



DIAMOND & POLKI FESTIVAL

THE LARGEST COLLECTION OF DIAMOND & POLKI JEWELLERY

50% DISCOUNT
+ 10% CASH BACK
 AS GIFT VOUCHER ON PURCHASE
 OF DIAMOND & POLKI JEWELLERY

ZERO DEDUCTION
 ON EXCHANGE OF 22K OLD GOLD
 FOR 22K NEW GOLD, PRECIOUS,
 DIAMOND, POLKI & PEARL JEWELLERY

OFFER VALID TILL 7TH JANUARY 2017

Joyalukkas
 World's favourite jeweller

Panasonic Tower, Kuwait City - Tel: 22279460 • Fahaheel, Makkah Street - Tel: 2392 2148
 Al Rai Branch 2, Near Lulu Hypermarket & Friday Market - Tel: 2220 2466

 150 FILS
 NO: 17081
 40 PAGES

DEMONSTRATORS RALLY TO PROTEST ALEPPO CARNAGE

ASSEMBLY TO DEBATE ALEPPO ON DEC 28

Min 10°
 Max 18°
 High Tide 13:35
 Low Tide 07:01 & 18:53

RIGHTS GROUP CALLS TO END KAFALA SYSTEM

KUWAIT: A Kuwaiti rights group yesterday called on the government to abolish its "kafala" system for foreign workers, which has long been criticized as a form of bonded labor or even slavery. In its 2016 annual report, the Kuwait Association for the Fundamentals of Human Rights called for "abolishing the current kafala system and replacing it with rules according to international standards". The system prevents workers from moving to a new job before their contracts end without their boss' consent, resulting in a wide range of abuses.

The rights group also expressed concern over the so-called administrative deportation of thousands of foreign workers every year by the interior ministry. "The association demands that no foreigner is deported out of Kuwait without a final court order," it said. The report criticized the segregation of Kuwaitis and expatriates at public health centers, saying it was discrimination on the basis of nationality.

The association warned of the growing "language of hatred" against foreigners and expressed concern over racial discrimination in Kuwait.

Continued on Page 13



KUWAIT: Protesters hold placards during a demonstration yesterday outside the Russian Embassy to condemn Moscow's support for the Syrian regime besieging rebel-held Aleppo. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat (See Page 2)

By B Izzak and Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: Around 2,400 Kuwaitis protested outside the Russian embassy yesterday to condemn Moscow's support for the Syrian regime besieging rebel-held Aleppo. Carrying banners saying "Stop crimes" and "Save Aleppo", the demonstrators marched on the diplomatic compound in Daiya housing the embassy. The crowds gathered yesterday were drawn from various backgrounds, and included both liberals and Islamists.

MP Jamaan Al-Harbash demanded to sever ties with Russia because of its support for Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad. He also called for Kuwait to allow more Syrians into the country, saying "we have to support our fellow Arab brothers and sisters against the attacks and crimes by the Syrian regime and its allies".

Kuwait is home to more than 130,000 Syrian nationals, according to government statistics released in 2014. Kuwait was one of the first Gulf countries to sever ties with Syria and pledge support to the rebels seeking to topple Assad. "Today, the Syrian people are at war with Russia... dead bodies are in the streets of Aleppo," Harbash told the crowd. "We call on Turkey and the Gulf states to expel Russian envoys and sever diplomatic ties with Moscow," he added.

"Our Assembly was the first Arab and Islamic parliament to hold a special session to discuss the situation in Syria. The Arab nations should unify to bring about practical solutions. Residents of Aleppo have sent their last messages from there, but we say the messages

Continued on Page 13



MANILA: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte gestures while delivering a speech before local and foreign businessmen at Malacanang Palace on Dec 12, 2016. — AFP

DUTERTE BOASTS HE KILLED CRIMINALS

MANILA: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has said he personally killed suspected criminals when he was mayor of a southern city to set an example for police. Duterte made the comments in a speech late on Monday night to businessmen as he discussed his campaign to eradicate illegal drugs, which has seen police and unknown assailants kill thousands of people since he became president on June 30.

After speaking about police killing suspects during the current crime war, Duterte said he led similar efforts when he was mayor of Davao, the major southern city that he ruled for most of the previous 20 years. "In Davao I used to do it personally. Just to show to the guys (police) that if I can do it why can't you," Duterte said in his speech at the presidential palace. "And I'd go around in Davao with a motorcycle,

with a big bike around, and I would just patrol the streets, looking for trouble also. I was really looking for a confrontation so I could kill."

Duterte, 71, also responded to criticism from human rights groups and US President Barack Obama about his anti-crime tactics, vowing he would not be intimidated by their criticism into stopping. "Sorry, I am not about to do that," he said. In a speech to expatriate Filipinos during a state visit to Cambodia yesterday, Duterte joked that as mayor of Davao he would go on missions with police and shoot blindly at criminal suspects. "I (would) sometimes go along with them. If you say I shot someone, maybe I did. I was closing my eyes because I am scared of firing a gun," said Duterte, a lawyer and former state prosecutor.

Continued on Page 13

ALEPPO HIT BY STRIKES, SHELLING

DEAL SIGNED WITH CHINA TO BUILD 2 EXPAT HOSPITALS

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Health Insurance Company (Daman) has signed a contract worth KD 162 million (\$530.85 million) with China Metallurgical Group Corporation (MCC) to build two hospitals in Jahra and Ahmadi governorates with capacity of 600 beds each. The hospitals will serve insurance-paying expatriates, who account for some 70 percent of Kuwait's 4.4 million population.

The hospitals are to be ready to operate by the end of 2019, Dr Ahmad Al-Saleh, Daman's board-member and chief executive, said in his speech during the signing ceremony, adding that the MCC would carry out design, construction, equipping and maintenance works. Signing the deal is part of the first phase of Kuwait's plan to overhaul the health system nationwide, Saleh was quoted by Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) as saying. Daman aims to provide healthcare services to expatriates separate from those provided by the government to Kuwaitis.

The project is also part of the Kuwait's development plan to provide top world-class healthcare services, Saleh said, adding that the new hospitals' interior and exterior design adhere to the latest international architectural and medical standards. Saleh did not mention

Continued on Page 13

ALEPPO: Shelling and air strikes sent terrified residents running through the streets of Aleppo yesterday as a deal to evacuate rebel districts of the city was in danger of falling apart. The agreement reached yesterday was meant to pave the way for thousands of civilians and rebel fighters to evacuate Syria's second city, scene of some of the worst fighting in more than five years of war. But cold and hungry civilians who had gathered

before dawn to evacuate were instead plunged back into a familiar nightmare.

"Bombing is ongoing, no one can move. Everyone is hiding and terrified," activist Mohammad Al-Khatib told AFP from inside the city. "The wounded and dead are lying in the street. No one dares to try and retrieve the bodies." The evacuation, agreed under a deal brokered by Russia and Turkey, had been due to

Continued on Page 13



ALEPPO: A wounded Syrian woman from the Al-Sukari neighborhood is helped onto the back of a truck as she flees during the government forces' military operation to retake remaining rebel-held areas in this embattled northern city yesterday. —AFP

AMAZON COMPLETES FIRST DRONE DELIVERY

WASHINGTON: Amazon said yesterday it completed its first delivery by drone, in what the global online giant hopes will become a trend in automated shipments by air. The delivery to a customer near Cambridge, England, was announced in a tweet by Amazon founder and chief executive Jeff Bezos. "First-ever #AmazonPrimeAir customer delivery is in the books. 13 min - click to delivery," he wrote of the Dec 7 order. A video on Amazon's web page showed the delivery process - with a quadcopter

drone delivering an Amazon Fire TV box and a bag of popcorn to a customer identified only as Richard B.

Amazon, which has been testing drone deliveries in the US and elsewhere, has on several occasions complained that the regulatory environment in the United States for these automated deliveries is more cumbersome. In its video, Amazon noted that it is working with two customers receiving drone deliveries in the Cambridge area and soon hoped to expand to

"dozens" near its warehouse.

Amazon is not the only group working on drone deliveries. Google parent Alphabet has a similar project known as Wing and some reports say US retail behemoth Wal-Mart is also studying drone deliveries. In the US, the first commercial drone delivery was made in July when convenience store 7-Eleven, with drone startup Flirtey, transported a chicken sandwich, hot coffee and donuts to a customer near Reno, Nevada.

Continued on Page 13



KUWAIT: Kuwaitis hold placards during a demonstration outside the Russian embassy to condemn Moscow's support for the Syrian regime besieging rebel-held Aleppo yesterday in Kuwait City. Carrying banners saying "Stop crimes" and "Save Aleppo," around 2,000 demonstrators marched on the diplomatic compound housing the embassy in Kuwait City. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



MP Jamaan Al-Harbash speaks during the rally.



Prominent cleric Mohammad Al-Awadhi speaks during the rally.



MP Hamdan Al-Azmi speaks during the rally.

KUWAIT URGES SECURITY COUNCIL BE RESPONSIBLE TOWARD ALEPPO

STATE CALLS FOR EMERGENCY ARAB MEETING

KUWAIT: The State of Kuwait yesterday called on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to shoulder "its historic responsibility and stop the blood shedding" in the embattled Syrian city of Aleppo. The State of Kuwait, which has followed up "with deep concern and pain, the tragic conditions experienced by the Syrian brethren in Aleppo, has called on the international community, namely the Security Council, to shoulder the historic responsibility and halt the blood-letting, protect the civilians and dispatch humanitarian aid into the city," said an official source of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a statement.

Kuwait calls on the international commu-

nity to respond to the exerted efforts by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Turkey and hold the extraordinary and emergency session of the UN General Assembly to discuss the situation in Syria, the official source added.

Kuwait, in line with its Arab and Islamic responsibilities, which has called for an emergency session of the Arab League Ministerial Council, has also urged for an urgent meeting at the Islamic level to discuss the tragic developments in Aleppo.

As part of these efforts, First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah has called the chiefs of the GCC, the Arab League

and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, counterparts in Arab and Islamic nations, urging them to respond to the call for holding the emergency meetings.

Emergency meeting

Meanwhile, Kuwait called for holding an extraordinary Arab ministerial meeting next Monday to discuss the "tragic conditions" in the war-battered Syrian city of Aleppo. Ambassador Ahmad Abdulrahman Al-Bakr, the State of Kuwait Permanent Delegate to the Arab League, said in a statement that Kuwait requested earlier yesterday holding an irregular meeting of the Arab foreign ministers to discuss the current dangerous con-

ditions in shadow of the aggravating tragic situation in the city of Aleppo.

Current consultations are involving Kuwait, the Arab League General Secretariat and Tunisia, the current chair of the Arab League Council. The Arab League Council is due to hold an extraordinary meeting at the delegates' level today in response to a request by Qatar-backed by other Arab states to discuss the catastrophic conditions in Aleppo.

Phone calls

In the meantime, Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani discussed Tuesday, via phone, with

Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu recent developments in Aleppo.

During the two phone calls, they reviewed the worsening humanitarian situation in the Syrian city of Aleppo as a result of the brutal shelling by the regime and its militias. They also touched upon means to intensify international efforts to stop massacres and gross violations against the Syrian people, to take out civilians through safe humanitarian corridors, and to ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid to the trapped people. —KUNA



KUWAIT RAISES \$500,000 FOR ALEPPO

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) said it has raised a sum of \$500,000 in humanitarian and relief aid to the residents of the besieged Syrian city of Aleppo. The sum is just part of a \$1 million fundraising campaign aiming at alleviating the sufferings of the residents of Aleppo, the KRCS's public relations and media chief Khaled Al-Zaid said yesterday.

Zaid urged Kuwaiti people to support the relief campaign, dubbed "Aleppo's Scream" in order to help in easing out the woes of Aleppo residents who have been suffering awfully critical living conditions.

He added that the society's humanitarian initiative was launched Tuesday and runs for five days. It comes within the framework of Kuwait's relentless relief efforts aiming at helping Syrian refugees and displaced persons in general and people of Aleppo in particular, the KRCS official pointed out.

The besieged Syrian city of Aleppo has been under stiff attacks by Syrian government forces and their allied militias, sparking wide-scale Arab and international outrage. Earlier on Tuesday, the UN Security Council (UNSC) held an emergency session

upon France and UK request against the tragic backdrop in Aleppo.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon appealed to those who have the influence and the power to alleviate the suffering of the people of Aleppo. Qatar called Tuesday for an emergency meeting of the Arab League Council at the level of permanent delegates to discuss the tragic situation in the Syrian city of Aleppo. Meanwhile, the State of Kuwait has called for holding an extraordinary Arab ministerial meeting next Monday to discuss the "tragic conditions" in the war-torn city. —KUNA



SPEAKER, PREMIER VOW COOPERATION



Marzouq Al-Ghanem

KUWAIT: The Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah early yesterday. His Highness the Prime Minister congratulated Ghanem on being reinstated as Parliament Speaker. Ghanem and Sheikh Jaber stressed the importance of boosting cooperation between the legislative and executive authorities to best fulfill the interests the country and people. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Capital Market Authority's Chairman Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf speaks during a seminar yesterday. —KUNA

KUWAIT'S CMA SAYS \$2 BILLION OF CORPORATE BONDS, SUKUK IN PIPELINE

KUWAIT: Kuwait's financial regulator is considering requests from local companies to issue \$2 billion worth of conventional bonds and sukuk, the chairman of the Capital Markets Authority, Nayef Al-Hajraf, said yesterday. The applications are under study for final approval, he said at a conference in Kuwait. He did not specify whether the issues would be in foreign or

local currency.

Bond issuance approved by the CMA totals \$4 billion since new rules covering debt sales were introduced a year ago, while sukuk stand at \$700 million, Hajraf added. He also said the CMA was working on creating regulations for a secondary market to trade bonds and sukuk in Kuwait. —Reuters

SLOVENIA KEEN ON COOPERATION WITH GCC STATES, KUWAIT: ERJAVEC

LJUBLJANA: The Republic of Slovenia is keen on developing relations with the GCC countries, especially Kuwait, said Karl Erjavec, Slovenian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs yesterday. Speaking on the sidelines of the two-day



Karl Erjavec, Slovenian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs

Slovenian-GCC conference, Erjavec said that this will not be the last meeting of this kind to be held in Slovenia, stressing that his country was looking forward for future events aimed at boosting cooperation between the two sides.

The current meeting will look into all suitable measures to enhance cooperation between the GCC and Slovenia, said the minister. Slovenia, as part of the EU, is willing to

boost ties with the Gulf States, said Erjavec who alluded to the 25th meeting of the EU and GCC Foreign Ministers back in July.

The Foreign Minister said that the EU, as one of the strongest partners to the GCC bloc, had signed several agreements to strengthen commercial and economic ties, revealing that the two sides signed an agreement back in April 2016 to boost economic relations. On relations with Kuwait, Slovenian Minister said that holding dialogue with the Gulf state was within his country's top priorities.

Previous agreements signed between Slovenia and Kuwait had provided solid grounds for the two nations to pursue more cooperation in the near future, said the minister who commended the Kuwaiti participation in the current Slovenian-GCC conference.

Kuwait and Slovenia currently focused their cooperation within the commercial level, said Minister Erjavec who hoped that the two countries will increase their commercial exchange from the 2015 sum of 14.2 million euro. The Minister took the chance to invite Kuwaitis and GCC business personnel to invest in his country, revealing that the health tourism sector was one of the major business attractions in Slovenia.

Meanwhile, Erjavec touched on the issue of Kuwait's bid for a non-permanent seat as representative of Asia and the Pacific in the UNSC for 2018-19, saying that the strong bilateral relations will reflect positively on Slovenia's stance on the issue. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Khaled Al-Jarallah met yesterday with the Pakistani Ambassador to Kuwait Ghulam Dastagir discussing the bilateral relations between the states of Kuwait and Pakistan in addition to regional and international issues. —KUNA

KUWAITI GOVT OFFICIALS, NGOS PONDER AVENUES FOR REFORMS

KUWAIT: Officials and members of the Government economic affairs commission held a meeting yesterday with NGOs' representatives discussing possible steps to boost reforms at the national level and re-activate these associations' role in this respect.

The commission, headed by Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh, has opted to specialize its first meeting for such a debate, reflecting the government keenness on placing economic issues on top of the task priorities, according to a committee statement.

The meeting was held in light of guidelines by His Highness the Amir for greater efforts to push economic and financial reforms forward, and in implementation of His Highness the Prime Minister's instructions. Such an approach is necessary for alle-

viating the State budget burden, trimming expenditure, improving the business environment, the labor market, privatizing many sectors and services and creating jobs.

The meeting included representatives of the Graduates Society of Kuwait, Kuwait Bar Association, Kuwait Accountants and Auditors Association (KAAA), Kuwait Engineers Society, Kuwait Economic Society as well as specialists from government departments.

The Government Commission also includes Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs Dr Hind Al-Subaih, Minister of State for Housing Affairs and Minister of State for Utilities Yasser Abul, Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudan, Minister of Oil, Electricity and Water Essam Al-Marzouq. —KUNA

CROWN PRINCE RECEIVES OFFICIALS

KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace early yesterday. His Highness the Crown Prince also received First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-

Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah. Furthermore, His Highness received Deputy head of the Ruling Family Council Dr Sheikh Ibrahim Al-Duaj Al-Sabah. —KUNA



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. —KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah
AMIR RECEIVES CALLS FROM SAUDI KING, QATARI AMIR

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received separate phone calls Tuesday from Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz and Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, who both inquired about his health condition after he caught a cold. His Highness the Amir thanked King Salman and Sheikh Tamim for their phone calls which reflected the solid relationship between Kuwait and each of Saudi Arabia and Qatar, wishing them and their countries everlasting prosperity. —KUNA



Let the New Year take you places

Enjoy up to **40%** discount on Qatar Airways when using your Mastercard®

Book online using your Mastercard and enjoy up to 40% discount on Qatar Airways flights.

- Bookings should be made between December 7 and December 21, 2016
- Travel dates can be between December 8, 2016 and November 30, 2017
- Book online at www.qatarairways.com/mastercard Use promo code: **MASTERCARD**

Terms and conditions apply.





KUWAIT: National Security Bureau chief Sheikh Thamer Al-Ali Al-Sabah meets with head of a delegation from the Center for American Progress Ambassador John Craig. — KUNA

SECURITY CHIEF, US OFFICIAL DISCUSS COMMON ISSUES

KUWAIT: National Security Bureau chief Sheikh Thamer Al-Ali Al-Sabah met yesterday with the head of a delegation from the Center for American Progress Ambassador John Craig. The two officials discussed issues of mutual concern. During the meeting, strategies to enhance bilateral ties were discussed, in addition to regional and international developments, a statement by the bureau noted.

Meanwhile, Chairman and Director General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Sheikh Mubarak Al-Duaij Al-Ibrahim Al-Sabah received US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman at his office. The two sides discussed boosting bilateral ties and the role of media in spreading awareness among people on different topics and develop international ties. In this regard, Silverman hailed the role of Kuwait

media in boosting relations with the US. Sheikh Mubarak Al-Duaij noted meanwhile that KUNA was cooperating with other media organizations to fight extremism and promote international peace. The meeting was attended by KUNA's Deputy Director for Administrative and Financial Affairs Abdulhameed Malak and Deputy Director for Editorial Affairs Saad Al-Ali. — KUNA

KUWAITI YOUTHS' COMBAT OF RADICAL IDEOLOGIES 'AMAZING': US DIPLOMAT

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti youths' creativity in combating radicalization and extremism via social media and other technological means is amazing and highly appreciated, said Nicole Chulick, Deputy Coordinator for Products in the Bureau of International Information Programs at the US State Department.

Following a workshop organized by the American Embassy under the title (Tech-Camp) late Tuesday, Chulick said that it was very encouraging from the Kuwaiti government to take part in such an event which reflected keenness in countering terrorism and false information on social media.

Tech-Camp, the first event of its kind to be held in the Gulf region, is helping in dispelling wrong ideas about the Muslim world, said Chulick who affirmed that the youth here, with their home-grown ideas, produced creative methods that were amazingly refuting terrorist ideologies.

The participants from most ministries have proven that they were capable of producing effective measures to counter negative messages on social media via spreading awareness on the vital issue through personal accounts and other applications, Chulick affirmed.

"Kuwait has an important leading role in helping to stop such an event like Tech-Camp," she said. Participants from the private sector also showed great interest in combating terrorism through social media outlets like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and Spanchat, she added.

Kuwait's keenness on being part of the global fight against terrorism is very important, said the US diplomat, adding that this threat was becoming part of an international issue that needed to be addressed promptly.

"If we are going to combat online radicalization in our communities, we need to involve the full support from your communities. We need every voice," said Chulick, adding "I have said in the Tech-Camp workshop that we as individuals should be responsible in what we say in public and on social networks... To check the content of what we receive and what we watch... It is our responsibility first, we should start with ourselves then spread these ideas to other individuals."

She emphasized "The United States has an obligation to continue its fight against terrorism on social media and by continuing more Tech-Camps and workshop in many regions to spread more awareness."

"I believe that the problem of using social network in promoting violence and terrorism is an ongoing problem and we have an obligation to fight such radical movements that are spreading rapidly around the world." In her closing statements, Chulick encouraged Kuwaiti youth to continue posting information and updates on their activities, stay engaged, and carry on collaborating with one another, affirming that "All young people have a vital role. They are the most credible voice to confront false narratives aiming to target their peers and their communities." — KUNA



Nicole Chulick, Deputy Coordinator for Products in the Bureau of International Information Programs at the US State Department.

Supported by

Australian Embassy
in Kuwait

In cooperation with

Colours of Australia

STUDENT ART COMPETITION

12 December 2016 to 26 January 2017

HELLO ARTISTS

Welcome to the student art competition. We hope you are ready to produce a beautiful painting and win valuable prizes. The theme for your painting is



Australia is a land of many colours, in the diversity of its landscape, animals, food and people. Show us what you think of when you imagine Australia!

Good Luck To You..

Sponsored by



- Competition is open to students from (6 - 9 years) (10 - 13 years) (14 years and above) and students with special needs.
- The competition is open to all schools in Kuwait (Government and Private)
- 10 winners from each category will receive valuable prizes.
- All participants will receive a certificate of appreciation.
- All schools participating in the competition will receive a certificate of appreciation.
- Any schools or individuals interested in participating are welcome to visit the office of Kuwait Times and collect the drawing sheet.
- Drawing sheets will be given to schools FREE of charge.
- Only drawing sheets provided by the Kuwait Times will be permitted for use in the competition.
- You may use any drawing material such as colour pencils, paint or crayons.

Participation Form

If you are interested in participating fill in the form and send it to Kuwait Times.

From:

We would like to confirm our participation in the above mentioned activity with the total number of participating students so the required number of drawing sheets can be delivered to our school.

School:

Tel: Fax:

Address:

Total number of interested students are
 6-9 years 10-13 years 14 years and above special needs

Name: Signature:

For more information contact Kuwait Times
Tel: 24835616/7 Fax 24835620/1 or send an email to: ads@kuwaittimes.net

SHEIKHA HESSA PRAISES 'SELF-MADE' KUWAITI WOMEN

MARRAKECH: Chairperson of Kuwait Businesswomen Committee Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah said Tuesday the Kuwaiti women have always been self-made and shoulder their responsibilities at present as they used to do in the past.

"In the past Kuwaiti mothers used to be independent in taking care of their children when the father goes fishing or pearling or dies. So, it is no wonder nowadays that they assert themselves economically and assume high posts in the public or political life on equal footing with men," Sheikh Hessa, also Chairperson of Council of Arab Businesswomen, pointed out. She made the remarks in an interview the sidelines of the Arab businesswomen forum being held here on December 12-16.

Sheikha Hessa noted that she engaged in business and public life affairs since was young thanks to the encouragement and support she received from her father. "His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah continues backing up the woman empowerment initiatives. The Kuwaiti political leadership spare no effort in supporting the businesswomen financially or through training and rehabilitation programs.

"There are numerous successful women who took up high managerial posts in state institutions and public life as well as diplomacy and politics as is the case in the parliament," she went on. Sheikha Hessa's presence at the economic forum was warmly welcomed by participants in the gathering.

Crucial step

Meanwhile, a group of Kuwaiti craftswomen said that women's empowerment represents a crucial step towards economic and social development. Secretary General of a Kuwaiti union of craftswomen Amina Ismail pressed Arab governments to support women to help "assimilate them into economic and social worlds." In a statement on the sidelines of the economic forum, Ismail noted that efforts to establish women empowerment could help expedite broad development in the Arab world.

Meanwhile, Jamila Al-Dwas, a member of this union, said that "women empowerment has become obligatory," adding that "Kuwait has made substantial progress on this issue." Moreover, another union member, Aseel Al-Mazyed underscored the "significant" phases that Kuwaiti women have completed, which proves that they are capable of standing alongside men to help build the nation's economy.

Kuwait's delegation to the economic forum organized by the Union of Moroccan Businesswomen comprises 20 women, headed by Sheikha Hessa Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah. The forum allows Arab businesswomen the chance to step up cooperation in business and economic realms. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri (center) meets ministry officials during a ceremony marking his assumption of the senior post. — KUNA

NEWLY-APPOINTED AWQAF MINISTER VOWS MODERATION TO BE MAINTAINED AS POLICY

SPEED UP WORK: JUSTICE MINISTER

KUWAIT: Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri has affirmed his keenness on maintaining moderation and "combating extremism and thoughts of annihilation." Minister Al-Jabri, the sole elected parliament member in the recently formed new cabinet, made the assertion during a ceremony marking his assumption of the senior post.

The newly-assigned minister affirmed his keenness on maintaining "moderation, his resolve to fight radicalism and destructive thoughts; because our religion is a religion of moderation," indicating that scholars in the country are supportive of this

approach. The State of Kuwait has repeatedly affirmed that it advocates Islam as a religion of moderation and peaceful co-existence among diverse communities. Kuwait hosts communities from various nations of diverse faiths, with freedoms to practice their beliefs.

On his call to pray for the people of Aleppo, the minister replied, "this is the least we can offer to our stricken brothers in Aleppo" praying to His Almighty to relieve them of their hardships. The State of Kuwait has urged the Security Council to shoulder its responsibilities towards the tragic conditions in Aleppo and called

for an irregular Arab meeting to look into the plight of the war-battered residents of the Syrian city.

Separately, the new Minister of Justice, Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs Dr Faleh Al-Azb yesterday urged personnel at the Palace of Justice to speed up legal and judicial transactions. Minister Azb made the call for speedier performance of the tasks during a tour to various sections of the Palace of Justice and affiliate buildings, in an effort to pin point causes for work obstruction and delay. The minister during the inspection listened to a number of judges, attorneys, prosecutors and staff. —KUNA

ARWA GULF TRADING COMPANY TO TAKE PART IN HORECA 2017

KUWAIT: Preparations for the Horeca Kuwait 2017 exhibition are steadily progressing, and the event is attracting more companies to take part, since it is an event which provides a golden opportunity to exchange expertise to meet the local market's needs and future expansion plans. In this regard, Arwa Gulf Trading Company recently announced its intention to take part in the exhibition as a leading companies in the field of hospitality, food industries, transport and gas, especially since its products are very well known in Kuwait and overseas.

Commenting on his company's participation, General Manager Tareq Al-Saleh said that Aqua Cool has become a major brand in bottled drinking water in Kuwait and that it has won customers' trust because of its high quality.

Saleh added that Aqua Cool was recently awarded the 'Best Taste Award' by the International Quality and Taste Institute in Belgium. "Aqua Cool is healthy and very beneficial for the body because of the balanced minerals and low sodium it contains," he underlined.

Meanwhile, Mohammed Serajuddin,

the company's beverages department manager, said that Arwa Gulf Trading, Aqua Cool and Lavazza Kuwait have specialized in the supply of bottled water, water dispensing machines and components, ground coffee, coffee beans and WEGA machines for coffee shops, restaurant and hotels. He added that jointly with the Italian company of Lavazza, Arwa provides high quality coffee machines and various types of coffee, varying from ground coffee, coffee capsules and decaffeinated coffee. He also

noted that the company's plan to go into the retail market in Kuwait will be complete by the first quarter of 2017.

Horeca Kuwait 2017 has so far attracted over 70 companies due to display their products in the presence of a group of international experts and chefs and a large group of company and hotel owners. The exhibition is organized by Leaders Group in collaboration with Hospitality Services Company at Kuwait International Fairgrounds in Mishref on January 16-18, 2017.



Tareq Al-Saleh



Mohammed Serajuddin

SPEECH LAID ACTION ROADMAP

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's speech at the opening of the National Assembly's 15th legislative term on December 11th has laid a roadmap for the national action on all levels, Information Minister Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah affirmed yesterday.

Sheikh Salman, also Minister of State for Youth Affairs, made his remarks to KUNA following his meeting with Director General of the Public Authority for Sport (PAS) Sheikh Ahmad Al-Mansour Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Undersecretary of the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Al-Zain Al-Sabah, Director-General of Public Authority for Youth (PAY) Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, and a number of youth and sports leaderships.

