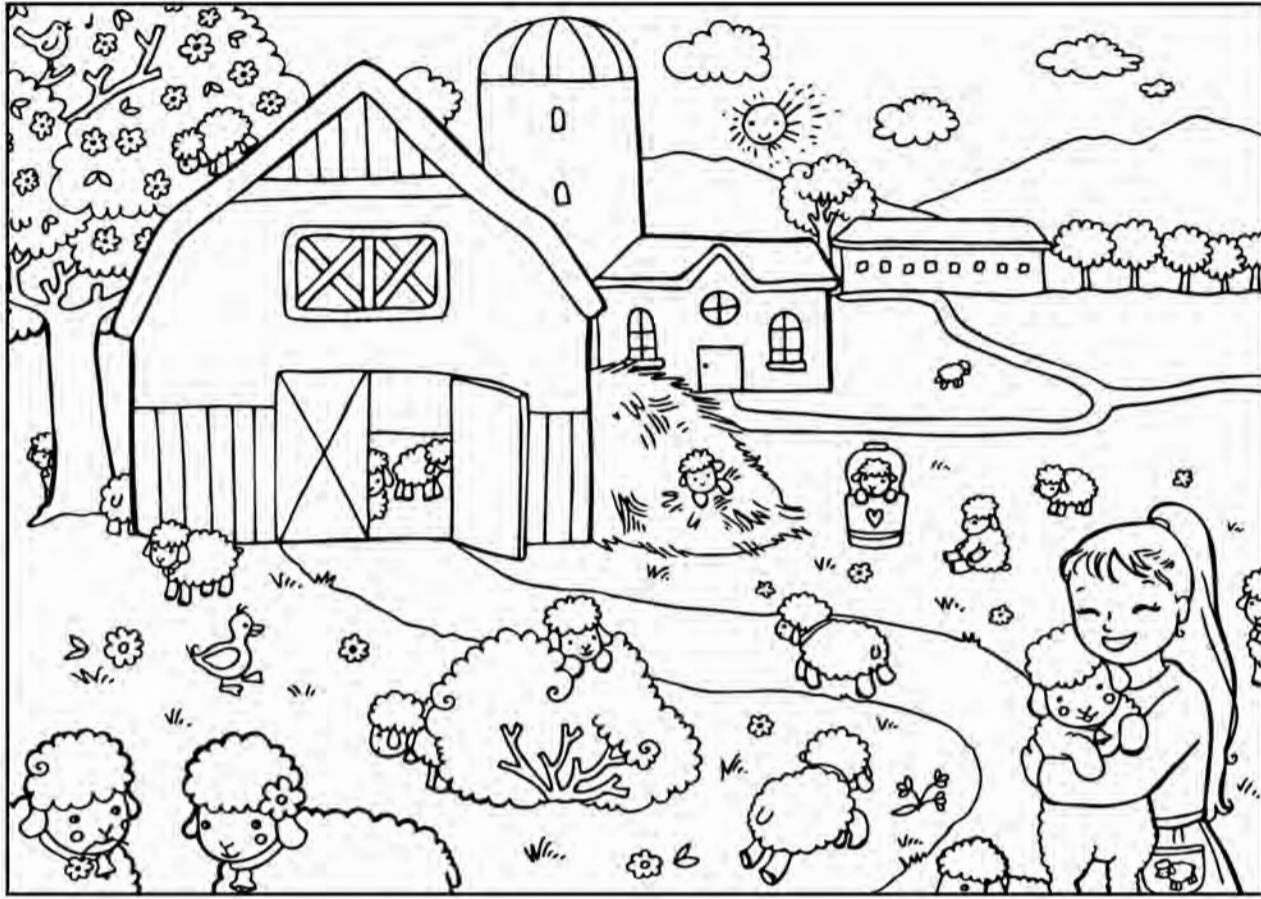
freere

latter





Count the number of sheep in the picture



Back to School Word Search



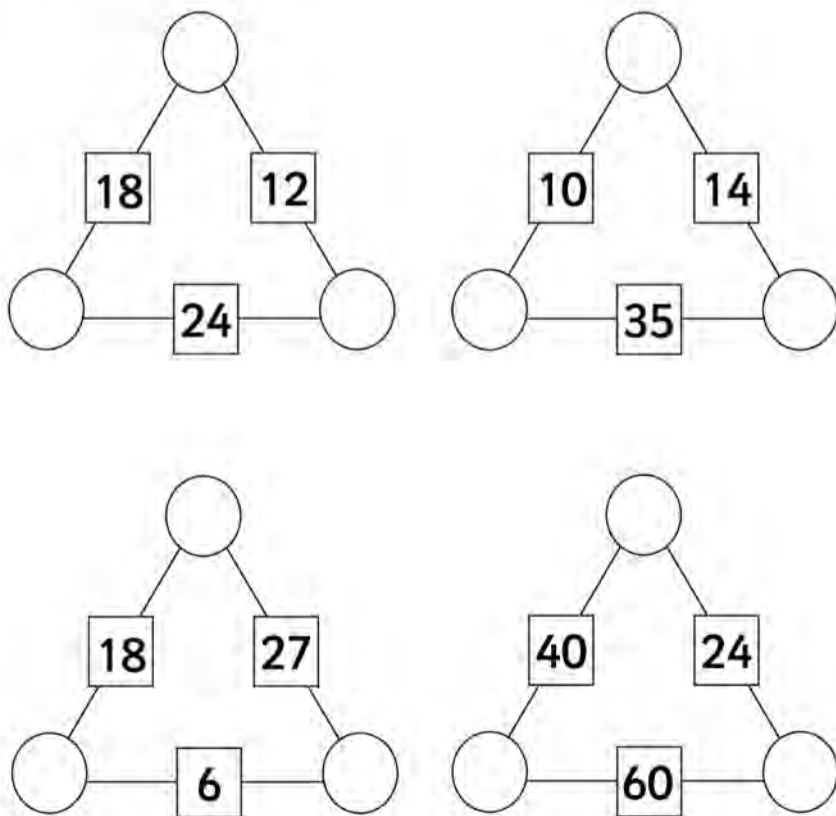
y	h	m	s	k	o	o	b	s	o	t	f
c	r	a	y	o	n	s	i	y	f	e	k
p	u	d	r	a	o	b	k	c	a	l	b
l	m	z	r	c	t	w	r	i	t	e	f
a	t	o	j	a	w	e	c	m	t	g	p
y	f	b	o	u	o	z	a	o	l	e	e
g	k	r	l	r	e	b	y	c	n	l	k
r	s	f	i	l	s	s	e	c	h	x	a
o	e	w	b	e	b	s	i	t	p	e	k
u	d	a	a	a	n	l	a	d	i	c	r
n	t	r	e	a	d	d	r	l	y	h	g
d	t	n	i	a	p	k	s	x	c	r	w

blackboard	books	classroom	crayons
desk	friends	paint	pencil
playground	read	table	teacher
tous	whiteboard	write	

Multiplication Arithmagons

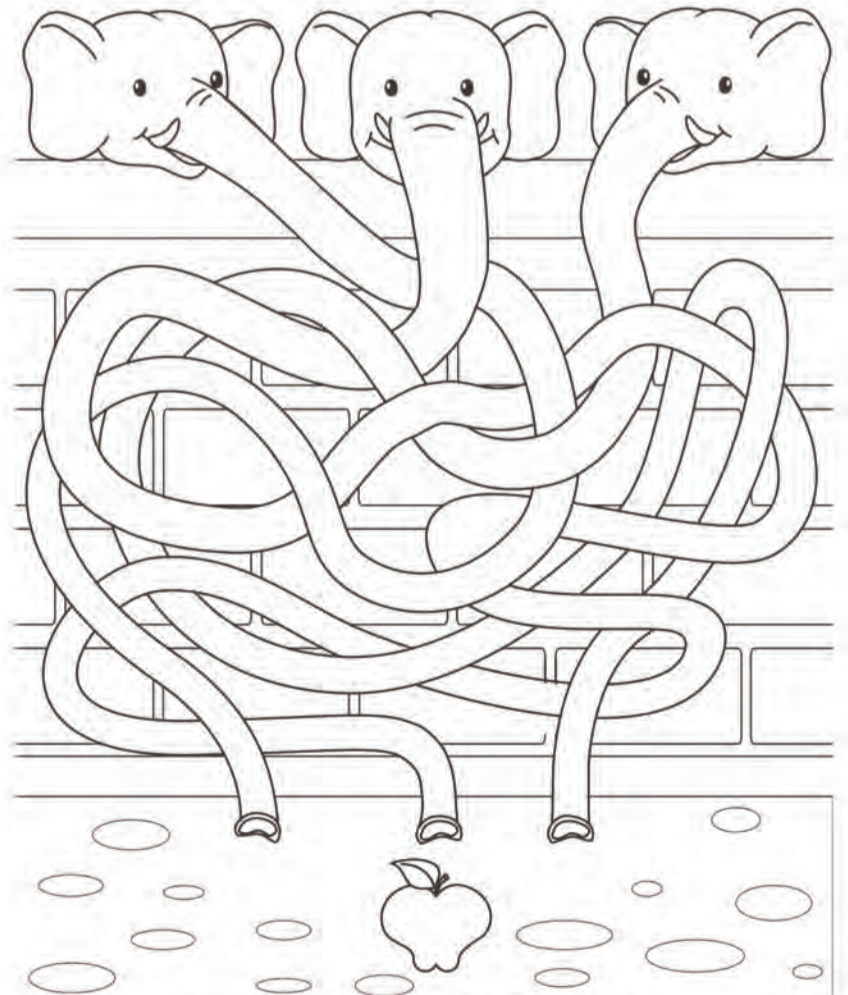
The number in each square is equal to the product of the numbers in the circles on either side.

Fill in the missing numbers.



Elephant Scramble

Guess which elephant gets the apple - then trace their trunks to see if you were correct!





Friday Times Travel

Land of the blue sky:

10 reasons to visit
Mongolia now





One of the last surviving nomadic societies, half of Mongolians live pastoral lifestyles little-changed since the days of Genghis Khan. The rest mostly live in Ulaanbaatar, their ties to the grassland fading as Mongolia's only city, enriched by overseas investment, hurtles into the 21st century. Change is in the air, which is why now is the time to visit.

Savor the serenity

Space. Glorious, mesmerizing, limitless space. One of the least densely populated countries on earth, Mongolia is where the gods play golf. Endless fairways of treeless green, patterned by the shadows of clouds; lakes for water hazards; pristine air; epic silence - there is a reason that Mongolians refer to their homeland as the 'land of the blue sky'. Occasionally the scene is tweaked by a lonely ger (yurt) of white felt: the portable homes of Mongolia's pastoralists dot the country's vast landscape. And when night falls, the stars come out to play. The Milky Way's billions of stars appear so close and clear it seems like you could sweep them up in your hands.

Meet Genghis Khan

Branded an imperialist during Soviet rule, Mongolia's fiercest warrior is now a brand in his own right, adorning energy drinks, cigars, vodka and hotels. You might spot Genghis Khan carved 60 meters high into the hills surrounding Ulaanbaatar as you touch down at the great ruler's namesake airport. Near Nalaikh, a giant silver statue of the Great Khan can be seen shimmering from miles off. In fact, little is known about the ruler rumored to lie buried somewhere secret in Khentii, a protected wilderness area. His tented capital, Karakorum, is long vanished, a pair of lonely stele markers at today's Kharkhorin the only trace. For a man who founded an empire stretching from Asia to Venice, the Great Khan left almost no physical legacy.

Eat the world's weirdest breakfast

Boodog is an ancient steppe cooking technique still used today when herdsmen find themselves far from home. An animal - usually a marmot - is sliced open and stuffed with river stones heated on a fire,

creating a primeval pressure cooker (they have been known to explode on occasion). The fur is then singed off and the meat carved up to eat. If you're lucky you might get treated to this, ahem, delicacy as the morning sun warms your ger. It's the preserve of men, which is hardly surprising - there's no washing-up. A posher version is the khorkhog - a goat cooked with hot stones inside a milk churn.

Marvel at Mongol warriors

Eurasia was terrorised by the prowess and potency of the Mongols 800 years ago, and their skills are by no means consigned to history. Every summer, Mongolians congregate for Naadam festivals to compete in the 'three manly sports': horse-riding, wrestling and archery. Children under ten race horses across 20km courses; wrestlers of all sizes hulk it out (Genghis Khan believed it a way to keep his soldiers battle-ready); archers pierce targets with deadly accuracy. The biggest Naadam festival is held every July at the National Stadium in Ulaanbaatar, but the remote rural contests are the true bastions of grassland tradition.

Explore the capital

Originally a sort of mobile yurt monastery, Ulaanbaatar has become Mongolia's only true city. Best visited during the brief summer season, it has a curious, weather-worn appeal - a muddle of crumbling Soviet-era apartments, ger ghettos and shiny Chinese-built high-rises. Recently, a cafe culture has taken hold, complemented by some excellent restaurants, cashmere fashions, a monument to the Beatles, and, oddly, one of the finest LEGO shops outside Denmark. Culturally, the ramshackle Chojin Lama Temple presents gruesome murals of Buddhist hell, while at the State Youth & Children's





Theatre, the Tumen Ekh ensemble specializes in the stirring art of throat-singing, the epic 'long song', shamanist dancing and contortionism.

Munch on mutton

You can eat everything from Asian fusion to KFC in Ulaanbaatar, but outside the capital, the flesh (and milk) of the sheep and goat are staples. After a summer 'white season' of mostly dairy foods, Mongolians quench their 'meat hunger' with mutton - boiled, fried or cooked in dumplings called buuz or pastries known as khuushuur. Milk is heated to make a clotted cream called orom, spread thick and yellow over slabs of Russian bread, and made into cheese curds called as aaruul, like rock-hard, lemony gobstoppers.

Go glamping

Sleeping in a rough-and-ready Mongolian ger is a quintessential grassland experience, but a growing number of tour operators are establishing sustainable, nomad-run ger camps that target the posh adventurer with innovative luxuries. Nomadic Journeys operates ger camps at pristine wilderness sites that feature heated eco-showers, hand-painted beds with thick yak's wool blankets, and even a sauna. For the truly adventurous, they'll open up an airstrip and fly people into the great Mongolian void - 365 degrees of pristine emptiness, and it's all yours.

Get spiritual

The Erdene Zuu Khiid monastery, Mongolia's most important Buddhist site (Buddhism came to Mongolia via Nepal and China), was constructed out of the rubble of Chinggis Khan's capital, Karakorum. But the

country's far older shamanistic tradition reveals itself on crags and hilltops -heaps of stones called ovoos are laced with horse skulls and strips of blue cloth, the colour symbolising sky worship. A few days on the steppe and you start to understand: the green grassland is a constant - it's the ever-changing 'eternal blue sky', with its puffy banks of buffeting clouds, rain, wind and azure stillness, that lends form to every vista.

Discover dinosaurs

In Ulaanbaatar's sleepy Museum of Natural History, an enormous pair of fossilized arms, tipped by 30cm hooked claws, hang from the wall. 'Terrible Hand', the monster these limbs belonged to, was until recently the great unsolved mystery of paleontology. The arms were unearthed in the 1960s in Mongolia's southern Gobi Desert; they didn't find a complete body until 2014.

Most of the world's best dino finds have come from the Gobi, and several tour operators visit dig sites including the Flaming Cliffs at Bayanzag, where dinosaur eggs were first found in the 1920s.

Sip the milk of the horse

In the countryside, little girls in frilly dresses sit by the roadside hawking plastic bottles of airag - horse's milk left to ferment outside a ger in a leather bag until it becomes alcoholic. Lip-puckeringly sour, it's an acquired taste, but the locals live by it. Airag is the tonic of weddings, funerals, and frankly any other excuse for a knees-up. One reason for producing airag is that the fermentation process reduces the high levels of lactose (a natural laxative) found in mare's milk.

—www.lonelyplanet.com



WORD SEARCH

Winter 2

Find the words hidden in the grid of letters.