His Highness' speech also sets up a comprehensive action plan for the Kuwaiti youth for the next stage, he said, noting that the Amir's speech also analyzed the country's local situations accurately and provided suitable solutions for them in a fashion that boosts Kuwait's status on regional and international levels. His Highness the Amir's political and leadership wisdom made the youth issue a top priority and interest in the country, providing them with all types of support, care, and attention, Sheikh Salman said.—KUNA

MPs TO DEBATE ECONOMIC REFORMS ON JANUARY 10

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem yesterday said that a request by several MPs to debate the government's economic reform package has been placed on the agenda of the Jan 10 session for discussion. MPs had demanded that the government should explain the measures included in the package, which was designed by the government in the face of falling oil revenues and to plug the budget deficit. Opposition MPs have vowed that they will strongly oppose any measure by the government to raise charges on services or to tax citizens to boost non-oil revenues.

Sawwagh's death

Meanwhile, opposition MP Al-Humaidi Al-Subaei said he will demand the formation of a committee to probe the case of the death of former lawmaker Faleh Al-Sawwagh, who died a few months ago while undergoing surgery. Subaei said the probe has become necessary after new Health Minister Jamal Al-Harbi referred the case to the public prosecution to investigate suspected medical negligence that led to Sawwagh's death. MPs paid tributes to Sawwagh during the opening session of the Assembly on Sunday.

Treatment abroad

Harbi also said that a committee has been formed to review decisions to send Kuwaiti patients for medical treatment abroad and establish if the decisions were in line with the law. The minister said that if the probe finds that some people who didn't deserve it were sent, the officials responsible for sending them will be penalized.

KAC pilots

Rapporteur of the Assembly's financial and economic affairs committee MP Safa Al-Hashem said the panel discussed yesterday the case of 38 Kuwait Airways pilots who were forced to do other government jobs as part of implementing the KAC privatization law. Hashem said that the pilots and the minister of housing and utilities attended the meeting to see how the pilots can be reinstated. She said that KAC management

has applied the law in a wrong way and the pilots should not be forced to leave the national carrier. Hashem said that the minister asked for time until Dec 25 to discuss the issue and

meet with the panel. She said that a number of MPs will file to amend two articles in the law related to appointments, adding she was not worried about the opposition of the adminis-

ENERGY AUTHORITY NEEDED: MINISTER

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

effective on May 2017.

KUWAIT: Minister of Oil and Minister of Electricity and Water Essam Al-Marzouq stressed the need for a legislation to establish a 'Public Authority for Electricity and Water.' He also noted that the authority would be public, meaning that all facilities currently under the ministry would not be privatized and will remain state-owned. Meanwhile, Marzouq stressed that the new electricity tariff is being studied by the Fatwa and Legislation Department, adding that it helps rationalize consumption, and is not primarily meant to increase the ministry's income. The new tariffs are expected to become

Cooperation

Chairman of the Municipal Council's reform and development committee Osama Humoud Al-Otaibi stressed that cooperation between the Municipal Council and the Ministry of State for Economic Affairs, formerly the Ministry of State for Planning and Development, is in progress in order to remove all the obstacles facing development plans.

Showers

Meteorologist Salah Al-Ansari reported light showers and cloudy weather over Kuwait International Airport and Um Al-Maradem island yesterday.

UTILITIES' MINISTRY DEPARTMENTS TO BE PRIVATIZED: MINISTER

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Minister of Housing and Minister of Utilities Yasser Abul received yesterday Hameed Al-Qattan, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Utilities, formerly known as the Ministry of Communications. During the meeting which also included other ministry officials, Abul asked them to change the ministry's name officially to the Ministry of Utilities in all official correspondences. He also gave Qattan full authority to run the ministry's affairs, and reassured the assistant undersecretaries that they would not be reshuffled for the time being. Meanwhile, Abul stressed the importance of privatizing all of the ministry sectors, which include the post, long distance calls, landlines and transport department.

Employees financial, administrative and vocational rights will be protected following the privatization process, Abul assured.

Officer accuses inmate of arson

A police man working at the central prison reported that someone had torched his vehicle, while the fire also damaged his brother's vehicle. Both cars were parked outside his house in Abdullah Mubarak, he said. He noted that surveillance cameras showed the incinerator's vehicle parked outside the house while the incident took place. The prison guard accused an inmate of committing the arson, saying that he had clearly threatened to torch his vehicle because he had refused to smuggle in some contrabands for him. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress.

النصر
ALNASSER

WIN 100 GRAMS GOLD EVERY DAY FOR 50 DAYS
13th December 2016 - 1st February 2017

Shop at Kalyan Jewellers and stand a chance to get more gold than you pay for. Buy gold jewellery worth KWD 50 and get one Raffle coupon, or buy diamond jewellery worth KWD 50 and get two Raffle coupons to double your chances of winning. This promotion is valid across all Kalyan outlets in UAE, Kuwait & Qatar. The campaign will have 23 lucky winners from UAE, 17 from Qatar and 10 from Kuwait over the course of 50 days. So make the most of this golden opportunity. Visit your nearest Kalyan Jewellers today.

KALYAN PROMISE

AL DABBUS STREET, FAHAHEEL - 23921533 | OPP. SOUK AL-WATIYA, MALIYA - 22287633
OPP. FRIDAY MARKET, AL RAI - 24752933 | AL SALAM MALL, GROUND FLOOR, SALMIYA - 22251534
104 branches spread across India and Middle East | www.kalyanjewellers.net | Follow us on Facebook | kalyanjewellersmiddleeast | @kalyanjewellers

MPs TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC IMBALANCE AS PRIORITY

KUWAIT: Several MPs indicated some of the government's priorities by speaking about the demographic imbalance and the problem of 'bachelors'. MPs Osama Al-Shaheen, Oudah Al-Ruwaei, Salah Khourshid, Hamad Al-Harshani and Khalil Al-Saleh called to put an end to these issues that have been raised for more than a decade without any solutions.

Shaheen considered rectifying the defect in the population structure and a finding logical solution for the bachelor problem among his priorities, especially since the imbalance has negative economic, social and security implications. He said repeated government promises of reform did not produce true reform - rather it widened the gap between the number of expats and citizens.

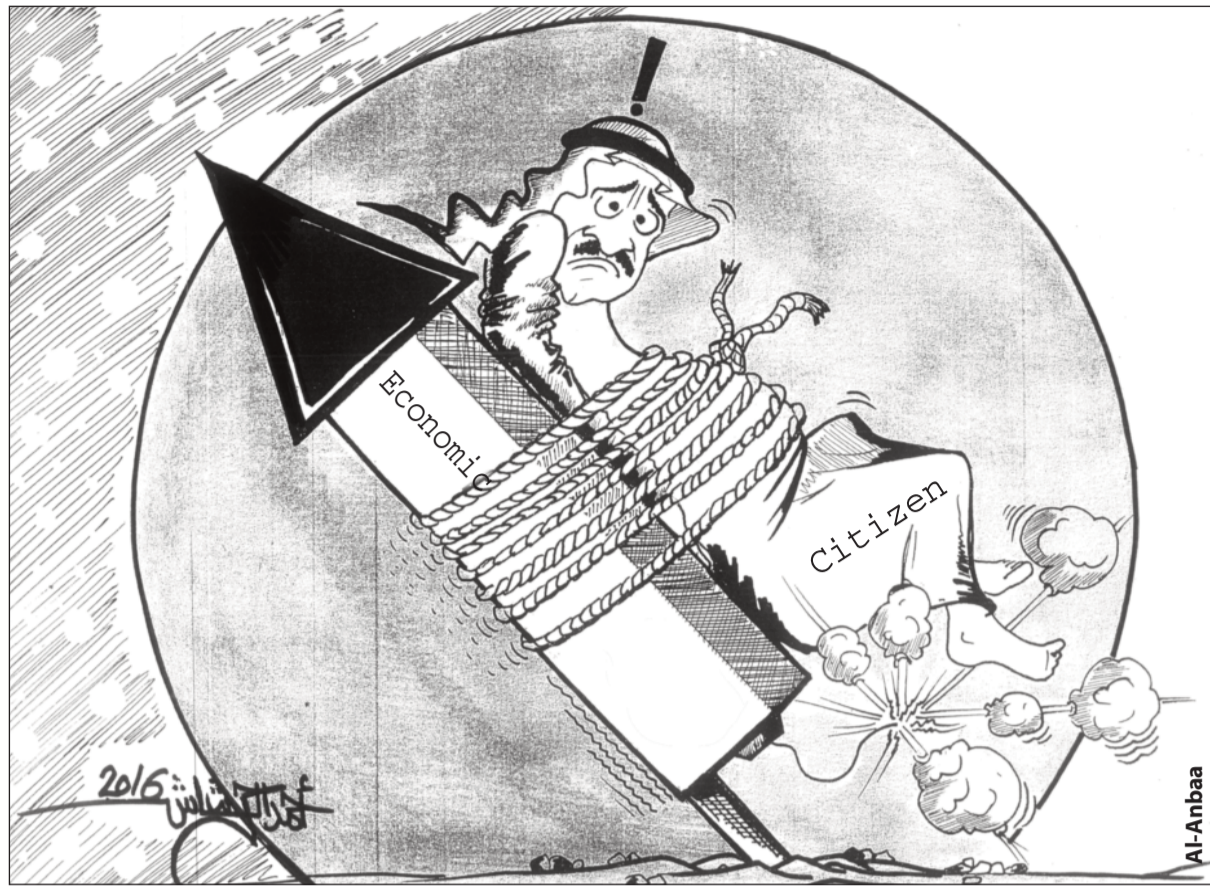
Shaheen said the defect in the population structure is increasing, and it is strange that the focus is only on certain nationalities. "Reform should be on two tracks - the first is to boost the percentage of citizens compared to expats and bring them back to becoming a majority; and diversify nationalities that are participating in building the country, and there should not be a concentration of certain nationalities," he said.

Meanwhile, Assembly Secretary Ruwaie said "if the government had complied with the rules and did not appease anyone at the expense of the population structure, we would not have seen these problems". "This should be dealt with according to the law," he added.

Khourshid asked the Cabinet to "put an end to the bachelors' problem and search for a serious and well-studied solution instead of transferring problems". "The bachelors' problem is not one of today, since a decade ago the government spoke about building cities for bachelors. But due to favoritism in distributing projects, no bachelor cities were built," he charged. "One of the most dangerous problems that has surfaced lately is that of single women, especially those seen on the streets, which may create moral problems," he said, calling for holding those who caused the bachelors' problem to account.

Harshani called for readjusting the demographic structure because it is the most important pillar of development, especially since it is linked to the security, economy and social sectors. He called upon the social affairs and labor minister to announce solutions for the problem and end the issue of bachelors.

Saleh also demanded the social affairs and labor minister to adjust the population structure and called for a strategy to reduce the number of expats, "because it is no longer acceptable to have the number of expats three times the number of citizens". "We are not against expats, but we are for reducing their numbers and finding solutions to the bachelor problem. There is no dispute over the necessity to find a solution for their humanitarian problems, and punish those who caused the unrealistic increase in their numbers," he added. — Al-Rai



الجريدة

Al-Jarida

37TH GCC SUMMIT

By Dr Hassan Jouhar

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) recently held its 37th summit in Manama without any surprises, especially with relation to the GCC union project, which reflects lack of unanimous integrated visions at the time being, despite media enthusiasm and the support provided by some political figures and blocs in some member states, including Kuwait, to such media campaigns. The summit settled for taking the traditional attitudes towards many regional and international issues and emphasizing member states' cooperation in various fields.

Hesitancy about declaring the GCC union, regardless of its form and suggested legal or political structure, remains the wisest and most balanced option at this stage because the infrastructure for regional integration is still immature, be it on economic level as for the unified currency or the joint market, or in terms of diversifying sources of income, in addition to transport links and land and sea connections amongst GCC brothers, though some of these projects, like the railway line, is underway.

Politically speaking and despite agreeing on many issues amongst GCC capitals, attitudes are still diverse and relatively different towards some major regional and international issues including the situation in Syria, Iraq, Yemen and most recently Egypt, in addition to Iran. The US presidential election results made the

situation more complicated. In addition, Oman's attitude, in particular, towards many of these issues might prevent the establishment of a full GCC union or make it prematurely born, which might create a great deal of embarrassment to such a long journey.

On the other hand, any project to declare the establishment of a regional union upon security concerns alone would be more like a reaction to some of the hot issues mentioned above, including what most GCC states consider as Iranian provocative acts. It might also direct member states towards adopting solid political tools and make accelerating decisions at the expense of completing the infrastructure needed for more economic and cultural conformity. Many similar pacts made as reactions to mere security or political situations could not hold for long and were doomed to failure, such as the Arab Maghreb Union, Warsaw Pact, Baghdad Pact and the Arab Cooperation Council.

GCC integration must be made upon well-studied foundations stemming from peoples' wills and aspirations, in addition to the challenges GCC states are facing in terms of sustainable human development, diversifying economies and activating the role of GCC diplomacy in making friends, which will make any future unity project be well-made in a promising way.

— Translated by Kuwait Times

Crime

Report

DETECTIVES HELD FOR THEFT

KUWAIT: Four detectives and two Syrians were arrested for breaking into a man's house and robbing a safe. The suspect were identified through CCTV footage that the complainant provided to police. The four detectives broke into the citizen's house looking for an unlicensed weapon, leaving the door broken. The owner was surprised on returning home to find out that the safe was missing. The six, including the four detectives were arrested for questioning and further legal action by Salmiya police station.

Officer injured

A driver of a rundown truck failed to escape from police, but ran over a technician deliberately. The incident took place in Kabd when officers at a checkpoint noticed the truck and decided to impound the vehicle for safety reasons. The driver ran over the technician while trying to escape, but was stopped and detained. The officer was sent to hospital for treatment.

Smuggling foiled

Two hashish rolls and 1,500 Tramadol tablets were found with an Egyptian man minutes after he arrived to Kuwait. The man was taken from Kuwait International Airport directly to the Drugs Control General Department for further action.

Without a license

"Be like a horse, and never get tired by taking this product." This promotion was written on a man's social media account which he used to sell aphrodisiacs without a proper license. Police had stopped a car that turned out to be reported missing by a car rental agency. Police noticed a bag of drugs next to the driver, and asked him about it. The man, bedoon (stateless), said the drugs were sexual stimulants, and that he sold them online for KD 45 per box. He was taken to the proper authorities to face charges. — Al-Rai, Al-Anbaa

News

in brief

GCC CHAMBERS REJECT JASTA

KUWAIT: The Federation of Gulf Cooperation Council Chambers (FGCCC) heavily criticized the Justice against Sponsors of Terrorism Act (JASTA) which was passed by the US Congress earlier this year. "Such legislative terrorism should not only be met with criticism and angry reactions, but also with planning for calculated steps and active diplomacy, creating a wide public relations network and forming a specialized work team that seeks aid from international legal companies and houses inside and outside the United States," said FGCCC Chairman Ali Al-Ghanem. Calling the arguments based on which the law was enacted as 'contradicting', Ghanem indicated that all countries were affected by terrorist actions, including GCC countries and Saudi Arabia in specific. He added that the law would affect US economic interests "and trillions of dollars that foreign countries invest inside America." — Al-Rai

GCC railway project

KUWAIT: The estimated cost of building a railway in Kuwait as part of the GCC railway project varies between KD 900 million and KD 1 billion, according to a study carried out by Ernst and Young and presented recently to the Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP). The \$19 billion project is planned to extend to up to 1,940 kilometers across all GCC states, including 145 kilometers in Kuwait. KAPP is still yet to receive offers regarding the project as it waits for removing obstacles standing in front of the projects - including more than 30 farms that have to be removed to make way for the tracks. — Al-Rai

Citizenship reinstatement

KUWAIT: A number of MPs discussed an initiative to form a team that discusses finding an amicable solution with the government to return citizenships of people whose nationalities were withdrawn. The reinstatement would come through a decision released by the cabinet, sources said, adding that steps are ongoing to launch this initiative to "end the suffering of those affected as soon as possible, especially since their situation is deteriorating." — Al-Rai

GULF BANK WINS 'BEST MESSAGE FOR TV COMMERCIAL 2016 AWARD' AT ADVERTISING CREATIVITY AWARDS CEREMONY

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank announced yesterday that it was awarded the "Best Message for TV Commercial 2016 Award" at the Fourth Advertising Creativity Awards (ACA) event organized by the Arab Media Forum. The event was held under the auspices of Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Homoud Al-Sabah, Minister of Information and State Minister for Youth Affairs.

The award was presented to Gulf Bank for its special TV commercial launched during the Holy Month of Ramadan 2016, and which was produced in cooperation with Impact and Echo. Gulf Bank's Ramadan video revolves around the issue of prejudice and stereotypes as well as around the importance of giving beyond one's limits. The video shares five different stories, where the actions of the characters are being perceived as pejorative but turning out that they are opting for good deeds. The video calls for people

to give beyond their limits and reminds every one of the importance of forgiveness during the Holy Month. The commercial was well received locally and regionally due to its impactful message and it was broadcasted on Kuwait television stations and released on YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and other social media channels.

The Advertising Creativity Award 2016 was organized for the fourth year by the Arab Media Forum, which has proven to be one of the region's most prominent local industry events. The event brought together many ministers, media and advertising executives, journalists, academics, authors, actors, businessmen, and social figures from all around the Arab world.

For more information about Gulf Bank, visit one of Gulf Bank's 56 branches, call the Customer Contact Center on 1805805, visit the bank's bilingual website at www.e-gulfbank.com or its social media channels on YouTube,



Representatives of Gulf Bank and Impact and Echo accepting the award at the 4th Advertising Creativity Awards Ceremony.



REMARKABLE ATTENDANCE AT KFH PAVILION AT GULF OIL COMPANY EXPO

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has participated in local banks exhibition organized by Gulf Oil Company. KFH participation comes as part of KFH efforts to introduce its services and products, highlight KFH nature of business and reiterate the significance of reaching various tiers of customers in addition to the achievement of cooperation and coordination with various entities working in various fields.

Specialized employees were able to present complete demonstrations and presentations on KFH services, products and financial solutions to visitors and Gulf Oil Company employees to enlighten them about all advantages and offers provided by the bank. These steps aim to reinforce communications with customers and identify their needs closely.

KFH presence in its special pavilion provides the opportunity to answer all queries and questions, introduce services and products provided by the bank including finance

deposits, banking cards, offers, special discounts, announce profits on deposits, discounts granted on prepaid credit cards and types of banking and finance transactions.

KFH pavilion witnessed remarkable attendance by oil sector employees, thus reiterating the compatibility and feasibility of the services and products provided by KFH. Needless to say that KFH has a vast customers' base and market share. Accordingly, it becomes a necessity to reach out to customers and update them on the latest services and banking products offered by the bank.

The visitors of KFH pavilion praised the remarkable interest and care which they have seen from KFH employees who have presented a comprehensive vision on KFH services, products, business and distinguished performance. These efforts have created a positive impression about KFH being the leading Islamic bank worldwide with a unique remarkable experience in Islamic finance services.

AUB SPONSORS SPECIAL NEEDS ENTERTAINMENT DAY

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank (AUB) announced the sponsorship of 'Color Your Life', a dedicated event that was developed to provide a host of activities and fun filled programs towards special needs across Kuwait. The all-day event was held recently at the Al-Kharafi Activity Kids Center and on the occasion of World Disability Day.

The event included a number of activities such as the creation of handcrafts in an entertaining environment, creating an extensive range of interactive activities that involve all participants from special needs while also encouraging a healthy competitive environment amongst participating teams.

Participating teams engaged in activities that involve movement motions, Henna drawings for females, caricature artists, as well as sports games amongst other entertaining programs and a wide variety of surprising gifts.

AUB said, "We are proud to be associated with social functions that aim to tell a strong story around Kuwait's integrated social fabric. AUB's commitment to corporate social responsibility starts with its belief in the core values of Kuwaiti society, and the bank's policies and vision are aligned to meet the needs of Kuwait.

We continue to support special needs development throughout the year, and ultimately reiterating AUB's commitment to the wider community."

AUB continues to drive community wide social initiatives that reflect its dedication towards sustainable devel-

opment across Kuwait. The bank's core social strategy includes driving programs across multiple sectors along with catering to special needs within its own branches, with the objective of providing an enhanced and complete experience.





SALE

The Avenues | Marina Mall



MADE IN BOGGI

M I L A N O



5 things to know ahead of the Abe-Putin hot springs summit

Page 10

Page 12

LOOPHOLE IN EU-TURKEY DEAL DRAWS MIGRANTS TO RIVER CROSSING



QARAQOSH, Iraq: This file photo taken on November 26, 2016 shows ammunition and mortar launchers confiscated from Islamic State (IS) group jihadists, after Iraqi forces recaptured it from the group.—AFP

IRAQI GAINS REVEAL HUGE SCALE OF IS ARMS INDUSTRY
CONVEYOR BELT FOR CAR BOMBS

QARAQOSH, Iraq: Factories churning out tens of thousands of munitions and an entire street turned into a conveyor belt for car bombs: advances by Iraqi forces around Mosul have laid bare the scale of the Islamic State group's arms industry.

In the more than two years since it seized control over swathes of the country, IS established a sprawling and highly organized system that experts say no other insurgent group has matched.

The capability has seriously boosted the threat from the group as it battles ferociously to cling to territory in Iraq and Syria—and the fresh intelligence could now prove vital in countering its plots to carry out attacks on the West.

Iraqi army deminer Hashim Ali picked his way carefully through the rubble as he explained how IS transformed Mart Shmony street in Qaraqosh, some 16 kilometers (10 miles) southeast of Mosul, into a production line of death after seizing the town in 2014 and forcing the mainly Christian population to flee.

Once it was a bustling thoroughfare of car workshops and stores selling Turkish furniture, but for the jihadists it offered all they needed to make the armored car bombs they use to blow up civilians and slow advancing Iraqi troops.

In one building they stripped the vehicles, in the neighboring one they cut the metal plates for armour. A few doors down they made the explosives. Just up the road they loaded the bombs into the car. "These people are not stupid, they are very well organized," Ali told AFP. "If you give them more time then they always find ways to surprise you."

Nearby the remnants of a pickup truck with a metal plate welded to its front stood inside a former furniture shop devastated by an air strike from the US-led coalition backing Iraqi troops. In towns, villages and districts retaken from IS the pattern was repeated.

AFP visited a number of sites where the group cannibalized existing infrastructure to create their own improvised arms factories. In a former cement plant in the town of Areej the

lathes in a cavernous hall had been put to work manufacturing mortars and rockets. Moulds for shells lay on tables and unfinished casings littered the floor.

At another location nearby, part of an abandoned gas storage facility was strewn with the deadly improvised explosive devices IS produced there. The white powder of homemade explosives spilled out of large bombs that the group had not had time to lay in the path of the advancing Iraqi troops.

'Something else'

"In terms of scale, planning, centralized command and control and the precision to which they are manufacturing, this is something else," James Bevan, director of Conflict Armament Research, a UK-based group which investigates arms flows around the globe, told AFP. "I can't name another armed group that manufactures on such a scale and with such a degree of coordination."

Bevan and teams from his organization have been on the ground in Iraq cataloguing the extent of IS arms production. Their findings, detailed in a

report released yesterday, show a sophisticated system that pours out tens of thousands of standardized mortars, rockets and explosives on an "unprecedented scale" and under strict quality controls.

While the raw materials for shell casings and missiles come from scrap metal and spare parts in the cities that IS have captured, the explosives and propellant are made from precursors mostly procured in bulk from the open market in Turkey and diverted through Syria.

As proof of their high standards the final IS products are often painted a military green, branded with the group's logo and packed into specially made crates to be dispatched to the various fronts it is fighting on.

Lessons for West?

On the battlefield the weapons they manufacture themselves have proven an important way for IS to supplement their flow of factory-made arms seized from government forces or rebel groups in Iraq and Syria. Commanded by former Iraqi military and intelligence officers, the group has fought conventional campaigns

with the help of its own improvised weaponry. But now, as the group faces increasing fragmentation with the territories it controls under pressure from various offensives, the intelligence being gleaned could prove invaluable for countering its threat beyond its shrinking heartland. "This will be critical for future efforts to counter the spread of this group," said arms expert Bevan. From France and Belgium to Egypt and Turkey the group and its affiliates have already carried out bloody terror attacks in a string of countries across the globe. Earlier this month the Europol police agency warned that IS where evolving their tactics to attack soft targets in Europe and could use the deadly car bombs they have employed to devastating effect in Iraq and Syria.

"If you look at the Iraq and Syria theatre as a hotbed for the development of more and more sophisticated improvised devices then it is probably unparalleled," Bevan said. "If and when Islamic State is pushed out of Mosul and pushed out of large parts of Syria its fighters will disperse and that means its bomb-makers will disperse too."—AFP



QARAQOSH, Iraq: This file photo taken on November 7, 2016 shows soldiers of the Iraqi army displaying weapons confiscated from the Islamic State (IS) group jihadists.—AFP

SHIPWRECK IN FLORIDA: THE STUFF OF HISTORY?

MIAMI: Treasure hunters have apparently found the 500-year-old remains of a naval expedition led by a colonizer who could have changed Florida's history, making it French-speaking at least for a while.

The big question is if the shipwreck is that of "La Trinite," the 32-gun flagship of a fleet led by Jean Ribault, a French navigator who tried to establish a Protestant colony in the southeast US under orders from King Charles IX.

They probably are, say authorities in Florida, the French government and independent archeologists. And if they in fact are, this is an unparalleled find, said John de Bry, director of the Center for Historical Archeology, a not-for-profit organization. "If it turns out to be 'La Trinite,' it is the most important, historically and archaeologically, the most important shipwreck ever found in North America," he told AFP.

All indications are that the shipwreck found is the real thing. The artefacts found at the site off Cape Canaveral include three bronze cannons with markings from the reign of King Henri II, who ruled right before Charles IX; and a stone monument with the French coat of arms that was to be used to claim the new territory. The remains are "consistent with material associated with the lost French Fleet of 1565," said Meredith Beatrice, director of communications with the Florida Department of State. In 1565, Ribault set sail from Fort Caroline, today Jacksonville, to attack his arch-enemy, the Spaniard Pedro Menendez de Aviles, who had been sent to Florida by King Philip of Spain to thwart French plans to set up a colony.

But Ribault got caught in a hurricane, which destroyed "La Trinite" and three other galleons and ended French dreams of claiming Florida. Ribault and hundreds of other French Huguenots were massacred by Menendez de Aviles.

Historical interest

"If the French had not been driven south and ships sunk by the hurricane, we would have a totally different story," said de Bry. "Florida could have been speaking French for a number of years." In modern day Florida, archeologists and historians have been looking for this shipwreck for years. Two years ago, an expedition from the state-run St. Augustine Lighthouse Archaeological Maritime Program gave it a shot but found nothing. Marine archeologist Chuck Meide, who led that try, said "this is one of the most important shipwreck discoveries we have had in Florida." The find was finally made in May of this year by a treasure hunting firm called Global Marine Exploration. Precisely where has not been disclosed.

"It is not advisable," said French consul general Clement Leclerc. "This is potentially a major discovery and we think it deserves a scientific and rigorous analysis and exploitation, because we think it should be later presented to the general public given its historical interest," he told AFP.—AFP

AFTER IS OUSTER, IRAQIS FLOCK TO NEW HOSPITAL

SIX PHYSICIANS PER 100,000 INHABITANTS

QAYYARAH: When it was ruled by jihadists, residents of Qayyarah in northern Iraq had to travel for hours through checkpoints if they needed medical treatment. But this week, Mahmud drove his son Mohammed straight to a new emergency unit in town after a mine exploded in the young boy's hand while he was playing.

Behind the front lines of an Iraqi offensive to retake the Islamic State group bastion of Mosul, Iraqis are flocking to the facility after months without healthcare under the jihadists. "Just a week ago it would have been impossible" to treat Mohammed, says the 35-year-old construction laborer, sitting by his recovering son, whose nose tip was also burnt in the explosion.

Medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF) opened the hospital last week after Iraqi forces expelled IS from Qayyarah in August, providing Baghdad with a platform for its assault on Mosul further north.

Under IS, "medicine was difficult to find. The only way to get treatment was to travel to Arbil" in Iraqi Kurdistan some two hours away by car, Mahmud says. MSF project coordinator Claire Nicolet says some chronically ill patients in Qayyarah for two years and a half did not see

the inside of a hospital. "There is no emergency hospital around here from Mosul to Tikrit" over a stretch of 250 kilometers (150 miles), she says.

When MSF opened its hospital in the agricultural town last week, its some 100 staff members-including 80 Iraqis-were quickly overwhelmed with "medical and surgical emergencies", she says. "We've received around 250 patients already for the first week," she says, wearing an MSF jacket, as families wait near a reception desk behind her.

In a nearby room with painted white walls, two nurses busy themselves cleaning and bandaging the arm of Salem Shahban, 16, after a motorbike accident.

'Fractures, road accidents'

Amid beds covered in fresh white sheets, a Polish doctor tries to distract five-year-old Abdelrahman Taha with toy cars while he examines his arm. Zahra Kadhim, an emergency doctor from Baghdad, says she and colleagues are ready to receive all manner of emergencies 24 hours a day. "We get fractures, road accidents, burns. We perform all forms of emergency surgery," says Kadhim, wearing a

long white coat and stethoscope draped around her neck.

Iraq long prided itself in providing free health care for all, but after the fall of president Saddam Hussein international organizations expressed alarm over the degraded state of the country's hospitals.

International sanctions against Iraq in the 1990s weakened infrastructure in the health sector, while ensuing violence destroyed hospitals and caused many doctors to flee.

Those who remain today "are seriously considering leaving, like many other professionals who are often trained abroad", a medical official in northern Iraq has told AFP, asking to remain anonymous. The World Health Organization said last year Iraq only had six physicians per 100,000 inhabitants.

IS declared a self-styled caliphate across parts of Iraq and neighboring Syria in 2014, implementing its radical interpretation of Islamic law in areas it controlled. "The health sector in areas under IS control has been greatly affected. IS had a negative effect on all aspects of daily life," says Kadhim.

But today, beyond the security checks at the

hospital's gate, life in Qayyarah is slowly returning to normal. The market has reopened and the butcher's display is lined with pieces of freshly slaughtered

mutton. In the distance, however, dark black smoke billows up from oil wells set alight by fleeing jihadists now fighting Iraqi forces in the streets of Mosul. —AFP



QAYYARAH: Iraqi families who were displaced by the ongoing operation by Iraqi forces against jihadists of the Islamic State group to retake the city of Mosul, are seen near Qayyarah, south of Mosul, on October 29, 2016. —AFP

watches calvinklein.com

Life in the now.
SHARE YOUR #CKMINUTE

Calvin Klein
swiss made

World's Finest Watchmaker

Model: K1W123456789
Material: 316L Stainless Steel / 18K Rose Gold
Reference: CK123456789 • The Americas: 212977727
UK: 020 7424 2424 • The Americas: 212977727
Latin America: 212 977 7272 • The China Hub: 212 977 7272

HUAWEI

A STEP AHEAD

HUAWEI Mate 9

CO-ENGINEERED WITH

New generation of Kirin 960 processor
EMUI 5.0 with intelligent machine learning algorithm
Groundbreaking solution for ageing smartphone performance.

Born Fast Stays Fast

consumer.huawei.com

Product colour, shape, interface and functions are for reference only. The actual product may vary. Based on normal usage. Product speed depends on actual usage situation.

FRANCE TO DEPLOY EXTRA POLICE, TROOPS FOR FESTIVE EVENTS

PARIS: France will put more police and soldiers on the streets to deter would-be militant attackers from striking during Christmas and New Year festivities, Interior Minister Bruno Le Roux said yesterday.

The newly appointed minister was speaking after parliament voted overnight to extend a state of emergency imposed after Islamists killed 130 people in Paris in multiple attacks just over a year ago. "The threat is serious," said Le Roux, who has the

power to deploy around 3,000 extra police and soldiers during the year-end holiday season, a peak time for party events and at airports and railway stations. "I want tourists to come to the country in large numbers and I want our fellow citizens to be able to go out and have fun," he told RTL radio.

More than 230 people have been killed in militant attacks in France over the past two years, including 86 during this year's

July 14 national holiday celebrations in the Riviera resort of Nice.

France remains on high alert for more, especially by followers of Islamic State, whose bases in Syria and Iraq are being bombed by French jets. The jihadist group has called on followers to carry out attacks on French soil.

Since last year's Paris attacks up to 10,000 police and soldiers have at times been deployed to protect sensitive sites

such as synagogues, airports and stations. The total has been pared back to around 7,000 since the end of the European soccer championship in July.

Beyond the human toll, tourist arrivals in France between July and September fell 10.6 percent from last year, and 18 percent in Paris. In November, the government announced spending of 15 million euros (\$15.9 million) on cameras and other security measures in key tourist zones.

Le Roux, appointed last week when his predecessor Bernard Cazeneuve was made prime minister, said 16 potential attacks had been foiled this year thanks to extra search and arrest powers granted to police under emergency rule.

Lawmakers on Tuesday night extended that state of emergency to July 2017, covering campaigning and balloting in a two-round presidential election in which the runoff is scheduled for May. — Reuters



PARIS: French president Francois Hollande (C) is pictured followed by French Minister for Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy Segolene Royal after the weekly cabinet meeting yesterday. — AFP

FRANCE URGES INTERNATIONAL MONITORING OF ALEPPO EVACUATION

PARIS: French President Francois Hollande yesterday joined calls for international observers to oversee the evacuation of civilians trapped under fire in the wrecked Syrian city of Aleppo.

At a meeting with his defense cabinet, Hollande said those trapped by the fighting should "be evacuated in a dignified and safe manner, under the supervision of international observers and in the presence of humanitarian organizations," the presidency said in a statement.

Hollande also demanded that the population of eastern Aleppo receive "unconditional aid and protection" and said only a negotiated political transition could lead to "a lasting victory over terrorism" in Syria.

The French statement echoed a call by the US Ambassador to the UN Samantha Power, who said Tuesday that foreign observers should be allowed in to "oversee the safe evacuation of the people who wish to leave but who justifiably fear that if they

try, they will be shot in the street or carted off to one of (Syrian President Bashar al-) Assad's gulags."

Yesterday, Aleppo was rocked anew by fierce clashes, jeopardizing a deal for the evacuation of civilians and fighters from remaining rebel-held areas announced Tuesday. French government spokesman Stephane Le Foll said France and Germany were pressing for the creation of humanitarian corridors allowing civilians out and aid agencies into the battered city.

He rejected calls for Hollande to take a leaf from late Socialist president Francois Mitterrand's book by visiting Aleppo. "Saying all you need is for the president to visit Aleppo for everything to be resolved... is not responsible," he said.

Mitterrand flew into the besieged city of Sarajevo in 1992, braving shelling and sniper fire to show solidarity with hungry, terrorized civilians during the Bosnian War. — AFP

LOOPHOLE IN EU-TURKEY DEAL DRAWS MIGRANTS TO RIVER CROSSING FORMIDABLE SIGHT FOR MIGRANTS

DIDYMOTEICHO, Greece: This time of year, the Evros river runs broad and icy, its banks muddy and remote. It's a formidable sight for migrants reaching Turkey's land border with Greece, but not formidable enough to stop people who have already come so far in their bid to make it to a new life in Europe. "It was horribly cold," said Kevin Mohamadi, 37, an Iranian who said he crossed the river after paying smugglers. "We were a group of 16, including Afghan families with four children each, and crossed in two boatloads. Then we had to walk through forests for four hours, to avoid being caught."

A year after the uncontrolled influx of more than 1 million refugees and economic migrants to debt-hobbled Greece, this border region is again seeing rising flows of migrants. It's largely due to a legal loophole: restrictions imposed in March to curb new arrivals by sea in the Greek islands don't apply to the land border.

That means that anyone entering here is far ahead of island arrivals in the queue for refugee relocation to other European countries, and those who do not qualify for asylum could even be spared deportation that they would otherwise face under the deal between the European Union and Turkey.

Discomfort and danger

Also, despite the river crossing, the discomfort and danger pales when compared with the sea journey to the islands. "The refugees usually cross in boats," said Panagiotis Ageladarakis, mayor of the border village of Amorio, about 1.5 kilometers (just under a mile) from the river. "At its widest the river is about 150 meters across, but there are narrower points, and Turks ferry them over. ... Then they walk to our villages. It's a regular sight."

Figures on arrivals here are far from complete. The only statistics released are of people who are caught with the smugglers they pay to ferry them over the Evros, which runs along most of the 180-kilometer (110-mile) border. There is no information on migrants who make it across without the help of smugglers, nor for those who are smuggled successfully across and taken further into Greece or elsewhere in Europe.

But even the few numbers that do exist show a rapid upward trend. About 655 people - largely Syrians - were arrested with 33 smugglers in October, double the figure for September.

A police official also told The Associated Press that Greek authorities are deterring about 4,000 people a month from coming over by driving patrol cars to the Greek side of the river when they



FYLAKIO, Greece: In this photo taken on Sunday, Dec 4, 2016 migrants who were arrested after crossing illegally from Turkey to Greece, stand behind a fence at a detention center at the Greek-Turkish border. — AP

see a group of migrants about to cross, or calling Turkish officials to pick them up. That's nearly three times the number seen in an average summer month, even though the crossing is much easier then because low water levels make it possible to wade across the river.

Migrants seeking to be included in EU plans to relocate them to other European Union countries often immediately hand themselves over to police and start their asylum application process. Ageladarakis said they usually arrive early in the mornings. "They come here to the coffee shop and ask us to call the police," he said.

Others, though, aim to go much further. Police say they pay smuggling gangs 2,000-2,200 Euros (\$2,100-2,300) each to be taken over the river and then driven in small trucks or cars to the northern city of Thessaloniki, or the capital, Athens, 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) to the southwest. Once there, they can apply for relocation - or pay to be spirited through the sealed Balkan borders, or for a forged passport and a plane ticket to anywhere in Europe.

Temporary shelter

People who cross on their own seek temporary shelter. Their transit is marked in a disused farm warehouse close to the railway station in the town of Didymoteicho, where flaking brick walls are

blackened by fires lit to cheat sub-zero temperatures, and discarded clothing, soiled diapers, worn-out shoes and toothbrushes litter the floor.

Paschalis Syritoudis, police chief in the nearby town of Orestiada, said people from Syria, Iraq, Eritrea, Somalia or Myanmar are automatically treated as refugees, and Syrians and Iraqis get documents that allow them to join the lengthy relocation process. "All other migrants are arrested and detained ... and if they don't request asylum the deportation procedure starts."

But maximum detention is six months, after which if the migrants haven't been deported - and countries such as Pakistan routinely block deportation requests - they are freed.

The figures for people passing through here are still low compared with those using the island route. Around 170,000 people have used that so far this year - but the vast majority before the Aegean island restrictions kicked in.

Under the March EU-Turkey deal - which, combined with Balkan border closures, slowed the migratory influx to a trickle - migrants arriving on the islands must be deported back to Turkey, even if they are bona fide refugees. To stay in Greece, they must prove not only that they merit asylum, but that there is a good reason for their not being granted asylum in Turkey. — AP

POLAND: US TO ACCELERATE TROOP DEPLOYMENT TO BALTICS

WARSAW: The United States has decided to accelerate the deployment of troops to Poland, the Baltic states and Romania as part of raising the security of the region, Polish and US defense officials said yesterday.

Polish Defense Minister Antoni Macierewicz made the announcement following talks with the commander of US land troops in Europe, Lt. Gen. Ben Hodges, in Zagan, western Poland, where some of the troops will be deployed. It will be an Armored Brigade Combat Team from Fort Carson, Colorado. Another US force, a battalion, will be deployed April 1 to Orzysz, in the northeast.

Hodges said the troops will arrive in the German port of Bremerhaven on Jan. 6 and will be immediately deployed to Poland, the Baltic states and Romania. Their transfer will be timed and treated as a test of "how fast the force can move from port to field," he said. "I'm confident in the very powerful signal, the message it will send (that) the United States, along with the rest

of NATO, is committed to deterrence," Hodges said.

He said the armored brigade has already moved out of its Colorado base and is loading on ships. "I'm excited about what my country is doing and I'm excited about continuing to work with our ally, Poland," Hodges said.

Poland and the Baltic nations of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have been uneasy about increased Russian military operations in the region, especially after its 2014 annexation of Crimea from Ukraine, and have requested US and NATO troops' presence on their territory as a deterrent. The alliance and the US insist the troop presence is not aimed against anyone, but Russia has threatened measures in response.

The US troops had previously been expected in mid- or late January. "I am very happy that a decision has been taken by the US side for an earlier deployment," Macierewicz said. — AP

SPANISH COURT SUSPENDS CATALONIA INDEPENDENCE VOTE

MADRID: Spain's Constitutional Court yesterday suspended a resolution by Catalonia's regional parliament that called a referendum next year on independence from the rest of the country.

Separatists in the wealthy, northeastern region have for years tried in vain to win approval from Spain's central government to hold an independence vote like Scotland's 2014 referendum on independence from Britain which resulted in a "no" vote. Catalan President Carles Puigdemont pledged in the autumn to hold such a referendum in September 2017, whether or not the central government in Madrid agreed, and the majority-separatist, regional parliament subsequently approved his plan.

The court said in a statement it "suspends... the resolution of Catalonia's parliament that plans a referendum in 2017." It also warned Catalan politicians involved in the process, such as parliament speaker Carme Forcadell and Puigdemont, that they had a duty to "stop or paralyze" any move to ignore or dodge the suspension, or face "potential liabilities, including at a penal level".

Catalonia's former president Artur Mas had already tried to hold such a referendum, but it was banned by the Constitutional Court so he held a symbolic,

non-binding independence vote instead in November 2014. More than 80 percent cast their ballot in favor of independence then - although just 2.3 million people out of a total of 6.3 million eligible voters took part.

But Mas is now due to stand trial for staging the vote on charges of serious disobedience and malfeasance, and risks a 10-year ban on holding public office. In this latest attempt, the Constitutional Court has five months to decide whether to implement the suspension for good, or lift it.

But it is highly unlikely to allow the vote to go ahead, given that it ruled in 2014 that, under the constitution, no region can unilaterally call an independence referendum that will affect the entire country. Catalans have nurtured a separate identity for centuries, with their own language and customs.

Their long-standing demands for greater autonomy have been exacerbated by Spain's recent economic downturn, leaving many resenting the amount of taxes they pay to the central government in Madrid to subsidize poorer regions. Calls for outright independence have increased in recent years, and polls show Catalonia, which accounts for almost a fifth of Spanish economic output, is roughly divided in half over splitting from Spain. — AFP



CALAIS, northern France: Trucks drive past a 4 meter high (13 foot high) wall along the highway leading to the Calais port yesterday. — AP

UNCERTAINTY FOR REMAINING CALAIS KIDS OVER UK TRANSFERS

PARIS: France on Tuesday denied reports that Britain has stopped taking in migrant children relocated from Calais, saying London has taken in over 450 minors since the "Jungle" camp was razed and that the transfers were "going well".

The French interior ministry said Britain had accepted 866 unaccompanied minors since the start of 2016, 468 of whom were whisked across the Channel after the sprawling Jungle was demolished in late October. "The cooperation is going well," the ministry said, denying reports that Britain had pulled up the drawbridge on children who had travelled to Calais in the hope of reaching England.

French authorities in October cleared the squalid camp near Calais port and moved the thousands of migrants - mostly Afghans, Eritreans and Sudanese - who had been living there to shelters nationwide. They included around 1,900 minors. Britain, which had already begun taking some of the children, assured at the time it would take hundreds more, without committing to an exact figure. Last week, British immigration minister Robert Goodwill said his government had welcomed over 750 children - a figure lower than that given by the French.

A spokeswoman for Britain's Home Office interior ministry told AFP Tuesday the transfer of Calais children was "continuing" but declined to say how many would be admitted. "The first phase of transfers has concluded but that is not the end of the process. More eligible children will be transferred from across Europe in the coming months," she said. Of those children given shelter so far, "many" had joined family members, she said.

'Child-by-child basis'

Last month, Britain tightened the admission criteria for unaccompanied migrant children without family in Britain, saying the child must be 12 or under, or run a high risk of sexual exploitation.

The threshold for Syrian and Sudanese children was lower, with children of up to 15 years declared eligible. A spokeswoman for Safe Passage, a charity that supports refugees coming to Britain, said: "Our understanding is that the transfers have stopped at 750."

Although the government said the transfers are ongoing, these are on a "child-by-child" basis, the spokeswoman said, with each case

potentially taking "months" to process. Before the Jungle was cleared, French President Francois Hollande had appealed to Britain to fulfill its "moral duty" towards migrants trying to reach Britain, where many have contacts or speak the language.

Dozens of migrants have died trying to climb onto trucks heading to Calais port to cross to England. French charities have warned that a closure of Britain's asylum channels could see children once again put their lives on the line.

Genevieve Jacques, head of the migrant charity Cimade, said she feared they would run away from the migrant shelters back to Calais and called on France to "take a tougher tone" with Britain. France and Britain have tried to make the Calais site less attractive for migrants, erecting a wall that officials said late Monday had been completed.

The four-meter-high (13-foot) wall runs along a kilometer-long stretch of the main road leading to Calais port, next to the area that used to house the sprawling camp. The concrete barrier - estimated to cost 2.7 million Euros (\$3 million) — aims to prevent new arrivals stowing away on trucks bound for Britain. — AFP

IS

LEXUS

EXPERIENCE THE NEW IS. TURNING HEADS ALL OVER TOWN



More sporty.
More responsive.
More refined.
An updated, sporty exterior combined with a new interior takes the IS driving experience to a whole new level of sophistication and exhilaration. It's time to turn some heads with the new IS.

- Enlarged Meter Hood
- New Multimedia Interface with 10.3" Screen
- Radar Cruise Control
- Safety Systems: LDA - LKA
- Available in:
 - IS200t: 2.0L 4 cylinder turbo engine - 241hp
 - IS350: 3.5L V6 engine - 312hp

BOOK A TEST DRIVE TODAY

The image displayed is for advertising purposes only.

Terms & Conditions apply for leasing.



MOHAMED NASER AL-SAYER & SONS EST. CO. W.L.L.
ONE OF THE AL-SAYER GROUP HOLDING COMPANIES

ASK ABOUT LEXUS
LEASING



Tel. 1830030

www.lexus.com.kw
@fTwitter LinkedIn LexusKW

BRILLIANT LIFE OF PATRIOTIC DEVOTION

Five years have passed since Chairman Kim Jong Il died. However, his career devoted to the promotion of people's welfare is still etched in the minds of the Korean people together with his beaming image. Kim Jong Il held people's welfare as the starting point of all his thoughts and activities.

Kim Jong Il considered it the goal of his life to devote his all for people's welfare. He formulated and implemented plans focusing on their interests. When he visited different units across the country and foreign countries, he always had his beloved people in mind.

He set it as a fundamental principle in the activities of the Workers' Party of Korea to steadily improve the people's standard of living, and advanced policies in reflection of their demands and aspirations. The economic construction in the Songun era on developing the defense industry

on a priority basis and light industry and agriculture in parallel, and prioritizing science and technology, the policy of agricultural revolution and many other policies of the revolution and construction are associated with the painstaking efforts of Kim Jong Il for the sake of the Korean people.

The Chairman made sure the people-first principle was thoroughly applied to all realms of social life. With his noble view in people, he believed in them and gave fullest play to their inexhaustible strength. Kim Jong Il devoted his all for the well-being of the people. He regarded the beloved people as the most precious beings that can be bartered for nothing, and found his pleasure and happiness in theirs.

Kim Jong Il ensured that trains and buses were run exclusively for a small number of students in mountain villages. When he visited the Hwanghae

Iron and Steel Complex, he took steps to set up a high-end hospital for promoting the health of the workers, saying the smelters must be given priority over the discharge of molten iron.

Whenever he examined any object and article, he paid his primary attention to whether they are to the people's liking, focusing on their demands, tastes, conveniences and interests. In December Juche 100 (2011), the last month of his great life, he visited the amusement park of Kaeson Youth Park despite the cold weather. He stressed that due attention should be paid to the management of the park lest visitors experience the slightest inconvenience. The Korean people still remember vividly the beaming image of the leader who showed great concern for their welfare.

By train he visited industrial establishments and rural and fishing villages and other parts of the country. A great upsurge was achieved in pro-

duction in all sectors and a broad avenue opened for improving the people's standard of living.

Indeed, Kim Jong Il burnt his heart with ardent love and self-sacrificing devotion for his people. Till the last moment of his life, he continued a high-intensity forced march of field guidance for the well-being of his people, before passing away on a train. His trips for the good of his people covered a total distance of 669,844 km, equivalent to that of going around the earth nearly 17 times.

In retrospect, his life is adorned with devotion and ardent love for the people. The Korean people are now looking back with deep emotion on the exploits he performed for the people throughout his life, and are vigorously stepping up the building of a powerful socialist country to translate the wishes of Kim Jong Il into brilliant reality in full support of their supreme leader Kim Jong Un's leadership.



LIMA: In this Nov 20, 2016, file photo, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, left, shakes hands with Russian President Vladimir Putin during their meeting at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. — AP

5 THINGS TO KNOW AHEAD OF THE ABE-PUTIN HOT SPRINGS SUMMIT

PROGRESS ON A 70-YEAR-OLD TERRITORIAL DISPUTE

TOKYO: Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will be the first G-7 leader to welcome Russian President Vladimir Putin for an official visit since Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014. Why? Territory.

Despite continued sanctions on Russia, Abe is eager to make progress on a 70-year-old territorial dispute that has kept their countries from signing a peace treaty formally ending World War II.

A look at the two-day talks, which open today at a hot springs resort in Abe's ancestral hometown of Nagato and wrap up Friday in Tokyo:

The islands

Japan says the Soviet Union took the southern Kuril islands illegally at the end of World War II, expelling 17,000 Japanese to nearby Hokkaido, the northernmost of Japan's four main islands. About one-third of the former residents are still alive. The Soviet Union, unilaterally scrapping a 1941 neutrality treaty, entered the war against Japan a week before the latter's surrender on Aug. 15, 1945. It occupied the disputed islands - known as the Northern Territories in Japan - within weeks, a process Russia says was legal. The two countries signed a Japan-Soviet Joint Declaration in 1956 ending their state of war and restoring diplomatic relations, but failed to conclude a peace treaty because of the island issue. Russia governs the

islands and the Russians who live there.

Prospects

Japanese hopes for a settlement sank after Abe met Putin last month on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting in Peru. James Brown, a Russia-Japan expert at Temple University's Japan campus said "there are too many obstacles to an agreement on the territorial issues to actually sign a peace treaty. I think they are trying to come up with some sort of formulation that gives the impression of progress." Former Japanese diplomat Kazuhiko Togo said in a recent commentary that serious negotiations began only after Abe and Putin met in Sochi, Russia, in May, "and seven months is too short to untie this complicated knot."

Economy first

Russia wants to attract Japanese investment, particularly to its far east. Japan's trade minister in charge of Russia, Hiroshige Seko, said about 30 projects in eight areas are ready for signing; Japan would provide advanced medical, health and environmental technology and help with the industrialization of the far east, while receiving expertise from Russia in decommissioning nuclear plants, energy and cyber security. "We will have a win-win situation, at least in economic relations," he told a news conference this week. Joint development of the

disputed islands is also on the table, but Japan is wary of the sovereignty issue: If it's Japanese territory, shouldn't Japanese laws apply?

The leaders' words

Abe told a group of former residents of the islands this week that "I'm determined to put an end to this issue in our generation." Putin told Japanese journalists Tuesday that there is a chance of a breakthrough, but his government doesn't mind the status quo. "We think that we have no territorial problems. It's Japan that thinks that is a territorial problem with Russia," he said.

Trump factor

A Russia-friendly approach from US President-elect Donald Trump could buy time, taking pressure off Japan to strike a quick deal before a change in US leadership, said Alexander Gabuyev, a Carnegie Moscow Center expert on the Pacific region. Trump's opponent, Hillary Clinton, had been expected to take a tougher stance toward Moscow. At the same time Trump's "America first" policy has raised concern in Japan that any reduction of the US military presence in Asia could mean increased risks for Japan as China's regional ambitions grow. Even short of a territorial agreement, Japan is keen to have closer relations with Russia for security reasons. — AP

CHINA PLEDGES FUNDS TO DECONGEST PHILIPPINE JAIL

MANILA: China has pledged funds for a new detention facility in the Philippines as part of its support for President Rodrigo Duterte's drug war, the Philippine jail chief said yesterday.

Duterte's unprecedented crackdown has worsened severe congestion in Philippine jails, with AFP photographs of Quezon City Jail in July exposing how inmates in one of the nation's most overcrowded detention facilities took turns

to sleep on an open-air basketball court and a staircase.

Duterte has credited China for supporting his crime war, which the United States and the United Nations have criticized over alleged extra-judicial killings. Beijing has provided funding for rehabilitation and offered weapons for the campaign that has left more than 5,000 people dead. Yesterday, the head of the Bureau of Jail

Management and Penology said that during Duterte's trip to Beijing in October, China also offered to donate 700 million pesos (\$14 million) for detention facilities. "It's meant to help the anti-crime campaign of our president. It's really for jails," prison director Serafin Barretto told AFP. "We feel happy because this will be a big help to address the lack of resources."

Barretto added that his agency decided to use the money to fund the construction of a new Quezon City Jail, which was built six decades ago for 800 inmates but now houses almost 3,000. Duterte, 71, took office in June and quickly made good on his campaign promise to launch a brutal drug war that would prevent the Philippines from becoming a narco-state.

The spike in arrests has packed an underfunded and overwhelmed penal system, with the population in Quezon City Jail soaring to 4,100 in August. The number had since gone down after a local court agreed to temporarily admit new inmates to other jails in Manila with more space, warden Randel Latoza told AFP. City and jail officials said the AFP report fast-tracked the transfer of land for a new facility that could house 6,000 inmates by 2019 but finances remained a challenge. Latoza said the Chinese aid would contribute to funding the new jail estimated to cost two billion pesos (\$40 million). — AP



MANILA: Inmates relax at the basketball court inside the jail in Quezon City yesterday. — AFP

US MILITARY OSPREY CRASH-LANDS OFF OKINAWA, NO FATALITIES

TOKYO: A US military Osprey aircraft crash-landed off Japan's southern island of Okinawa after its propeller was damaged during refueling training, and all five crewmembers were rescued, the US Marine Corps said yesterday.

The Marine Corps said in a statement that the MV-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft landed in shallow water off Okinawa's east coast late Tuesday. Officials said two crewmembers sustained non-life-threatening injuries and were being treated at a Navy hospital.

The accident came a week after a Marine Corps pilot died when his F/A 18 fighter jet crashed off western Japan. Marine Corps officials said another Osprey had a landing gear problem elsewhere on Okinawa during training Tuesday, although there were no injuries in that incident.

The Osprey crash just off Nago City triggered protests on Okinawa, where anti-US military sentiment is strong. Many Okinawans oppose deployment of Ospreys on the island because of safety concerns following a string of crashes outside Japan, including one in Hawaii last year. "This is what we have feared might happen someday," Nago Mayor Susumu Inamine told public broadcaster NHK. "We can never live safely here."

Lt. Gen. Lawrence Nicholson, Okinawa area coordinator for the Marines, said the Osprey's propeller was damaged when it

hit a fuel line during offshore refueling. Its pilot landed the aircraft in shallow water to avoid the danger of flying overland back to the base, he said. "That was his aim - to protect his crew, and to protect the people of Okinawa," Nicholson told a news conference in Okinawa. "I hope you would all agree that we should be proud of our flight crew that took a bad situation and prevented it from becoming a disaster."

Nicholson said an investigation of the incident has begun and Osprey flights will be suspended in Okinawa for an unspecified period until all safety procedures are fully reviewed. Flights elsewhere around the world will continue, he said. The Osprey was based at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma. The base, located in a crowded residential area in central Okinawa, is to be relocated to another site in Nago on the east coast of the island where residents oppose the plan.

Japanese Defense Minister Tomomi Inada asked the US military to suspend Osprey flights until the cause of the accident is known. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told reporters the crash was extremely regrettable, and said safety must be guaranteed. More than half of the 50,000 American troops in Japan are stationed on Okinawa - which has less than 1 percent Japan's land mass - under a mutual security treaty. Many on the island complain about noise, pollution and crime linked to the US military. — AP



NAGO, Okinawa, southern Japan: Officers of Okinawa Prefectural Police and US military investigate the site where debris of a US military MV-22 Osprey, background, was spotted in shallow waters yesterday. — AP

CHINA WARNS TRUMP IGNORING ONE CHINA POLICY COULD HURT PEACE

BEIJING: Any change in US policy favoring formal recognition of Taiwan will "seriously" damage peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and undermine relations between Beijing and Washington, a Chinese government spokesman said yesterday.

The comments from the Cabinet's Taiwan Affairs Office follow President-elect Donald Trump's remarks over the weekend that he didn't feel "bound by a one-China policy" unless the US could gain benefits from China in trade and other areas.

Under the one-China policy, the US recognizes Beijing as China's government and maintains only unofficial relations with Taiwan, a former Japanese colony which broke from the Chinese mainland amid civil war in 1949.

Spokesman An Fengshan said breaching the one-China principle "will seriously affect peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait." "The one-China policy is an important political foundation for relations between China and the US," An told reporters. "If such a foundation is disturbed or undermined, there can be no talk of a healthy and stable development of US-China relations."

Trump broke diplomatic precedent by talking on the phone with Taiwanese

President Tsai Ing-wen on Dec. 2, during which the island's leader congratulated Trump on his election victory. Then, this past weekend, Trump said he might use America's recognition of Beijing as leverage for gaining advantages in trade and other areas.

That is placing him perilously close to touching on China's bottom line that brooks no formal recognition of Taiwan or challenge to its claim to sovereignty over the island. China's response has thus far been fairly muted, mainly blaming Tsai for placing the call.

The last major crisis over Taiwan came in 1995, when China staged threatening war games and missile tests near the island in response to then-president Lee Teng-hui's visit to the US, which was seen by Beijing as a bid to solidify the island's de-facto independent status. The move was largely seen as backfiring, with Lee winning the island's first direct presidential election in 1996.