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

- BLIZZARD
BOOTS
CARNIVAL
CHRISTMAS
EGG NOG
FIREWOOD
FREEZE
GLOVES
- HAIL
HOCKEY
ICE FISHING
KNIT CAP
OLYMPICS
PARKA
SEASON
SKIING
- SKIS
SLED
SLIPPERY
SNOW BLOWER
SNOW SHOVEL
SNOWFLAKE
SOLSTICE

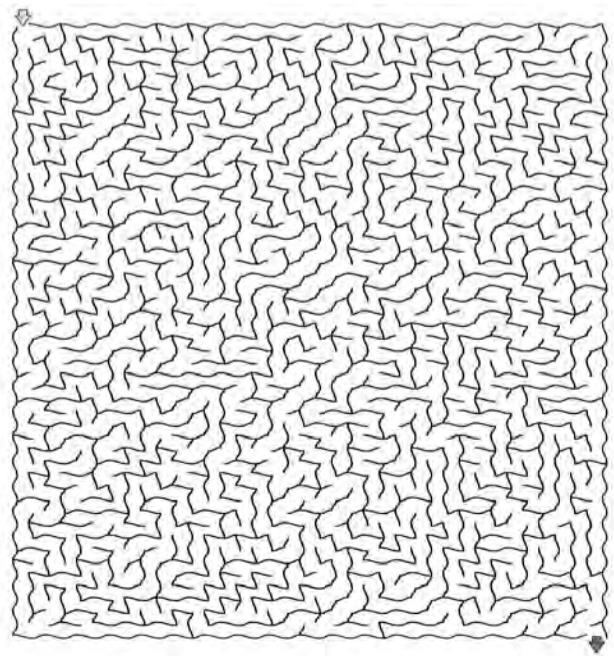
Yesterday's Solution

Winter 1 - Solution

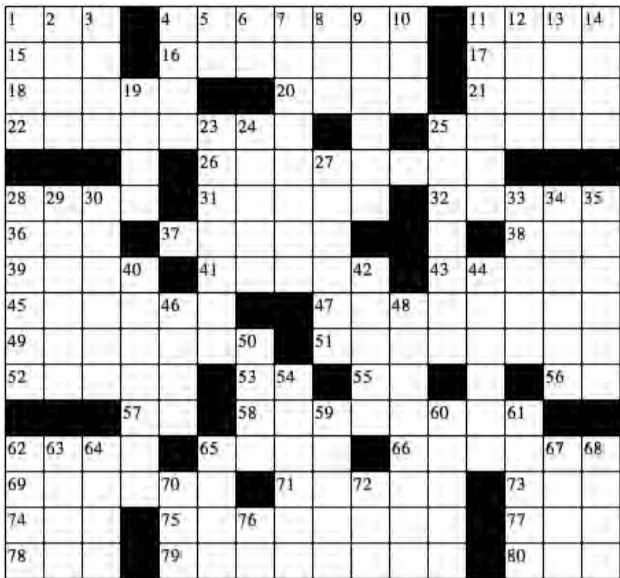
H N E S O W D H O L I D A Y S G F
S Q A M N L O S E L C I C I O N N
O E I G O O S L L S B V J H U W F
D C T C G F W L P W L E G I P O B
B A Z A E O X M E W Z V K B G Z W
L L A C K S B U A E O P G E K D J
A P T H U S C O E N T N V R L S O
C E W I N T E R T I R E S N O T L
K R W W F P F M A D O C I A T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

- ANTIFREEZE
BLACK ICE
COLD
FIREPLACE
FOG
FROST
HIBERNATION
HOLIDAYS
- ICE SCRAPER
ICICLES
MITTENS
SCARF
SKATES
SKI PANTS
SLEET
SNOW PLOW
- SNOWBALL
SNOWMAN
SOUP
STORM
TOBOGGAN
WINTER TIRES
WOOL SOCKS

CHALLENGING MAZE



CROSSWORD 1354



ACROSS

1. Any of several small ungulate mammals of Africa and Asia with rodent-like incisors and feet with hooflike toes.
4. The wife of a duke or a woman holding ducal title in her own right.
11. Acting or moving or capable of acting or moving quickly.
15. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
16. Shrubby or herbaceous low-growing evergreen perennials.
17. Wild sheep of northern Africa.
18. (Norse mythology) God of light and peace and noted for his beauty and sweet nature.
20. The basic unit of money in South Africa.
21. An enclosure made of wire or metal bars in which birds or animals are kept.
22. City in central Iran.
26. Large tropical American tree of the genus Cordia grown for its abundant creamy white flowers and valuable wood.
28. Disability of walking due to crippling of the legs or feet.
31. The present time or age.
32. Entice to do.
36. A nucleic acid that transmits genetic information from DNA to the cytoplasm.
37. Widely known and esteemed.
38. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
39. A river in central Italy rising in the Apennines and flowing through Florence and Pisa to the Ligurian Sea.
41. Or or relating to or caused by tides.
43. All the plant life in a particular region.
45. The 3 goddesses of fate or destiny.
47. Of or pertaining to atmospheric phenomena, especially weather and weather conditions.
49. Stem of the rattan palm used for making canes and umbrella handles.
51. Raise to a higher energy level.
52. A condensed but memorable saying embodying some important fact of experience that is taken as true by many people.
53. 16 ounces.
55. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
56. A period of time equal to 1/24th of a day.
57. A colorless and odorless inert gas.
58. A town in southeastern New Mexico on the Pecos River near the Mexican border.
62. A large quantity of written matter.
66. Having a woven pattern.
69. A coming to an end of a contract period.
71. Marked by quiet and caution and secrecy.
73. Aircraft landing in bad weather in which the pilot is talked down by ground control using precision approach radar.
74. A plant hormone promoting elongation of stems and roots.
75. Make weak.
77. A barrier constructed to contain the flow or water or to keep out the sea.
78. Resonance of protons to radiation in a magnetic field.
79. (of market animals) Made ready for market.
80. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

1. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
2. By bad luck.
3. Minute floating marine tunicate having a transparent body with an opening at each end.
4. Any of a group of Indic languages spoken in Kashmir and eastern Afghanistan and northern Pakistan.
5. An ancient city of Sumer located on a former channel of the Euphrates River.
6. A metric unit of length equal to one hundredth of a meter.
7. Publicly announced.
8. A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.
9. (of meat) Full of sinews.
10. Experiencing or showing sorrow or unhappiness.
11. The face or front of a building.
12. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
13. Tall evergreen of Japan and China yielding valuable soft wood.
14. Bound or secured closely.
19. Slightly wet.
23. Not static or stable.
24. The mother-in-law of Ruth whose story is told in the Book of Ruth in the Old Testament.
25. Minute aquatic multicellular organisms having a ciliated wheel-like organ for feeding and locomotion.
27. Title used for a married Frenchwoman.
29. An encroachment or intrusion.
30. A strong paper or thin cardboard with a smooth light brown finish made from e.g. Manila hemp.
33. The Oceanic language spoken by the Maori people in New Zealand.
34. A local church community.
35. An investigator who is employed to find missing persons or missing goods.
40. The Japanese art of folding paper into shapes representing objects (e.g., flowers or birds).
42. United States tennis player (born in Czechoslovakia) who won several singles championships.
44. Any stoppage attributable to unusual activity.
46. Type genus of the Aceraceae.
48. United States poet (1884-1933).
50. Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.
54. Smooth-haired breed of hound with short legs and long ears.
59. (the feminine of raja) A Hindu princess or the wife of a raja.
60. Dried out by heat or excessive exposure to sunlight.
61. (Irish) Chief god of the Tuatha De Danann.
63. A set of questions or exercises evaluating skill or knowledge.
64. South American armadillo with three bands of bony plates.
65. Tropical Asian starlings.
67. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
68. God of love and erotic desire.
70. (sports) The chief official (as in boxing or American football) who is expected to ensure fair play.
72. The compass point that is one point north of due east.
76. A linear unit of length equal to 12 inches or a third of a yard.

Yesterday's Solution

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

Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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



03:30 Doctors
04:05 Doctors
04:35 Eastenders
05:05 The Musketeers
06:00 Holby City
07:00 Doctors
07:30 Doctors
08:00 Eastenders
08:30 Eastenders
09:05 Casualty
10:00 Death In Paradise
10:55 Call The Midwife
12:45 Casualty
13:35 Holby City
14:30 Doctors
15:00 Eastenders
15:30 The Musketeers
18:15 Doctors
18:45 Doctors
19:15 Father Brown
20:05 Thirteen
21:00 Thirteen
21:55 Happy Valley
22:50 Friday Night Dinner
23:15 Hunderby
23:40 Doctors



03:00 Ridiculousness
03:50 Key And Peele
05:55 Impractical Jokers UK
06:20 Key And Peele
06:50 Tosh.0
07:15 Tosh.0
07:40 Gym Rescue
08:30 Ridiculousness
09:20 Key And Peele
09:45 Tosh.0
10:10 Tosh.0
10:35 Tosh.0
11:00 Impractical Jokers UK
11:25 Gym Rescue
12:15 Key And Peele
12:40 Ridiculousness
13:30 Tosh.0
13:55 Tosh.0
14:20 Impractical Jokers UK
14:45 Lip Sync Battle
15:10 Key And Peele
15:35 Tosh.0
16:00 Tosh.0
16:30 Hungry Investors
17:25 Hungry Investors
18:15 Tosh.0
18:39 Tosh.0
19:03 MLE Chowdown: The Turkey Bowl
19:50 Tosh.0
20:13 I Live With Models
20:37 Brotherhood
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
21:30 Inside Amy Schumer
21:54 Broad City
22:18 South Park
22:42 Underground With Dave Attell
23:30 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
00:00 Inside Amy Schumer
00:25 Patton Oswalt: Tragedy Plus



03:40 Auction Hunters: Pawn Shop Edition
04:05 Storage Hunters
04:30 Dallas Car Sharks
05:00 How Stuff's Made
05:30 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Mythbusters
06:50 World's Top 5
07:40 Incredible Engineering
Blunders: Fixed
08:30 Boy To Man
09:20 Running Wild With Bear Grylls And President...
10:10 So You Think You'd Survive?
11:00 Dark Woods Justice
11:50 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
12:40 Mega Shippers
13:30 Fast N' Loud
14:20 Misfit Garage
15:10 Street Outlaws
21:00 Fast N' Loud
21:50 Misfit Garage
22:40 Street Outlaws
23:30 Life After: Chernobyl
00:20 Return Of The Great White Serial Killer
01:10 Fast N' Loud
02:00 Misfit Garage



03:00 Industrial Junkie
03:48 Smash Lab
04:36 Battle Factory
05:00 Battle Factory
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 Smash Lab
08:14 How The Universe Works
09:02 Industrial Junkie
09:26 Industrial Junkie
09:50 How Do They Do It?
10:14 Food Factory
10:38 Battle Factory
11:26 Smash Lab
12:14 How The Universe Works
13:02 How Do They Do It?
13:26 Food Factory
13:50 Industrial Junkie
14:14 Industrial Junkie
14:38 Battle Factory
15:02 Battle Factory
15:26 Smash Lab
16:14 How The Universe Works
17:02 Industrial Junkie
17:26 Industrial Junkie
17:50 Smash Lab
18:40 How The Universe Works
19:30 Race To Escape
20:20 How Do They Do It?
20:45 Food Factory
21:10 Mega Builders
22:00 Race To Escape
22:50 How The Universe Works
23:40 Smash Lab
00:30 How Do They Do It?
00:55 Food Factory
01:20 Race To Escape
02:10 How The Universe Works



03:15 The Hive
03:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
03:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
04:10 Hank Zipzer
04:35 Binny And The Ghost
05:00 Violetta
05:45 The Hive
05:50 Mouk
06:00 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 Shake It Up
09:00 Hannah Montana
09:25 Hannah Montana
09:50 Wizards Of Waverly Place
10:40 Good Luck Charlie
11:05 Good Luck Charlie
11:30 Jessie
11:55 Disney Mickey Mouse
12:00 The 7D
12:15 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
12:40 Hank Zipzer
13:05 Star Darlings
13:10 Austin & Ally
13:35 Austin & Ally
14:00 Liv And Maddie
14:25 Liv And Maddie
14:50 Dog With A Blog
15:15 Hank Zipzer
15:40 Bunk'd
16:05 Star Darlings

16:10 Gravity Falls
16:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
17:00 Backstage
17:25 Starstruck
18:55 The 7D
19:05 Austin & Ally
19:30 Jessie
19:55 Violetta
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
22:50 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
01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:40 Hank Zipzer
02:05 Binny And The Ghost
02:30 Violetta



03:10 Henry Hugglemonster
03:20 Calimero
03:35 Zou
03:45 Loopdidoo
04:00 Art Attack
04:25 Henry Hugglemonster
04:35 Calimero
04:50 Zou
05:00 Loopdidoo
05:15 Art Attack
05:35 Henry Hugglemonster
05:50 Calimero
06:00 Zou

06:20 Loopdidoo
06:35 Art Attack
07:00 The Hive
07:10 Zou
07:25 Loopdidoo
07:40 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
10:30 Sofia The First
11:00 The Lion Guard
11:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
12:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
12:30 Gummi Bears
13:00 Sofia The First
13:30 Doc McStuffins
14:00 The Lion Guard
14:30 Aladdin
14:55 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
15:05 Goldie & Bear
15:30 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
18:45 Jake And The Neverland 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



03:15 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
04:10 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
05:05 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
06:00 Fashion Bloggers
06:25 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
07:20 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
08:20 E! News
09:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
13:05 E! News
14:05 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
15:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
16:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
17:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
18:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
19:00 E! News
20:00 WAGs
21:00 LA Clippers Dance Squad
22:00 Famously Single
23:00 E! News
00:00 Botched
00:55 Botched
01:50 Botched
02:20 E! News



03:00 Man Fire Food
03:30 Man Fire Food
04:00 Chopped
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games
06:00 Man Fire Food
06:30 Man Fire Food
07:00 Chopped
08:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
08:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
09:00 The Kitchen
10:00 The Pioneer Woman
10:30 The Pioneer Woman
11:00 Chopped
12:00 Guy's Big Bite
12:30 Guy's Big Bite
13:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
13:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:00 Man Fire Food
14:30 Man Fire Food
15:00 Chopped
16:00 The Kitchen
17:00 The Pioneer Woman
17:30 The Pioneer Woman
18:00 Chopped
19:00 Guy's Grocery Games
20:00 Cutthroat Kitchen
21:00 Kitchen Casino
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
22:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
23:00 Iron Chef America
00:00 Cutthroat Kitchen
01:00 Kitchen Casino
02:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
02:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives



06:00 Boyster
06:10 Super Matrak
06:35 Super Matrak
07:00 Pokemon Bw: Adventures In Unova
07:25 K.C. Undercover
07:50 Supa Strikas
08:15 Danger Mouse S1
08:40 Camp Lakebottom
09:05 Counterfeit Cat
09:10 Gravity Falls
09:35 Lab Rats
10:00 Rocket Monkeys
10:25 Ultimate Spider-Man
10:50 Boyster
11:20 Boyster
11:45 Pair Of Kings
12:10 Pair Of Kings
12:35 Lab Rats
13:00 Lab Rats
13:30 Phineas And Ferb
13:55 Phineas And Ferb
14:20 Kickin' It
14:45 Pokemon Bw: Adventures In Unova
15:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
15:15 Supa Strikas
15:40 Supa Strikas
16:05 Lab Rats
16:30 Danger Mouse S1
16:55 Kirby Buckets
17:25 K.C. Undercover
17:50 Annedroids
18:15 Gamer's Guide To Pretty...
18:40 K.C. Undercover
19:05 Counterfeit Cat
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



03:40 America: The Story Of The U.S.
04:30 Ultimate Guide To The Presidents
05:20 Ancient Aliens
06:10 The Universe
07:00 Patton 360
08:00 Cities Of The Underworld
09:00 The Universe
10:00 America: The Story Of The U.S.
11:00 Ultimate Guide To The Presidents
12:00 Ancient Aliens
13:00 Patton 360
14:00 Cities Of The Underworld
15:00 The Universe
16:00 America: The Story Of The U.S.
17:00 Ultimate Guide To The Presidents
18:00 Ancient Aliens
19:00 Patton 360
20:00 Cities Of The Underworld
21:00 The Universe
22:00 Ancient Impossible
23:00 Decoding The Past