Washington responded by putting two aircraft carrier battle groups on alert, one of which crossed the Taiwan Strait, although China's vast strides in military power in the years since would likely complicate such a move in the current era. — AP



BEIJING: Taiwan Affairs Office spokesman An Fengshan signals for questions from a journalist at a routine press conference yesterday. — AP

ALEPPO HIT BY STRIKES, SHELLING

Continued from Page 1

begin at 5:00 am (0300 GMT) but was delayed, with buses parked outside rebel-held areas left waiting.

Following several hours of quiet, fighting then erupted anew in the ravaged city, with Syria's regime, the rebels and their foreign allies trading accusations of blame. As booms of air strikes and artillery fire rang out, an AFP correspondent in rebel areas saw panicked civilians running in the streets to find shelter, some hiding in the doorframes of damaged buildings.

The correspondent saw several wounded civilians, as well as a regime tank turning its cannon towards opposition-held districts and opening fire. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported "very intense clashes on every frontline" and said at least two people had been killed in rebel areas. State television said rebel rocket fire on government-controlled areas had also resumed, killing at least seven people. Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan and Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin agreed in a telephone call yesterday to make a joint effort to start the evacuation of civilians and opposition forces from eastern Aleppo as soon as possible, Turkish presidential sources said. "The situation on the ground is very fragile and complicated," Erdogan said. Moscow, a staunch ally of President Bashar Al-Assad, said Damascus resumed its assault on Aleppo after rebels violated the ceasefire. Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Moscow expected rebel resistance in the city to end in the next "two to three days".

Rebels and a source close to the regime told AFP that the evacuation had been suspended after objections from the Syrian government. The source said Damascus objected to the number of people leaving, claiming rebels had sought to raise it from 2,000 to 10,000. But Yasser Al-Youssef, a political official from the Nureddin Al-Zinki rebel group, said the regime and its ally Iran were trying to add "new conditions" to the agreement. "They want to link this deal to other issues, including the areas of Fuaa and Kafraa," he added, referring to two government-held Shiite-majority villages in northwestern Syria that are under rebel siege.

Turkey too accused Assad's regime and its supporters of blocking the deal. French President Francois Hollande joined Washington's call for international observers to be sent in to oversee the evacuation. Hollande said those

trapped by the fighting should "be evacuated in a dignified and safe manner, under the supervision of international observers and in the presence of humanitarian organizations." Before the fighting resumed, crowds of civilians could be seen gathered in the streets of rebel areas from the early hours, some clutching bags of belongings, to await evacuation. Some had slept in the open, despite the cold and a fierce storm that brought heavy rain and high winds. Many were hungry, after weeks without regular meals because of dwindling food supplies caused by the army's siege. The evacuation deal was announced a month into an army operation that has seen the government take more than 90 percent of the former rebel stronghold in east Aleppo. Turkey, which has backed the opposition, said those leaving would be taken to Idlib province, which is controlled by a powerful rebel alliance that includes Al-Qaeda's former affiliate Fateh al-Sham Front.

The agreement came amid international concern about the plight of civilians in the city, and as the UN said it had reports of atrocities being committed by advancing government forces. The UN has expressed concern over allegations that men have gone missing after crossing to government areas, and yesterday said it had credible reports of at least 82 civilians, including 11 women and 13 children, being executed in recent days. Aleppo, a cultural and economic hub second only to Damascus in importance, had been split between a rebel-controlled east and government-held west since 2012. It was unclear how many civilians remained in rebel territory, after an estimated 130,000 fled to other parts of Aleppo during the government advance.

More than 465 civilians, including 62 children, have died in east Aleppo during the assault, the Observatory said yesterday in a new toll. Another 142 civilians, among them 42 children, have been killed by rebel rocket fire on government-held zones in the same period, the monitor said. More than 310,000 people have been killed since the Syrian conflict began, and over half the population has been displaced, with millions becoming refugees.

Assad's regime has enjoyed strong support from Iran as well as Russia and yesterday officials in Tehran hailed the "liberation" of Aleppo. Yahya Safavi, top foreign policy adviser to supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said impending victory in Aleppo showed that "Iran is the leading power in the region". — AFP



A woman plays with dogs in a snow-covered park in Vilnius, Lithuania, yesterday. Residents of the Lithuanian capital are savoring the snowy and warm winter days, with temperatures of just minus 1 degree Celsius. — AP

RIGHTS GROUP CALLS TO END KAFALA SYSTEM

Continued from Page 1

It criticized the government's crackdown on freedom of expression through arresting bloggers. The rights group called for introducing a "humanitarian and legal solution" for around 120,000 stateless people - locally known as bedoons - who are deprived of many basic rights. Bedoons were born and raised in Kuwait and claim the right to Kuwaiti citizenship, but the government says only around a third qualify for consideration and that the rest hold other nationalities.

But the association welcomed "favorable" govern-

ment measures including issuing a special law for domestic helpers and legislation to set up a national human rights body. In July, Kuwait became the first Gulf state to set a minimum wage for its hundreds of thousands of mostly Asian domestic workers.

In its 2016 "Trafficking in Persons" report, the US State Department upgraded Kuwait from tier three, the worst level, to tier two while keeping it on watch list, citing an improvement in its treatment of migrant workers, including maids. Around 25 million foreigners live and work in the energy-rich Gulf states, making up half of the population. — AFP

DEAL SIGNED WITH CHINA TO BUILD 2...

Continued from Page 1

when his company plans to sign a contract to build a third hospital in Farwaniya as part of the plan announced at the time of its establishment. Daman was established by a Cabinet resolution in 2014 as a joint venture between the public and the private sectors, with KD 230 million (\$759 million) capital. It was also granted land to build hospitals.

Once Daman starts operating its hospitals, the government plans to shift treatment of expatriates in Kuwait there, thus ending state-sponsored health services offered for foreigners at public hospitals, making those exclusively for Kuwaiti citizens. Furthermore, Saleh had confirmed two months ago that expats' annual health insurance fees will increase to KD 130 from the current KD 50 once the hospitals become operational. — Agencies

DEMONSTRATORS RALLY TO PROTEST ALEPPO...

Continued from Page 1

will not end, with our strong will. We call upon the government to allow Syrians who live in Kuwait to bring their relatives on visit visas to Kuwait. We want to host them and open the country to welcome them," MP Abdullah Al-Anezi said.

Head of the Ummah Party Hakim Al-Mutairi called for jihad in Syria. "Jihad is a religious duty of every Muslim. Those who can't do so due to a legitimate excuse should send money. The 22 Arab countries have an army of more than five million soldiers - why don't they defend the people in Syria? I call upon clerics and preachers to make statements to encourage Muslims to go for jihad in Syria," he thundered.

Speakers also condemned Iran and Shiite militias, accusing them of indiscriminate killings of civilians in Aleppo. MP Thamer Al-Suwaid called the war in Syria a "genocide". Former lawmaker Ahmad Al-Shuhoumi condemned what he labeled "a dirty sectarian war led by Iran against Sunni Muslims".

"We demand that humanitarian organizations take immediate action against the genocide taking place in Aleppo. We know that many of humanitarian and charity organizations were not able to reach the areas in crisis

and help the people in need. We shouldn't keep silent, and the Arab countries should unify to financially help the people of Aleppo," MP Al-Humaidi Al-Subaei said.

Kuwaiti charities and the Kuwait Red Crescent Society have launched fundraising campaigns for victims of the fighting. Protesters also carried pictures of Syrian children and posters of Assad with a swastika. They then marched towards the fence of the diplomatic compound, shouting: "The people want the expulsion of the ambassador". Police watched the demonstration closely, but it ended peacefully. A policeman told Kuwait Times, on the condition of anonymity, that the number of protesters was between 2,200 to 2,400. He said some speeches violated the national unity law, and some placards that were sectarian in nature were confiscated.

National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem said yesterday the Assembly will debate the situation in Aleppo on Dec 28 after several MPs demanded a special session to debate the issue. Ghanem also said that he has written to the heads of Arab and international parliaments to urge them to increase pressure to stop the war against civilians in Aleppo. Kuwait has also called on the Arab League to hold an emergency meeting Monday to discuss Aleppo.

DUTERTE BOASTS HE KILLED CRIMINALS

Continued from Page 1

Rights groups have previously accused Duterte of running vigilante death squads in Davao that killed more than 1,000 suspected criminals, including children accused of petty crimes. Duterte has variously denied and acknowledged involvement in the death squads. But he easily won presidential elections in May after promising to rollout his Davao law-and-order policies across the nation. He pledged that 100,000 people would die in the crackdown and that so many bodies would be dumped in Manila Bay that fish there would grow fat from feeding on them.

Since taking office in late June, police have reported killing 2,086 people in anti-drug operations. More than 3,000 others have been killed in unexplained circumstances, according to official figures. Often masked assailants break into shanty homes and kill people who have been tagged as drug traffickers or drug users. Rights groups have warned of a breakdown in the rule of law with police and hired assassins operating with complete impunity.

Duterte has insisted that police are only killing in self-defence and gangsters are murdering the other victims. But he has also said he will not allow any police to go to jail if they are found guilty of murder in prosecuting his crime war. Surveys show a majority of Filipinos continue to support the charismatic Duterte and his crime policies, accepting his argument that drastic action is required to stop the Philippines from becoming a narco-state. In October, Duterte compared himself to Adolf Hitler and said he would be "happy to slaughter" three million drug addicts.

He later apologized for the Hitler reference but said he was "emphatic" about wanting to kill the millions of addicts. In September, a self-confessed Davao death squad member told a Senate hearing into the drug war that then-mayor Duterte personally gunned down a justice department agent and ordered the murders of opponents. The confessed hitman, Edgar Matobato, said one of the victims was fed to a crocodile. Duterte's aides denied the claims, sought to discredit Matobato and orchestrated the removal of the president's chief political opponent as chair of the Senate hearing. — AFP

AMAZON COMPLETES FIRST DRONE DELIVERY

Continued from Page 1

Project Wing announced plans this year to deliver burritos in partnership with US food chain Chipotle to students at Virginia Tech University, one of the campuses where drone research is being conducted. US officials earlier this year announced the first steps in drone regulations, covering applications such as newsgathering and commercial flights over populated areas.

But the first set of rules stopped short of allowing some

long-sought applications, including delivery of goods by retailers like Amazon in populated areas. Amazon got British approval this year for flying drones that are no longer within sight of their operators in rural and suburban areas; having one person operate several highly automated drones; and testing devices to make the drones able to identify and avoid obstacles. The world's largest online retailer, Amazon raised eyebrows in late 2013 with its plan to airlift small parcels to customers by drone in select markets less than 30 minutes after orders are received. — AFP



Kuwait Times

Premier Brands

To see your ad here, call:
+965 248 35 616 / 617
 E MAIL :info@kuwaittimes.net
 ads@kuwaittimes.net
 Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

GRAND YEAR END SALE



Midea NY2311-16M Oil Heater

- 11 Fins
- 2300 Watts

السعر القديم 130.000
السعر الجديد 29.000
54% OFF



Midea NY2513-16FA Oil Heater

وظيفة الترطيب Humidifier Function

- 13 fins
- 2500 Watts
- 3 Settings

السعر القديم 180.000
السعر الجديد 24.000
23% OFF



DeLonghi TRRS1225 Oil Heater

Better Everyday

- 12 fins
- 2000 Watts

السعر القديم 300.000
السعر الجديد 30.000
90% OFF



Midea NF20-16BA Fan Heater

- 2000 Watts
- 3 Heat Settings
- Black, White, Red & Yellow

السعر القديم 300.000
السعر الجديد 40.000
13% OFF



بست AL-YOUSIFI

Credit: Start from 8KD • Up to 48 month • Instant approval

Shop Online: www.best.com.kw Free Delivery

• Kuwait 1 (the New str.) • Kuwait 2 (Panasonic Tower) • Hawalli 1 (Tunis str.) • Hawalli 2 (Bin Khaldon str.) • Shuwalkh (4th Ring road) • Al-Rai (4th Ring road) • Salmiya (Salem Al-Mubarak str.) • Farwaniya (Behind police Station) • Fahaheel (Opp. General Parking) • Jahra (Opp. Main Co-op.) • Airport (Departure Hall)

1809 809

Kuwait Times

THE LEADING INDEPENDENT
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF
ESTABLISHED 1961

Founder and Publisher
YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN

Editor-in-Chief
ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-ALYAN

EDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432
ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
FAX : 24835620/1
CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163
ACCOUNTS : 24835619
COMMERCIAL : 24835618

P.O. Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait.
E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

Focus

SYRIA WAR MARS
OBAMA LEGACY

The fall of the last rebel-held areas in the Syrian city of Aleppo could seal the fate of the "Obama Doctrine", deepening the world's worst humanitarian crisis in decades and staining US President Barack Obama's legacy. With the US-aligned rebels facing defeat by government forces backed by Russia and Iran, Obama's light-footprint approach to the Syrian conflict will suffer a serious blow weeks before he hands power to President-elect Donald Trump on Jan. 20.

The rebel loss would underscore the failure of US efforts to stem the carnage from Syria's nearly six-year-old civil war, leading some critics to predict that Obama's record will be tarnished just as President Bill Clinton's was by his refusal to intervene to halt the 1994 Rwandan genocide. "There is no doubt he will be hammered in historical terms," said Aaron David Miller, a former Middle East adviser to Republican and Democratic administrations. "The question will be why he didn't do more."

While the war is expected to grind on, Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad's victory in Aleppo would provide fresh fodder for Trump, who has argued the insurgency has collapsed, and the United States should revamp its fight against Islamic State by joining up with Russia, and by extension, Assad. Syria has been one of the main testing grounds for Obama's doctrine of relying on local proxy fighters instead of large-scale US military deployments, reflecting his reluctance to be drawn back into unpopular ground conflicts like the Iraq war.

The approach has faltered in Syria, where on Tuesday the Syrian army said it could declare full control over eastern Aleppo. A deal was struck to allow the remaining rebel fighters to evacuate their last enclave there, Russian UN Ambassador Vitaly Churkin said. "Leading from behind leaves a vacuum that is filled by the Bashar Assads and Vladimir Putins of the world," said Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John McCain, referring to how an Obama aide described his strategy. "I think history will judge that these are unintended results that are going to cause great challenges to the United States for years to come."

Obama has been criticized for refusing to provide sufficient arms and other support to moderate rebel groups to compel Assad and his Russian and Iranian backers to negotiate an end to his authoritarian rule. "Obama has pursued a policy of calculated dithering in Syria, just agonizing over the choices until they no longer existed," said Emile Hokayem, a senior fellow at the International Institute for Strategic Studies think tank.

The Democratic president has defended his policy as "judicious". His spokesman, Josh Earnest, said it was Obama's "overriding responsibility" to protect the interests and safety of the American people first. A Republican, Trump has vowed a dramatic shift from Obama's cautious strategy toward a more aggressive approach - although exactly how he will proceed remains unclear. He will inherit an increasingly complicated conflict in Syria, and many analysts fear his lack of foreign policy experience could lead to dangerous miscalculations.

If Trump follows through after Aleppo's fall on his pledge to cooperate with Russia, Assad's military patron, there is a risk that frustrated moderate rebels could gravitate toward militant factions that pose a potential threat to Western interests. As Assad himself turns from the wreckage of Aleppo to assert his authority over a fractured Syria, he will have to contend with the loss of swathes of his country for the time being and tough pockets of resistance still to crush. The war has taken some 400,000 lives and made more than 11 million people homeless, driving many into neighboring countries or on a long perilous trek to Europe.

Cost of Inaction

The imminent fall of rebel-held eastern Aleppo - and the sense of US powerlessness as it unfolds - suggests that Obama likely will be judged by history as much for what he did not do as for what he did. He first called on Assad to leave power in 2011. But Obama never supplied moderate rebels with enough firepower to topple him or force him to the negotiating table. His failure to carry out threatened air strikes to enforce his 2012 "red line" over Assad's use of banned chemical weapons dealt a heavy blow to US standing, including by some of his staunchest regional allies.

Obama also rejected recommendations, as recently as October, by members of his national security team for tougher action against Assad. Instead, he gave priority to striking Islamic State with a US-led bombing campaign and local allies assisted by relatively small numbers of US special forces. The strategy hewed to a prescription Obama laid out in a 2014 West Point speech in which he made clear he would intervene in foreign conflicts only when he believed US interests were threatened. — Reuters

All articles appearing on these pages are the personal opinion of the writers. Kuwait Times takes no responsibility for views expressed therein. Kuwait Times invites readers to voice their opinions. Please send submissions via email to: opinion@kuwaittimes.net or via snail mail to PO Box 1301 Safat, Kuwait. The editor reserves the right to edit any submission as necessary.



ADVANTAGE ASSAD - ALEPPO CAPTURE KEY MOMENT

The Syrian government's expected recapture of Aleppo after a prolonged and punishing air assault is a defining moment in the country's devastating civil war: it leaves President Bashar Assad in control of almost all major urban areas - and poised to petition for a role in the world community's broader war against Islamic State militants clinging to parts of Syria's northeast. The prospect of such cooperation would once have been considered highly improbable. Assad became anathema in the West and much of the region after the brutal means he employed during six years of carnage that killed hundreds of thousands, displaced half his population and sent millions of refugees to neighboring countries and Europe.

But much has changed. Vladimir Putin's Russia is fully engaged on Assad's side, with no world players eager to take it on. The assortment of rebel groups now clings to a handful of pockets around the country, lacking momentum and likely to return to a low-grade insurgency at best. Most critically, the incoming US president projects a sort of flexibility lacking under Barack Obama. Promising to scale up the war on the Islamic State group, Donald Trump has hinted he would be ready to work with Assad and Russia. "I don't like Assad at all," Trump said during the second presidential debate in October. "But Assad is killing ISIS. Russia is killing ISIS," he said, using an alternative acronym for the group.

And his selection of Exxon Mobil CEO Rex Tillerson, who has extensive business dealings with Russia and ties to Putin, has only fueled speculation that Trump would pursue closer ties with Moscow. If such a shift occurs, it would resolve an awkwardness that has bedeviled the two-year, US-led military effort to uproot IS militants from the swaths of Iraq and Syria they seized in 2014. In these areas, the group established an extraordinarily ruthless "caliphate" with mass killings and enslavement, imposed their brutal interpretation of religion and fomented regional insurgencies and global terrorism.

That helped pull together a broad coalition of Western and Middle Eastern nations that seems near victory in Iraq, where the Baghdad government has been a critical ally leading the fight on the ground and where a major battle for the key city of Mosul is now underway. But in Syria, the fight was compli-

cated by Assad's pariah status. Lacking a local military ally, the US-led coalition has partnered with irregulars and relied on air power and some special forces' operations. That approach, which has had modest success, may well erode if Assad is widely deemed to have survived the war.

Aleppo is key to cementing that perception - its loss is a crushing blow to the rebels, leaving them little chance of recovering momentum. Syria's largest city was once the country's commercial powerhouse, holding symbolic and strategic importance as an ancient trading post and longtime gateway to Turkey and the West. The rebels' hold on the eastern sector of the city has been crumbling this week, reduced to a few neighborhoods, and the government seems on the verge of re-establishing authority over the city.

Assad also controls the capital, Damascus, the major cities of Homs and Hama, as well as most of the Lebanese border and the Mediterranean coast, where his minority Alawite sect holds sway. Assad has vowed to carry on with the war until all of Syria is retaken, but has expressed confidence that opposition to him is on the decline. "Even if we finish in Aleppo, we will carry on with the war against them," he told a local newspaper last week.

Now he can free up some of his troops and thousands of allied militiamen to turn to remaining pockets held by rebels elsewhere in Syria, as well as the Islamic State jihadis. These rebel areas include some stretches around Damascus and near the Jordanian border, as well as in northern Idlib province, a stronghold of Syria's Al-Qaeda affiliate. "The recapture of Aleppo will position Assad to claim that he is Syria's legitimate sovereign ruler and lobby the international community to provide him with support," said Jennifer Cafarella of the Washington-based Institute for the Study of War.

He seems more likely to achieve that if he is actively engaged in fighting the Islamic State group, which has not been a top priority despite the fact that its major stronghold is the mid-sized Syrian city of Raqqa. On Sunday, IS extremists re-occupied the central town of Palmyra, which they had been expelled from earlier this year - a surprise attack that clearly took advantage of the Russian and Syrian government's preoccupation with Aleppo.

Messy Future

It's unclear whether Assad will prioritize retaking Palmyra, with what's left of its archaeological treasures after the first Islamic State occupation. He may prefer to wait a few months in hopes of engineering a new situation with the new team in Washington. Either way, Syria's future will likely be messy for a while, given the array of armed factions, the likelihood of continued foreign meddling through porous borders and the trauma and rage felt by much of the population. Many expect a continued insurgency - which in turn would help Assad argue that he should be viewed as a partner in the international fight against "terrorism".

In the battle for local hearts and minds, it looms large that Assad relied so heavily not only on Russia and longtime ally Iran to retake Aleppo, but was also aided by Lebanon's powerful Hezbollah militia and volunteers from Iraq and Afghanistan. This stands in stark contrast to the outside powers supporting the opposition. No one sent in troops other than Turkey, an intervention mostly bent on downsizing Kurdish fighters it deemed a threat to its own security. The Syrian rebels were armed only lightly, and the United States refrained from attacking Assad even after the 2013 use of chemical weapons. Even the notion of a no-fly zone over northern Syria was rejected.

Cafarella said this environment legitimizes an emerging narrative among jihadi groups that says the international community allowed Iran and Russia to dominate Syria, and as a puppet Assad must be opposed. Radicals' "ability to recruit will grow rather than diminish after Aleppo's fall," she said. "The terror threat emanating from Syria will increase rather than decrease."

A big question now is the position of Assad's regional enemies, from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf nations to Turkey. Assad may lobby for restarting peace talks, betting on the opposition's weakness to force concessions - chiefly that he should remain in power at the head of a more inclusive government. But given the epic devastation he has overseen, a genuine rapprochement seems unlikely in the extreme. — AP

ASSAD'S SHIITE ALLIES HELPED HIM WIN ALEPPO

When rebel fighters launched a last desperate attempt to break the siege of Aleppo in October, they were beaten back - not by the Syrian army but by the Lebanese Shiite group Hezbollah fighting on its behalf, a senior official in the pro-government alliance said. In the build-up to the final battle for Syria's second city, scores of fighters from a single Iraqi Shiite militia were killed in just two days of combat this summer, said a commander of another group fighting for President Bashar Al-Assad.

Even in the last hours of fighting in Aleppo, allied Iraqi militia were at the vanguard. The UN human rights office said it had reports that the Syrian army and an allied Iraqi militia had killed at least 82 civilians in captured city districts - allegations denied by the army and militia in question. These episodes show how in the decisive battle of Syria's nearly six-year-old civil war, Assad drew heavily on foreign Shiite militias sponsored by Iran for his most important victory to date.

Rebel sources say that among fighters taken prisoner by insurgents in the last months of Assad's campaign to retake Aleppo, there was not a single Syrian soldier. To be sure, Russian air strikes were the most important factor in Assad's triumph. They enabled his forces to press the siege of rebel-held eastern Aleppo to devastating effect and regain full control of what was Syria's biggest city and economic hub before the war.

But on the ground, Shiite militias from as far afield as Afghanistan played an important role for Assad, a member of the minority Alawite sect which is an offshoot of Shiite Islam. Among these militias, which fought in and around Aleppo alongside the Tiger Force, an elite Syrian army unit lavishly backed by Russia, was the Ansar Allah al-Awfiya group. The rebels inflicted big losses on the militia's fighters by hitting them with a barrage of guided anti-tank missiles as they retreated in an area outside Aleppo, according to the militia commander, also an Iraqi. Reuters was

unable to confirm the account with the group itself.

But Hezbollah, battle-hardened by years of conflict with Israel, played an even more important role. It ensured the siege was not broken by helping thwart a series of suicide attacks, according to the official in the pro-Assad military alliance. "If they (the suicide attacks) had succeeded we would have been the ones under siege," he said. Asked about the role of Shiite militias in the battle for Aleppo, a Syrian military source said army statements always referred to the "allied forces" working with the army. Last year Assad publicly credited Hezbollah for its role.

Suicide Attacks

Victory in Aleppo leaves Assad virtually unassailable by the rebels but he still faces great challenges in restoring the power of his state. While he controls the most important cities in western Syria and the coast, armed groups including Islamic State control swathes of territory elsewhere in Syria. Assad could face prolonged guerrilla warfare from forces including the Nusra Front, until recently affiliated with Al-Qaeda, the global jihadist network founded by Osama bin Laden.

But victory in Aleppo shows how the direction of the civil war has shifted with the support of his allies. "The course of events in Aleppo in the last few months ... has turned the tide in Syria's war in favour of the Syrian government and resistance movement," said Hossein Salami, the deputy head of Iran's Revolutionary Guard, which has also deployed forces in the protracted campaign for Aleppo. He was referring to a regional alliance grouping Hezbollah, Iran and Syria defined by hostility to Israel. Less than 18 months ago, Assad's forces had been losing ground across Syria and he had acknowledged there was a manpower problem in his army. Russia's decision to intervene militarily in September 2015 helped prop up Assad, while protecting its own interests in the region. — Reuters

LOSS TO SPELL END FOR
REBELLION'S DREAMS

Syria's rebels once dreamed of overthrowing President Bashar Al-Assad's government and taking control of the country, but with the imminent loss of Aleppo they now face the prospect of total defeat. Though rebels retain territory elsewhere in Syria, including almost all of neighboring Idlib province, a crushing defeat in the country's second city would be highly symbolic.

It "means the end of Syria's opposition as a force that can plausibly challenge the Assad regime or control a country," said Sam Heller, a fellow at The Century Foundation think tank. When rebels stormed Aleppo in 2012, a year after the uprising against Assad began with anti-government protests, the opposition believed it was on the verge of overthrowing his regime. With the support of backers including Western nations, Gulf countries and Turkey, opposition fighters appeared to have momentum on their side.

But in recent months, and particularly after Russia's Sept 2015 intervention in support of Damascus, they have suffered a string of defeats capped off by their likely loss of Aleppo. "We're now past the point where the opposition has any hope of pulling back," said Yezid Sayigh, a senior fellow at the Carnegie Middle East Centre. "They just no longer have the numbers and the geographic spread to be able to mount major offensives."

With Aleppo out of rebel hands, the largest remaining rebel bastion is Idlib province, which is controlled by an

alliance dominated by former Al-Qaeda affiliate Fateh al-Sham Front. Rebels also hold territory in southern Daraa province and the Ghouta region around Damascus, although the army has been advancing there.

'Capitulation deals'

In recent months, the government has sealed a number of "reconciliation deals" with rebel areas in Ghouta, securing the surrender of opposition fighters in return for granting them safe passage to Idlib. The opposition criticizes these deals as a "starve or surrender" tactic, with rebels forced into deals after months or years of army siege and sustained bombardment. But Assad has long touted such deals as the best way to resolve a conflict that has killed more than 310,000 people and displaced over half the population since it began in March 2011.

"I think it's very likely that the loyalist forces will move quickly to impose capitulation deals on other rebel pockets," said Aron Lund, a non-resident fellow also at The Century Foundation. "Dismantling the insurgency in Eastern Ghouta will be one of the regime's big projects in 2017," he added. In Idlib, with access to the Turkish border and a deep well of fighters - including new arrivals from surrendering areas elsewhere - rebels are likely to be able to hang on for longer. "You have an armed opposition there that remains vital and motivated," said Heller. — AFP

Network Administrator
 Mezzan Holding
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for coordinating with the Systems Team and Service Desk, designing, installs, configures, maintains and troubleshoots the organization's Local and Wide Area Networks; managing the security systems related to the company: Firewall & Security Administration.

Apply Now [JB3592313](#)

Chief Accountant
 Post Services Company
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for performing financial analysis and reporting to management as needed, reviewing month-end accounting activities and closing such as reconciliations and journal entries, coordinating with finance team to complete assigned accounting tasks within deadlines, evaluating computerized accounting.

Apply Now [JB3593305](#)

Relationship manager
 Gulf Search Solutions DWC
 LLC - Kuwait

You will be responsible for managing a team of sales professionals, directly accountable for the delivery of the sales objectives, assessing and reviewing business approach, devise and implement target based sales strategy and monitor sales performance, exposing to regional and global markets.

Apply Now [JB3592301](#)

Software Engineer
 Carriage Logistics General
 Trading Co. - Kuwait

You will be responsible for building out our internal tools - including operations and customer service software, as well as optimizing driver algorithms and consumer-facing e-commerce applications.

Apply Now [JB3591815](#)

HR & Administration Officer
 Global Management Solutions
 (GMS) - Kuwait

You will be responsible for all administrative duties for the HR department of the company, developing of HR processes, in coordination with the Head of HR, visa processing, salary processing, leave allowances, onboarding, off boarding, staff accommodation and various miscellaneous duties.

Apply Now [JB3591074](#)

Digital Marketing Manager
 Amaken sarl
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for managing all relationships with vendors and ensuring most efficient cost possible, having in-depth knowledge of the various paid marketing channels and technologies, including paid search (Google AdWords), retargeting, social network advertising (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and more).