X-MEN: THE LAST STAND ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION



03:40 Big Rig Bounty Hunters
04:30 Pawn Stars
05:00 Britain's Bloody Crown: War Of The Roses
06:00 Gold Hunters: Legend Of The Superstition...
06:50 Hunting Hitler
07:40 Grave Trade
08:30 American Restoration
08:55 Mountain Men - Closest Calls
09:45 Ax Men
10:35 Ice Road Truckers
11:25 American Restoration
11:50 American Restoration
12:15 Counting Cars: Best Of
12:40 Car Hunters
13:05 American Pickers
13:55 Hoard Hunters
14:45 Hunting Hitler
15:35 Grave Trade
16:25 Counting Cars: Best Of
16:50 Time Team
17:40 Aussie Pickers
18:30 Pawn Stars South Africa
18:55 Pawn Stars South Africa
19:20 Ice Road Truckers
20:10 Ax Men
21:00 Pawn Stars
21:25 Storage Wars
21:50 Criss Angel: Mindfreak
22:15 Criss Angel: Mindfreak
22:40 Britain's Bloodiest Dynasty
23:30 Pirate Treasure Of The Knights Templar
00:20 Britain's Bloody Crown: War Of The Roses
01:10 Counting Cars: Best Of
01:35 Car Hunters



03:25 Don't Tell The Bride
04:20 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
05:15 Eggheads
05:45 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway
07:05 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
08:00 Don't Tell The Bride
08:55 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
09:50 Murdoch Mysteries
10:45 Eggheads
11:15 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
12:10 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway
13:25 Emmerdale
13:50 Emmerdale
14:20 Coronation Street
14:45 Murdoch Mysteries
15:35 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
16:30 Don't Tell The Bride
17:25 Tonight At The London Palladium
18:20 Emmerdale
18:45 Emmerdale
19:10 Coronation Street
19:35 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
20:30 Don't Tell The Bride
21:25 Tonight At The London Palladium
22:20 Coronation Street
22:50 Emmerdale
23:15 Emmerdale
23:40 Murdoch Mysteries
00:30 Eggheads
01:00 Emmerdale



03:45 Brilliant Beasts
04:40 The Living Edens
05:35 I, Predator
06:30 Dr. K's Exotic Animal
07:25 Brilliant Beasts
08:20 The Living Edens
09:15 Wild India
10:10 Wild Scotland: Highlands
11:05 Dead Or Alive
12:00 Shark Men
12:55 Intimate Enemies
13:50 Dr. K's Exotic Animal
14:45 Blitzkrieg Sharks
15:40 The Great Elephant Gathering
16:35 Secrets Of The Desert Elephants
17:30 Wild Scotland: Highlands
18:25 Dead Or Alive
19:20 Blitzkrieg Sharks
20:10 The Great Elephant Gathering
21:00 Secrets Of The Desert Elephants



AVENGERS: AGE OF ULTRON ON OSN MOVIES HD



04:08 Unstoppable
06:00 X-Men: The Last Stand
08:00 Robot Overlords
10:00 Jack The Giant Killer
12:00 Unstoppable
14:00 X-Men: The Last Stand
16:00 Robot Overlords
18:00 Armored
20:00 Brick Mansions
22:00 John Wick
00:00 V/H/S 2
02:00 The Power Of Few



04:00 Three Men And A Baby
06:00 Grosse Pointe Blank
08:00 Jack
10:00 Three Men And A Baby
12:00 A Lot Like Love
14:00 Bottle Rocket
16:00 Jack
18:00 Hope Springs
20:00 Tammy
22:00 Tim And Eric's Billion Dollar Movie
00:00 Talladega Nights
02:00 Hope Springs



03:00 The Girl
05:00 Extracted
07:00 Fast Girls
09:00 Memories
11:00 The Girl
13:00 Welcome To The Punch
15:00 Draft Day
17:00 Memories
19:00 Rudderless
21:00 Nightcrawler
23:00 The Rover
01:00 Draft Day



03:00 Oz The Great And Powerful
05:15 Penguins Of Madagascar
07:00 Snow Dogs
09:00 Treasure Planet
11:00 101 Dalmatians
13:00 Jem And The Holograms
15:00 Coraline
17:00 American Girl: Isabelle Dances Into The Spotlight
19:00 American Girl: Saige Paints The Sky

21:00 Pirates Of The Caribbean: On Stranger Tides
23:15 Coraline
01:00 American Girl: Saige Paints The Sky
02:45 Pirates Of The Caribbean: On Stranger Tides



03:15 Birdman
05:15 Philomena
07:00 Prefontaine
09:00 Monkey Kingdom
10:30 Steve Jobs: The Man In The Machine
13:00 The Signal
15:00 Legends Of The Fall
17:30 Monkey Kingdom
19:00 Inside Llewyn Davis
21:00 Begin Again
23:00 Choke
01:00 Legends Of The Fall



03:00 Inside Out
05:00 Seventh Son
07:00 Sleeping Beauty
09:00 Inside Out
11:00 Ant-Man
13:00 Big Game
15:00 Big Eyes
17:00 Cinderella
19:00 Goosebumps
21:00 The Good Dinosaur
22:45 Avengers: Age Of Ultron
01:15 No Escape



04:15 Cher Ami
06:00 Looney Tunes: Rabbit's Run
07:45 Blackie And Kanuto
09:45 Delhi Safari
11:30 Bolts And Blip
13:00 Baby Geniuses And The Treasures Of Egypt
14:30 The Heart Of The Oak
16:00 Marco Macaco
18:00 Delhi Safari
20:00 Miffy The Movie
22:00 The Heart Of The Oak
23:30 Marco Macaco
01:15 Blackie And Kanuto



04:30 The Rewrite
06:30 Louder Than Words

10:15 4 Babies A Second
11:10 The Great Human Race
12:05 Hazen's Wild Survival Guide
13:00 Wicked Tuna
14:00 Breakout
15:00 Locked Up Abroad
16:00 4 Babies A Second
17:00 Myigrations
18:00 Hazen's Wild Survival Guide
19:00 Colombia's Gold War
20:00 4 Babies A Second
20:50 Myigrations
21:40 Hazen's Wild Survival Guide
22:30 Colombia's Gold War
23:20 Ape Man



03:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
03:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
03:48 Harvey Beaks
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
09:24 Harvey Beaks
09:48 Henry Danger
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 Harvey Beaks
17:48 Breadwinners
18:12 Henry Danger
18:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
20:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
21:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
21:24 Breadwinners
21:48 Breadwinners
22:12 Sanjay And Craig
22:36 Sanjay And Craig
23:00 SpongeBob SquarePants
23:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
23:48 Henry Danger
00:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
00:36 Max & Shred
01:00 The Haunted Hathaways
01:24 Sanjay And Craig
01:48 Sanjay And Craig
02:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
02:36 SpongeBob SquarePants



03:20 Hacking The System
03:50 Machine Impossible
04:45 Science Of Stupid
05:10 Science Of Stupid
05:40 Ape Man
06:35 Locked Up Abroad
07:30 Breakout
08:25 Wicked Tuna
09:20 Science Of Stupid
09:45 Science Of Stupid



JEM AND THE HOLOGRAMS ON OSN MOVIES HD FAMILY



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Today is a great time to be with others and to work together. Beyond work in general, you will have luck in matters of speculation. Hint: study the different department stores that think outside the box. You will find yourself taking time out from your busy day to demonstrate understanding and sensitivity to a co-worker. Home and family are on your mind this afternoon. This evening you will be expressing your creative side. You are coming to a creative and competitive phase, one in which you want to be appreciated for what you do and who you are. A lover or child becomes a focal point in your life. Creative pursuits, such as hobbies, are an outlet for much of your energy and will help you become relaxed, refreshed and balanced.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You may not appreciate someone in authority today but he or she seems to appreciate you and will express this to you. You are able to cut through the red tape and get at what is beneath and behind the meaning of words. You may feel that your career is at a rather delicate point and under a lot of pressure. It could be hard to find solutions or make the right decisions as to how to proceed. The whole process could be sluggish. If you bide your time and make no negative comments to others, you will find yourself in a better place before quitting time. Be positive, buckle down and tend to the work at hand-good results happen. Your family will give and receive positive input to and from you this evening. Life seems to be working well.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Communication, computers, electronics and everything new wave excite you and you excel here. You may discover new ways of working with traditional materials. This is a perfect time to be assertive and to move forward in your career decisions. You have all the drive and energy you could want for successful results today. The path is open and clear. Music is likely to play a more important role for you than usual and a period of material acquisition can tempt you into excessive spending . . . Careful. The supportive help of someone today can be an important factor that will affect business or reputation and increase your sense of security. You are a fine psychologist, researcher or detective and are good at dealing with joint or others' finances.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Any blocks or frustrations are easily worked through at this time. Communicating and the transaction of clear messages are important to you now. Your timing should be perfect and those around you should find you most spontaneous and alive. You may feel the need to care for a friend or communicate with far-away relatives this afternoon. Letters and phone calls may take much of your time. You have needs and you sense the needs of others; fitting the two together in positive ways makes life work. Music is likely to play a more important role in your life tonight. You could write a song. Also, you and your mate may decide to purchase tickets for an upcoming concert. You may decide to start attending the community symphony events.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Today is one of those days for group interaction. The energies tend to be more in land sale or purchase and perhaps new ways to gain customers through land. Others value you for your ability to make practical decisions. You could be most persuasive at this time. Some people stay away from you when they do not want to be called upon for certain jobs because you are most convincing. Animals or an unusual hobby involving pets will most likely amuse you this evening. Perhaps it is just a visit to the pet store. More than likely, we will hear about some new animal training techniques from you. You work to open people's minds to new ideas regarding the care taking and training of animals and will probably help a pet adjust to a new family.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Life is going your way today and you keep smiling and setting up situations that will help create new business. Superiors are pleased with your progress. Co-workers want to help you celebrate your special day. A feeling of being secure in many areas of your life takes precedence at this time. Stability and permanence satisfy a deep emotional need. Music is likely to play a more important role for you than usual and a period of material acquisition can satisfy a deep yearning to be free from want. You have a drive to discover, invent and find new ways to use things; you are well coordinated. Someone who has traveled your path is available to help you with life questions. A long and fun trip is in your future.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You may find questions for yourself that pertain to making your life meaningful. You get to fix, change and nurture your life today. Cultivating a garden is almost like cultivating your life. Pulling the weeds, removing the bugs, good water, good light and tender loving care keep you moving in positive directions. You look to improve this day. Health improvements are likely and this is an excellent cycle for getting those annual physicals out of the way. You enjoy working with your mind and can usually find a solution to even the worst problems. Your skills in this regard make you expert at guiding others. An elderly family member has good information to offer you this evening. Give this person the opportunity for self-expression.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

New ways to communicate or an easy manner will make conversations and interactions go well. You may find yourself more talkative than usual. Talking with an older person may be beneficial. You are at your mental best with sharp ideas and clear thoughts. This is an excellent time to make decisions and take care of mental work. You may be moved to appreciate a new flower or perhaps a painting. If you are shopping today, you will want to be wise to compromise or negotiate. Although this is a lucky day, you can enjoy life without overspending-use your imagination. Close relationships take on more expression and more importance. Someone of the opposite sex will be inspired by your presence this evening.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You should be on a great adventure television series. You love a challenge and this includes the workplace as well as the challenges that come to you away from the workplace. There is usually a point or a destination and you usually know what to do. When it comes to helping, you might want to ask what the agreement is with regard to the expectations for the finished product. Sometimes frustrations happen when higher-ups do not have a clear picture of what they want. Do not be afraid to ask questions. If you are in retail, your positive attitude will gain you many new customers and a high sell count. You like design and style and your customer will find your suggestions wise. You enjoy a concert or an impromptu get-together with friends tonight.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Circumstances may urge you to great effort and hard work. Things are working with rather than against you, so do not hold back and do not overdo by trying to go too far, too fast. Let things take their natural course. You may enjoy probing into your inner workings or some good solid gossip this afternoon-be careful in what you say. You are dynamic and always expressive in thought and speech-dramatic. You appreciate your own ideas and tend to be outgoing. You could be a bit emotional from time to time but you could also be a good entertainer and the life of a party. You do need to be aware of the tendency toward exaggeration; use this talent to write. There are plenty of tears and laughter this evening. Romance is possible tonight.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Somebody says something today that strikes a memory or reminds you that an important time is near. You will want to complete one list before beginning another list but now that you are reminded, you will have plenty of time. This could mean you could apply for a raise, prepare a bid or buy presents for a party. There is the making of a very busy day. You are witty and do not allow the worries of others to distract you from your goal. Your communication skills are at a high-water mark. Your manner is so facilitating and attractive to others that you would make an excellent counselor or teacher and you could find yourself familiarizing a new employee with his or her surroundings and duties. You are encouraged to help others in many walks of life.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You could find that you are appreciated for your ability to act and get things done. All sorts of people depend on you to help them in organization and focus. You may often be sought after as just the right person for a particular job. Any career that you seek in which you will be of service to others is a perfect choice, for you are good at detecting the needs of others before they verbalize the need. You are basically balanced emotionally and people sense that in you and feel the peace. Any form of group exercise is a wonderful way to exercise the body and enjoy the fun of team support this afternoon. You may find yourself looking for a little romance this evening and if you are not already involved in a relationship you may find a special someone soon.

COUNTRY CODES

Afghanistan	0093	Kuwait	00965
Albania	00355	Kyrgyzstan	00996
Algeria	00213	Laos	00856
Andorra	00376	Latvia	00371
Angola	00244	Lebanon	00961
Anguilla	001264	Liberia	00231
Antiga	001268	Libya	00218
Argentina	0054	Lithuania	00370
Armenia	00374	Luxembourg	00352
Australia	0061	Macau	00853
Austria	0043	Macedonia	00389
Bahamas	001242	Madagascar	00261
Bahrain	00973	Majorca	0034
Bangladesh	00880	Malawi	00265
Barbados	001246	Malaysia	0060
Belarus	00375	Maldives	00960
Belgium	0032	Mali	00223
Belize	00501	Malta	00356
Benin	00229	Marshall Islands	00692
Bermuda	001441	Martinique	00596
Bhutan	00975	Mauritania	00222
Bolivia	00591	Mauritius	00230
Bosnia	00387	Mayotte	00269
Botswana	00267	Mexico	0052
Brazil	0055	Micronesia	00691
Brunei	00673	Moldova	00373
Bulgaria	00359	Monaco	00377
Burkina	00226	Mongolia	00976
Burundi	00257	Montserrat	001664
Cambodia	00855	Morocco	00212
Cameroon	00237	Mozambique	00258
Canada	001	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Cape Verde	00238	Namibia	00264
Cayman Islands	001345	Nepal	00977
Central African Republic	00236	Netherlands (Holland)	0031
Chad	00235	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Chile	0056	New Caledonia	00687
China	0086	New Zealand	0064
Colombia	0057	Nicaragua	00505
Comoros	00269	Nigar	00227
Congo	00242	Nigeria	00234
Cook Islands	00682	Niue	00683
Costa Rica	00506	Norfolk Island	00672
Croatia	00385	Northern Ireland (UK)	0044
Cuba	0053	North Korea	00850
Cyprus	00357	Norway	0047
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Oman	00968
Czech Republic	00420	Pakistan	0092
Denmark	0045	Palau	00680
Diego Garcia	00246	Panama	00507
Djibouti	00253	Papua New Guinea	00675
Dominica	001767	Paraguay	00595
Dominican Republic	001809	Peru	0051
Ecuador	00593	Philippines	0063
Egypt	0020	Poland	0048
El Salvador	00503	Portugal	00351
England (UK)	0044	Puerto Rico	001787
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Qatar	00974
Eritrea	00291	Romania	0040
Estonia	00372	Russian Federation	007
Ethiopia	00251	Rwanda	00250
Falkland Islands	00500	Saint Helena	00290
Faroe Islands	00298	Saint Kitts	001869
Fiji	00679	Saint Lucia	001758
Finland	00358	Saint Pierre	00508
France	0033	Saint Vincent	001784
French Guiana	00594	Samoa US	00684
French Polynesia	00689	Samoa West	00685
Gabon	00241	San Marino	00378
Gambia	00220	Sao Tome	00239
Georgia	00995	Saudi Arabia	00966
Germany	0049	Scotland (UK)	0044
Ghana	00233	Senegal	00221
Gibraltar	00350	Seychelles	00284
Greece	0030	Sierra Leone	00232
Greenland	00299	Singapore	0065
Grenada	001473	Slovakia	00421
Guadeloupe	00590	Slovenia	00386
Guam	001671	Solomon Islands	00677
Guatemala	00502	Somalia	00252
Guinea	00224	South Africa	0027
Guyana	00592	South Korea	0082
Haiti	00509	Spain	0034
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Sri Lanka	0094
Honduras	00504	Sudan	00249
Hong Kong	00852	Suriname	00597
Hungary	0036	Swaziland	00268
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Sweden	0046
Iceland	00354	Switzerland	0041
India	0091	Syria	00963
Indian Ocean	00873	Taiwan	00886
Indonesia	0062	Tanzania	00255
Iran	0098	Thailand	0066
Iraq	00964	Toga	00228
Ireland	00353	Tonga	00676
Italy	0039	Tokelau	00690
Ivory Coast	00225	Trinidad	001868
Jamaica	001876	Tunisia	00216
Japan	0081	Turkey	0090
Jordan	00962	Tuvalu	00688
Kazakhstan	007	Uganda	00256
Kenya	00254	Ukraine	00380
Kiribati	00686	United Arab Emirates	00976



ANAND, Gujarat: Surrogate mothers in various stages of pregnancy resting in a dormitory above a clinic in Anand in western Gujarat state. Leading Indian fertility doctors and surrogate mothers yesterday criticized a move to ban commercial surrogacy. —AFP

INDIAN IVF DOCTORS SLAM MOVE TO BAN COMMERCIAL SURROGACY

AHMEDABAD: Leading Indian fertility doctors and surrogate mothers yesterday criticized a move to ban commercial surrogacy, saying it will severely limit options for childless couples and women who carry others' babies as a way out of poverty. India's cabinet on Wednesday cleared a bill to restrict surrogacy services to Indian married couples, following concerns over the "rent-a-womb" industry exploiting impoverished young women.

The bill seeks to bar foreign, single and homosexual would-be parents from surrogacy services in India and states that only women who are close relatives of a beneficiary can act as surrogates.

Gita Makwana, 33, who became a surrogate mother in 2010 after having one child of her own, said the bill would remove avenues for women like her to escape poverty.

"When I became a surrogate I got three lakh rupees (\$4,475) as compensation," Makwana from Anand in Gujarat state, a centre for India's surrogacy sector, told AFP. "I used it to repair my house and educate my child. — AFP

POST ARAB SPRING LIFESPAN DROPS ACROSS REGION: STUDY

CONFLICTS THREATEN TWO DECADES OF HEALTH GAINS

PARIS: The conflict and civil strife that has erupted across the eastern Mediterranean region since the Arab Spring began in 2010 has shortened lifespans and damaged health, according to a study released yesterday. Yemen, Tunisia and Egypt all lost about three months in life expectancy between 2010 and 2013, with deteriorating conditions threatening health gains made over the previous two decades, researchers said. In Syria-ravaged by a civil war that has left more than 290,000 people dead and displaced millions since March 2011 — average life expectancy has been cut by six years, they reported in the journal *The Lancet Global Health*. Men in Syria typically lived to about 75 on the eve of conflict. By 2013, the average age of death was about 69.

For Syrian women, the decline was from 80 to 75 over the same period. "Recent conflicts have shattered the basic infrastructure in a number of countries," said lead author Ali Mokdad, a professor at the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation. "As a result, millions of people are facing dire water shortages and poor sanitation that will lead to disease outbreaks." Infant mortality is also rising in some countries, the study found.

Dire situation

Again, the situation was most dire

in Syria: Average annual drops in infant deaths of six percent from 2000 to 2010 gave way to an increase of more than nine percent per year between 2010 and 2013. Health conditions are likely to have gotten worse since then not just in Syria, but in Libya, Yemen, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia too, the researchers warned.

"The Arab uprising has evolved into complex wars," Mokdad said in a statement. "Along with population growth and ageing, these ongoing conflicts have dramatically increased the burden of chronic diseases and injuries." Many doctors and nurses, he added, have fled to safe havens, adding to the health woes.

The fighting has also masked the shift away from communicable diseases such as tuberculosis as the leading cause of premature death, to lifestyle-related conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and stroke. For 22 countries in the region, deaths from diabetes rose from 12 to 19 per 100,000 people between 1900 and 2013. Heart disease became the number one killer in 2013, overtaking diarrhoeal diseases and respiratory infections. "These trends will lead to additional strain on financial and human resources in a region where they are already scarce," the study cautioned.

"Life expectancy decline is traditionally regarded as a sign that the

health and social systems are failing," said Mokdad.

"The fact that this is happening in several countries indicates there is an immediate need to invest in health care systems," he said in a statement. Demonstrations and protests in 2011 involving hundreds of thousands of people challenged the grip on power of autocratic rulers across the Arab world. While Tunisia managed mostly to escape the kind of violent after-shocks seen in other Arab Spring countries that toppled longstanding leaders, Egypt, Yemen and Libya are still struggling to find stability.

Conflict in Syria has killed more than 250,000 people and displaced some 11 million since it began more than five years ago as pro-democracy protests. Many of the health gains achieved by countries in the region are at risk of stalling as fighting has damaged basic infrastructure while millions are at risk of disease outbreaks caused by water shortages and poor sanitation, the experts said.

"Along with population growth and ageing, these ongoing conflicts have dramatically increased the burden of chronic diseases and injuries and many health workers have fled for safer shores," said Mokdad. "These issues will result in deteriorating health conditions in many countries for many years and will put a strain on already scarce resources." —Agencies

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Friday Times BUSINESS

FRIDAY, AUGUST 26, 2016



Clean air but murky policy
as Yellen speech awaited

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UK RETAILERS SEE BEST SALES IN SIX MONTHS

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SANAA: Bank customers wait to withdraw Yemeni currency at the Central Bank of Yemen in the capital Sanaa yesterday.—AFP

SAUDI STOCKS PLUNGE ON ECONOMY FEARS QATAR SLIPS AFTER WEAK Q1 GDP DATA

DUBAI: Most Gulf stock markets fell yesterday with Saudi Arabia sliding for a fifth straight day, led by banks, but United Arab Emirates bourses were firm. Egypt sank as blue chip Orascom Telecom Media and Technology Holding reported a loss. The Saudi index, which on Wednesday fell below minor technical support on the April low of 6,066 points, sank 0.9 percent yesterday to a six-month closing low of 5,977 points. Turnover was thin; this week's volume was the lowest in 2016. That is partly because summer holidays have kept retail investors away. Investors are also worried about the impact on corporate earnings of Saudi Arabia's economic slowdown due to low oil prices.

"Liquidity is very poor. To complete relatively small sell orders, traders are being forced to push prices lower. And because of weak sentiment, buyers are not being attracted despite the lower prices," Akber Khan, senior director for asset management at Qatar's Al Rayan Investment, said of the Saudi market. Retail investors were also concerned by tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran, he added.

Al-Rajhi Bank slid 2.3 percent. Investors are fretting about the impact of a severe slump in the Saudi construction sector on the quality of bank loans. Cement shares, exposed to the construction industry, were also weak with Yamamah Cement dropping 3.8 percent. In Qatar, the index dropped 0.5 percent with oil drilling rig provider Gulf International Services sinking 1.4 percent.

Qatar's gross domestic product, adjusted for inflation, grew only 1.1 percent from a year earlier in the first quarter, the slowest growth since at least 2011, official data published on Thursday showed. Both the oil and gas sector and the rest of

the economy shrank from the previous quarter.

However, Khan said that although Qatar's index had dropped back in the last few days, the market had continued to see net inflows of foreign funds in anticipation of its upgrade by FTSE to emerging market status in mid-September. Such inflows have totalled about \$400 million since the start of July and have been positive on every day except July 14, when there was a small net outflow, he said.

After early drops, markets in both Dubai and Abu Dhabi closed higher; the UAE is widely seen as more resilient to low oil prices than Saudi

Arabia because of its diversified economy and Abu Dhabi's huge financial reserves. Dubai's index closed 0.3 percent higher as GFH Financial, the most heavily traded stock and a speculative favourite of local retail investors, surged 3.0 percent.

Emirates NBD lost 0.6 percent. Sources told Reuters on Wednesday that Emirates Islamic, the sharia-compliant arm of ENBD, had laid off more than 100 people as part of cost-cutting to adjust to a cooler economy. Abu Dhabi's index edged up 0.2 percent as blue chip Aldar Properties added 1.5 percent. In Egypt, the index fell 1.1 per-

cent as Orascom Telecom, the most heavily traded stock, dropped 1.7 percent. It reported a net loss of 3.635 million Egyptian pounds (\$409,000) for the first half of this year, though revenues rose to 213.285 million pounds from 129.316 million pounds a year ago.

HIGHLIGHTS

SAUDI ARABIA

* The index fell 0.9 percent to 5,977 points.

DUBAI

* The index rose 0.3 percent to 3,492 points.

ABU DHABI

* The index edged up 0.2 percent to 4,520 points.

EGYPT

* The index fell 1.1 percent to 8,131 points.

QATAR

* The index dropped 0.5 percent to 11,135 points.

KUWAIT

* The index edged down 0.1 percent to 5,429 points.

OMAN

* The index dropped 0.5 percent to 5,823 points.

BAHRAIN

* The index fell 0.6 percent to 1,146 points.

— Reuters

SAUDI'S SKY PRIME GRANTED LICENSE FOR DOMESTIC FLIGHTS

DUBAI: Sky Prime Aviation Services has become the latest aviation company in Saudi Arabia to be awarded a national air operator license under an ongoing liberalization of the kingdom's aviation market. The company, which provides private jets, received the license for chartered flights from Minister of Transport Sulaiman Al-Hamdan during a ceremony in Riyadh, according to its Twitter feed. It will launch flights at the end of 2016, it said. It is the third air operator to be given permission to launch in the kingdom in recent months after Nesma Airlines and SaudiGulf Airlines.

The aviation sector is one of many areas the government is keen to strengthen as part of its

2030 vision, which aims to lower the kingdom's dependence on oil. Previously, only national carrier Saudi Arabian Airlines and budget operator National Air Services were allowed to serve a domestic market of about 27 million people. Foreign carriers could fly in and out of Saudi Arabia, but not within it. The Saudi authorities began accepting applications to allow other airlines to operate internal flights in 2012. Riyadh-based Sky Prime will start its operations during the last quarter of 2016, according to its Twitter feed. According to its website, the company offers private jet charter, maintenance and technical support, aviation project management and ground handling.—Reuters



RIYADH: Saudi Crown Prince Salman bin Abdulaziz (right) and Saudi Arabian Finance Minister Ibrahim Al-Assaf talking during a cabinet session in Riyadh to approve the state's budget for 2015. Saudi Arabia, the world's largest crude exporter, announced a 2015 budget with a huge \$38.6 billion deficit due to the sharp decline in oil prices but still raised spending. — AFP

GULF MARKETS PULL BACK SLIGHTLY ON SOFT OIL PRICE

MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

DUBAI: Gulf stock markets pulled back slightly early yesterday as a fresh retreat of global oil prices encouraged profit-taking on the gains of the last several days. Oman outperformed after positive corporate news. The main Dubai index slid 0.6 percent in quiet trade as property stocks slipped, with Emaar Properties down 0.5 percent.

The Abu Dhabi and Qatar markets both lost 0.3 percent, though Qatar's Barwa Real Estate continued its strong rally of recent days, rising 1.1 percent in heavy trade. Oman edged up 0.3 percent. Al Anwar Holdings, one of the country's major investment holding companies focusing mainly on the financial sector, jumped its 10 percent daily limit to 0.212 rial after its board said it had decided to explore a potential buy-back of up to 10 percent

of its shares at a price of up to 0.223 rial per share.

Bank Dhofar was quoted higher, though it had not yet traded, after saying it planned to boost its capital by issuing up to 115.5 million rials (\$300 million) of Tier 1 capital instruments in 2015 to support growth. Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE) ended yesterday's session on mixed board as the price index rose by 31 points reaching 6,577 points, while the weighted index dropped 1.9 points and the KXS 15 lost 11.8 points.

Some 38.6 million shares were traded valued nearly KD 27 million through 8,354 transactions. The top gainers were (TAHSSI-LAT), (UIC), (SENERGY), (REMAL) and (INVESTORS), while the top volume shares were (GFH), (SAFRE), (ABYAAR), (SENERGY) and (MAYADEEN). — Agencies

PUTIN SCRAPS NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAYS FOR MINISTERS

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday scrapped New Year's holidays for government ministers because of the unfolding economic crisis. Russian company employees throughout the country are entitled to holiday from Jan. 1 to Jan. 12 when Russians celebrate the New Year, the main holiday in Russia, as well as Orthodox Christmas on Jan 7. Putin told a televised government session yesterday that Cabinet ministers should not take this time off. "For the government, for your agencies we cannot afford this long holiday, at least this year - you know what I mean," he said.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev told Cabinet ministers yesterday he expects them to keep the situation in check even during the holiday lull "from the first days of the year."

Russia's economy, battered by low oil prices and Western sanctions, is set to enter recession next year for the first time in six years, while the ruble is now worth less than half of its value. The

ruble staged a modest rally last week and was trading 2 percent higher at 52 rubles per dollar yesterday, up from 80 rubles earlier this month. The Russian Central Bank announced yesterday that the country's currency reserve has dropped below \$400 billion for the first time since August 2009, as the government has been selling the currency on the market to support the ruble.

Stabilizing the ruble, which is one of the world's worst-performing currencies this year following the slide in oil prices and the sanctions imposed on Russia, is a priority for the country's monetary authorities. The Central Bank in past weeks raised its key interest rate to 17 percent and said

it will offer dollar and euro loans to banks so they can help major exporters that need foreign currencies to finance operations. Many Russian companies have been locked out of Western capital markets following the sanctions imposed on the country for its involvement in Ukraine. — AP

News

i n b r i e f

US dollar stable against KD at 0.292

KUWAIT: The exchange rate of the US dollar against the Kuwaiti dinar was stable at KD 0.292 yesterday, while the euro went up to KD 0.357 compared to yesterday's rates. The Central Bank of Kuwait said in its daily bulletin that the sterling went up to KD 0.455, the Swiss franc went up to KD 0.297 and while the Japanese yen was unchanged, at KD 0.002.

Bank Dhofar to raise capital up to \$300m

DUBAI: Oman's Bank Dhofar, the third-largest lender in the sultanate by assets, plans to boost its capital by issuing up to 115.5 million rials (\$300 million) of Tier 1 capital instruments in 2015, it said yesterday. In addition, the bank said it would issue up to \$500 million of senior non-capital debt instruments in the next four years. Both plans would aim to support growth in coming years and would require shareholder and regulatory approvals, Bank Dhofar said. It did not give details of the planned capital or debt instruments.

Saudi Alinma Bank proposes 0.5 riyal per share dividend

DUBAI: The board of Saudi Arabia's Alinma Bank recommended a dividend of 0.5 riyal per share for 2014, a bank official said yesterday. Earlier, Alinma said in a statement to the Saudi stock exchange that the dividend would be 5.0 riyals. But a bank official, contacted by telephone, subsequently told Reuters that was wrong and the correct figure was 0.5 riyal. It would be the bank's first dividend since it listed on the stock market in 2008. Net profit jumped 29 percent from a year earlier in the first nine months of this year to 932 million riyals (\$249 million), with the bank citing growth in core activities and an increase in operating income.

Egyptian pound steady on official market

CAIRO: The Egyptian pound held steady at a central bank dollar sale yesterday and on the black market. The bank offered \$40 million and said it had sold \$38.2 million at a cut-off price of 7.1401 pounds to the dollar, unchanged from its last sale on Wednesday. The rates at which banks are allowed to trade dollars are determined by the results of central bank sales, giving the bank effective control over official exchange rates. In the unofficial market, one trader said the pound was trading at 7.80 to the dollar yesterday, virtually unchanged from Wednesday when traders put it at 7.80/81.