Apply Now [JB3590967](#)

Operations Manager - Al Kout Mall - GLA Property Management - Kuwait

You will be responsible for running an efficient operation and delivery of soft services consisting of housekeeping, pest controlling, waste management and car parking management, implementation of the investment agreement and fit out programs are respected by each investors.

Apply Now [JB3590775](#)

Site Engineer
 Combined Group Contracting
 Company (K.S.C.C) - Kuwait

You will be responsible for designing new buildings, restoring and conserving old buildings and developing new ways of using existing buildings, as well as, being involved in construction projects from the earliest stages right through to completion.

Apply Now [JB3590724](#)

Airport Services Duty Officer
 Qatar Airways
 KSA

You will be responsible for acting as a liaison between airport service providers and users and monitoring the day to day operations, providing input and recommendations to management to improve the effectiveness of the daily operations and ensuring passenger and aircraft handling practices conform to safety and security requirements.

Apply Now [JB3595175](#)

QC Engineer-Mechanical
 Al Kifah Holding
 KSA

You will be responsible for performing all daily inspection and test of the scope and character necessary to achieve the quality of construction required in the drawings and specifications for all works under the contract performed ON or OFF site and maintaining and update quality reports to the client to know the result of the project.

Apply Now [JB3595012](#)

Office Manager (Corporate)
 Al Kifah Holding
 KSA

You will be responsible for maintaining office services by organizing office operations and procedures; preparing payroll; controlling correspondence; designing filing systems; reviewing and approving supply requisitions; assigning and monitoring clerical functions.

Apply Now [JB3595012](#)

Credit Analyst
 QNB
 KSA

You will be responsible for reviewing credit facility proposals for Corporate and Private Banking customers. The role will provide analyses and assess the risk of the borrowers, proposed credit structures, security/collateral, exposure levels and the adherence to established policies, guidelines and credit procedures.

Apply Now [JB3594697](#)

Content Writer
 Above Digital
 UAE

You will be responsible for creating & executing content calendars for various client accounts, researching avatars and client niches to communicate with through your content channels, creating monthly content pieces for blogs, newsletters and social media platforms and reviewing and editing content to meet quality standards.

Apply Now [JB3594362](#)

Chief Financial Advisor
 Networkers International
 UAE

You will be responsible for providing expert advice on financial strategies and policies, including advice on management and operations of the different financial functions within the organization and advising on commercial and investment opportunities, future business growth and general economic outlook.

Apply Now [JB3594927](#)

Social Media Account Manager
 Mackenzie Jones
 UAE

You will be responsible for working with clients to create a social media strategy that collaborates with marketing, offline PR and advertising campaigns, research top influencers, competitors, and trends in clients' industries and creating timely and engaging content optimized for platform used and intended audience

Apply Now [JB3594977](#)

VM Coordinator (GCC Nationals)
 Chalhoub Group - UAE

You will be responsible for organising and deploying high quality visual merchandising across the market. The Visual Merchandising Co-ordinator is also responsible for guiding the in store teams, as well as ensuring the consistency of standards.

Apply Now [JB3595006](#)

Senior Social Media Officer | Qatar Airways | Doha
 Qatar Airways - Qatar

You will be responsible for managing service quality and service levels through teams by adhering to set standards, developing, managing, coordinating, and implementing workflows and standard operating procedures.

Apply Now [JB3593241](#)

Project Engineer
 JUBAILI BROS
 Qatar

You will be responsible for preparing the tender documents (specifications, BOQ, drawings), by performing a site inspection, and preparing the designs as per the requirements (generator set sizing, testing and commissioning), and solving upon request technical problems, to assist the sales department with the offer preparation based on accurate project planning.

Apply Now [JB3593223](#)

Sr Marketing Planning Manager - OMichael Page International (UAE) Limited- Qatar

You will be responsible for managing operations, analysis, planning and strategy support enterprise commercial activities and strategic decision making, planning and budgeting Enterprise commercial performance management.

Apply Now [JB3593104](#)

IT Project Manager
 EBLA Computer Consultancy
 Qatar

You will be responsible for ensuring that a project is completed on time and within budget, that the project's objectives are met and that everyone else is doing their job properly, separating the usual day-to-day business activities and require a group of people to work together to achieve a set of specific objectives.

Apply Now [JB3592975](#)

LAMAR JACKSON VOTED AP COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

LOUISVILLE: For someone who is not completely comfortable in the spotlight, Lamar Jackson has come to embrace it all: the speeches, the truckload of trophies, even all those tweets about his outfits. But after a week of award shows, interviews and photo opportunities, the Louisville quarterback just wants to get back to the place that made him the most decorated college football player of the year.

"It feels like I haven't played football in a year, I've been away so long," Jackson said. "I can't wait to get back out there, put on those pads and grind."

Jackson returns to Louisville as The Associated Press college football Player of the Year, the latest addition to the sophomore's haul of postseason awards.

The youngest Heisman Trophy winner received 42 of 61 first-place votes from AP's panel of media voters. Jackson received 153 points overall, followed by Clemson quarterback Deshaun Watson (73) and Alabama defensive lineman Jonathan Allen (32). Watson received 10 first-place votes and Allen three.

Jackson's runaway selection seemed fitting in a season in which he outraced defenders on his way to an impressive collection of highlights and hardware.

The 19-year-old opened the season by accounting for a school-record eight touchdowns against Charlotte. Then he had a flashy goal-line hurdle over a Syracuse defender the next week while rolling to an ACC-record 610 yards. He showcased his improvement in the pocket and quick, nimble footwork during a five-TD outburst against Florida State in a statement win for the program. "His ability to picture plays is something that he really worked on and got better at," Louisville coach Bobby Petrino said. "One of the things that is really neat was how he became a leader during the season. 'I can remember a couple of times in practice where he would look at me and go, 'He was short on that route.' And I would say 'Yes, yes he was.' And I would go ahead to the receiver to correct him and Lamar goes, 'That's OK, Coach. I got him.'"

The 6-foot-3, 205-pound Jackson has passed for 3,390 yards with 30 touchdowns and rushed for a school-record 1,538 and 21 scores. His combined TD total broke Watson's Atlantic Coast Conference record of 47 set last season, and he established single-season conference rushing marks for yardage and TDs by a QB.

EXPECTATIONS

After earning ACC honors from media and coaches as the league's top player, Jackson last week won the Maxwell and Walter Camp awards. He's still trying to get his mind around the deluge of individual accolades and attention - especially being a Heisman winner.

While he will tell anyone who listens that his intention when he arrived at Louisville was helping the Cardinals win games and championships, the spotlight and expectations will grow next season.

Jackson has the chance to become just the second repeat Heisman winner and first since Ohio State's Archie Griffin (1974 and '75). His goal remains leading Louisville into championship playoff contention after the No. 15 Cardinals (9-3) fell short this fall.

"The attention has been like that all year, and I just can't go out as much," said Jackson, who will lead Louisville against No. 19 LSU (7-4) on Dec. 31 in the Citrus Bowl. "This just motivates me to elevate my game."

Jackson, from Pompano Beach, Florida, is eager to resume bowl preparations for the game in his home state after a week of media appearances and award shows in Atlanta and New York - where his fashion choices took over social media.

His outfit for his Heisman coronation was a red velvet jacket with black lapels, black bow tie and black suede loafers adorned with menacing yellow eyes, which he says represented his fierce look from inside his helmet.

Initially reluctant to wear the shoes, Jackson relented and now laughs about the attention they generated. "I showed my teammates the picture of the shoes and they said, 'You gotta get them,'" Jackson said. "I was like, 'I don't want to wear them,' and we debated about it and talked about it, and it just went from there. It's fun."

Hard to imagine this impressive whirlwind would be anything other than fun, especially considering Jackson could do it again at the ripe old age of 20. — AP



File photo shows, Louisville QB Lamar Jackson leaps over defender for 5th touchdown of the half.

NEW ZEALAND RUGBY BOOSTS ALL BLACKS' PAY PACKETS

WELLINGTON: Captain Kieran Read is likely to become the first All Black to earn more than NZ\$1 million (US\$720,000) per season in pure salary after New Zealand Rugby agreed a major pay boost under a collective agreement with its Players' Association.

In a move detailed yesterday, NZR as agreed to boost its player payment pool by \$70 million (US\$50 million) from \$120 million (US\$86 million) to \$190 million (US\$136 million) over the next three years.

The boost recognizes increases in sponsorship and broadcast revenue, including an estimated \$40 million (US\$29 million) windfall from next year's British and Irish Lions Tour, and is designed to protect New Zealand's leading players from raids by overseas clubs.

Read comes off contract next year and is poised to announce a new deal through the 2019 Rugby World Cup which could take him through the \$1 million barrier.

Former captain Richie McCaw and star flyhalf Dan Carter are thought to have earned more than \$1 million from salaries and endorsements but Read's seven-figure payment would be salary alone, before other earnings.

Many players will benefit as New Zealand Rugby has set aside \$24.8 million (US\$17.8 million) for top-ups to players salaries from Super Rugby and provincial contracts, an increase of \$8.9 million (US\$6.4 million) on the previous collective. Player revenue-sharing amounts to around 36.5 percent of NZR's income from broadcasting and sponsorship.

"We're really pleased to be in a position where the game has grown its revenue overall," contracts manager Chris Lendrum said. "This collective was about delivering to the players their fair share of that money because they've been so important earning it and then determining what the most efficient way to spend all that money was."

Lock Brodie Retallick and winger Julian Savea are thought to be among the front-rank of earners in the current All Blacks team at around \$800,000 (US\$576,000) annually. But rich overseas clubs continue to pursue New Zealand's top players and the latest increases reflect NZR's determination to repel those offers.

Fullbacks Israel Dagg and Ben Smith and flyhalf Aaron Cruden have been most recently linked with moves to clubs in France and Britain.

"It's already come into play with the decisions of some of the senior players over the past 12 months. We're in a position where we can offer considerably more for those players than the equivalent point four or five years ago and that's making life a lot easier for us at that level. But there are still challenges and one or two of those players may still go. That's just the way it is for us."

"They might be looking at anywhere from 30 to 50 per cent increase in total payment levels. We think that makes us more competitive probably with the English market but to a lesser extent Japan, Ireland and France. That's always a moving feast."

NZR has also announced an increase from \$3.7 million (US\$2.6 million) to \$9.8 million (US\$7 million) in its fund to reward senior players who remain in Super Rugby to help develop younger players. That includes a one-off payment of \$35,000 (US\$25,000) to players with more than five seasons in Super Rugby. — AP



LONDON: In this file photo, New Zealand's Kieran Read pauses during the Rugby World Cup semifinal match between New Zealand and South Africa at Twickenham Stadium in London. Read is likely to become the first All Black to earn more than \$1 million per season after New Zealand Rugby agreed a major boost in salaries under a collective agreement with its Players' Association. — AP

HANSEN SAYS LIONS WILL BE 'READY TO RUMBLE' IN NZ

WELLINGTON: All Blacks coach Steve Hansen said yesterday that the British and Irish Lions' vast depth would ensure they coped with next year's gruelling tour schedule in New Zealand. The Lions play 10 matches on tour, including six before the first Test in Auckland, prompting concerns that players who have just completed their domestic seasons will be exhausted for the internationals. But Hansen said the sides that contribute players to the Lions-England, Wales, Ireland and Scotland had numerous quality players who could slot into the squad. "In every position they've got real depth," he told Radio Sport. "These guys are going to be able to play a really strong midweek team and also have a very strong Test team who are going to be fresh and ready to

rumble." Hansen predicted Lions coach Warren Gatland would adopt the same high-tempo, expansive game plan he employed with the Wales national team. But he expected the Lions to implement it more efficiently than the Welsh, who slumped to a 3-0 series defeat in New Zealand this year after failing to match the All Blacks' intensity.

"The quality of play will be a lot higher than we've had from the Welsh team," Hansen said. "That's no disrespect to the Welsh team, it's just the quality of the people they're going to have in that squad."

Some past Lions tours have descended into bickering between cliques of players from different nations and Hansen said a major challenge for Gatland was striking the

right balance. "If you don't manage it well then you have the opportunity for it to turn into a disaster," he said.

'REALLY GOOD SIDE'

He said the All Blacks were relishing the prospect of taking on a Lions side containing some of the best of the resurgent Northern Hemisphere nations have to offer. "(They) know they're facing a really good side, it's not as if they're facing a poor Lions team," he said. "The Six Nations are in good shape and playing good rugby so I'm very excited about it."

Hansen also admitted he was resigned to losing at least one of his backline stars to offers from cashed-up European clubs. Aaron Cruden, Ben Smith and Israel Dagg have all been linked to overseas clubs, which would make them ineligible to play for the All Blacks. "You're never going to retain everybody because we don't have the same amount of money as the England and the French (clubs), that's just the reality," he said.

"Will we keep all three of them? Probably not, but if we can keep two out of the three then that would be a positive." Fly-half Cruden has found himself behind Beauden Barrett in the All Blacks' pecking order, while Smith is 30 and comes off contract in 2017.

Dagg is also approaching the end of his international career and has already proved a point to selectors by forcing his way back into the All Blacks this year after being dropped for the 2015 World Cup. — AFP



All Blacks coach Steve Hansen.

HARTLEY'S 'FANTASTIC' CAPTAINCY NEEDS TO BE RECOGNISED: RFU CHIEF

MELBOURNE: Dylan Hartley's exemplary leadership of England over the last year should be taken into account when coach Eddie Jones decides whether he should retain the captaincy after the third dismissal of his career, RFU chief Ian Ritchie has said.

The New Zealand-born hooker was shown a straight red card for a swinging arm tackle on Ireland flanker Sean O'Brien while playing for Northampton against Leinster in the European Champions Cup last Friday. Hartley, who has a lengthy disciplinary record, faces a long spell on the sidelines but Ritchie thinks his part in England's resurgence over the last year needs to be taken into account when it comes to considering his leadership position.

"Dylan has clearly played a fantastic part in captaining the team, on and off the pitch, just to be clear," Ritchie told London's Daily Telegraph.

"His leadership credentials are very strong. He's made a huge contribution, as Eddie would say."

"So you view all these things in perspective and in perspective one looks at the totality of what he's done and what's happened over the years and I think we should be supportive of that."

Hartley was omitted from the England squad for last year's World Cup because of a ban for head-butting and has previously served bans totalling 54 weeks for offences including eye-gouging, biting and verbally abusing referees.

Australian Jones handed him the captaincy when he took over as coach in the wake of England's humiliating exit from the World Cup and Hartley has been an integral part of a team that won all 13 tests in 2016.

Hartley's leadership of England had also inevitably brought him into discussions about the captaincy of Warren Gatland's British and Irish Lions squad for next year's tour of New Zealand.

Ritchie is obviously more concerned about England and who will lead them into the defence of their title in the Six Nations, the start of which Hartley could miss depending on the length of his ban. "If he's eligible for selection it's ultimately a matter for Eddie, but we should recognise and support all that Dylan has done in the last 12 months," Ritchie added. "It is primarily a matter for Eddie and if you look back over it, Eddie's judgement has been really good. We should recognise that and I'm sure we will." — Reuters

US OLYMPIC CHIEFS SUPPORT BOBSLED MOVE, BUT OPPOSE BOYCOTTS

LOS ANGELES: United States Olympic chiefs backed a decision to move next year's bobsleigh and skeleton world championships out of Russia on Tuesday but said the organisation remained opposed to boycotts of future events in the drug-tarnished country.

The International Bobsleigh and Skeleton Federation on Tuesday announced it was withdrawing the February championships from Russia in the wake of the final installment last week of a damning report by professor Richard McLaren into Russian doping.

United States Olympic Committee chief executive Scott Blackmun told

reporters the IBSF had made the right decision following widespread unease among athletes due to compete in Russia. "We fully support the decision bobsled made today," Blackmun told reporters on a conference call.

"It seemed like the right thing to do given how strongly the athletes felt about going to Russia."

However Blackmun said that while USOC supported stripping Russia of the championships, the organisation remained opposed to "sport-by-sport" boycotts of other events.

"I don't think we support a boycott of any kind," Blackmun said. "At the end of

the day our athletes need to have the opportunity to be well-informed and make decisions about where they compete. "It's not our job as an NOC (National Olympic Committee) to make decisions about international events."

The McLaren report, which had been commissioned by the World Anti-Doping Agency, detailed a vast drug scandal in Russia that involved more than 1,000 Russian athletes across 30 sports in a state-backed doping programme. Blackmun described the report's findings as "stunning" and called on a unified response to address the issue of drugs in sport. "We need to

move with a sense of urgency. I think that's important. We need to make sure that we have the international federations, and the NOCs, and WADA, and national governments all on the same page," Blackmun said.

"It's not a simple issue. If you asked everybody how the system works today I'm not sure you'd get a consistent response, even from informed stakeholders. So I think it's important that we take what we've learned from the McLaren Report and apply it to the future. "This is not just an issue in one country. It's an issue around the world and it's going to require that everybody

around the world makes an investment in trying to ensure that clean athletes can compete cleanly."

Meanwhile USOC chairman Larry Probst said the committee was looking forward to working with the administration of US President-elect Donald Trump, who recently called International Olympic Committee chief Thomas Bach to express support for Los Angeles' bid for the 2024 Summer Games. "He's very excited about the thought of having the Olympic Games in the United States in 2024," Probst said of Trump. "I think we've got a fan who will be in the White House... and that's a good thing." — AFP

BEATING KLITSCHKO WOULD MAKE ME A LEGEND: JOSHUA

LONDON: Britain's heavyweight world champion Anthony Joshua says beating Ukrainian veteran Wladimir Klitschko in their mouthwatering showdown for the IBF and WBA crowns next April would entitle him to be called a legend.

The 27-year-old 2012 Olympic champion-who defended his IBF title successfully last Saturday against American journeyman Eric Molina-will face off against Klitschko on April 29 at Wembley Stadium and said the bout could be a life-changing experience for him. "A knockout is the cherry on top but to win, whichever way, is very possible," said Joshua at a press conference also attended by Klitschko at Wembley on Wednesday. "This is a fight that can change one from champion to legend overnight. "It will draw masses of attention and they are the type of fights that can change the way people view you."

Klitschko, who will be 41 by the time the bout takes place, said he has stayed in the sport since losing his WBA, IBF and WBO belts in a surprise defeat by troubled British pugilist Tyson Fury in November 2015 expressly to regain his titles.

"I am obsessed with my goal to become the champion again," said Klitschko, who has not fought since that defeat.

Joshua, who is 18-0 in his professional career and has never been taken the distance, conceded that while Klitschko might be on the elderly side for a boxer contesting a world title it did not make him any less dangerous. "I know what they mean when they say the old lion still roars and I know what that obsession is like because I live with that same obsession, it's just a clash of the titans," said Joshua, who was a sparring partner for Klitschko early in his

professional career. "In life you have to prepare for the unpredictable so you just never know. "This is the step up people want to see, what more can I ask for? I'm true to myself, true to my sport and that's why I'm ready for any challenge."

'FOLLOWING IN MY FOOTSTEPS'

Their press conference was conducted in a dignified and respectful manner which would have delighted the promoters after two rowdy recent press conferences.

Former world heavyweight champion David Haye threw a punch at his next opponent Tony Bellew and Dereck Chisora-who lost to Klitschko in a title challenge-hurled a table.

"It's amazing that two fighters aren't throwing tables or punching each other or saying what they're going to do to each other," remarked Klitschko. Klitschko said his respectful attitude would not change towards Joshua. "I was, I am and I will be very complimentary of him (Joshua)," said Klitschko.

"The first time I saw him perform in 2012 when he became Olympic champion here in London, I felt he was following in my footsteps. "Whatever the outcome, I truly believe he is one of the best heavyweights right now. I think Anthony is an absolutely outstanding athlete. It's great that eventually we meet."

Klitschko admitted even to addressing Joshua's "little bro"-although he added it didn't mean he would go easy on him in the ring. "We are friends in a certain way," said Klitschko.

"I did call him little bro' but even when I am in the ring with my bro', I am very competitive." — AFP



NEW YORK: Artemi Panarin #72 of the Chicago Blackhawks tries to keep the puck as Kevin Hayes #13 of the New York Rangers defends on December 13, 2016 at Madison Square Garden in New York City. — AFP

ANISIMOV LEADS BLACKHAWKS TO 2-1 WIN OVER RANGERS

NEW YORK: Artem Anisimov scored the tiebreaking goal late in the second period to lead the Chicago Blackhawks over the New York Rangers 2-1 on Tuesday night. Trevor van Riemsdyk also scored as the Central Division leaders improved to 3-0-1 in their last four games. Scott Darling stopped 33 shots, upping his record to 7-2-2. Artemi Panarin had two assists and Anisimov had one as Chicago got even with New York following a 1-0 overtime loss at home to the Rangers last Friday. Jesper Fast scored for the Rangers and Antti Raanta, starting for the fourth straight game, made 24 saves. Raanta had won three consecutive starts, including shutouts in the last two. New York had won four of its last five. Blackhawks captain Jonathan Toews was activated from injured reserve earlier in the day after missing nine games with an upper-body injury.

CAPITALS 4, ISLANDERS 2

Matt Niskanen scored two goals in the third period to lift Washington over New York for its fifth straight victory. Brett Connolly and Justin Williams also scored for the Capitals (18-7-3). Following a five-game winning streak, the Islanders have dropped their last two. New York's 11-12-5 record is the worst in the Metropolitan Division. Brock Nelson and Nikolay Kulemin scored for the Islanders, and Jaroslav Halak made 34 saves.

HURRICANES 8, CANUCKS 6

Justin Faulk scored the go-ahead goal 5:56 into the third period and Carolina rallied from three goals down to beat Vancouver. Jeff Skinner had two goals, with his second starting Carolina's wild comeback. The Hurricanes scored six goals in the third - including four in a 4:40 span - to erase a 5-2 deficit. Ron Hainsey and Victor Rask scored 24 seconds apart before Faulk put Carolina back up with a wrist shot that clicked off Nikita Tryamkin on its way past Ryan Miller. Jordan Staal added an insurance goal with 7:22 left, and Brandon Sutter made it 7-6 with 5:50 to play before Lee Stempniak scored an empty-netter with 57.6 seconds remaining. Sven Baertschi had two goals and an assist for the Canucks. Baertschi, Alexandre Burrows, Markus Granlund and Ben Hutton all scored during Vancouver's four-goal second period. Sebastian Aho scored an early goal for Carolina and Michael Leighton made 13 saves in relief of Cam Ward, who stopped 15 shots. Miller made 24 saves but was pulled after Faulk's goal in favor of Jacob Markstrom.

SABRES 6, KINGS 3

Jack Eichel scored two goals in 2:08 of the second period and assisted on another to lead Buffalo past Los Angeles. Ryan O'Reilly and Brian Gionta also scored for the Sabres during a four-goal flurry in a 6:13 span of the second. Eichel set up Evander Kane for an insurance goal late in the third and Sam Reinhart scored into an empty net in the final minute. Kyle Okposo assisted on three of Buffalo's goals, giving him 11 points in his last 10 games and a team-high 21 points this season. Okposo played after missing Monday's practice due to

NHL results/standings													
Columbus 3, Edmonton 1; Dallas 6, Anaheim 2; Nashville 6, St. Louis 3; Minnesota 5, Florida 1; San Jose 3, Toronto 2 (SO); Arizona 4, Detroit 1; Buffalo 6, Los Angeles 3; Washington 4, NY Islanders 2; Chicago 2, NY Rangers 1; Carolina 8, Vancouver 6.													
Western Conference					Metropolitan Division								
Central Division					Atlantic Division								
W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS		
Chicago	19	8	4	83	71	42	Ottawa	16	11	2	70	78	34
Minnesota	16	8	4	80	57	36	Boston	16	12	2	71	71	34
St. Louis	16	10	4	82	85	36	Tampa Bay	14	13	2	81	81	30
Nashville	13	11	4	84	81	30	Florida	13	13	4	71	82	30
Dallas	12	13	6	81	98	30	Detroit	13	13	4	71	81	30
Winnipeg	13	16	3	82	96	29	Toronto	11	11	6	81	87	28
Colorado	11	15	1	60	86	23	Buffalo	11	11	6	62	75	28
Pacific Division					Eastern Conference								
W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS	Atlantic Division							
San Jose	17	11	1	71	63	35	Pittsburgh	19	7	3	104	84	41
Anaheim	15	10	5	83	81	35	NY Rangers	20	10	1	106	72	41
Edmonton	15	12	5	94	88	35	Columbus	18	5	4	90	57	40
Calgary	16	13	2	81	86	34	Washington	18	7	3	76	61	39
Los Angeles	14	12	2	74	76	30	Philadelphia	18	10	3	101	94	39
Vancouver	12	16	2	73	94	26	New Jersey	12	10	6	69	82	30
Arizona	10	14	5	66	91	25	Carolina	12	11	6	77	82	30
Atlantic Division					Eastern Conference								
W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS	Atlantic Division							
Montreal	19	6	4	92	64	42	NY Islanders	11	12	5	73	85	27

Note: Overtime losses (OTL) are worth one point in the standings and are not included in the loss column (L)

illness. Robin Lehner made 13 of his 30 saves in the third period and won for just the second time in his last 11 starts. Jeff Carter scored twice for the Kings, and Anze Kopitar had the other goal. Peter Budaj made 16 saves before being replaced by Jeff Zatkoff in the second period. The Kings have lost three of four and have not won in Buffalo since Feb. 21, 2003.

BLUE JACKETS 3, OILERS 1

Sam Gagner had a goal and an assist, and Columbus won its seventh straight game by beating Edmonton. Cam Atkinson and Matt Calvert also scored to help the Blue Jackets (18-5-4) improve to 8-0-1 in their last nine games. Tyler Pitlick had the goal for the Oilers (15-12-5), who have lost five of six.

STARS 6, DUCKS 2

Dan Hamhuis opened Dallas' five-goal third period against Anaheim with his first of the season on his 34th birthday. Hamhuis tipped in Jamie Benn's cross-ice pass on the power play at 5:41, tying it at 2. Adam Cracknell, Patrick Eaves and Benn then scored to drive Ducks goalie John Gibson from the game at 12:24. Radek Faksa added an empty-netter at 13:57. Dallas had lost six of eight. Anaheim was 6-1-1 in its previous eight. Antti Niemi made 34 saves to improve to 6-1-1 at home this season. Ryan Getzlaf and Corey Perry scored for the Ducks.

WILD 5, PANTHERS 1

Devan Dubnyk made 29 saves and Minnesota defeated Florida for its fifth straight victory. Zach Parise, Erik Haula, Eric Staal, Mikko Koivu and Jason Zucker scored for Minnesota, which has points in 10 of its last 11 games. Zucker added an assist, and Jason Pominville and Jonas Brodin each had two assists for the Wild. Roberto Luongo's regrettable history in Minnesota continued as he stopped 12 of 17 shots before being pulled

midway through the third period. Luongo is 0-7 and has been pulled in four of his last seven games at the Xcel Energy Center. Dylan McLlath scored his first goal of the season for the Panthers, who have one win in their past six games. Dubnyk is 7-0-2 in his last nine games and leads the NHL in goals-against average and save percentage.

PREDATORS 6, BLUES 3

Mike Fisher scored twice and Nashville erased a three-goal deficit to beat St. Louis. James Neal, Filip Forsberg, Ryan Johansen and Mike Ribeiro also scored for the Predators, who snapped a two-game skid. After trailing 3-0 early in the second period, Nashville scored six straight goals to earn its 10th home victory of the season. Fisher got the go-ahead goal off a pass from Colin Wilson at 9:02 of the third period. Kevin Shattenkirk, Ryan Reaves and Brad Hunt scored for St. Louis, which has lost three of four.

SHARKS 3, MAPLE LEAFS 2, SO

Logan Couture scored the only goal in a shootout, and San Jose rallied to beat Toronto. The Sharks trailed 2-0 before Justin Braun and Joe Pavelski scored in a quick burst in the third period. Martin Jones made 29 saves in the opener of a four-game road trip. Zach Hyman and Auston Matthews scored for the Maple Leafs, who have dropped five of six. Frederik Andersen made 40 stops. Jones denied Mitchell Marner, Matthews and Nikita Soshnikov in the tiebreaker, and Couture was successful in the second round.

COYOTES 4, RED WINGS 1

Jamie McGinn scored twice in Arizona's victory over Detroit. Lawson Crouse and defenseman Anthony DeAngelo also scored for Arizona. Peter Holland had two assists in his Coyotes debut, and Mike Smith made 37 saves. Andreas Athanasiou scored for the Red Wings, and Jimmy Howard stopped 15 shots. — AP



LONDON: Britain's Anthony Joshua (L) and Ukraine's Wladimir Klitschko (R) take part in a press conference at Wembley Stadium in north west London yesterday. Ukraine's Wladimir Klitschko will fight Britain's Anthony Joshua on April 29, 2017 at Wembley Stadium in London — AFP

BRAZILIAN UFC FIGHTER CRIS 'CYBORG' BECOMES US CITIZEN

LOS ANGELES: Brazilian UFC fighter Cris "Cyborg" Justino became a US citizen during a naturalization ceremony Tuesday. The 31-year-old from Curitiba, Brazil, was among thousands who took the oath of citizenship at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

Justino, who said she added Cyborg as a middle name on her naturalization papers, said coming to the United States has changed her life.