ATHENS: People gather at an indoor basketball hall as the municipality of Athens distributes a Christmas meal for homeless and poor people yesterday. — AFP

AUTO, AEROSPACE INDUSTRIES WARM TO 3D PRINTING 'MANUFACTURING GAME-CHANGER'

EDEN PRAIRIE, United States: New 3D printing technology unveiled this week sharply increases the size of objects that can be produced, offering new possibilities to remake manufacturing in the auto, aerospace and other major industries. One application demonstrated by 3D printing machinery maker Stratasys would allow airlines to pick made-to-order airplane interiors that could be tweaked with the click of a mouse.

By turning the manufacturing plane vertical from the standard horizontal, the "printer" has the potential to create components of unlimited size. "We're now talking about parts in feet and meters versus centimeters and inches," said Rich Garrity, Americas president for Stratasys. "It's not just a concept."

The advances, by Stratasys, Siemens and others, are beginning to push 3D printing well into the center of manufacturing from around the edges. 3D printing employs sophisticated computer simulations and software to direct "print" objects from powdered, molten and filament materials like nylon, resins, clays, thermoplastics and metals.

Manufacturing 'game-changer'

The technology has not always lived up to sky-high hype, but leading manufacturers remain bullish over its potential to shake up the factory floor. "It is something that is going to be a game-changer," said Teresa Finchamp, director of operations and quality in Boeing's department for new technologies. Benefits include the ability to reduce weight by substituting

plastic compounds for metals. And by making use of a "digital toolbox" and made-to-order technology, it can also can reduce the need for warehouse space and many conventional manufacturing tools.

The ultimate prize is finished items equal in quality to today's goods, but which are cheaper and faster to make. Siemens argues that 3D printing, along with an increased role of robotics, greater automation and other innovations are creating a "digital factory" that will force a day of reckoning among manufacturers.

"These technologies all evolve so fast," said Andreas Saar, a vice president for additive manufacturing at Siemens. "We believe if people don't connect, they're going to have a huge problem," he said.

Boeing, Siemens and Ford are all corporate partners of Stratasys that joined a press tour of its factory in Eden Prairie near Minneapolis. Stratasys on Wednesday showcased an "infinite build" printer that turns the plane of production on its side, allowing the printing of items of "practically unlimited part size," according to the company.

Rocket parts

Also on display was a 3D robotic demonstrator utilizing Siemens software that positions and rotates an item as it is printed. The process, allowing for precise movements on an eight-axis motion system, is suited to produce lightweight components that must also be very strong. During the visit, the device was building a black ribbed dome that could be used on a rocket.

Stratasys says the applications of the robotic technology are broad and could also be utilized in the oil and medical equipment industries. Stratasys executives described the innovations as "step" changes but would not comment on a timeframe for commercializing the technology. "We are confident where we are in terms of development and we wanted to be able to demonstrate to the market our intent and where we're heading," Garrity said. Even if the Stratasys innovations can be made commercial quickly, there are other barriers to more extensive use of 3D printing. A key challenge for the auto industry, a relatively high-volume sector, will be matching the efficiency of conventional manufacturing, experts say.

Ellen Lee, who is in charge of bringing 3D printing into the manufacturing process at Ford, also said the technology does not yet make use of materials robust and durable enough for the most important car parts. Boeing's Finchamp said the aerospace giant planned to use larger 3D parts on commercial airplane interiors as soon as this year. But questions about material strength clouds the outlook for use on larger parts. "We have to be very cautious," she told AFP. "We're very very conservative with how to get things onto planes." Pete Basiliere, an analyst at Gartner who specializes in imaging and print services, said greater consumer interest in 3D printing could help boost the technology. "As consumers start to realize that they can (customize) and not at tremendous cost, then you're going to see the demand jump," he said. — AFP



SINGAPORE: An autonomous vehicle is parked for its test drive in Singapore On Wednesday.—AP

FIRST DRIVERLESS TAXI HITS SINGAPORE STREETS

SINGAPORE: The first driverless taxi began work yesterday in a limited public trial on the streets of Singapore.

Developer nuTonomy invited a select group of people to download their app and ride for free in its "robotaxi" in a western Singapore hi-tech business district, hoping to get feedback ahead of a planned dull launch of the service in 2018. "This is really a moment in history that's going to change how cities are built, how we really look at our surroundings," nuTonomy executive Doug Parker told Reuters.

The trial rides took place in a Mitsubishi i-MiEv electric vehicle, with an engineer sitting behind the steering wheel to monitor the system and take control if necessary.

The trial is on an on-going basis,

nuTonomy said, and follows private testing that began in April.

Parker, whose company has partnered with the Singapore government on the project, said he hoped to have 100 taxis working commercially in the Southeast Asian citystate by 2018.

Nutonomy is one of several companies racing to launch self-driving vehicles, with automakers and technology firms striking new alliances. Swedish automaker Volvo AB said last week it had agreed to a \$300 million alliance with ride-hailing service Uber to develop a driverless vehicle.

Israeli driving assistant software maker Mobileye NV said its vehicle, developed with Delphi Automotive PLC, would be ready for production by 2019, while Ford Motor Co said its self-driving car was slated for 2021. — Reuters

GERMAN FIRMS SEE BREXIT CLOUDS APPROACHING

DATA SHOWS COUNTRY HEADING FOR WEAKER GROWTH IN 2017

FRANKFURT: Germany is waking up to the threat of Brexit and could see weaker growth in 2017, analysts said yesterday, after a key business confidence survey showed a sharp decline. The Ifo economic institute's closely-watched index fell to 106.2 in August from its July level of 108.3, reaching its lowest point since December 2014.

Analysts surveyed by Factset had been expecting a slight rise to 108.5. "The German economy has fallen into a summer slump," Ifo president Clemens Fuest said in a statement, noting that all sectors surveyed except construction had reported a drop in the index. August's sharp drop contrasts with a smaller decline in July, when German business surprised forecasters by appearing to shrug off anxiety over Britain's late-June vote to quit the European Union.

The latest correction was all the more unexpected after an investor survey by the ZEW institute in mid-August showed a recovery from the huge Brexit slump in confi-

dence in July. Ifo's headline figure is produced from two figures representing companies' feelings on the current business environment and the outlook for the next six months.

The sub-index measuring current business fell to 112.8, two points below its July level. Confidence in the future outlook also took a two-point blow, falling to 100.1 from 102.1 in July. Manufacturers, retailers and wholesalers all reported falling confidence in August. Chemical and electrical firms were among the gloomiest in industry, Ifo chief Fuest said, while food and beverage firms were the least positive among retailers. But one bright spot was construction, where firms had a more optimistic view of the coming months even as their view of current business clouded over. Germany's DAX stock market index of 30 leading firms had fallen 1.36 percent by 0900 GMT yesterday as investors absorbed the news, with every single blue-chip firm's shares losing value.—Reuters



TOKYO: Honda Motor President and CEO Takahiro Hachigo stands next to the company's all-new NSX supercar during a press preview in Tokyo yesterday. Honda Motor began accepting applications in Japan for custom orders of the all-new NSX supercar, which underwent a full redesign for the first time in 26 years since the introduction of the original NSX. — AFP

UK'S BIG 6 ENERGY SUPPLIERS STEM CUSTOMER EXODUS

LONDON: Rebounding energy prices are giving Britain's 'Big Six' energy suppliers a chance to win back ground lost to smaller rivals and stem an exodus of customers that shaved off more than a billion pounds in revenue last year.

The Big Six - Centrica's British Gas, SSE, E.ON, RWE npower, EDF Energy and Scottish Power - were hit hard by weak energy prices last year that decimated their upstream profits and lured customers to cheaper tariffs on offer at smaller competitors. Britons have also grown increasingly dissatisfied with poor customer service from market leaders, enabling smaller rivals to snatch market share with more efficient service and tailored offers such as green energy supply. As small, independent energy suppliers, such as First Utility, Ovo Energy or Utility Warehouse, buy most of their customers' energy needs for a shorter period, they were able to slash tariffs as energy prices tumbled by 20-30 percent over the course of 2015. Large suppliers typically hedge a few years ahead, locking in prices over a longer period.

But small players are now having to increase their tariffs to cover higher wholesale prices, handing the Big Six an opportunity to fight back. Energy market prices for the winter, the peak demand period for heating, have risen nearly 30 percent since April due to a rise in oil prices and weak gas storage levels.

"Now that commodity prices have bounced back, the discount small suppliers can offer versus the Big Six has been shrinking," said Roland Vetter, head of research at commodity investment firm CF Partners. Industry data from EnergyUK shows the percentage of consumers switching from a large to a small supplier fell in June to the lowest since April 2015.

RWE won more than 200,000 new British customers in July, returning its customer base to end-2015 levels, while No. 2 supplier SSE reduced customer losses to 50,000 between March and June, from 90,000 over the same period last year. Smaller supplier Ovo Energy, in contrast, has increased its fixed-term tariff by 3.6 percent and Co-operative Energy has lifted one two-year fixed tariff by as much as 103 pounds (\$136), according to uswitch, a site that compares energy tariffs and takes a commission payment from suppliers when energy users switch.

CUSTOMERS OVERCHARGED

Some small suppliers may not have sufficient financial means to buy energy further ahead than a few months. Darren Braham, chief finance officer and co-founder of First Utility, said a weak hedging strategy was a "very, very risky proposition". "They've got this constant tension between 'how much can I afford to hedge and suck up working capital' against the risk of wholesale prices moving against them." The weak hedging position of some small suppliers has worried other players in the market. "If one small supplier goes belly up then it will affect all small suppliers," said Simon Oscroft, a former energy trader at Macquarie, who set up supplier SO Energy in late 2015.

"Everyone would lose faith in some of those newer, more innovative and better managed suppliers. It would set the energy industry back a few years." Oscroft said SO Energy customers sign up on 12-month contracts, which his trading team can fully hedge in the forward market.

Small suppliers contacted by Reuters, including Ovo Energy and Affect Energy, declined to comment on their hedging strategies due to commercial sensitivity. Others did not respond to requests for comment. Smaller providers had increased their share of the electricity market to 13 percent by March this year, and took 14 percent of the gas market, both up from 10 percent in early 2015, according to energy regulator Ofgem, as they also benefited from customer frustration at the Big Six's tariffs. In June, the Competition Markets Authority ordered the largest energy suppliers to cap some of their most expensive tariffs after a two-year investigation found they had overcharged customers by billions of pounds. Utilities deny overcharging customers. As smaller rivals face a battle to retain market share, some are moving to strengthen their balance sheets.

Good Energy, which specializes in providing energy from renewable sources, raised 3.1 million pounds in a share offer in June, while some of the biggest independent energy suppliers, including First Utility and Utility Warehouse, have hired established trading businesses, in these cases Shell and npower, to carry out trading and hedging. — Reuters

UK RETAILERS SEE BEST SALES IN SIX MONTHS

CONSUMERS CONFIDENT AS BREXIT SLUMP FADES

LONDON: British retailers reported their strongest sales in six months in August, industry figures showed yesterday, adding to signs that consumers are, for now, taking the country's vote to leave the European Union in their stride. The Confederation of British Industry said its sales volume index rose to +9, its highest since February, from an initial slump after the Brexit vote to -14 in July.

Sales in September were expected to moderate. The expected sales index was +3 for next month, up from -12 in August. The release was in keeping with recent data showing consumers shrugging off the shock Brexit vote, with retail sales boosted by warm weather and by overseas buyers attracted by a cheaper pound.

"While the fall in sterling has boosted visitor numbers to the UK, it is likely to

push up the price of imported goods over time, which will mean households will be more likely to rein back spending on non-essentials," Anna Leach, CBI Head of Economic Analysis and Surveys, said. Price pressures in factories - which feed through into consumer prices - jumped in July as import prices rose at their fastest rate since 2011. Samuel Tombs, an economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics, said he still expected growth in overall spending to slow sharply. "Away from the high street, there are clear signs that (consumer activity is) ...slowing down - falling new car registrations and declining mortgage approvals show households are shying away from big-ticket purchases."

A survey on Wednesday showed the number of mortgages approved by British banks fell to its lowest in a year in

July. So far most data has shown less of a negative impact on the economy from the Brexit decision than some of the dire predictions made by supporters of remaining in the EU.

But Britain has yet to trigger the formal exit process that would start the two-year period for formal negotiations about the country's future relationship with the EU, leaving many companies uncertain about what Brexit will mean for them.

The CBI said an index of orders placed with suppliers was -7 in August, up from -34 in July and was expected to improve further next month. Investment intentions rose to +15 in August from their most recent previous reading of -13 in May. The survey was conducted between July 27 and Aug. 12 and 131 firms took part. — Reuters



SYDNEY: Workers push shopping trolleys at a Woolworths store in Sydney yesterday. Australian supermarket giant Woolworths yesterday reported a large annual net loss of AUD 1.23 billion (\$940 million), its first since listing more than two decades ago, following a failed push into hardware and a slump in food sales. — AFP

HUGE LOSSES AT AUSTRALIAN RETAIL GIANT WOOLWORTHS

SYDNEY: Australian supermarket giant Woolworths yesterday reported a large annual net loss of Aus\$1.23 billion (US\$940 million), its first since listing more than two decades ago, following a failed push into hardware and a slump in food sales. Woolworths, Australia's largest retailer and one of the two dominant supermarket chains in the country, recorded the sharp plunge for the year to June 26 — the first loss since 1993,

compared to a net profit of Aus\$2.15 billion in the prior period.

The company said Wednesday it was exiting the disastrous Masters home improvement business seven years after entering the hardware market, selling it for Aus\$1.5 billion.

"Unequivocally it's been a challenging year for the group-in this case the numbers speak for themselves," The Australian Financial Review quoted

Woolworths chief executive Brad Banducci as saying.

"But you need to look through the numbers to see where we are-we are making progress but there's still a lot to do." Australian food and petrol sales sank 40.8 percent to Aus\$1.76 billion for the period, while its discount department store chain Big W lost Aus\$14.9 million after last year's profit of Aus\$111.7 million. —AFP

APPLICATIONS FOR US JOBLESS CLAIMS FALL

WASHINGTON: Slightly fewer people filed for US unemployment benefits last week, a sign the American job market remains healthy.

THE NUMBERS: The Labor Department said yesterday that applications for jobless aid slipped by 1,000 to a seasonally adjusted 261,000. The less volatile four-week average dropped by 1,250 to 264,000. Overall, the number of people receiving unemployment checks fell by 30,000 to 2.15 million, down 5 percent from a year earlier.

THE TAKEAWAY: Applications are a proxy for layoffs. They have remained below 300,000 for 77 straight weeks, longest streak since 1970. The current reading is even more impressive because the population has grown considerably since then.

KEY DRIVERS: The US unemployment rate is 4.9 percent. Employers added 255,000 jobs in July and 292,000 in June. Hiring is strong even though the economy has registered lackluster growth since late 2015. The economy expanded at an annual pace of 1.2 percent from April through June after growing just 0.8 percent in the first quarter and 0.9 percent in the fourth quarter of 2015.

Solid hiring amid slow growth is worrisome. It shows that the economy is less productive, with more workers needed to produce the same or slightly more output. Productivity, or the amount of output per hour, has dropped 0.4 percent over the past year. Weak productivity growth could hobble the US economy and keep a lid on pay gains. Greater productivity allows companies to boost workers' pay without raising prices. —AP



MIAMI: People stand in line to apply for a job with Aldi at a job fair in Miami Lakes, Florida. The Labor Department reported on the number of people who applied for unemployment benefits a week earlier. —AP

PHARMA NERVES HIT STOCKS, DOLLAR WOBBLES BEFORE FED

LONDON: European stocks saw their biggest fall in three weeks yesterday and currency markets were noticeably subdued as investors took to sidelines ahead of one of the big global central banker gatherings of the year. Japanese and Chinese stocks had suffered modest drops in Asia and the pace picked up in Europe as London's FTSE sank 0.4 percent and Frankfurt and Paris lost as much as 1.2 percent in a region-wide slide.

Wall Street was also set for an all-red start for its main S&P 500, Dow and Nasdaq indexes where weekly jobless claims, big ticket goods and Markit PMI data is on the slate.

Stubbornly low oil prices and warnings about steel demand kept the pressure on miners in Europe, though it was a near 2 percent drop from pharma stocks that caused the most pain after US presidential candidate Hillary Clinton had chastised industry price hikes on social media. The wobbles saw some demand for bonds return. Treasury yields dipped to 1.55 percent ahead of US trading though Europe struggled to hold on to its early progress that had been helped by a deal to recapitalize ailing state-owned Portuguese bank Caixa Geral de Depósitos.

"The recapitalization of CGD is likely to have implications for Portugal's budget, but all in all it is positive," said DZ Bank strategist Daniel Lenz. "It's better to have a stable banking sector." Currency markets, meanwhile, were firmly focused on the annual central banker mountain getaway in Jackson Hole in Wyoming that starts later and will see Federal Reserve chief Janet Yellen speak today. — Reuters



LONDON: Pedestrians walk along the pavement in the busy shopping district on Oxford Street central London. Retail sales in Britain, a key driver of the country's economy, rebounded 1.4 percent in July from the previous month's drop, official data showed yesterday. — AFP

CLEAN AIR BUT MURKY POLICY AS YELLEN SPEECH AWAITED

MARKET WATCHERS DERIDE POLICY AS 'SCHIZOPHRENIC'

WASHINGTON: If US Federal Reserve chief Janet Yellen chooses to use her closely watched address today to clear the air, she will have plenty of clearing to do. Yellen, who will address a ballyhooed annual gathering of central bankers in the crisp climate of Jackson Hole, Wyoming, presides over US monetary policy now derided by market watchers as "schizophrenic."

On the health of the economy and the dangers of inflation, her colleagues on the committee that sets key interest rates are at odds with each other—with one member perhaps unfairly chided in the business press for appearing to contradict himself more than once in the space of a single week.

All members of the Federal Open Markets Committee agree that interest rates will have to rise. The only question is how soon. But the central bank this year has retreated from its announced course of rate hikes, fearing for the resilience of the US economy in the face of Brexit, slowing Chinese growth and domestic signs of weakness. The question for Yellen, and for global markets affected by her decisions, is whether the American economy is strong enough again.

'Completely befuddled'

"I think the problem is we're all completely befuddled as to their next move," said Jared Bernstein, former economic adviser to Vice President Joe Biden. William Dudley, the influential president of the New York Fed, suggest-

ed this month that a rate hike was possible in 2016. Dennis Lockhart of the Atlanta Fed said there could even be two. John Williams, president of the San Francisco Fed, appeared to agree, telling The Washington Post on August 11 that rates could rise this year but then publishing an essay just four days later saying the time had come "to critically reassess" prevailing interest rate policy and speaking of "limits to what monetary policy can and indeed should do."

For good measure, three days later, Williams, who does not currently have a vote on the FOMC, said publicly that a rate hike would be a good idea "sooner rather than later."

Futures traders currently put the likelihood of at least one rate hike by December at 51 percent.

Bernstein told AFP the Fed was experiencing a moment of policy ferment. "I think they themselves are legitimately questioning some of their most basic guideposts," he said. "That's definitely confusing to a lot of market participants." The "new normal" that policy makers are contending with is an era of predominantly low interest rates and productivity growth, when rising employment fails to produce the expected gains in inflation and GDP growth is sluggish.

Donald Kohn, who was Fed vice chair until 2010, said that on leaving office he had expected to see a quicker recovery from the Great Recession of 2008 - 2009 but had been surprised by longer-term trends in productivity, demand and

interest rates. "As a consequence, even highly accommodative monetary policy hasn't been as stimulative as I anticipated," he said. "It has taken longer than I expected to get the US economy back to the region of full employment and inflation climbing back to the two percent target."

All of this has left key players like Williams and Stanley Fischer, the current vice chair of the Fed, calling for non-traditional measures including new fiscal and regulatory policies, such as investments in infrastructure and education or responsive tax rates that vary with unemployment.

Last month, the phrase "fiscal stimulus" appeared in news stories more frequently than at any point since 2009, the height of the global financial crisis, according to research produced by Bank of America Merrill Lynch. Yellen's Friday address is billed as a discourse on the Fed's "monetary policy toolkit" and observers say she is unlikely to give clear signals on the timing of the next rate hike. But markets have little choice but to watch and listen anyway, looking for hints about her views on the health of the world's largest economy.

Without a doubt, though, investors are not watching the game they are used to. "Rules that made sense ten years ago don't make sense right now," said Bernstein, reiterating that Fed members were themselves searching for answers. "I think their understanding of key economic parameters is in flux." —AFP

TURNER HOMERS HELP DODGERS BEAT GIANTS

LOS ANGELES: Rich Hill pitched six dominant innings in his first start with Los Angeles and Justin Turner hit his 24th homer, lifting the Dodgers over the San Francisco Giants 1-0 on Wednesday night. Los Angeles has a three-game lead over the Giants atop the NL West. Turner homered in the fourth for the first hit against starter Johnny Cueto. Turner has 20 homers since June 10. Hill (1-0) was on the disabled list with a blister on his left middle finger when the Dodgers acquired him from the Oakland Athletics on Aug. 1 along with outfielder Josh Reddick. He allowed five hits and struck out three while throwing 81 pitches. Cueto (14-4) allowed a run and four hits over six innings, and San Francisco has lost eight of 10. Kenley Jansen got his 37th save to complete the six-hitter. He reached 604 career strikeouts, tying Jim Brewer for most career strikeouts as a reliever in franchise history.

CUBS 6, PADRES 3

Major league ERA leader Kyle Hendricks pitched six effective innings and Chicago finished off a three-game sweep. Hendricks (12-7) gave up two runs and four hits, striking out eight and leaving with a 2.19 ERA. He has allowed no more than three earned runs in 17 straight starts. There Cubs relievers took over for the NL Central leaders, with Aroldis Chapman pitching the ninth for his 29th save in 32 chances. Willson Contreras homered and Ben Zobrist drove in two runs to help the Cubs win for the 22nd time in 27 games. At 81-45, they are 36 games over .500 for the first time since ending the 1945 season at 98-56. The Padres have dropped nine of their past 12. Paul Clemens (2-3) took the loss.

YANKEES 5, MARINERS 0

Rookie Gary Sanchez kept up his torrid stretch with his seventh home run in the past nine games, and Masahiro Tanaka won his fourth straight start in New York's victory over Seattle. Tanaka (11-4) threw seven shutout innings and got the better of the Mariners and former Japan League teammate Hisashi Iwakuma (14-9). The Yankees won their third straight road series. They took two of three from the Mariners, one of the teams they're chasing in the AL wild-card race. Sanchez homered into the second deck in left field in the first inning on the first pitch from Iwakuma, his ninth home run in 18 games since joining the Yankees lineup Aug. 3. Sanchez added a double and his intentional walk in the seventh inning led to Mark Teixeira's RBI single for a 4-0 lead.

RANGERS 6, REDS 5

Yu Darvish hit only the second homer by a Texas pitcher and Adrian Beltre had a tiebreaking double in the eighth inning in the Rangers' 6-5 victory over Cincinnati. Darvish's solo shot to center field was one of three homers by the Rangers, who wasted a three-run lead before rallying late. Beltre's double off Blake Wood (5-2) snapped a 5-5 tie. Nomar Mazara had a three-homer, and Ian Desmond followed Darvish's homer in the fifth with one off Tim Lincecum. The Reds have given up 10 homers in the last three games, including four sets of back-to-backs. Darvish let a 5-2 lead slip away. He walked a season-high five batters and hit a batter in six innings. A passed ball and an error led to two unearned runs. Jake Dieken (4-2) went one inning and got the win. Sam Dyson pitched the ninth for his 28th save.

RAYS 4, RED SOX 3

David Ortiz hit his 30th home run in the first inning, but Tampa Bay came back from a three-run deficit to beat Boston to prevent the Red Sox from taking sole possession of the AL East lead. Luke Maile doubled with two out in the 11th and scored after Red Sox pitcher Heath

Hembree (4-1) dropped a throw to first base on Kevin Kiermaier's grounder. Brad Boxberger (2-0) got the win with one inning of relief. Boston has won 10 of its last 13 games and remained tied for first with Toronto. Bidding to become the majors' first 18-game winner, Rick Porcello allowed Evan Longoria's tying homer in the eighth before leaving. It was Longoria's 30th homer.

ANGELS 8, BLUE JAYS 2

Albert Pujols moved into sole possession of

Nationals in the ninth, making it 10-7 and bringing Britton into the game with one out in a non-saved situation. Wade Miley (8-10) allowed two runs on seven hits in five-plus innings. Tanner Roark (13-7) gave up five runs in five innings and hit three batters.

MARLINS 3, ROYALS 0

Jose Fernandez pitched seven innings and appeared to avoid a serious injury when he tweaked his right leg on his final pitch, helping

ner this season, and the Athletics beat Cleveland. The A's took two of three games from the AL Central leaders. Cleveland went into the day with the best record in the American League, but was held to one run for the third consecutive game. Khris Davis tripled and scored as part of Oakland's five-run second inning off Trevor Bauer (9-6). Roberto Perez homered, and Jose Ramirez and Lonnie Chisenhall had two hits apiece for Cleveland. Graveman (10-8) extended his scoreless streak



LOS ANGELES: Los Angeles Dodgers' Justin Turner hits a solo home run as San Francisco Giants catcher Buster Posey, left, watches along with home plate umpire Carlos Torres during the fourth inning of a baseball game. — AP

10th place on the career home run list with 584, Matt Shoemaker pitched six shutout innings and Los Angeles beat Toronto to snap an 11-game road losing streak. Pujols finished 4 for 4 with three RBIs. After he and Mike Trout hit back-to-back homers in the first, Pujols hit a sacrifice fly in the second, singled in the fourth and sixth innings, then capped his night with an RBI double in the eighth. For Pujols, the homer broke a tie with Mark McGwire on career list. A three-time MVP and 10-time All-Star, Pujols is two home runs shy of tying Frank Robinson for ninth place. Two pitches after Trout hit his 24th home run, Pujols did the same. Both shots came off Blue Jays right-hander Marco Estrada (7-6). Shoemaker (8-13) allowed three hits, walked one and struck out three.

ORIOLES 10, NATIONALS 8

Baltimore closer Zach Britton saw his remarkable streak of 43 straight games without allowing an earned run end, then shut down Washington's ninth-inning rally. The Nationals scored five times in the ninth, one of them charged to Britton. But after his own mistake helped Washington put runners on first and second with one out, Britton got Ryan Zimmerman to ground into a double play. Manny Machado and Matt Wieters each homered and drove in four runs for the AL wild card-contending Orioles. Baltimore has beaten the NL East leaders three straight times this week. Daniel Murphy hit a grand slam for the

Miami snap Kansas City's winning streak at nine. Fernandez (13-7) pulled up after striking out Christian Colon to end the seventh, and rubbed his right knee before limping to the dugout. The Marlins pinch-hit for him in the bottom of the seventh. Fernandez had nine strikeouts to increase his season total to 213, breaking the Marlins' record of 209 set by Ryan Dempster in 2000. Fernandez also had the Marlins' first two hits, hiking his average to .286. Fernando Rodney pitched around two singles and walk for his 25th save and eighth with Miami. Dillon Gee (5-7) took the loss.

CARDINALS 8, METS 1

Matt Carpenter, Randal Grichuk and Stephen Piscotty homered off New York starter Jacob deGrom to power St. Louis. Carpenter set the tone, hitting a leadoff home run in the first inning. The Cardinals went on to win for the seventh time in nine games. Piscotty and Yadier Molina each had three of the Cardinals' season high-tying 19 hits. Carlos Martinez (12-7) gave up one run and four hits over eight innings. He also got two hits himself. Roughed up for the second straight start, deGrom (7-7) allowed five runs on 12 hits in 4 2/3 innings. He was tagged for a career-worst eight runs and 13 hits in his previous outing against San Francisco.

ATHLETICS 5, INDIANS 1

Kendall Graveman pitched into the seventh inning to become Oakland's first 10-game win-

to 16 innings before Perez homered in the seventh. Graveman allowed six hits in 6 2/3 innings and won for the ninth time in his last 11 decisions.

ASTROS 5, PIRATES 4

Evan Gattis hit his 20th home run, leading Collin McHugh and Houston over Pittsburgh for the Astros' fifth victory in six games. McHugh (8-10) gave up three runs in five innings, ending an 0-4 rut in his last five starts. Ken Giles closed for his fifth save. Gerrit Cole (7-9) allowed five runs in five innings. Jordy Mercer homered for Pittsburgh.

BREWERS 7, ROCKIES 1

Ryan Braun hit two home runs and Milwaukee tied a season high with its fourth straight victory, beating Colorado. Braun hit a solo drive off Tyler Anderson (4-5) in the fourth inning. He connected for his 24th homer, a two-run shot, off Chad Qualls in a four-run seventh. Colorado's Nolan Arenado hit his NL-leading 34th homer in the first. The Rockies went on to load the bases, but Zach Davies (10-6) escaped further trouble.

TIGERS 9, TWINS 4

Miguel Cabrera hit his 28th home run and had four hits, Justin Upton added a three-run homer and Detroit beat Minnesota. Matt Boyd (5-2) tied his career high with seven strikeouts in six innings to win his fifth straight decision. — AP

WINDIES, INDIA ENTERS NEW WORLD IN THE US

FORT LAUDERDALE: West Indies face India in two Twenty20 internationals in Florida at the weekend in a litmus test for both cricket's future in the US and Carlos Brathwaite's credentials as Caribbean skipper. After India cruised to victory in the Test series and in the aftermath of the Caribbean squad's latest round of blood-letting, the sides head for the sport's newest outpost, the Central Broward Regional Park, the only purpose-built cricket stadium in the US.

Six matches in the recent franchise-based Caribbean Premier League were played at the \$10 million arena while the first full international matches, two Twenty20 games between New Zealand and Sri Lanka, were staged there in 2010. Saturday and Sunday's back-to-back fixtures come at a crucial time for the West Indies. They may be the reigning world champions in the format having triumphed in India earlier this year, but that didn't save Darren Sammy's job as skipper. He was sacked in what he claimed was a "30-second phone call" and replaced by Brathwaite who etched his name into West Indies cricket folklore by smashing four sixes in the final over against England to win this year's World T20 final in Mumbai.

"I think a team like this will be pretty easy to lead, from the point of view that the dressing room is a fun place to be," said Brathwaite. "I don't think it's a case where I have to negotiate too many egos." His first job will be to introduce stability into the engaging but often frustrating nature of West Indies' short-form cricket-before they won their second World T20 in four years, they lost to Afghanistan in the qualifying round.

Despite his heroics in Mumbai, 28-year-old Brathwaite is a lightweight when it comes to international experience, having played just three Tests, 14 ODIs and eight Twenty 20s. In contrast, the team's superstar Chris Gayle has 103 Tests, 269 ODIs and 50 T20s to his name as well as a host of batting records. — AFP

DILSHAN READY TO RETIRE AFTER AUSTRALIA SERIES

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's Tillakaratne Dilshan will quit international cricket after the ongoing limited overs series against Australia, the swashbuckling opener announced yesterday. "I have decided to retire from the ODIs after the third match in Dambulla (on Sunday) and will play the two Twenty20s and then retire completely," Dilshan told local media.

After the conclusion of the five-match ODI series, Sri Lanka and Australia will play two Twenty20 matches on Sept. 6 and Sept 9. Inventor of the famous "Dilscoop" ramp shot, Dilshan played the last of his 87 tests in 2013 before quitting the longer format with 5492 runs and 39 wickets. A wily off-spinner and one of the most agile Sri Lankan fielders even at the age of 39, Dilshan scored 22 and 10 in the first two one-dayers of the ongoing five-match series against world champions Australia. "I together with my committee wish to extend our sincere appreciation and wish him the very best in his future endeavours," Sri Lanka Cricket president Thilanga Sumathipala said in a statement.