"The first time I went to America, I had the opportunity to fight here and people really appreciate my work and appreciate my sport," she said, while lining up with 2,300 citizenship applicants for the day's first ceremony.

"It's an opportunity for me (to) give back for the American community what

they give to me. I can vote. I can participate more," she said. Justino came to the United States on a visa for competitive athletes in 2008 and later applied for a green card, said Richard M. Wilner, her immigration attorney.

She applied to naturalize in December 2015. Wilner said becoming a citizen was a personal decision for Justino and will not affect her work in the sport. The veteran fighter is 17-1 since her 2005 debut and has won titles in the Strikeforce and Invicta promotions. She signed with the UFC earlier this year and lives in Huntington Beach.

Including a second ceremony scheduled for the afternoon, some 4,000 people from more than 120 countries were being naturalized Tuesday. — AP



LOS ANGELES: Brazilian UFC fighter Cris "Cyborg" Justino takes the "Oath of Citizenship" to become a US citizen during a naturalization ceremony at the Los Angeles Convention Center, Tuesday. — AP

S AFRICA NAME UNCAPPED DE BRUYN FOR S LANKA TESTS

JOHANNESBURG: South Africa have named uncapped batsman Theunis de Bruyn in their injury-hit squad for the three-match home test series against Sri Lanka that starts on December 26.

The 24-year-old explosive right-hander has been included after Rilee Rossouw was ruled out with a foot injury, adding to the absences of former captain AB de Villiers (elbow), and fast bowlers Dale Steyn (shoulder) and Morne Morkel (back).

"De Bruyn is the latest player to be rewarded for consistently good form at franchise and South Africa A level," Cricket South Africa selection convenor Linda Zondi said in a statement on Wednesday.

"He has an outstanding first-class career average of 48.73 and has made 423 runs at 60.42 in this season's four-day competition."

De Bruyn also offers an option as a part-time seam bowler. On Monday, it

was announced that Faf du Plessis, who recently led the side to series victories at home to New Zealand and away in Australia, would take over the test captaincy on a permanent basis as De Villiers battled to regain full fitness.

"Credit to AB de Villiers for the smooth way the leadership transition has taken place. Faf has done an outstanding job in the last two test series and our leadership is in very good hands," Zondi added.

Next Monday, Du Plessis will appeal his conviction for ball tampering during the series in Australia that resulted in him losing his entire match fee for the second test in Hobart.

The appeal represents an element of risk as he is flirting with the higher sentence of a one-match ban, which would rule him out of the first test in Port Elizabeth, should he fail.

Replacement wicketkeeper Dane Vilas and left-arm spinner Tabraiz

Shamsi have been dropped from the squad that toured Australia last month.

The second test will be played in Cape Town from Jan. 2 and will be concluded in Johannesburg from Jan. 12.

Squad: Faf du Plessis (captain), Kyle Abbott, Hashim Amla, Temba Bavuma, Stephen Cook, Theunis de Bruyn, Quinton de Kock, JP Duminy, Dean Elgar, Keshav Maharaj, Wayne Parnell, Vernon Philander, Kagiso Rabada. —Reuters

INDIA, ENGLAND CALL OFF TRAINING AMID CYCLONE

NEW DELHI: The England and Indian training sessions were cancelled yesterday owing to unfit ground conditions at the MA Chidambaram stadium in cyclone-battered Chennai which hosts the fifth and final Test from tomorrow.

Ten people were killed by Cyclone Vardah, the worst cyclonic storm to hit the tech hub in southern Tamil Nadu state in more than two decades. Trees and power supply lines were also uprooted when Vardah struck Monday.

The Indian team management told AFP the match would go ahead as scheduled while confirming that the practice session had been called off yesterday. The pre-match press conferences and training would take place as scheduled today, it said. The England team also said it had called off yesterday's practice session and would now have bowling and fielding drills

today. Kashi Viswanathan, the secretary of the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association, said the cyclone had damaged the sight screen and other stadium property.

"The sight screen has been badly damaged, the bulbs of the floodlights blown off, a number of air conditioners also got damaged," he told the Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency on Tuesday.

"The assuring part is that the pitch and the outfield has not been affected by the cyclone," he said. Viswanathan also said three stands at the ground will be closed for the Test match due to a long-running dispute with the Chennai city council which has refused to issue safety certificates. India, the world number one Test side, have already clinched the five-Test series 3-0 after an innings and 36-run victory in the fourth Test in Mumbai this week. The first Test at Rajkot had ended in a draw. —AFP



MUMBAI: This file photograph taken on December 8, 2016, shows England's captain Alastair Cook playing a shot on the first day of the fourth Test match between India and England at the Wankhede stadium in Mumbai. A rampant India will look to create history in the fifth and final Test against England from tomorrow, by piling more misery on Alastair Cook in what could be his last outing as the tourists' skipper. — AFP

CHEERLEADING BOASTS INTERNATIONAL APPEAL

ORLANDO: Cheerleading, which received provisional recognition as an Olympic sport last week, is an increasingly international activity by no means restricted to its North American birthplace, according to the man who has driven its growth over four decades.

Jim Webb has helped transform cheerleading from sideline entertainment at American football and basketball games to the sport that was granted recognition by the International Olympic Committee. Cheerleading will now be able to tap into some IOC funding and take part in a number of programmes, including athlete development and anti-doping. At the end of their three-year provisional recognition period, they can apply to become part of the Olympic Games sports programme. While cheerleading's strong youth appeal was clearly attractive to the IOC, widespread international participation is also key to taking the next steps towards a place at the Summer Games.

With over 100 national federations registered with the International Cheer Union (ICU), Webb is certain the competitiveness of the sport would not be confined to just North America.

"When we first started our world championships there was a big gap between the US and Canada and now there is a lot of parity with countries

from Europe and Asia that win medals and that sometimes beat the US and Canadian teams," he told Reuters.

"Thailand has some great cheerleading. Japan has outstanding cheerleading. Some of the countries in Europe, Norway, Finland, Germany, the UK has outstanding cheerleading. It's developing everywhere."

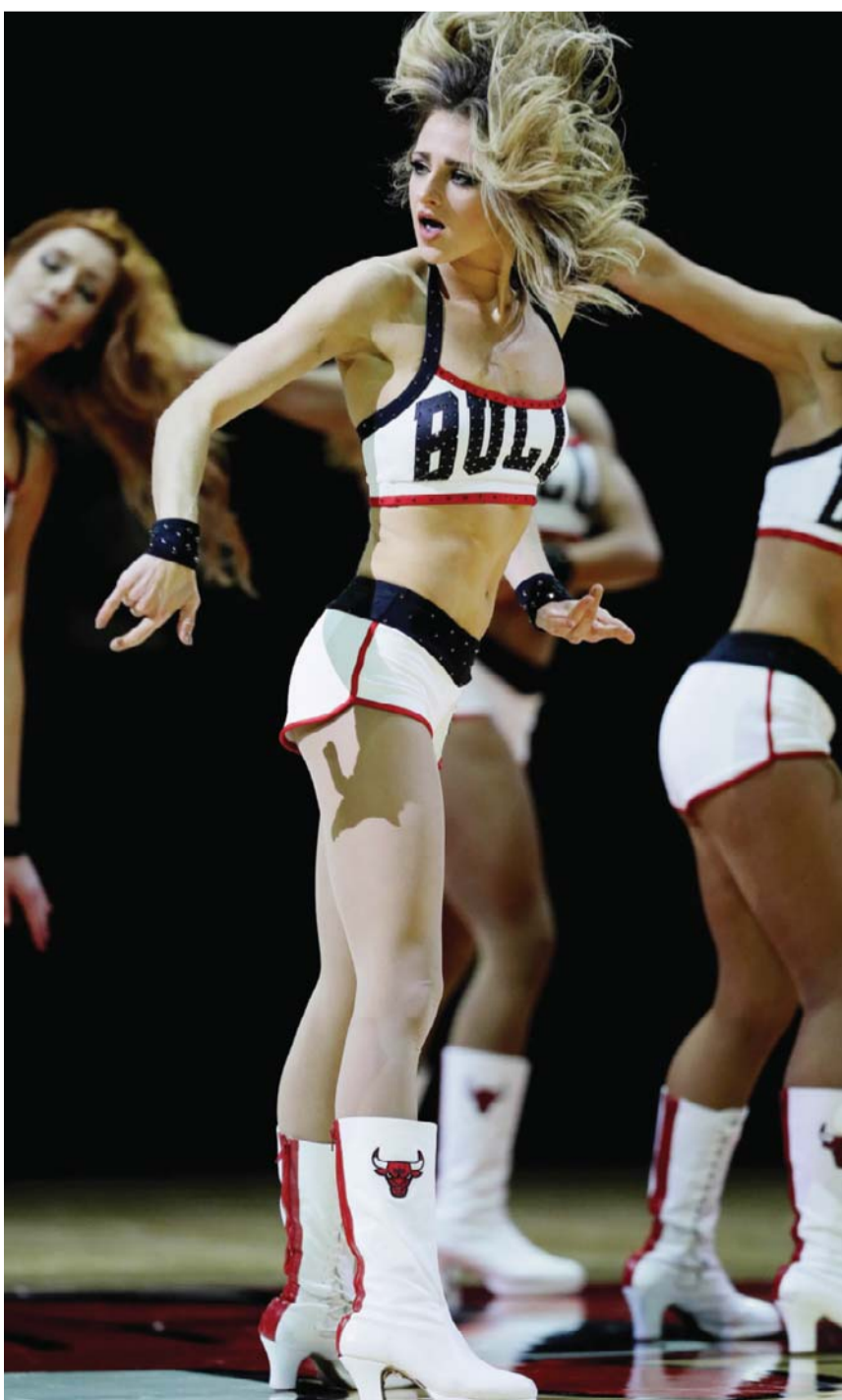
The addition of cheerleading and the Thai martial art of muaythai last week takes the number of recognised Olympic sports to 37, only 28 of which were part of the programme at the Rio Olympics earlier this year.

"One of the problems for the Olympic Games is there are just so many sports and that could change," Webb added.

"But when somebody goes in, somebody has to go out and of course we're not interested in creating any enemies. There's so many sports being formed now that it's tough, it's a crowded space and they vet you very, very thoroughly."

Webb, who founded his cheerleading promotional company Varsity Sports in 1974, is very clear on what the sport can offer the Olympic movement.

"One of the key components of what we do that makes it very different is that visual effect of so many people doing these different stunts and skills at the same time that make it very appealing to watch," he added. —Reuters



CHICAGO: A cheerleader performs during a break between the Bulls and the Minnesota Timberwolves at the United Center on Tuesday in Chicago, Illinois. —AFP

RAMPAGING INDIA LOOK TO INCREASE COOK'S WOES

NEW DELHI: A rampant India will look to create history in the fifth and final Test against England from tomorrow by piling more misery on Alastair Cook in what could be his last outing as the tourists' skipper.

After completing an innings victory in the fourth Test on Monday in Mumbai, Virat Kohli's men will become the first Indian team to go unbeaten in 18 matches by avoiding defeat in the series finale in Chennai. The majestic Kohli, who is in the form of his life after striking his third double century of the year, is no mood to ease up on their beleaguered visitors.

After putting the outcome of the series beyond doubt, Kohli said India would now "really express ourselves fully" in Chennai and hope to make it 4-0 against opponents who had been something of a bogey team.

England had won their last three series against India, including their tour in 2012 at the start of Cook's record-breaking tenure as captain. Four years on, Cook's appetite for the job is being increasingly called into question and the skipper himself has spoken of the possibility of stepping down while continuing to be available for selection as a batsman.

ROOT 'READY'

"If he still feels the same way he did when he started, if every defeat hurts him as much now as it did then, I believe he should carry on," Nasser Hussain, one of Cook's predecessors, wrote in the Daily Mail.

"But if any part of him feels as if he's taking the job for granted, then he should have a serious think about handing it over to Joe Root. It's not a job you do lightly."

After the Mumbai Test, Cook said he had still to decide on his future but he raised eyebrows by declaring that Joe Root's most likely successor should be ready to take on the task.

"You start having questions, of course you do," said Cook as he was quizzed about whether he wanted to soldier on after 58 Tests as captain. "I think Joe Root is ready to captain England. He's ready because he's a clued-up guy, he's got the respect of everyone in the changing room."

"He hasn't got much captaincy experience but that doesn't mean he can't be a very good captain." England coach Trevor Bayliss is among those hoping that Cook does decide to remain captain, describing the speculation around his future as an unwelcome distraction.

"I think everyone, to a man, in the dressing room would be disappointed if he wasn't captain," Bayliss was quoted as saying by website cricinfo. "But when it's constantly in the media all the time, it's a bit of a pain in the backside."

KING KOHLI

While Cook considers whether to abdicate, his counterpart-dubbed King Kohli by the Indian media—appears increasingly confident on the throne. He now has a chance of setting a new Indian record for the most runs in a series after scoring 640 in the first four Tests, with Sunil Gavaskar's 774 on the 1971 tour of West Indies coming into view.

Kohli is one of several Indian players who have had outstanding series, including spinner Ravichandran Ashwin who has taken 27 wickets.

"The team is exceptional in terms of intensity and situational awareness. Everyone has contributed to the success. This team is special," said India coach Anil Kumble.

India are expected to be unchanged but England could bring in an extra spin bowler on a

pitch that is expected to turn, with Cook admitting it was a mistake to only pick two specialist spinners in Mumbai.

England will be hoping Stuart Broad, who missed the last two Tests with a foot injury, will be available with his stand-in Jake Ball only taking one wicket in Mumbai.

India (from): Virat Kohli (capt), Murali Vijay, Lokesh Rahul, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya

Rahane, Ravichandran Ashwin, Parthiv Patel, Ravindra Jadeja, Jayant Yadav, Umesh Yadav, Amit Mishra, Bhuvneshwar Kumar

England (from): Alastair Cook (capt), Joe Root, Jos Buttler, Moeen Ali, Ben Stokes, Jonny Bairstow, Adil Rashid, Chris Woakes, Steven Finn, James Anderson, Jake Ball, Gary Ballance, Gareth Batty, Stuart Broad, Liam Dawson, Ben Duckett, Keaton Jennings. —AFP

UPBEAT AUSSIES TO TEST PAKISTAN WITH BOUNCERS

BRISBANE: Skipper Steve Smith says Australia's pace attack will test the resolve of Pakistan batsmen with short-pitched bowling in Brisbane's first ever day-night Test from today. Smith has yet to finalise his team and hasn't ruled out playing with four pacemen at the expense of spinner Nathan Lyon, but he is promising the tourists a work-out on the bouncy Gabba pitch.

With in-form quicks Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood armed with the new ball, Smith said team strategists had watched Pakistan's recent series in New Zealand where the tourists slumped to two hefty defeats. "I think traditionally sub-continent sides don't handle the pace and bounce in Australian conditions," Smith said yesterday, ahead of the three-Test series. "So you need to try and find ways to exploit that as much as possible and at times I'm sure we're going to see some short-pitched bowling to mess with their feet to find ways to get them out."

"New Zealand obviously did a good job, so hopefully our bowlers can replicate that."

Smith was far more upbeat about Australia's chances after stopping the rot of five straight Test defeats with a revamped team in Adelaide late last month. "It's been a nice turnaround. We've won four games on the trot (including three ODIs against New Zealand) as an Australian team now and hopefully we can keep that winning momentum

going," he said. Pakistan also have fast bowling ammunition to return fire at the Gabba, led by Mohammad Amir and Wahab Riaz. Smith pinpointed Amir as a potential "handful".

YASIR WARNING

"He's a quality bowler. He's got some great skills. He bowls with really good pace and can swing the ball," he said.

"It's great to have those sort of gears and those skills so no doubt he could potentially be a handful if it's swinging around." But Smith also warned Pakistan's leg-spinner Yasir Shah to make sure his length was on the mark or the Australian batsmen would take to him. Yasir has captured 116 wickets in just 20 Tests since his debut against Australia in Dubai two years ago. "I guess the extra bounce can play in your favour as a spin bowler at the Gabba, but it can also play against you," Smith said. "Your length has to be spot on, generally there isn't too much turn—it's more bounce, so length is crucial. "And if you're slightly off your length, you can really cash in down the wicket and square of the wicket as well." Smith added that rookie opener Matt Renshaw, who made his Test debut against South Africa in Adelaide this month, was adapting to his new environment.

"He's coming out of his shell in the last couple of days. I was impressed with the way he played last week and been impressed with the way that he trains. —AFP



BRISBANE: Australia's cricket team captain Steven Smith (R) and his Pakistani counterpart Misbah-ul-Haq hold a trophy during a media call at Gabba in Brisbane yesterday, on the eve of their first pink ball day and night Test. — AFP

INDIA INSPIRED BY ICELAND IN GRASSROOTS EXPANSION

GENEVA: The size of the task facing Dutchman Piet Hubers when he agreed to help develop grassroots soccer in India quickly became apparent with one simple comparison.

Hubers discovered there are more full-sized pitches in his home town of Wijchen, which has a population of around 40,000, than in the whole of Mumbai, which has more than 20 million inhabitants.

"That makes it very challenging," he told Reuters in an interview held at the International Sports Convention in Geneva. Iceland, who reached the quarter-finals of Euro 2016, are a good guide to what can be achieved.

"I use Iceland very much as an example," said Hubers. "They invested a lot of money in facilities, in halls, in artificial pitches but also in coaches."

"It's mandatory that every coach is qualified otherwise you can't even coach a youth team and that in my opinion is one of the basics of the success of Icelandic football."

Cricket-loving India is a sleeping giant as far as football is concerned. The national side are 137th in the world rankings and, on the only occasion they qualified for the World Cup in 1950, pulled out without kicking a ball.

However, the country of 1.3 billion is finally waking up to the most popular sport on the planet. The Indian Super League (ISL) is in its third season and Kushal Das, secretary general of the All India Football Federation, has said the country is aiming to qualify for the 2026 World Cup.

Hubers, a former defender for Dutch top-flight club NEC Nijmegen, believes that developing the sport at grassroots level is fundamental to India's plans.

"The more players you get into the system, the better the quality will be at the top," he said.

YOUNG CHAMPS

The ISL, promoted by billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries and Rupert Murdoch's Star India TV, have their own

grassroots programme of which Hubers is technical director.

The most talented players are selected for a residential programme, based near Mumbai, known as Young Champs.

Started in 2014, the scheme's first target is to give 500,000 children between the ages of six and 14 the chance to play football and get coaching.

Hubers said finding spaces to play was one of the major challenges in India's teeming cities and that children needed to play regularly.

"One training session every week and a grassroots match every week for 20 weeks a season is the absolute minimum but that is also the biggest challenge because you need good facilities, you need a playing system, you need good coaches, you must organise teams and that is not so easy," he said. Improvisation is often the key and the concept of pop-up pitches, where organisers bring portable goals and announce venues on social media, has become popular. Officials have also attempted to persuade private clubs and schools to make their facilities available.

"There are square metres you can use here and there, for example for playing a small game which can be four against four, or seven against seven," Hubers said.

Coaching is another key element. "The most important thing for the ISL clubs is to educate the coaches ... so that parents can be confident their children are improving," added Hubers. He said it can take 10 years of investment in grassroots football to pay off at international level and believes India's goal of reaching the 2026 World Cup is achievable.



"You always must set targets ... and that's just a target, not an obligation although it is certainly high on our wish list," he explained.

"I think that qualifying for the World Cup in 2026 is a realistic objective. When you look at the national team and the national youth teams, they're progressing very well and they will progress more if the grassroots system increases." — Reuters



BOURNEMOUTH: Bournemouth's Nathan Ake, left, vies for the ball with Leicester City's Shinji Okazaki, right, during the English Premier League soccer match between Bournemouth and Leicester City, at the Vitality Stadium, in Bournemouth, England, Tuesday. — AP

MARC PUGH'S GOAL BRINGS LEICESTER DOWN TO EARTH

	Bournemouth	1
	Leicester	0

BOURNEMOUTH: Premier League champions Leicester City crashed to earth with a bump as Marc Pugh's 34th-minute goal earned Bournemouth a 1-0 win at the Vitality Stadium on Tuesday.

Leicester overwhelmed Pep Guardiola's Manchester City 4-2 on Saturday in a thrilling return to the form that carried them to last season's fairytale title triumph.

But Pugh marked his first start of the season with the game's only goal to lift Bournemouth up to eighth place and keep Claudio Ranieri's Leicester four points above the drop zone in

14th. It was not how Ranieri would have wanted to mark his 200th Premier League game as a manager.

The Italian has not seen his side win back-to-back league games since April and they have not won away from the King Power Stadium since the start of the campaign.

From contemplating the prospect of a Champions League last 16 encounter against Sevilla, with whom they were paired in Monday's draw, Leicester find themselves facing up to a relegation scrap.

Ranieri made only one change to the team that had outclassed City at the weekend, with Luis Hernandez coming in for the suspended Danny Simpson at right-back.

But it was Bournemouth, for whom Jack Wilshere returned to the starting XI, who made the early running, with Charlie Daniels flashing a cross across the face of goal.

Leicester talisman Jamie Vardy returned to his brilliant best with a hat-trick against City and he

had a sight of goal after rounding Artur Boruc, only for a sliding Steve Cook to intervene.

It was a rare sight of goal for the visitors and after Wilshere had warned the palms of Leicester goalkeeper Ron-Robert Zieger with a crisp effort, the home side took the lead.

Adam Smith cut the ball back from the right for Benik Afobe, whose shot was parried by Zieger, but Pugh was on hand to smash the rebound home. Ranieri sent for the cavalry in the second half, throwing on forwards Ahmed Musa, Shinji Okazaki and Leonardo Ulloa, but still a goal eluded his side. Vardy hooked an effort straight at Boruc from Hernandez's long throw, while Robert Huth headed wide from Riyad Mahrez's corner and Okazaki saw an effort brilliantly blocked by the valiant Cook.

There was one last sight of goal for the champions when Ulloa took aim from point-blank range, but Boruc thwarted him to give Bournemouth its first win over Leicester since March 1989. — AFP



NEW DELHI: Delhi Dynamos FC midfielder Marcos Ramiro Tebar (L) vies for the ball against Kerala Blasters FC forward Mohammad Rafiq (R) during the second leg of the second semi-final Indian Super League (ISL) football match between Delhi Dynamos FC and Kerala Blasters FC at The Jawahar Lal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi yesterday. — AFP

SOCHAUX TOPPLE MARSEILLE IN FRENCH LEAGUE CUP

PARIS: Marseille crashed out of the French League Cup on Tuesday after losing 4-3 on penalties to second-tier Sochaux following a 1-1 draw in their last-16 tie.

Bouna Sarr fired the three-time champions ahead at the Stade Bonal but Moussa Sao swiftly responded to level for hosts Sochaux. Goalkeeper Christopher Dilo then saved spot-kicks from Doria and Aaron Leya Iseka in the shootout as Sochaux, the only non top-flight team left in the competition, advanced to the quarter-finals.

"We're frustrated because we should have qualified, but that's the Cup for you," said Marseille coach Rudi Garcia. "We knew it would be tough playing away."

"Hats off to Sochaux. They pushed when we scored and hit back with a magnificent goal. They then sat back and tried to hold on until the penalty shoot-out."

Sochaux coach Albert Cartier said his team's victory had been "deserved" and came "from the heart", adding that they regularly practised penalties.

"Generally we practise penalties at the end of very long training sessions so the

players remain focused while fatigued, even if the context is obviously not the same." Earlier, former Portugal international Sergio Conceicao made a winning start as Nantes manager with a 3-1 victory over Montpellier.

Argentine striker Emiliano Sala struck either side of a Kevin Berigaud goal at the Stade de la Beaujoire as Nantes became the first team through to the last eight.

Poland international Mariusz Stepinski added a third for Nantes on the hour, although the hosts played out the final few minutes with 10 men after the dismissal of Abdoulaye Toure.

The relegation-threatened Breton club appointed Conceicao last Thursday to succeed Rene Girard with Nantes languishing second from bottom in the French top flight. Conceicao, 42, formerly held the reins at Olhanense, Academica de Coimbra, Braga and then Vitoria Guimaraes in his homeland. Holders Paris Saint-Germain host Lille in a repeat of last year's final, while Monaco, Nice and Lyon were also in action yesterday. — AFP

GRIFFITHS PROPELS CELTIC 11 PTS CLEAR

GLASGOW: Runaway leaders Celtic further extended their lead at the top of the Scottish Premiership with a 1-0 defeat of Hamilton at Celtic Park on Tuesday.

A first-half strike from Leigh Griffiths was enough to claim Celtic's 10th consecutive victory and condemn Hamilton to their first defeat in six games. The Hoops now hold an 11-point advantage over Rangers, having played two games less than their fierce Glasgow rivals.

Aberdeen missed the chance to narrow the gap to second-place Rangers when their game against Motherwell at Pittodrie was abandoned due to floodlight failure.

Despite the victory, Celtic manager Brendan Rodgers thought his side had not been at their usual standard. "I think throughout most of this season we've performed at a really high level, but some games we haven't," the former Liverpool manager said. "Tonight was one of those games that we didn't quite hit those heights, but we showed a great desire and persistence to keep going and we got the job done in the end."

Hamilton manager Martin Canning thought his side had been excellent. "I thought their work-rate was different class and they did what they were asked to do," he said. "It is a difficult place to come and it would've been nice to get something from it. But to come here and perform that way, I think the boys deserve some credit."

Celtic had gone into the first of three consecutive home games on the back of three comfortable away wins where they had racked up nine goals.

DEMBELE AND GRIFFITHS COMBINE

Hamilton were well aware of the threat the Glasgow giants could pose, having been thrashed 8-1 on their last visit to Celtic Park in January. However, the visitors have shown themselves hard to beat this season following five consecutive draws, and proved disciplined in defence in the early stages.

Griffiths had grabbed a hat-trick on Hamilton's last visit on his way to clocking up 40 goals last season, only to find his opportunities more limited this season under Rodgers. But a goal in his last run-out against Partick Thistle saw him keep his place in the starting line-up as he partnered the in-form Moussa Dembele up front.

It was only the second time the pair had featured together from the start and the gamble paid off as they combined for the only goal in the 36th minute. Australian international Tom Rogic threaded a through ball for Dembele to chase and the French forward squared to Griffiths, who held off the challenge of Grant Gillespie to fire into the empty net.

The Scotland international nearly had a second before the break as he raced onto a ball in the box, only to arrow a shot narrowly wide from a tight angle. The chances began to come for Celtic at the start of the second half, with Griffiths blasting over from a Roberts cut-back before Dembele was off-target with a header as he blocked an attempted clearance. Stuart Armstrong then scuffed a shot wide after racing into the box to collect a pass as the Hoops continued to be frustrated in front of goal. Substitute Eamonn Brophy squandered a late chance for Hamilton when he fired wide after electing to shoot when team-mate Ali Crawford appeared to be in a better position. — AFP



YOKOHAMA: Real Madrid's head coach Zinedine Zidane speaks during a press conference at the FIFA Club World Cup soccer tournament in Yokohama, near Tokyo, yesterday. Real Madrid and Club America will play today semifinal. — AP

RONALDO A RARE BREED, SAYS ZIDANE BEFORE JAPAN CLASH

YOKOHAMA: Cristiano Ronaldo is itching to prove just why he deserved the Ballon d'Or by leading Real Madrid to another Club World Cup title, Zinedine Zidane said yesterday. The Portuguese superstar, voted the world's best player for a fourth time earlier this week, will lead Real's charge in Japan, where the European champions face Mexico's Club America in Thursday's semi-final. "Cristiano is hugely motivated for this game-as always," Real coach Zidane told reporters in Yokohama.

"He would be motivated even if it were a friendly, that's just the sort of player he is. "Obviously we have many great players at Real Madrid but it's very rare one player wins so many awards," added the Frenchman, whose side are chasing their second world title in three years this week.

"To win four Ballon d'Ors is a fabulous achievement and it's not an easy thing to do. What he's doing is absolutely incredible-maybe he deserves a fifth one too!" Ronaldo closed in on Lionel Messi's record five awards after a remarkable year in which he helped Real dominate Europe for the 11th time and powered Portugal to European Championship glory.

The 31-year-old talisman, whose joy has been dampened by allegations of tax fraud, insisted that if he and Messi played for the same team, he would have scooped more accolades than his Argentine rival. "It would be interesting to see both of us in the same team," Ronaldo told Spanish media.

"I think great players should play together. If we were in the same team, I think I would

have more than him, but he wouldn't be far off. "Everyone knows Messi is a great player," he added. "He's won five Ballon d'Ors."

RAMOS BLOW

Zidane, whose Spanish table-toppers are currently on a club record 35-game unbeaten run, is set to leave out captain Sergio Ramos against Club America. "I don't think he will play," said Zidane, looking to bring Real a fifth world crown.

"It's not a serious problem, he's a bit fatigued after the long flight and we don't want to take the risk. We will rest him for the final." Zidane, who is missing Gareth Bale as the Welshman recovers from ankle surgery, has warned his players against over-confidence against a Club America side celebrating their centennial season.

"For many of their players maybe it will be their only chance to play against Real Madrid and I'm sure they will give us plenty of headaches," he said. "I told the players we can't just turn up and expect to win, we have to earn it."