According to media reports, the former captain was persuaded to retire as Sri Lanka build a new team under Angelo Mathews with an eye on the 2019 World Cup. Dilshan made his one-day debut against Zimbabwe in 1999 and went on to play 329 ODIs, amassing 10248 runs that included 22 hundreds, with an 86-plus strike rate. He has also scored 1884 runs in 78 Twenty20 Internationals and was Sri Lanka's top scorer in this year's World Twenty20 in India. — Reuters



COLOMBO: In this photograph taken on August 23, 2016, Sri Lanka's Tillakaratne Dilshan walks with his equipment during a practice session at the R Premadasa International Cricket Stadium. — AFP



SOUTHAMPTON: England's Jason Roy bats during the first one day international (ODI) cricket match between England and Pakistan at The Ageas Bowl cricket ground. — AFP

DIZZY ROY SPELL LEADS ENGLAND WIN OVER PAKISTAN IN 1ST ODI

SOUTHAMPTON: Jason Roy overcame a dizzy spell to lead England's charge to a 44-run win under the Duckworth/Lewis method in a rain-marred first one-day international against Pakistan in Southampton on Wednesday. Surrey opener Roy's quickfire 65 fired England towards an initial victory target of 261 after Pakistan had made 260 for six, captain Azhar Ali top-scoring with 82. But following a third and final rain interruption of this day/night fixture at 9:37 pm local time (2037 GMT), the umpires eventually called the game off with England 194 for three.

Eoin Morgan, the England captain, was 33 not out and Ben Stokes 15 not out. Roy and Joe Root (61) took England to the brink of victory with a second-wicket stand of 89 in 14 overs. The 26-year-old Roy sparked England's chase with three fours in four balls off Umar Gul in the third over of the hosts' innings. But there was a worrying moment when Roy, on 20, needed several minutes' on-field treatment for a dizzy spell. "It was a case of not having enough sugar on me apparently, that's it plain and simple," Roy told reporters. "I had a headache, felt a bit dizzy, they got the physio and the doctor on, they told me to get some sugar on board. "I was

able to get my bearings, settle and reset myself and just go again," he added. Meanwhile opening partner Alex Hales, who managed just 145 runs during the preceding 2-2 drawn Test series against Pakistan, again fell cheaply. Hales was out for seven when he guided Gul straight to Mohammad Hafeez at slip.

More Amir misfortune

Mohammad Amir had had five catches dropped off his bowling during the Test series and the Pakistan paceman's bad luck continued Wednesday. Roy, on 24, skied left-arm quick Amir high on the legside. The ball appeared to be heading straight to Gul at square leg. However, wicket-keeper Sarfraz Ahmed called for the catch, only to make insufficient ground and drop the chance despite getting both gloves to the ball. Pakistan may have recently climbed to the top of the Test rankings, but this was the kind of fielding error which had helped leave them languishing in ninth place in the equivalent ODI standings.

Roy swept left-arm spinner Imad Wasim for the first six of the match before completing a 43-ball fifty also featuring five fours. But his innings ended when a lofted drive off spinner Mohammad Nawaz was brilliantly

caught just inside the boundary by Babar, running round from long-off. Root, England's star batsman in all three formats, was untroubled while hitting six fours in 72 balls.

But when Morgan dropped the ball into the offside and set off, Root failed to beat Azhar's direct hit. Earlier, Azhar won the toss and led from the front in an innings where Ahmed made 55 and Azam was unluckily lbw for 40. Pakistan were going well at 173 for three after 35 overs but then lost Azhar before a rain stoppage put a further break on their run-scoring. Azhar, however, was twice dropped on nine.

Hales floored a relatively routine chance in the gully before wicket-keeper Jos Buttler could not hold a more difficult left-handed catch down the leg-side. Babar was given out lbw to leg-spinner Adil Rashid by Australian umpire Simon Fry, even though replays clearly showed an inside edge. But by that stage Pakistan had used up their lone review of the innings. Azhar pressed on to a relatively sedate 84-ball fifty before upping his tempo. But he fell when top-edging a slog-sweep off Rashid (two for 51) to Moeen Ali at short third man. The five-match series continues at Lord's on Saturday. — AFP

HOPE SOLO SUSPENDED FROM US SOCCER TEAM

CHICAGO: US women's goalkeeper Hope Solo was suspended Wednesday for six months by US Soccer for disparaging comments about Sweden following the Americans' early departure from the Rio Olympics. Solo called the Swedes "a bunch of cowards" for focusing on defense rather than attacking the three-time defending champion US team. Sweden ousted the US 4-3 on penalty kicks following a 1-1 draw in a quarterfinal match. US Soccer President Sunil Gulati said Solo's comments were "unacceptable and do not meet the standard of conduct we require from our National Team players."

"Beyond the athletic arena, and beyond the results, the Olympics celebrate and represent the ideals of fair play and respect," Gulati said. "We expect all of our representatives to honor those principles, with no exceptions." The 35-year-old Solo, who was previously suspended for 30 days early in 2015 for her conduct, will not be eligible for selection to the national team until February. Solo said she was "saddened" by the decision in a statement on her Facebook page. "I could not be the player I am without being the person I am, even when I haven't made the best choices or said the right things," she said. "My entire career, I have only wanted the best for this team, for the players and the women's game and I will continue to pursue these causes with the same unrelenting passion with which I play the game."

Lightning rod

Solo was a lightning rod during the Olympic tournament, irking fans in Brazil when she posted a photo on social media of herself covered with mosquito netting and armed with insect repellent. Fans booed her mercilessly and hollered "Zika!" each time she kicked downfield. Then she caused a stir with her "cowards" comment. Sweden's coach, Pia Sundhage, who led the US team to gold medals in Beijing and London, replied by stating: "It's OK to be a coward if you win." Solo has been making headlines throughout her stellar career. Last month, she became the first goalkeeper with 100 international shutouts when the United States defeated South Africa 1-0 at Soldier Field in Chicago. It also was her 150th career win.

Solo won her second straight Golden Glove Award for the best goalkeeper at the Women's World Cup a year ago. Over the course of the tournament in Canada, she had five shutouts and allowed only three goals in seven games. She has vocally advocated for women's rights. Solo was among the US players who filed a complaint with the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for wage discrimination, saying the men's national team players have been paid much more than many on the women's team. More recently, she has called for better conditions for players in the National Women's Soccer League.

She has also been trying to avoid trial on misdemeanor domestic violence charges after a 2014 incident at her sister's home, when the goalkeeper was accused of being intoxicated and assaulting her sister and 17-year-old nephew. Solo said she was a victim in the altercation. Earlier this year, an appeals court in Washington state rejected Solo's request to avoid trial. — AP



BELO HORIZONTE: In this Aug 3, 2016, file photo, US goalkeeper Hope Solo takes the ball during a women's Olympic football tournament match against New Zealand. — AP



RIO DE JANEIRO: Qatar's Ashraf Amgad Elseify competes in the Men's Hammer Throw Final during the athletics event at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games at the Olympic Stadium in Rio de Janeiro on August 19, 2016. — AFP

QATAR'S RECRUITED ATHLETES STIR DEBATE ON CITIZENSHIP

DOHA: When 39 athletes from Qatar qualified for the Rio Olympics, the most in the tiny Gulf state's history, Noor Al-Shalaby celebrated the achievement in a Facebook post. "Qatar! You are in my blood and my soul," wrote the 34-year-old accountant. The small team delivered the country's first silver medal at the Rio Olympics. And the Olympians - at least 23 of whom were born outside Qatar and brought in to help the country flourish athletically - are a source of pride for Egyptian-born Shalaby, who was raised in Qatar. But their status is also a reminder of restrictive citizenship laws that have complicated Shalaby's life and made her future uncertain.

Qatar has for years used its immense oil and gas wealth to recruit sportspeople from around the world, part of an ambitious vault onto the world sporting stage by the wealthy Arab state which will host the soccer World Cup in 2022. Kenyan runners and Bulgarian weightlifters granted citizenship to compete internationally for Qatar are compared by outsiders to 'mercenaries' sent to win medals for Doha and promote its standing abroad. But the practice of handing passports to these athletes has stirred a debate about national identity inside Qatar where residents like Shalaby who have lived in the country for decades, and whose expertise may be needed in a post-oil economy, have no obvious path to citizenship. "I was born in Doha... my friends are Qatari and, in my heart, I am too," she said. "Of course it hurts that I am not a citizen."

Laws 'outdated'

The influx of foreigners into the once-impooverished Gulf states goes back to the discovery of oil in the 1930s. The growth of hydrocarbon industries

brought in thousands of Arab workers, including Syrians and Palestinians, to bolster small local populations. Many secured jobs and settled in the Gulf among local Sunni Muslim populations who had traditionally lived in the desert or in small coastal towns, living off pearling and trade. But as numbers of foreign residents rose and millions of South Asian labourers were brought in to power construction booms, tightly-knit Gulf populations saw demographic change as a threat to their way of life.

Attuned to this, Gulf authorities have kept heavily guarded rights to nationality. Qatar, a former backwater that is the world's largest LNG exporter, is home to a vast foreign population that ranges from low-paid construction laborers living in camps outside cities to top executives who receive generous tax-free salaries. No legal provisions exist allowing foreigners, who account for around 90% of Qatar's 2.3 million population, to become permanent residents. Instead a handful of foreigners who must speak Arabic and have resided in the country for at least 25 consecutive years are absorbed into Qatar's citizenry on a case by case basis that requires approval from the emir.

A Qatar government spokesperson was not immediately available to comment. Officials, including the former emir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, have said nationality is given to people who apply and fulfil regulations.

'Adding value'

But some younger Qataris are now questioning the laws controlling citizenship, calling them outdated. "If these guys get naturalized then what about doctors, scientists, engineers, academics and artists? Don't they add more value to society?" Hamad Al-

Khater, a public sector employee, tweeted after the Olympic debut of Qatar's handball team, 11 out of 14 of whom are naturalized athletes. A prominent Emirati commentator argued in a 2013 op-ed for citizenship to be opened to long-time foreign residents including entrepreneurs, scientists and academics who have contributed to society. But many remain deeply apprehensive about relaxing citizenship laws: they fear the added expense - Qatar spends billions of dollars each year on free education, health-care, and housing loans for its estimated 300,000 citizens - and question whether naturalized citizens could ever become true Qataris.

"Even without naturalizing people, our identity is in a kind of crisis. Giving out passports would complicate things," said businessman Abdullah Al-Mohannadi, 32. There is concern too that foreigners might have an adverse influence on Qatar's dynastic political system and conservative culture - based on deep-rooted tribal values that are already considered under threat. "What happens down the line when these individuals and their descendants call for change and go against Qatar's political stability?" said Faisal Al-Shadi, a Lebanese student born in Qatar. "These citizens might come together and challenge the status quo."

After growth peaks and Qatar moves towards a post-oil economy, analysts say, the economic rationale for restricting citizenship could change. "Qatar will need to attract long-term residents who can contribute to the tax base and support what will eventually become an ageing population," said a Doha-based university lecturer. "Residency rights are one way to entice professionals to stay in the country for longer." — Reuters

RUSSIA'S PUTIN CALLS BAN ON PARALYMPIC TEAM 'IMMORAL'

MOSCOW: A ban on Russia's Paralympic team competing in Rio next month is cynical and immoral, President Vladimir Putin said yesterday, but he said that Moscow acknowledged mistakes it had made in tackling sports doping. Russia's track-and-field team was excluded from the Rio Games that just ended after world anti-doping authorities alleged Moscow ran a state-sponsored sports doping program. The entire Russian

Paralympic team has also been barred over the same doping allegations.

At a Kremlin ceremony to welcome home Russian athletes who had competed in the Rio Games, Putin said international anti-doping organizations had singled out Russia for harsh treatment because they were subject to political pressure. Russia's Olympic team finished this month's Games in Rio in fourth place according to the total number of gold

medals it won. Putin said the result could have been better if a third of Russian competitors had not been excluded. "I used to say this before ... and I still believe that these international anti-doping structures ... should be rid of political pressure," Putin told Russian Olympians in an emotional speech in a gilded Kremlin hall.

Putin said the decision to bar Russian athletes, including those who had not

tested positive for any banned substances, was a vivid manifestation "of how the humanistic foundations of sport and Olympism are shamelessly flouted by politics". The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) said on Tuesday that Russia had lost its appeal against a ban from next month's Rio Paralympics. "The decision to disqualify our Paralympic team is outside the law, outside morality and outside humanity," Putin said. — Reuters

LEDECKY HANDS OVER HER MEDALS TO THROW PITCH

WASHINGTON: One by one, swimmer Katie Ledecky handed her Olympic medals to Bryce Harper. Four gold medals and one silver from the Rio Olympics sat in the hands of the reigning National League MVP. As the Nationals star outfielder admired the medals of the Olympic champion and held her hat, Ledecky threw the ceremonial first pitch to reliever Shawn Kelley before the Baltimore Orioles beat Washington 10-8 Wednesday night. "I've swum in front of 14,000 people," Ledecky said of the pitch. "Once the ball leaves the hand, you can't really control it."

Ledecky, a native of nearby Bethesda, Maryland, has thrown out the first pitch at Nationals Park before. That was in 2012 after she won the 800-meter freestyle at the London Olympics as a 15-year-old. "I think I've gotten stronger and a lot's happened in four years," she said. "I've been to a couple world championships, more international meets, another Olympics, I've gone through high school, I'm heading out to college. Looking back four years ago, a lot has changed since then." Ledecky has just become more dominant.

She tied as the most decorated US female athlete in Rio along with gymnast Simone Biles and just short of Michael Phelps for the most among Americans. Before Ledecky's first pitch, a tribute played on the video board, featuring a clip of her world record-shattering victory in the 800-meter freestyle performance in Rio when she won by more than 11 seconds. The 19-year-old met several Nationals before the game, including Harper, whom she called one of her favorites. They didn't give her any tips on the first pitch, which she said she practiced plenty Tuesday, but they were curious about her five medals. "They all wanted to see how heavy they were and things like that," Ledecky said. "They are pretty heavy. It was kind of a different feeling for me to have them be a fan of me when I've been a huge fan of theirs for a couple years."

'U-S-A! U-S-A!'

Ledecky got a warm reception on the field 20 minutes before the start of the game but a rousing standing ovation when she was shown on the video board before the fifth inning. Fans cheered and broke out in chants of "U-S-A! U-S-A!" She said her accomplishments in Rio are "slowly but surely" sinking in, only days after the closing ceremony. — AP



WASHINGTON: Olympic gold medal swimmer Katie Ledecky, left, hands her medals to Washington Nationals' Bryce Harper, right, to hold before she threw out the ceremonial first pitch before a baseball game between the Baltimore Orioles and the Washington Nationals. — AP



RIO DE JANEIRO: This file photo taken on August 06, 2016 shows members of the Kenya delegation entering the stadium during the opening ceremony of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games at the Maracana stadium. — AFP

KENYA'S WORLD-CLASS RUNNING MATCHED BY WORLD-CLASS GRAFT

NAIROBI: Kenya's runners impressed at the Rio Olympics, but to the country's shame its officials were equally distinguished when it came to corruption. Six gold medals-including in both men's and women's marathons-six silvers and one bronze put Kenya in 15th place overall and made it the top African nation by far, yet a shameful shadow hangs over what was the best Kenyan Olympics performance ever.

Leading the controversy was the dismissal of track team manager Michael Rotich, recalled from Rio after an undercover investigation accused him of seeking a \$13,000 (11,500 euros) bung to warn runners of "surprise" drugs tests. Soon afterwards another coach, John Azrah, was also recalled after apparently attempting to pass himself off as one of his runners and then giving a urine sample. However, some have defended Azrah, 61, saying he only took the runner's ID so he could get a free breakfast at the Olympic Village.

Trouble from the start

Kenya's Olympics was in trouble before it even began. The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) only cleared the country's athletes at the last minute after parliamen-

tarians botched the passage of a new law designed to convince world authorities that Kenya is serious about tackling the widespread doping that has seen at least 40 athletes banned since 2012.

Controversy also kicked off Kenya's Olympics when athletes appeared at the opening ceremony in mismatched gear, despite kit sponsor Nike providing ample outfits. Deputy president William Ruto, who was in Rio, called for criminal and parliamentary enquiries after Nike complained that much of the apparel had gone missing. Meanwhile, Kenyan media and social media have been ablaze with stories of unknown hangers-on and freebie-seekers living large as part of the supposedly official delegation. But while the liggers appeared to have no trouble reaching Rio, athletes were less fortunate. Someone forgot to book a plane ticket for javelin world champion Julius Yego—who went on to win Olympics silver—while 200m sprinter Carvin Nkanata's accreditation was submitted late meaning he almost missed his race.

Nor did the embarrassment end with the Olympics' closing: there has been no official homecoming with many of the athletes opting to sneak into the country to

prevent officials basking in the glory of their performances. "We don't want people to hog publicity from our arrival when they have treated us badly," one athlete told the Daily Nation newspaper.

Others are still stranded in Rio with marathoner and MP Wesley Korir issuing a barrage of tweets from Brazil deploring their treatment and alleging officials had left them languishing in a bid to find cheaper flights home. President Uhuru Kenyatta said those found responsible for the shambles would "face the consequences of their actions". "We will ensure that lessons are learnt, questions are answered, action is taken and full accountability achieved," Kenyatta said this week.

'Heads must roll'

Sports minister Hassan Wario was questioned by detectives on Wednesday as calls for his resignation grew louder. "He was asked to explain what exactly happened in Rio especially how the team was treated, the contingent that travelled to Rio and allegations by kit sponsors Nike over the allocation of uniforms," said a source at the Directorate of Criminal Investigations. "It is certain that heads must roll," the source added. — AFP

KLOPP KEEPS PEACE WITH STURRIDGE

LONDON: Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp is trying to keep the peace with Daniel Sturridge after the frustrated striker complained about being played out of position. Sturridge has been deployed on the right wing rather than in his preferred central striker's berth in his two appearances for Liverpool this season and he made it clear he is unhappy Klopp has used him in the unfamiliar role. The 26-year-old scored twice in the 5-0 English Football League Cup win at Burton Albion on Tuesday but afterwards said: "Of course it's more difficult for me to play wide because I am a centre-forward."

"In the modern-day game you have to try and be flexible, but everyone knows my best position. 'I'm a player who plays on instinct, and in the middle I have clarity on movements and things that I have been doing for years. 'I am not saying I am happy to do it, I am saying I have to do a job for the team.'" Klopp was asked about Sturridge's comments yesterday and, although he didn't rule out using the former Manchester City and Chelsea player on the flanks again, the German said there is no reason for Sturridge to see the role as a demotion.

"The first thing is I don't want to play Daniel as a wide player but of course he can start there and play there but in the decisive moments he needs to be involved in all the finishing situations," Klopp told reporters. "I think both goals (against Burton) he scored inside the box so he was not on the wing in this moment—that is flexible football. 'That is how football works, it is not a fixed position (where you) stay outside and wait until you get the ball—especially not in Daniel's case. 'Daniel is a very smart player in hiding himself in positions where it is not easy to defend and it is very often in a wing position.'"

Sturridge has been injured for much of Klopp's time at Anfield, but the German insisted his relationship with the England international is still good. "We have still to work on a lot of things. I know him and when we have talks there is no issue," Klopp said. "It is only a starting position for the next offensive move for my team. 'We don't have these positions anymore where you say, 'You play this all the time', it is normal.'" —AFP



STAFFORDSHIRE: Liverpool's English striker Daniel Sturridge (L) and Liverpool's Spanish defender Alberto Moreno (R) arrive for the English League Cup second round football match between Burton Albion and Liverpool at the Pirelli Stadium. — AFP



MANCHESTER: Manchester City's English goalkeeper Joe Hart (C) gestures to the crowd after the UEFA Champions League second leg play-off football match between Manchester City and Steaua Bucharest at the Etihad Stadium. — AFP

FANS HAIL HART AS MAN CITY REACHES UCL GROUP PHASE

MANCHESTER: Joe Hart played potentially his last Manchester City game as Pep Guardiola's team rubber-stamped their place in the Champions League group phase by beating Steaua Bucharest 1-0 on Wednesday. Leading 5-0 from last week's away leg, City completed a 6-0 aggregate victory courtesy of Fabian Delph's second-half header, putting them in Thursday's group-stage draw in Monaco with room to spare. But the spotlight at a less than full Etihad Stadium fell squarely on goalkeeper Hart, whose name was chanted by the home fans throughout the game after he was frozen out by new manager Guardiola.

"That was a really special night for me," Hart, City's captain for the night, told BT Sport. "We all know there is a situation going on. This is a special place for me, I've made no secret of that. But situations occur in football. We are men and we get on with it." With Claudio Bravo poised to complete a 17 million pounds (\$22 million, 20 million euros) move from Barcelona, this could have been Hart's 348th and final City appearance.

A veteran of City's two Premier League title wins, two League Cup successes and 2011 FA Cup triumph, the

England goalkeeper, 29, applauded all four corners of the ground before going off at the end. "Joe is still a player of us. I'm so happy with him today," Guardiola said. "I know he's a legend for this club. Joe is one of the reasons the club has become (what it is). He helped to make this team one step above, so I'm so happy the people love him." Hart has been linked with a move to Everton or Sevilla. His fellow outcast Yaya Toure was also handed a first competitive start of the season by Guardiola, who saw Nigerian striker Kelechi Iheanacho hobble off with an apparent calf injury late on.

'Pigs do fly!'

A picture of Hart had been removed from the stadium's exterior wall prior to the game as part of a visual facelift, but City's fans made it clear they were unhappy about his treatment by Guardiola. One group of fans held a banner reading "A GOOD HART THESE DAYS IS HARD TO FIND" and a chant of "Don't sell Joe Hart!" broke out within seconds of kick-off. Guardiola has justified his decision to sideline Hart by citing concerns about his passing ability and there were ironic cheers every time the City goalkeeper successfully picked out a team-mate.

Asked about his successful footwork after the game, Hart joked: "Well pigs do fly, don't they!" City controlled the game, but although Iheanacho, Nolito and Delph all hit the target in the first half, none of them came close to troubling Steaua goalkeeper Valentin Cojocar. After drawing a block from Cojocar, Delph made the breakthrough in the 56th minute when he converted Jesus Navas's right-wing cross with a glancing header. But the home fans had other preoccupations and after a chant of "Stand up if you love Joe Hart!" had drawn almost everyone in the ground to their feet, his first save, from Adrian Popa, prompted a huge cheer.

There were two further saves, to repel a free-kick from Nicolae Stanciu and a close-range Alexandru Tudorie effort, and both were greeted in the same manner. A straightforward evening for Guardiola took an unwelcome twist towards the end when Iheanacho pulled up abruptly as he chased a through ball and had to be stretchered off. "We were more organized today," said Steaua coach Laurentiu Reghecampf. "The difference was the hugely valuable players City have." — AFP

DRINKWATER SIGNS NEW CONTRACT WITH LEICESTER

LONDON: Leicester City and England midfielder Danny Drinkwater signed a new five-year contract with the Premier League champions yesterday. Drinkwater, 26, joins Jamie Vardy, Riyad Mahrez and Kasper Schmeichel in committing his future to the club since the end of last season. "I've loved playing for this club. It's been perfect for me and my career and I want to be here for a long time to come. I couldn't be happier," Drinkwater told Leicester's website. Drinkwater joined Leicester in 2012 from Manchester United and has made 177 appearances for the Foxes.

He was named the club's player of the year as Leicester won promotion back to the top flight in the 2013-14 campaign, and last season played a key role as the Foxes became the most unexpected champions in Premier League history. Drinkwater, who won the first of his three England caps against the Netherlands in March, added: "I've grown a lot as a player and a person in the last four years and Leicester has been a massive part of that. 'I love being part of this team. We've been through so much together and I'm sure there's a lot more to come.'" — AFP

BLATTER WAGES FINAL BAN APPEAL

NNE: Former FIFA president Sepp Blatter mounted his final appeal yesterday against his six-year ban from football, in a long-shot quest for redemption after his career ended in scandal. Blatter was at the world's top sports court for a one-day hearing seeking to overturn a suspension imposed by FIFA over ethics violations.

"I will accept the verdict," Blatter, 80, told journalists outside the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in Lausanne, Switzerland. "I do hope it will be positive for me, but we are footballers. We learn to win but also we learn to lose," he said. The case that triggered Blatter's downfall first emerged in September of last year, when Swiss prosecutors said they were investigating him over a suspect two million Swiss franc payment (\$2 million, 1.8 million euros) he authorized in 2011 to his one-time heir apparent, Michel Platini.

Platini, the former head of European foot-

ball, was also sanctioned by FIFA over the funds. The Frenchman lost his CAS appeal in a May verdict that likely diminishes Blatter's hopes of victory. Speaking to reporters before appearing to give evidence at the closed-door hearing, Platini said Blatter's fate may already be sealed. "I'm not sure if a decision hasn't already been made," he said, pledging to tell the truth about the infamous payment "for the umpteenth time." CAS secretary general Matthieu Reeb said the hearing may not wrap up until 7:00 pm (1700 GMT), citing delays. A decision may take several weeks.

Settling a debt?

Blatter arrived at the treelined courthouse in a black Mercedes Sedan and flanked by his Zurich-based lawyer Lorenz Erni. Restating a justification for the Platini payment he has made repeatedly over the last year, Blatter insisted FIFA owed money to the

ex-Juventus star. Platini had been hired by FIFA as a consultant from 1999 to 2002 and had apparently not received his full compensation. "I am sure, at the end... that the panel will understand that the payment made to Platini was really a debt that we had" with him, Blatter said yesterday. "This is a principle: if you have debts you pay them." FIFA's ethics committee was not convinced by the explanation, banning both Blatter and Platini for eight years in December. Those suspensions were however cut to six years on appeal in February. CAS however judged FIFA's sanctions against Platini "too severe" and trimmed his suspension to four years. That outcome would likely offer little comfort to the ageing Blatter, whose four-decade career as a football broker is likely over. Separate from yesterday's appeal, Blatter is also the target of a criminal investigation by Swiss prosecutors over the Platini payment and alleged misman-

agement during his 17-year tenure as FIFA president.

He was replaced in that job by fellow Swiss national and former UEFA number two Gianni Infantino in February. An investigation commissioned by Infantino's administration also accused Blatter and two top deputies-Jerome Valcke and Markus Kattner-of awarding themselves nearly \$80 million worth of improper salary increases and bonuses during their final five years in office.

Both Valcke and Kattner have been sacked by FIFA. Valcke is also the subject of a Swiss criminal probe. Blatter and Platini were the most prominent casualties during more than a year of unprecedented scandal that upended world football, but many others have fallen. Prosecutors in New York have indicted 40 football and sports marketing executives over allegedly receiving tens of millions of dollars in bribes and kickbacks. — AFP

HULL CONFOUNDING GRIM PRESEASON FORECASTS

MANCHESTER: Hull started the season as the English Premier League's "crisis club," regarded by some as the worst-prepared team ever to begin a top-flight campaign. No manager. Owners that want out. Only 13 fit senior players. Not a penny spent in the offseason. One of their best players sold to a lower-league club on the eve of the season. With two wins from two games, including one over reigning champion Leicester, the side from the northeast of England is confounding the grim preseason predictions and is mixing with Premier League royalty atop the fledgling standings.

Hull sits alongside Manchester United, Manchester City and Chelsea on a maximum six points so far. One of them - United - visits the KCOM Stadium tomorrow. "I'm not sure we could have imagined or hoped for the start we've had," Hull midfielder Shaun Maloney said. "But when the games come along, all the stuff off the field gets pushed to the back of your mind." The build-up to the season couldn't have been more different for United and Hull. At United, Jose Mourinho arrived as coach, around \$200 million was spent on a quartet of

signings that includes world-record transfer Paul Pogba and star striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic, while the team's best players were retained despite its failure to qualify for the Champions League. Over at Hull, Steve Bruce resigned as manager three weeks before the season started, reportedly unhappy at not being able to sign players while the club's owners - the Allam family - look to sell up. Long-term injuries have robbed them of Michael Dawson, Moses Odubajo and Allan McGregor, while Mohamed Diame - the player whose winning goal in the League Championship playoff secured Hull's return to the Premier League - was sold to Newcastle in early August.

Protest continues

Meanwhile, Hull fans disillusioned with the owners continue to protest against the way the club is being run, and will likely do so again tomorrow. "No communication, no manager, no engagement, no signings, no identity, no concessions, no honesty," the Hull City Supporters' Trust said in a statement. It's against this backdrop that caretaker manager Mike Phelan is working, but the former Manchester United assistant coach has come up with a winning formula. Hard work, good preparation and making the most of limited goalscoring chances are reasons behind Hull's flying start - a 2-1 win over Leicester followed by a 2-0 victory at Swansea. Midfielder David Meyler gave an insight into Phelan's methods after the Swansea game on Saturday.

"We could tell you everything about them - how long they sleep, how many times they go to the toilet every day," Meyler said. "That's just the type of person he is. He's a winner and he's trying to embed that into us." Meyler wants Phelan to be hired as full-time manager and that possibility could materialize now that Hull's No 1 target, Wales coach Chris Coleman, has pledged his future to the national team. Phelan has spent almost all his coaching career as a No. 2, most significantly to Alex Ferguson at Manchester United. "When you're Sir Alex's assistant for long enough, I presume you go through everything," Meyler said, "and he's not taking any short-cuts now." — AFP



THURINGIA, Germany: Bayern Munich's defender Mats Hummels reacts after scoring during the German Cup (DFB Pokal) first round football match between the German first division team Bayern Munich and the German regional soccer team Carl Zeiss Jena. — AFP

ANCELOTTI'S BAYERN KICK OFF EYEING FIFTH STRAIGHT TITLE

BERLIN: Bayern Munich kick off the 2016/17 German Bundesliga season at home to Werder Bremen today with their rivals out to stop them winning a fifth straight Bundesliga title. Germany defender Mats Hummels and burly Portugal midfielder Renato Sanches have been Bayern's only off-season signings, but it's all change behind the scenes at the Munich giants. Against Bremen, new coach Carlo Ancelotti will be in charge of his first game at the Allianz Arena as he becomes the fourth Italian to coach in the Bundesliga after Giovanni Trapattoni, Nevio Scala and Roberto Di Matteo.

"Our priority is to win the league," Ancelotti said when he first took over from Pep Guardiola. "We're looking forward to the start of the season and we're ready for the first game against Bremen." Ancelotti has brought in an entire new backroom staff, including son Davide, while Bayern are without a sporting director since Matthias Sammer quit with health problems at the end of the season. Security has been stepped up for the sea-

son opener in Munich amid terror fears in Germany. Rucksacks over an A4 size and large bottles are banned with a crowd of around 75,000 expected. Nothing short of three points will be acceptable for the defending champions who made history last season by becoming the first club to win four consecutive German league titles. Bremen are without Germany striker Max Kruse, who injured his knee in their shock German Cup defeat to third-division Sportfreunde Lotte last Sunday. Kruse has undergone an operation and will be out for the foreseeable future. "It's a real blow because it looks like we're going to be without a key player for a good while," coach Viktor Skripnik told the club's website. However Bremen, who narrowly avoided relegation last season, hope to have ex-Bayern striker and Peru veteran Claudio Pizarro, who turns 38 in October, back from a thigh injury. Several Bayern stars who are coming back from injury will be missing including Sanches, defender Jerome Boateng, defender Holger Badstuber and winger Arjen Robben.

Dortmund's new eight

New-look Borussia Dortmund, who finished second to Bayern last season, open their campaign at home to Mainz tomorrow having made eight new signings over the summer. Spain defender Marc Bartra, France under-21 winger Ousmane Dembele, midfielder Sebastian Rode, Portugal international left-back Raphael Guerreiro and Germany winger Andre Schuerrle are some of the new signings set to feature for Thomas Tuchel's side. World Cup-winner Mario Goetze is also back in the yellow and black shirt after three years at Bayern.

Having signed Germany and former Bayern striker Mario Gomez from Fiorentina, Wolfsburg open their campaign at Augsburg, who have former Darmstadt coach Dirk Schuster in charge this season. Alongside Gomez, Wolfsburg have signed Stuttgart forward Daniel Didavi, Spanish forward Borja Mayoral on loan from Real Madrid and Poland winger Jakub Blaszczykowski as they try to make sure they are snapping at the heels of the Bundesliga's top clubs. — AFP

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BELO HORIZONTE: United States goalkeeper Hope Solo holds the ball during a women's Olympic football tournament match against New Zealand at the Mineirao stadium in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, Wednesday, Aug 3, 2016. — AP

HOPE SOLO SUSPENDED FROM US SOCCER TEAM