America coach Ricardo La Volpe promised the Mexicans would have no fear. "We have quality in our team too," said the firebrand Argentine, who famously used to incur the wrath of FIFA officials for chain-smoking on the bench.

"I don't think Real Madrid are favourites," added La Volpe, whose team beat South Korea's Jeonbuk Motors 2-1 at the weekend. "Yes, they are a great team but we will play with our heart, look to be aggressive and take our chances." — AFP



BRUSSELS: The Mayor of Brussels Yvan Mayeur, right, the Vice President of UEFA Michael Van Praag, left, the President of EURO Brussels 2020 Alain Courtois, 2nd left, and the President of the Belgian Football Association Francois De Keersmaecker pose with the Brussels EURO 2020 Host City logo at the City Hall in Brussels yesterday. — AP

Sports

New Zealand Rugby boosts All Blacks' pay packets



Marc Pugh's goal brings Leicester down to earth



THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2016

BEATING KLITSCHKO WOULD MAKE ME A LEGEND: JOSHUA

Page 17



CLEVELAND: Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James, center, drives between Memphis Grizzlies' Troy Williams, left, and Jarell Martin in the second half of an NBA basketball game, Tuesday, in Cleveland. The Cavaliers won 103-86. — AP

CAVS MAUL GRIZZLIES, CURRY OUTGUNS DAVIS

CLEVELAND: Kevin Love scored 29 points, J.R. Smith found his aim - for one half - and LeBron James added 23 points as the Cleveland Cavaliers won their fifth straight, 103-86 on Tuesday night over the Memphis Grizzlies. Memphis rested center Marc Gasol for the first of back-to-back games against the defending NBA champions. Cavs coach Tyrone Lue said after the game that James, Love and Irving will not travel for the game yesterday. Smith, who has been in a season-long shooting slump, scored 17 of his 23 points in the first half as the Cavs, who gave star point guard Kyrie Irving the night off, built a 22-point lead and ended the Grizzlies' six-game winning streak. Zach Randolph replaced Gasol in the starting lineup and scored 18 points to lead the Grizzlies. The reigning Western Conference player of the week, Gasol is expected to play Wednesday in Memphis to complete a brutal three-game stretch for the Grizzlies, who beat Golden State by 21 on Saturday.

foul. Klay Thompson added 17 points for the Warriors, who combined for 14 3-pointers, five by Curry. Davis finished with 28 points, five blocked shots and two steals but turned the ball over six times.

TIMBERWOLVES 99, BULLS 94

Zach LaVine scored 24 points, Andrew Wiggins added 23 and Minnesota won in coach Tom Thibodeau's return to Chicago. The Timberwolves wiped out a 21-point deficit and got Thibodeau a victory in his first game in Chicago since the Bulls fired him in an acrimonious split in 2015. Gorgui Dieng and Karl-Anthony Towns each scored 16 points, and the Timberwolves snapped a four-game losing streak. Jimmy Butler led Chicago with 27 points, and Robin Lopez added 14. But the Bulls continued a pattern of letdowns against losing teams, this time falling to one that came in tied for the NBA's worst record.

SUNS 113, KNICKS 111, OT

Eric Bledsoe scored the go-ahead points on a driving, left-handed layup with 30 seconds to play and Phoenix gave New York its second loss in eight games. Bledsoe scored eight consecutive points late in OT and finished with 31, his third consecutive 30-point game. Kristaps Porzingis scored 34 points for New York, one shy of his career high, before fouling out with 1:34 left in OT. Carmelo Anthony capped a 3-for-15 shooting night with an

air ball that resulted in a 24-second clock violation with 5.9 seconds left.

TRAIL BLAZERS 114, THUNDER 95

Damian Lillard had 17 points and nine assists before sitting out the fourth quarter and Portland snapped a four-game losing streak. Russell Westbrook was off his league-leading average of 31.1 points a game with 20 for the Thunder, who have lost two of their last three after a six-game winning streak. Mason Plumlee added 18 points for the Blazers, who led by 26 points in Portland's first game back after a 1-4 road trip. Six Portland players finished in double figures in the second of a back-to-back.

MAGIC 131, HAWKS 120

Serge Ibaka scored 29 points, Elfrid Payton reached career highs with 26 points and 14 assists and Orlando snapped a three-game losing streak. Orlando began the night ranked 29th in scoring and played without center Nikola Vucevic, but it got big production from the bench. Payton, Jodie Meeks and Jeff Green combined for 62 points, while starting guard Evan Fournier scored 23. Dwight Howard had 20 points and 16 rebounds and Dennis Schroder had 19 points and 13 assists for the Hawks, who thought they were on a good trajectory after rallying from 20 points down in last Friday's win at Milwaukee. — AP

NBA results/standings

Portland 114, Oklahoma City 95; Phoenix 113, NY Knicks 111 (OT); Minnesota 99, Chicago 94; Golden State 113, New Orleans 109; Orlando 131, Atlanta 120; Cleveland 103, Memphis 86.

Eastern Conference				Western Conference					
Atlantic Division				Northwest Division					
W	L	PCT	GB						
Toronto	17	7	.708		Oklahoma City	15	10	.600	-
NY Knicks	14	11	.560	3.5	Utah	15	10	.600	-
Boston	13	11	.542	4	Portland	13	14	.481	3
Brooklyn	6	17	.261	10.5	Denver	9	16	.360	6
Philadelphia	6	18	.250	11	Minnesota	7	18	.280	8
Central Division				Pacific Division					
Cleveland	18	5	.783	-	Golden State	22	4	.846	-
Chicago	13	11	.542	5.5	LA Clippers	18	7	.720	3.5
Indiana	13	12	.520	6	Sacramento	9	15	.375	12
Detroit	13	13	.500	6.5	LA Lakers	10	17	.370	12.5
Milwaukee	11	12	.478	7	Phoenix	8	17	.320	13.5
Southeast Division				Southwest Division					
Charlotte	14	11	.560	-	San Antonio	19	5	.792	-
Atlanta	12	13	.480	2	Houston	18	7	.720	1.5
Orlando	11	15	.423	3.5	Memphis	17	9	.654	3
Washington	9	14	.391	4	New Orleans	8	18	.308	12
Miami	8	17	.320	6	Dallas	6	18	.250	13

ANTLERS STUN NACIONAL TO REACH WORLD FINAL

SUITA: Japanese champions Kashima Antlers beat Atletico Nacional 3-0 in the Club World Cup semifinals yesterday thanks to a first-ever penalty awarded after video replay.

Hungarian referee Viktor Kassai made soccer history when he used video to issue the penalty kick in the first half. Kashima midfielder Gaku Shibasaki sent in a free kick in the 31st minute, and teammate Daigo Nishi was fouled inside the box by Atletico Nacional forward Orlando Berrio.

Kassai walked to the sidelines to get another look at the play on a monitor. He then signaled for Kashima to take a penalty. Shoma Doi converted for 1-0. Yasushi Endo and Yuma Suzuki added second-half goals to send Kashima to the final on Sunday against either Real Madrid or Club America.

"It did stop the flow of the game," Kashima coach Masatada Ishii said. "But if they make a clear judgment using video assistant referees (VARs) then that is a good thing. Of course, if they use it many times during a game then that is something we need to think about."

The replay system allows referees to halt games to review footage of "game-changing decisions." They can also rely on information being fed by VARs watching broadcast feeds away from

the field. The South American champion dominated the first half but the momentum shifted to Kashima with the history-making call.

Live tests are set to be expanded globally in 2017 with a decision anticipated by the following year on VARs becoming a permanent feature. FIFA President Gianni Infantino, who has observed recent off-line trials with VARs at Italy games, wants video replays in use at the 2018 World Cup in Russia. The system was introduced last week at the start of the Club World Cup but wasn't used until Wednesday's game.

Atletico had numerous scoring chances with the best coming in the final minute of the first half when Jhon Mosquera rattled the crossbar. "In the first half Berrio collided with a player," Atletico coach Reinaldo Rueda said. "It was not intentional and the player did fall and that led to their first goal. Because of that, our discipline was disturbed. Normally, we can maintain our discipline."

Kashima becomes the first Japanese team to reach the final of the Club World Cup. "This is a new page in the history of not only our club but of Japanese football as well," Ishii said.

Earlier, Asian champion Jeonbuk Motors thrashed African side Mamelodi Sundowns 4-1 to claim fifth place. — AP



SUITA: Atletico Nacional forward Miguel Borja (L) vies for the ball with Kashima Antlers defender Gen Shoji (R) during the Club World Cup football semi-final match between Japan's Kashima Antlers and Colombia's Atletico Nacional at Suita City stadium in Osaka yesterday. — AP

WILLIAMS ATONES TO END ARSENAL'S UNBEATEN RUN

	Everton	2
	Arsenal	1

LIVERPOOL: Ashley Williams' 86th-minute header saw Everton return to form in spectacular fashion as they hit back to dent Arsenal's Premier League title hopes in a 2-1 victory on Tuesday. Wales defender Williams rose unmarked to head home Ross Barkley's corner in a major disappointment for the visitors, who had taken the lead through Alexis Sanchez's 12th Premier League goal of the season. After Seamus Coleman's headed equaliser, tempers flared at half-time when players from both sides had to be separated as they exchanged angry words and pushes on their way down the Goodison Park tunnel. In a frantic finale, Everton defender Phil Jagielka was sent off for a second bookable offence and, with goalkeeper Petr Cech attacking in the home area, Arsenal saw two shots heroically cleared off the line. Arsenal would have taken over from Chelsea on goals scored if they had won, but they remain second, while Ronald Koeman's Everton climb to seventh after only their second win in 11 league outings. Everton made a poor start to the contest and fell behind after 20 minutes when a catalogue of errors involving Williams gifted Sanchez the opening goal. After Barkley lost the ball on the edge of his own area, Williams accidentally injured team-mate Idrissa Gueye

with a lunging tackle that forced Jagielka to trip Francis Coquelin inches outside the box. Sanchez took the set-piece, a powerful shot that deflected wickedly off Williams's left calf and wrong-footed goalkeeper Maarten Stekelenburg, who could only help the ball into his own goal.

But a minute before the interval Everton were rewarded for their response when Coleman headed home the equaliser. Fellow full-back Leighton Baines swung over a deep cross from the left wing and Coleman, inexplicably unmarked six yards from goal, glanced a superb header past Cech for his third goal of the season. Arsenal, aiming for a 15th unbeaten league outing, which would have represented manager Arsene Wenger's best run since 2011, had looked content to hit their hosts on the break during a strong opening. After just six minutes, an overlapping sprint by Nacho Monreal saw the full-back pull the ball into the Everton area, but fractionally behind Mesut Ozil, who could only sky his shot high over the goal. But after falling behind, Everton showed resilience, with Aaron Lennon, starting just his third game of the season, particularly threatening. A good run and shot was well blocked by Gabriel, Romelu Lukaku blasted over from Barkley's through ball and then Lennon, again, shot over from close range after a free-kick was deflected to him at high speed. Ozil appeared to be at the centre of the scuffle that broke out at the interval and was quickly in action again after the restart, feeding Sanchez, who chipped into the box for Theo Walcott to head wide. Ozil should have restored his team's lead in the 54th minute when he latched onto a pass from Sanchez, but curled a shot well over from just inside the area. — AP



ASIA SHARES CREEP CAUTIOUSLY HIGHER



SINGAPORE: A worker places inbound parcels on a conveyor belt for coding at the sorting section of the Singapore Post (SingPost) ecommerce logistics centre in Singapore. — AFP

ASIAN POSTAL SERVICES ADAPT TO POST-MAIL ERA
 ONLINE SHOPPING WEIGHS ON TRADITIONAL DELIVERY COMPANIES

SINGAPORE: With the pre-Christmas rush at its peak, a serpentine network of conveyor belts at Singapore Post's new logistics centre moves parcels destined for addresses across the world in time for the festive season. It is a scene repeated in sorting offices around the globe in December, the busiest time of the year for postal firms with armies of workers toiling to get presents delivered on time.

But times are changing and the explosion of online shopping is forcing traditional delivery companies such as SingPost to adapt or be damned. The growth of websites such as Amazon and Alibaba means customers can avoid crowded high streets and buy anything from mobile phones to sports equipment

online and send them straight to loved ones. US-based research firm eMarketer said online sales are expected to reach \$1.9 trillion this year and top \$4.0 trillion by 2020.

And traditional firms are making moves to keep up. The nearly 200-year-old SingPost, which is partly owned by China's Alibaba, last month inaugurated its ecommerce sorting office capable of handling up to 100,000 parcels a day.

It also now provides a service setting up retail websites for clients and allows for online payments while it has teamed up with brands including Adidas, Timberland and Xiaomi to help expand their online retail sales in the region. And last year it expanded its US and

European presence by buying ecommerce technology provider Jagged Peak and ecommerce firm TradeGlobal.

'Change or die'

"In this new digital age, the lives of the traditional postal companies are coming to a turning point: change or die," said Cris Tran, an analyst with consultancy Frost & Sullivan. With traditional mail volumes dropping dramatically, ecommerce offers hope for national postal firms in Asia if they adapt quickly enough and do battle with giants like FedEx and DHL. This year's "Singles Day" ecommerce promotion by Alibaba on November 11 grossed 120.7 billion yuan (\$17.8 billion), smashing last year's sales

record of 91.2 billion yuan. Asian postal firms "are doing some very innovative things to take advantage of ecommerce," said Brody Buhler, global managing director for post and parcel at consultancy Accenture.

Japan Post has partnered with convenience stores to provide 24-hour delivery, while Pos Malaysia is boosting its warehousing, logistics and other capabilities in a bid to become a full-service ecommerce provider, Buhler said. "Pos Indonesia investments in capabilities such as lockers and faster fulfillment from China are great examples of postal organizations investing to take full advantage of the opportunity ecommerce provides for growth," he added. In the year ended March 2016,

ecommerce-related revenues accounted for 35.8 percent of SingPost's turnover which crossed Sg\$1.0 billion (\$707 million) for the first time, and that is tipped to rise further.

Teo Chung Piau from the National University of Singapore's Business School said Asian postal firms must also compete with domestic startups and delivery specialists such as Japan's Ta-Q-Bin and China's SF Express. Regulation of state-owned postal firms is also slowing crucial reforms that will allow them to compete better, he added. Government-owned Australia Post needed regulatory approval to raise the cost of a basic postage stamp, a move it said was necessary to ease losses in its traditional letter business. — AFP

GULF STOCKS PULL BACK ON CAUTION

MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

DUBAI: Stock markets in the Gulf retreated yesterday in shrinking trading volumes as investors turned cautious ahead of the US interest rate hike and guidance from the US central bank expected late in the day. Petrochemical shares, which have been dragging Saudi Arabia's main index lower over the last two sessions, fell further. The main index lost 0.6 percent and all but one of the 14 listed petrochemical producers fell. PetroRabigh dropped 3.3 percent.

Many analysts think the Saudi market's uptrend is not reversing but stocks may take an extended breather following a stellar performance over a six-week period which took the index to a one-year high earlier this week. Yesterday marked the market's second consecutive day of shrinking trading volume. The 2017 budget, expected to be announced late this month, looks likely to include more domestic fuel subsidy cuts, which is prompting some investors to cash out of domestic demand-focused shares for now.

Electronics and bookstore retailer Jarir fell 1.3 percent. In Egypt, the main index pulled back a further 0.6 percent with selling pressure escalating in the final hour of trade. Losers outnumbered gainers 24 to five with Orascom Telecom, the most heavily traded share, slumping 5.2 percent. Shares in the conglomerate have been beaten down 20 percent since the company said its chief executive, billionaire Najuib Sawiris, announced early this month that he would

step down. The company did not give a reason for his departure, and analysts said the uncertainty had hit investor sentiment hard.

"Saying they are shutting down banking operations in North Korea and that their long-time CEO is leaving in one month's time has left investors feeling battered," said a Cairo-based equity analyst. Dubai's index fell for a second straight day, dropping 1.2 percent to 3,584 points.

It retreated below major technical resistance on its August peak of 3,624 points. Trading volume shrank by roughly a half from the previous day's very large amount. Most activity focused on mid-sized speculative shares, suggesting local short-term traders were the main players and that foreign investors, who had been active buyers in previous days, had pulled back.

Builder Drake & Scull, the most heavily traded stock, fell 1.8 percent. Union Properties lost 1.7 percent. Profit-taking also hit Abu Dhabi, dragging the index down 0.9 percent. Telecommunications operator Etisalat fell 1.3 percent and First Gulf Bank dropped 1.9 percent.

Qatar's main index, which had outperformed its regional peers on Tuesday, retreated 0.4 percent.

Commercial Bank lost 3.1 percent to 32.40 riyals on the first day of trading of its rights issue, which will end on Dec. 28. The bank is offering new ordinary shares at 25.50 riyals each. — Reuters

CROWDFUNDED TRAIN SERVICE TAKES ON GERMAN RAIL GIANT

FRANKFURT AM MAIN: With a single 1970s train in orange livery and a little crowdfunding help, a plucky Berlin start-up is challenging the might of Germany's state rail operator, Deutsche Bahn. At 6:20 am yesterday, the first Locomore train will leave Stuttgart in Germany's southwest, pass through Frankfurt and Hanover and pull into Berlin, its final destination, some six and a half hours later.

With just one return service a day to start with, compared to the over 700 daily long-distance journeys run by Deutsche Bahn, Locomore founder and director Derek Ladewig knows he barely qualifies as a rival. But he is hoping to win over Deutsche Bahn customers with budget ticket prices and lure environmentally-conscious travelers from more polluting forms of transport.

"We are offering a new service to compete with the car, the plane, the long-distance bus as well as Deutsche Bahn," Ladewig said. Locomore, which bills itself as the world's first crowd-funded train line, owes its start-up capital entirely to online supporters who chipped in more than 600,000 euros (\$640,000) in less than a year to get the project on the rails. Many of the contributors bought vouchers that can now be traded for tickets, as well as souvenirs such as mugs and T-shirts in the firm's distinctive orange hue—a nod to the vintage origins of Locomore's renovated carriages from the 1970s.

Popular with families

The 600-kilometre trip from Stuttgart to Berlin takes slightly longer than with Deutsche Bahn, but Locomore hopes to make up for that by promising its ticket prices will always be cheaper than those of its competitor. By comparison, Locomore charges 22 euros for a Stuttgart-Berlin



BERLIN: A compartment bearing the logo of German open-access railway operator Locomore is on display at Innotrains - the railway industry's largest trade fair, in Berlin. Locomore is offering a daily connection linking Berlin to Stuttgart via Hannover and Frankfurt. — AFP

ride in January, compared with 115.90 euros on Deutsche Bahn—although the latter's journey is roughly an hour shorter, and it offers prices as low as 29 euros for travellers willing to change trains once or twice. Karl-Peter Naumann, a spokesman for the passenger group Pro Bahn, welcomed the new player on the block and said the service should prove popular with families, who will be offered their own compartments, and with young people.

The country's rail sector was liberalised in

1994 but remains dominated by Deutsche Bahn, which carries more than 5.5 million passengers a day in Germany alone and accounts for 99 percent of all long-distance rail journeys. The state firm has more competitors on the regional transport networks, where its market share falls to 72 percent, according to Mathias Lahrmann of the BSL transportation consulting agency. Locomore is not the first private company to try to go up against the rail operator, but those efforts have gained little traction. — AFP

DOLLAR TAKES BREATH, INVESTORS ANXIOUS ABOUT FED RATE OUTLOOK

RUSSIAN ROUBLE BIGGEST WINNER FROM TRUMP VICTORY

TOKYO: The dollar took a breather yesterday as investors waited to see if the US Federal Reserve will signal any acceleration in the pace of future rate increases to deal with an expected ramp-up in fiscal spending under President-elect Donald Trump. In its policy meeting ending later in the day, the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) is seen as all but certain to raise its interest rate target by 0.25 percentage point to 0.50-0.75 percent. The decision will be announced at 1900 GMT.

It would be just the Fed's second rate hike since the financial crisis in 2007-08, following last December's tightening. "The markets think a rate hike is a certainty so the focus is on the outlook for next year. I think they will maintain their previous projections to raise rates twice next year but if they turn more hawkish, the dollar will test its upside again," said Shinichiro Kadota, chief FX strategist at Barclays.

The dollar index, which tracks the US unit against a basket of six major currencies, edged down to 101.00, having slipped from this week's high of 101.78 touched early on Monday. The euro inched higher to \$1.0637, pulling further

away from Monday's one-week low of \$1.0525. Against the yen, the dollar was slightly higher at 115.25 yen, but remained well below Monday's 10-month peak of 116.12 yen. Some investors were eager to take profits from the dollar's massive rally of about 10 percent against the yen since the Nov 8 US election.

Expectations that Trump will cut taxes, boost fiscal spending and raise US growth over the near-term lifted US bond yields and stock prices, making the dollar more attractive. On Monday, the benchmark US 10-year yield touched more than two-year highs above 2.50 percent, and the 30-year US Treasury yield climbed to around a 17-month peak. "If Treasury yields could correct lower after the FOMC outcome, that means the yen could appreciate again," said Yutaka Miura, a senior technical analyst at Mizuho Securities. "Until then, the pair is range-bound in the 115-level," he said.

Although many investors had long thought the Fed will raise rates very slowly and cautiously, especially under dovish Chair Janet Yellen, Trump's surprise election victory last month has drastically shaken up that assumption. The two-

year US debt yield rose to a 6 1/2-year high on Tuesday, and US money market futures are pricing in almost two rate hikes next year. That marks a sea change from before the election, when markets were not fully pricing in even one rate hike in 2017. Commodity-linked currencies were supported by strong rises in oil prices after OPEC and some of its rivals reached their first deal since 2001 to jointly reduce output to tackle global oversupply.

The Australian dollar traded at \$0.7489, having hit a near one-month high of \$0.7524 on Tuesday. The Aussie was also not far from its March peak of 86.66 yen, a break of which could open a way for a test of above 90 yen touched last year. The Canadian dollar stood at C\$1.3133 per US dollar, after having risen to as high as C\$1.3102 to the dollar on Tuesday, an eight-week high. The biggest winner in the past few sessions from rallying oil prices was the Russian rouble, which rose 5.4 percent over the past week against the dollar to hit a 16-1/2-month high. The Russian currency is the best performing currency since Trump's upset. —Reuters

BANK ALKHAIR ANNOUNCES SALE OF ITS STAKE IN PAKISTAN'S BURJ BANK

KUWAIT: Bahrain-based Bank Alkhair, a leading Islamic wholesale bank, announced yesterday that the bank has obtained approval from the State Bank of Pakistan to sell its stake in Pakistan's Burj Bank to Al Baraka Pakistan Limited (ABPL), a subsidiary of Al Baraka Banking Group. Prior to the transaction, Bank Alkhair was Burj Bank's major shareholder, followed by Jeddah-based Islamic Corporation for Development of the Private Sector with 33.9 percent of shares.

This transaction follows the announcement on 5 September 2016 of the approval of shareholders to the merger of Pakistan's Burj Bank and ABPL, creating an institution with assets totaling more than \$1.1 billion. The amalgamation was approved by the State Bank of Pakistan and has become effective since 31 October 2016. Burj Bank is a Pakistani Islamic bank, headquartered in Karachi. It currently operates a total of 74 branches and provides a full range of Shariah-compliant banking services.

Bank Alkhair acquired a 22.2 percent equity stake in Pakistan's Burj Bank (formerly Dawood Islamic Bank), a Shariah-compliant commercial

bank, in June 2006. In March 2009, Bank Alkhair increased its equity stake in the bank to 37.9 percent. Commenting on the announcement, Ayman Sejny, Group CEO of Bank Alkhair said: "At Bank Alkhair, we actively manage our investment portfolio to ensure that our investments support the company's strategic direction."

In keeping with this we are pleased to sell our stake in Pakistan's Burj Bank to Al Baraka Pakistan Limited, a subsidiary of Al Baraka Banking Group, a leading Islamic bank in Bahrain. "Bank Alkhair is an Islamic wholesale bank licensed by the Central Bank of Bahrain with an international presence in Saudi Arabia, Dubai, Malaysia and Turkey. Bank Alkhair has completed several landmark transactions since its inception, including the establishment of t'azur, a regional Takaful company and the acquisition of Bahrain Financing Company, the oldest and one of the leading foreign exchange and remittance houses in the GCC.

Subsidiaries of Bank Alkhair include: Alkhair Capital Turkey's operations which continue to complement Bahrain's investment banking business. In Saudi Arabia, Alkhair Capital Saudi Arabia



Ayman Sejny CEO of Bank Alkhair

continues to revolve around the three core business lines: Asset Management; Investment Banking and Brokerage. In Malaysia, Alkhair International Islamic Bank, the bank's Capital Markets division continues to focus its strategy on maintaining an optimal asset mix and generating income from fee-based transactions.

VIVA - FIRST TO LAUNCH 'VIVA IR APP' IN KUWAIT

KUWAIT: Kuwait Telecommunications Company VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, and the leader company in investor relations in Kuwait for 2016, has announced that it is the first company in Kuwait to launch a mobile application for investor relations. This app has been designed to keep pace with the era of communications and provide easy access to all VIVA's information at any time via mobile to be one of the main communication channels between VIVA and its shareholders, investment community, the concerned parties and all third parties.

This app is available on mobile phones operating by IOS and Android Operating Systems. The app can be downloaded by searching "VIVA Investor Relations" or "VIVA IR" in both the App Store on Apple devices and Play Store on the Android-Operated devices. Eng Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Badran, Chief Executive Officer at VIVA, said: "Based on the transparency principle which represents one of VIVA values, we always seek to activate and enhance the communication channels with the investors and financial analysts through all the available communication methods which facilitate the public access to all information that investor look for through the most advanced communications tools."

In 2016, VIVA contributed in investor conferences to enhance the communication with all investors and financial community," Abdulaziz



Eng Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Badran, Chief Executive Officer



Abdulaziz Abdullah Al Qatei, the Chief Finance Officer

Abdullah Al Qatei, the Chief Finance Officer at VIVA, said: "VIVA has enhanced its position in 2016 to be one of the best companies in investor relations in the Middle East and North Africa by enhancing and supporting the investor relations activities and adopting the highest standards of professionalism and competency in communicating with investors and the investment community."

Further to these efforts, we are proud to launch this app that allow all investors to

access the information related to VIVA's share performance, financial information through the periodical reports, financial data and the latest news which is published by Investor Relations Department to be in line with our strategy and our commitment to enhance the level of disclosure and transparency to the favor of our esteemed shareholders interest. To see the mobile app features and to download it directly please visit this link: <https://myirapp.com/viva/>.

National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report

At 02:00 PM Previous Day

Global Stock Indices						
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %	
Dow Jones	19,796.43	19,911.21	114.78	▲	0.58	14.27
NASDAQ	5,412.54	5,463.83	51.29	▲	0.95	9.11
SBP 500	2,256.96	2,271.72	14.76	▲	0.65	11.12
Financial Times	6,968.57	6,958.41	-10.16	▼	-0.15	11.47
DAX	11,284.65	11,260.37	-24.28	▼	-0.22	4.82
CAC 40	4,803.87	4,775.87	-28.00	▼	-0.58	2.99
Swiss	8,162.53	8,118.70	-43.83	▼	-0.54	-7.93
Nikkei 225	19,250.52	19,253.61	3.09	▲	0.02	1.16
Topix	1,540.25	1,538.69	-1.56	▼	-0.10	-0.56
Hang Seng	22,446.70	22,456.62	9.92	▲	0.04	2.47
Straits Times	2,955.23	2,954.06	-1.17	▼	-0.04	2.47

MENA Stock Indices						
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %	
Kuwait	5,671.62	5,671.98	0.36	▲	0.01	1.00
Saudi Arabia	7,108.44	7,067.25	-41.19	▼	-0.58	2.85
Dubai	3,625.23	3,583.62	-41.61	▼	-1.15	15.05
Abu Dhabi	4,539.91	4,497.39	-42.52	▼	-0.94	5.40
Bahrain	1,188.12	1,188.35	0.23	▲	0.02	-2.28
Qatar	10,397.58	10,358.99	-38.59	▼	-0.37	-0.30
Oman	5,732.37	5,737.48	5.11	▲	0.09	6.03
Lebanon	1,224.62	1,224.62	0.00	-	0.00	4.71
Jordan	2,175.24	2,172.08	-3.16	▼	-0.15	1.82
Egypt	11,385.10	11,389.35	4.25	▲	0.04	62.50
Morocco	10,957.24	10,993.89	36.65	▲	0.33	22.76
Tunisia	5,465.69	5,458.64	-7.05	▼	-0.13	8.40

Global Currencies Exchange Rate								
Currency	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	US Dollar	Euro	Sterling Pound	Swiss Franc	Japanese Yen	Australian Dollar
Kuwait Dinar		12.1774	3.2605	3.0641	2.5761	3.2944	374.93	4.3439
Saudi Riyal	0.08212		0.2678	0.2516	0.2115	0.2705	30.79	0.3567
US Dollar	0.30670	3.7348		0.9398	0.7901	1.0104	114.99	1.3323
Euro	0.32636	3.9742	1.0641		0.8410	1.0754	122.42	1.4182
Sterling Pound	0.38819	4.7271	1.2657	1.1891		1.2793	145.58	1.6866
Swiss Franc	0.30354	3.6964	0.9897	0.9299	0.7817		113.85	1.3186
Japanese Yen	0.00267	0.0325	0.0087	0.0082	0.0069	0.0088		0.0116
Australian Dollar	0.23021	2.8033	0.7506	0.7051	0.5929	0.7584	86.31	

MENA Currencies Exchange Rate								
Currency	US Dollar	Kuwaiti Dollar	Saudi Riyal	Bahraini Dinar	Qatari Riyal	Omani Riyal	Emirates Dirham	Egyptian Pound
US Dollar		0.30670	3.7348	0.3740	3.6271	0.3832	3.6576	18.6900
Kuwaiti Dinar	3.2605		12.1774	1.2195	11.8262	1.2493	11.9257	60.9390
Saudi Riyal	0.2678	0.08212		0.1001	0.9712	0.1026	0.9793	5.0043
Bahraini Dinar	2.6736	0.81999	9.9853		9.6974	1.0244	9.7789	49.9693
Qatari Riyal	0.2757	0.08456	1.0297	0.1031		0.1056	1.0084	5.1529
Omani Riyal	2.6099	0.80047	9.7476	0.9762	9.4665		9.5461	48.7799
Emirates Dirham	0.2734	0.08385	1.0211	0.1023	0.9917	0.1048		5.1099
Egyptian Pound	0.0535	0.01641	0.1998	0.0200	0.1941	0.0205	0.1957	

Global Interest Rates					
Currency	1-Week	1-Month	3-Month	6-Month	1-Year
Kuwaiti Dinar	0.00	1.19	1.44	1.63	1.94
US Dollar	0.67	0.70	0.96	1.29	1.65
Euro	-0.39	-0.38	-0.33	-0.22	-0.08
Sterling Pound	0.24	0.26	0.37	0.53	0.79
Swiss Franc	-0.79	-0.81	-0.73	-0.66	-0.50
Australian Dollar	1.58	1.63	1.60	1.60	1.61
Japanese Yen	-0.03	-0.12	-0.06	0.00	0.11

Global Bond Yields				
Country	2-Year	5-Year	10-Year	30-Year
United States	1.17	1.89	2.44	3.10
Europe	-0.78	-0.46	0.32	1.09
United Kingdom	0.10	0.56	1.40	2.06

Commodities						
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %	
Kuwait Oil	52.45	51.52	-0.93	▼	-1.77	45.19
Brent	52.69	52.31	-0.38	▼	-0.72	28.66
West Texas	53.04	52.94	-0.10	▼	-0.19	30.00
Gold	1157.96	1162.16	4.20	▲	0.36	8.35
Silver	16.91	17.07	0.16	▲	0.97	18.08

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.657
Indian Rupees	4.541
Pakistani Rupees	2.919
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.062
Nepali Rupees	2.843
Singapore Dollar	215.490
Hongkong Dollar	39.453
Bangladesh Taka	3.831
Philippine Peso	6.150
Thai Baht	8.626

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	81.654
Qatari Riyal	84.101
ani Riyal	795.218
Bahraini Dinar	813.070
UAE Dirham	83.356

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	20.500
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	16.819
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.229
Tunisian Dinar	133.920
Jordanian Dinar	431.200
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.040
Syrian Lira	2.182
Morocco Dirham	30.909

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	306.000
Euro	327.110
Sterling Pound	389.080
Canadian dollar	233.940
Turkish lira	88.310

Swiss Franc	304.480
Australian Dollar	231.030
US Dollar Buying	304.800

GOLD

20 Gram	238.39
10 Gram	122.12
5 Gram	61.90

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	305.650
Canadian Dolla	233.395
Sterling Pound	388.295
Euro	326.790
Swiss Frank	303.780
Bahrain Dinar	810.255
UAE Dirhams	83.610
Qatari Riyals	84.830
Saudi Riyals	82.435
Jordanian Dinar	432.270
Egyptian Pound	16.965
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.061
Indian Rupees	4.529
Pakistani Rupees	2.915
Bangladesh Taka	3.876
Philippines Peso	6.134
Cyprus pound	167.850
Japanese Yen	3.650
Syrian Pound	2.435
Nepalese Rupees	3.825
Malaysian Ringgit	69.750
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	44.675
Thai Bhat	9.580
Turkish Lira	87.715

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY

BUY	SELL
British Pound	0.380815 0.390815
Czech Korune	0.004063 0.016063
Danish Krone	0.039798 0.044798
Euro	0.319351 0.328351
Norwegian Krone	0.032384 0.037584
Romanian Leu	0.084806 0.084806
Slovakia	0.009174 0.019174
Swedish Krona	0.029458 0.034458
Swiss Franc	0.295323 0.306323
Turkish Lira	0.084525 0.094825

Australasia

Australian Dollar	0.220883 0.232883
New Zealand Dollar	0.213969 0.223469

America

Canadian Dollar	0.227645 0.236645
Georgina Lari	0.138207 0.138207
US Dollars	0.301900 0.306600
US Dollars Mint	0.302400 0.306600

Asia

Bangladesh Taka	0.003499 0.004083
Chinese Yuan	0.042875 0.046375
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037368 0.040118
Indian Rupee	0.000249 0.005505
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018 0.000024

Japanese Yen	0.002581 0.002761
Kenyan Shilling	0.003147 0.003147
Korean Won	0.000252 0.000267
Malaysian Ringgit	0.065072 0.071072
Nepalese Rupee	0.002091 0.003071
Pakistan Rupee	0.

CHINA TO PENALIZE US AUTOMAKER FOR MONOPOLISTIC BEHAVIOR

TRUMP COMMENTS ON TRADE, TAIWAN RATTLE US FIRMS IN CHINA

SHANGHAI: China will soon slap a penalty on an unnamed US automaker for monopolistic behavior, the official China Daily newspaper reported yesterday, quoting a senior state planning official. News of the penalty comes at a sensitive time for China-US relations after US president-elect Donald Trump called into question a long-standing US policy of acknowledging that Taiwan is part of "one China".

Beijing maintains that self-ruled Taiwan is a wayward province of China and has never renounced the use of force to take it back. Investigators found the US company had instructed distributors to fix prices starting in 2014, Zhang Handong, director of the National Development and Reform Commission's price supervision bureau, was quoted as saying. In an exclusive interview with the newspaper, Zhang said no one should "read anything improper" into the timing or target of the penalty.

The article did not give further details and the NDRC did not immediately respond to requests for comment. China, the world's largest auto market, has become crucial to the strategies of car companies around the world, including major US players General Motors

Co and Ford Motor Co. "We are unaware of the issue," said Mark Truby, Ford's chief spokesman for its Asia-Pacific operations. In a statement, GM said: "GM fully respects local laws and regulations wherever we operate. We do not comment on media speculation."

Comments unsettle companies

The penalty follows a government crackdown on what it has called anti-trust behavior by foreign automakers and dealers. It would be the second penalty by the NDRC this month and the seventh fine issued to automakers since the commission began anti-monopoly investigations in 2011, the newspaper said. Targeted firms have included Audi AG, Daimler AG's Mercedes-Benz and Toyota Motor Corp, and one of Nissan Motor Co Ltd's joint ventures.

The NDRC's move was not directed against Trump's latest comments but to show it was not letting up pressure on price fixing behavior in the auto sector after a raft of fines last year, a source at a government-affiliated industry association said. "I don't think NDRC had only made a decision two weeks ago or a week ago. This is a long-term plan for them," the source said. Local media had

reported NDRC officials saying a penalty would be levied against an international automotive firm this year prior to Trump's remarks on Taiwan, although they did not specify it would be a US company.

In a separate editorial, the China Daily urged Trump to recognize the importance of close economic ties between China and the United States rather than "trying to gain an upper hand in what is essentially a win-win relationship". "History proves that what is good for Sino-US relations is good for their economies," it said, noting that Chinese customers bought more than a third of the 9.96 million vehicles GM sold worldwide last year.

"For the American economy to be great again... the US needs to cement its economic relations with China, rather than destroy them." Trump's challenges to China on trade and Taiwan have rattled American companies who have long benefited from stable relations between the two countries. In 2011, China imposed duties of up to 22 percent on large cars and SUVs exported from the United States during a wide-ranging spat on trade and currencies that became a focus of criticism for US presidential candidates.—Reuters



SHANGHAI: A copy of the local Chinese magazine Global People with a cover story that translates to 'Why did Trump win' is seen at a news stand in Shanghai.—AFP

News

in brief

Petrofac halts Tunisia gas production again

TUNIS: Oil and gas industry contractor Petrofac is halting gas production in Tunisia after two weeks of renewed protests on the southern Kerkennah islands, the company said yesterday. The announcement comes just three months after Petrofac restarted operations at Kerkennah's Chergui gas field, following nine months of disruptions due to protests. Petrofac had threatened in September to shut down operations entirely and leave Tunisia, but the government reached a deal with protesters demanding jobs and development. Imed Darouich, head of Petrofac's operations in the North African country, said the company was now being forced to halt operations again because protesters were blocking trucks and stocks were running out. "After 14 days of people blocking trucks, the company finds itself unable to produce," he said. Petrofac officials declined to comment on local media reports that the company had once again told Tunisian authorities it would leave the country.

Iceland cuts its interest rate; currency advances

REYKJAVIK: Iceland's central bank yesterday shaved its key interest rate by a quarter of a point to 5.0 percent, citing the krona's appreciation and political uncertainty following the country's October elections. Gross domestic product, business investment growth and export growth had all been stronger than projected for the first nine months of the year, the bank noted. The rate of inflation, which was 2.1 percent in November, "has remained below target for nearly three years" despite large pay increases and higher household spending. Favorable external conditions, the appreciation of the krona, and a relatively strict monetary stance compared to the rest of Europe has meanwhile slowed inflation, the bank said. But the increase in household spending has been weaker than expected in recent months, and the fact that Iceland's political parties have not been able to form a government since October 29 elections, have sparked uncertainty about the future budget, it noted.

Tata ousts Mistry from board; purge stepped up

MUMBAI: India's Tata has ousted Cyrus Mistry as a director of its cash cow IT business Tata Consultancy Services as the Indian conglomerate steps up its purge of its former chairman. TCS said in a statement late on Tuesday that shareholders had voted overwhelmingly at an extraordinary general meeting in India's commercial Mumbai to dump Mistry from its board. In the statement to the National Stock Exchange of India it said that Mistry is "hereby removed from the office of Director of the Company with effect from the date of this meeting". Mistry was unceremoniously sacked in October as chairman of Tata Sons, the holding company of India's most famous family conglomerate—the \$103 billion steel-to-salt Tata Group. The shock move saw company patriarch Ratan Tata reassert his authority over the sprawling group. Tata Sons has called for its operating companies to hold EGMs to oust Mistry from their various boards. TCS was the latest, and biggest, to do so.

Turkish private sector's overseas debt increases

ISTANBUL: The long-term, overseas debt of Turkey's private sector increased 6.3 percent in the first ten months of this year to \$207.6 billion, central bank data showed yesterday. Of that, 59.5 percent was denominated in dollars and 33.7 percent in euro, the central bank said. The remaining 6.8 percent was denominated in Turkish lira and other currencies, it said. The recent sell-off in the lira currency is likely to make it more expensive for Turkish companies to repay debt borrowed in dollars. The lira, which saw its worst month in November since the 2008 financial crisis, is down 16 percent this year, hit by widening security fears and the surging dollar. The private sector's short-term overseas debt decreased 18 percent in the first ten months of this year, to \$16.8 billion, the data also showed.

JAPANESE BUSINESS CONFIDENCE REBOUNDS; FIRST TIME IN A YEAR

A SLIDING YEN BOOSTS PROFIT HOPES

TOKYO: Confidence among some of Japan's biggest firms has rebounded for the first time in over a year, a key central bank survey showed yesterday, as a sliding yen boosts profit hopes. The Bank of Japan's Tankan report—a quarterly survey of more than 10,000 companies that is the broadest indicator of how Japan Inc is faring—showed a reading of 10 among major manufacturers, rising from six in its previous report. A positive figure means companies are on average optimistic. The October-December reading marked the first on-quarter improvement since last year's April-June report.

Confidence among small- and mid-sized firms also strengthened in the latest reading, while companies also said they planned to boost capital spending, although the pace was weak. The report offered some good news for Japan's sputtering economic recovery. Last week, the government downgraded its estimate for third-quarter growth to 0.3 percent, from an initial 0.5 percent reading. The BoJ's report is likely to take some pressure off the central bank to launch more easing measures after its last meeting of the year next week. Still, firms expect the next three months to be less rosy.

"This suggests companies remained cautious, perhaps reflecting uncertainty around the outlook for policy and exchange rates under the new US administration, among other factors," Barclays said in a research note. "If the yen remains weak,



TOKYO: Pedestrians walk along a street in the Ginza shopping district in Tokyo yesterday. Confidence among some of Japan's biggest firms has rebounded for the first time in over a year, a key central bank survey showed yesterday, as a sliding yen boosts profit hopes.—AFP

however, there could still be some upside." Wednesday's report for the final quarter of the year includes company polling following Donald Trump's victory in the US presidential election. The dollar has soared since the surprise November election result, on hopes for a big government spending package and higher interest rates

under the Trump administration.

'Big break'

The yen is now trading at multi-month lows against the greenback, which makes Japanese products cheaper abroad and inflates the value of repatriated profits. "It seems that Japanese manufacturers are

getting a big break from the recent yen depreciation," said Takuji Okubo, chief economist at Japan Macro Advisors. "But do they have a good reason to think it the yen's slide will continue? I don't think so. It all depends on how Trump executes his economic policy."

Japan's economy contracted in the last three months of 2015, before bouncing back this year, although the recovery has been wobbly. Officials are under intense pressure to deliver a boost to growth as Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's spend-for-growth policies appear to falter. He launched his "Abenomics" growth blitz in early 2013—a mix of massive monetary easing, government spending and red-tape slashing. But promised reforms to the highly regulated economy have been slow in coming.

Tokyo in July announced a whopping 28-trillion-yen (\$243-billion) package aimed at kickstarting growth, after Britain's June vote to quit the European Union sent financial markets into a tailspin and initially sparked a rally of the safe-haven yen. The currency's downtrend has since been reversed. The cheaper yen could help shore up Japan's inflation rate, which remains way below the Bank of Japan's official 2.0 percent target. The BoJ last month pushed back the timeline for hitting the target. It now expects to hit the goal by March 2019—four years later than its original target and the latest in a string of delays.—AFP

BLACK COAL AND THIN PICKINGS: CHINA'S MINERS FACE DECLINE

MENTOUGOU: The global fight against climate change and Beijing's efforts to combat choking pollution have been a disaster for Lu Zhanhong. Facing unemployment after years working with explosives deep in a coal mine on the outskirts of the Chinese capital, Lu has little hope of finding another job, no rights to farmland in his rural hometown, and fears he is dying of occupational disease.

"They'll just give us contract labourers a bit of severance and send us packing," he said. "But no one wants to hire someone in their 40s." There are tens of thousands of miners like Lu; even if the government wanted to, what could it possibly do for all of us?" he asked. China's rise to become the world's second largest economy was largely powered by cheap, dirty coal gouged out of the earth by migrant workers like Lu. But with growth slowing to its lowest rate in 25 years and Beijing beginning to reduce coal's share of the national energy mix, the country's demand for the fuel may have peaked, leaving the miners on the slagheaps of economic history. All five of Beijing's coal mines, Lu's Daanshan colliery among them, have been ordered to shut by 2020, the city's main planning body said in November. Lu came to work for the mine from the distant southwestern province of Sichuan nearly a decade ago. For now, he makes 4,000 yuan (\$560) a month doing some of the most dangerous underground work, paying 200 yuan to rent a small brick room to share with his wife and 10-year-old son.

'War on pollution'

It is heated by a single coal-burning brazier and papered in colorful government posters decrying the dangers of undiagnosed HIV or coal gas poisoning. Among Lu's own greatest fears is that he has silicosis, a common miners' lung disease caused by inhaling fine dust, and may not live long enough to raise his son. "Every year the coal mine authorities give us an exam, but they never give us the results," he said. The hills surrounding his mine are crowned with heavy machinery, swathed in thick grey smog.

Public discontent about coal's environmental toll has grown in China and many of the

country's giant state-owned coal mining firms are now unviable and plagued by overcapacity, leading the government to declare a "war on pollution" and attempt to curb output. The Asian giant set a target of reducing coal production capacity by 250 million tons this year, which Premier Li Keqiang announced had been met by the end of October—although figures for actual output were not yet available. Its consumption of the fuel—the country accounts for half of the world's demand for coal and almost half of its production—had "likely peaked", the International Energy Agency said Monday.

But critics say that efforts to cut coal use have fallen short of expectations. Even while China makes cuts to the sector and operates many of its coal-fired power stations at less than half their capacity, it "perversely" has plans to spend as much as half a trillion dollars on building more such units, London-based campaign group Carbon Tracker Initiative said in a report last month. While coal cuts are crucial for the global battle against climate change, they spell catastrophe for the workers they cast aside.

'Nothing but wolves'

According to the website of Beijing Coal Group, the state-owned enterprise that owns the mines near the capital, their government-mandated closures will mean the loss of 6 million tons of coal production capacity and the "resettlement" of more than 11,000 workers, mostly migrants. It did not make clear whether that meant assigning them to other units, sending them home, or simply sacking them.

"Once those mines are closed, there won't be a damn thing left for them," predicted one disaffected retired miner in his 50s, a Beijing native surnamed Wu. "Nothing even to eat, drink or sustain them unless they go out and beg." The ruling Communist Party has a difficult balance to strike between turning off the financial taps to the industry and risking widespread unemployment, with its potential for anger and unrest. Wang Shuqing, 77, worked in Beijing Coal Group's Wangping mine for 34 years before retiring in the 90s.—AFP



HUAXIAN: Photo shows a textile worker at a factory in Huaxian County, in China's northern Henan Province.—AFP

CHINA BANK LENDING HEADS FOR A RECORD

BEIJING: Chinese banks extended 794.6 billion yuan (\$115.10 billion) in new yuan loans in November and look set to lend a record amount this year as Beijing boosts the economy to meet growth targets despite worries about the risks of prolonged debt-fueled stimulus. Lending continued to be driven by consumer loans, primarily home mortgages, despite a series of measures rolled out by the authorities to cool surging home prices and avoid property bubbles.

Off-balance sheet lending also unexpectedly spiked in November, raising concerns of tighter liquidity if regulators crack down on the shadow banking sector, economist David Qu at ANZ said. New bank loans rose to a record 11.6 trillion yuan in the first 11 months of the year, according to Reuters calculations based on central bank data, and have handily surpassed the levels of China's massive credit-led stimulus during the global financial crisis in 2009. But analysts said the increase in November was partly seasonal, as outstanding yuan loan growth held steady at 13.1 percent by month-end on an annual basis, unchanged from October.

Subdued corporate demand

Corporate loan growth remained weak in November, increasing by only 165.6 billion yuan. That pointed to subdued credit demand from companies and a preference by banks to lend to households, as mortgages are usually considered higher quality assets, said Nomura economist Yang Zhao. "With the property market cooling down, I would expect that loan growth faces downward pressure next year. I don't think there is a fundamental improvement in investment demand by corporates," said Yang.

Mid- to long-term loans to households rose to 569.2 billion yuan, or 71.2 percent of all loans, up from September's 66.5 percent, though analysts said it might take a few months to know how tighter restrictions will impact mortgages. Analysts polled by Reuters had expected new lending to have risen to 720 billion yuan from October's 651.3 billion yuan. Broad M2 money supply (M2) grew 11.4 percent from a year earlier, central bank data showed yesterday, slightly below forecasts.—Reuters

ASIA SHARES CREEP CAUTIOUSLY HIGHER

ASIA RESIGNED TO FED HIKE, UPTIGHT ON RATE OUTLOOK

SYDNEY: Asia shares crept cautiously higher yesterday while a hush settled on the US dollar as investors felt certain the Federal Reserve would raise rates for the first time in a year, but were less sure what it might herald for 2017. European bourses were tipped to open a shade lower by spread betters, while E-mini futures for the S&P 500 were down a minuscule 0.02 percent. Australia led the going early with a gain of 0.8 percent, though MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside

Japan could only manage a 0.1 percent rise. Japan's Nikkei and Shanghai stocks both dithered either side of flat, as did much of the region. The outcome of the Fed's policy meeting will be announced at 1900 GMT, followed by Chair Janet Yellen's news conference half an hour later. A quarter point move is fully priced in, as are two more hikes next year. Any hint that the Fed may move more aggressively than that would likely send the dollar higher and jolt emerging markets. All eyes are

thus on the Fed's economic and rate "dot" plots for a sense of how policymakers think President-elect Donald Trump's policies will impact growth and inflation.

"As most FOMC participants are likely to wait for more specifics on Trump's fiscal policy initiatives before formally altering their forecasts, markets may be disappointed by the lack of additional insight provided," said Michelle Girard, chief US economist at RBSM. "We expect most participants will continue to

see two to three rate hikes as appropriate in 2017." Treasuries have already priced in a rate hike and more, with two-year yields reaching ground last trod in April 2010 at 1.18 percent. In contrast, the European Central Bank only last week extended its asset buying campaign and moved to purchase more short-term debt.

A rich spread

As a result, the spread between US and German two-year yields is now the widest since late 2005, with Treasuries offering a mouth-watering premium of 191 basis points. The gap kept the euro on the defensive at \$1.0635, not far from the recent 20-month trough at \$1.0505. The dollar was likewise steady on the yen at 115.24 and against a basket of currencies at 101.000. Speculation that a Trump Administration will implement more debt-financed fiscal stimulus and cut regulation helped all three major US stock indexes to records this week. The Dow ended fewer than 100 points from the magical 20,000 mark. Bank of America Merrill Lynch's latest survey of investors found expectations of global growth at 19-month highs and inflation at the second highest percentage in 12 years.

Fund managers were the most opti-

mistic about corporate profits in more than six years and allocations to bank stocks surged to an all-time peak. The Dow ended Tuesday up 0.58 percent, while the S&P 500 gained 0.65 percent and the Nasdaq 0.95 percent. Tech stocks joined the party as Apple climbed 1.7 percent and Amazon 1.9 percent. However, confidence in Asia toward business conditions over the coming six months dropped in the final quarter of 2016 to its lowest level in a year as firms fretted about sluggish economic environment, a Thomson Reuters/INSEAD survey found.

Asian companies are particularly reliant on demand from China, which is firmly in Trump's protectionist sights. Bulk commodities from iron ore to coal have also benefited from the deflation trade, combined with signs of stronger growth in China. Again, any hint the Fed might step up the pace of tightening could undo some of those gains. Oil ran into profit-taking following a reported rise in US crude inventories and an estimate that OPEC may have produced more crude in November than previously thought. US crude futures, which hit a high of \$53.41 on Tuesday, were down 70 cents at \$52.28 a barrel. Brent crude eased 68 cents to \$55.04. — Reuters

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report										
Wednesday 14 December 2016										
Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low					
Price Index	▲ 0.36	5,671.98	5,671.62	5,679.02	5,651.90					
Weighted Index	▼ -2.64	377.47	380.11	380.47	376.94					
KSX 15	▼ -8.75	886.78	895.53	896.65	886.13					
Trades										
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change			
MARIN	70	70	500	35	1	70	▲ 5.0			
IKARUS	37.0	36.0	131,575	4,757	8	36.0	▼ -2.5			
IPG	380	380	388	147	1	380	▲ 15.0			
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	810	— 0.0			
ENERGYH	44.5	42.0	410	17	3	44.5	— 0.0			
GPI	40.5	39.5	2,811,800	113,010	45	40.0	— 0.0			
ABAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	102	— 0.0			
Oil & Gas			2,944,673	117,967	58	783.40	▲ 8.38			
KFOUC	178	176	86,350	15,200	8	176	▼ -2.0			
BPPC	490	480	199,807	96,056	13	490	▲ 10.0			
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	640	— 0.0			
ALQURAIN	228	226	86,172	19,631	18	228	— 0.0			
Basic Materials			372,329	130,887	39	985.45	▲ 3.04			
KCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	420	— 0.0			
REFRI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	325	— 0.0			
CABLE	385	380	113,200	43,292	18	385	— 0.0			
SHIP	168	166	358,000	59,488	21	166	▼ -2.0			
PCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	920	— 0.0			
PAPER	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	290	— 0.0			
MRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	63	— 0.0			
AGICO	270	270	24,000	6,480	2	270	— 0.0			
GMCM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	305	— 0.0			
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	118	— 0.0			
KBMM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	190	— 0.0			
NICBM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	206	— 0.0			
EQUIPMENT	47.5	46.0	5,079,666	238,454	139	46.5	▲ 1.5			
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	50	— 0.0			
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	— 0.0			
SALBOOKH	63	59	773,430	47,341	53	61	▲ 3.0			
AGLTY	630	610	1,148,507	717,577	29	630	— 0.0			
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	202	— 0.0			
CLEANING	43.5	42.5	255,712	10,896	12	43.0	▼ -0.5			
KGL	54	51	408,300	21,335	24	54	▲ 1.0			
KPCP	170	170	53,000	9,010	5	170	▲ 2.0			
HUMANSOFT	2,260	2,260	6,300	14,238	4	2,260	— 0.0			
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	206	— 0.0			
SAFWAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	385	— 0.0			
GFC	30.5	29.5	155,000	4,679	4	30.5	— 0.0			
MAYADEEN	29.5	28.5	25,785,546	750,919	185	29.0	▲ 0.5			
COC	620	620	19,500	12,090	2	620	— 0.0			
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	56	— 0.0			
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	660	— 0.0			
ALAFAC	222	220	175,078	38,717	6	220	— 0.0			
MUBARRAD	56	56	220,261	12,335	8	56	▼ -1.0			
LOGISTICS	71	69	658,539	45,692	17	71	▼ -1.0			
SCEM	81	80	110,500	8,841	3	81	▲ 1.0			
GCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	75	— 0.0			
QIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	70	— 0.0			
FCEM	80	80	243,000	19,440	8	80	— 0.0			
RKWC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	87	— 0.0			
SPEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	81	— 0.0			
Industrials			35,587,539	2,060,824	540	1297.58	▲ 1.57			
KSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	136	— 0.0			
NSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	64	— 0.0			
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	— 0.0			
CATTL	236	226	5,689	1,297	7	234	▼ -2.0			
DANAH	90	88	3,500	310	2	90	▼ -1.0			
POULT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	192	— 0.0			
FOOD	2,600	2,600	27,865	72,449	4	2,600	▼ -20.0			
Consumer Goods			37,054	74,056	13	1140.13	▼ -9.04			
MHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	230	— 0.0			
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	920	— 0.0			
YIACO	425	385	8,600	3,408	5	425	▼ -10			
Health Care			8,600	3,408	5	1260.35	▼ -7.19			
KCIN	980	960	150	146	2	960	— 0.0			
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	265	— 0.0			
SULTAN	60	58	250,001	14,680	14	60	— 0.0			
CABLETV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	61	— 0.0			
EYAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	385	— 0.0			
IFAHR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	152	— 0.0			
QULAFUEL	118	114	41,917	4,891	19	116	▲ 2			
MUNTAAHAT	76	75	30,790	2,310	3	76	— 0.0			
JAZEERA	770	750	18,340	14,043	13	770	▼ -10			
SOOR	118	114	25,074	2,889	16	114	— 0.0			
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	106	— 0.0			
ALRAI	148	148	10,000	1,480	2	148	▼ -4			
ZIMAH	41.0	40.5	597,550	24,391	21	41.0	— 0.0			
Mezzan	950	930	473,412	442,029	33	930	▼ -30			
Consumer Services			1,447,234	506,859	123	911.49	▼ -3.51			
ZAIN	440	425	4,151,036	1,797,505	110	425	▼ -10			
OREDOO	1,160	1,140	1,010	1,152	2	1,140	— 0.0			
HITSTELEC	42.5	41.5	6,786,112	284,172	101	41.5	▼ -1			
VIVA	920	910	101,282	93,054	57	920	— 0.0			
Telecommunications			11,039,440	2,175,883	270	631.73	▼ -4.10			
NBK	660	650	1,332,993	879,648	26	650	▼ -10			
GBK	246	236	9,676,634	2,340,037	82	246	▲ -10			
CBK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	415	— 0.0			
ABK	295	290	101,130	29,833	5	295	▼ -5			
ALMUTAHED	395	395	51,366	20,290	4	395	▼ -5			
KIB	206	204	218,709	44,939	10	204	▼ -2			
BURG	305	295	2,201,761	660,628	49	300	— 0.0			
KFIN	540	530	3,035,033	1,609,118	78	530	▼ -10			
BOUBYAN	400	395	140,190	55,773	21	395	▼ -5			
AUB	196	194	1,694,373	328,710	33	196	— 0.0			
ITHMR	38.5	37.5	2,367,247	89,035	45	38.0	▼ -1			
WARBANK	220	218	684,906	145,356	79	218	— 0.0			
Banks			21,484,342	6,203,365	432	832.89	▼ -4.29			
KINS	246	246	40,500	9,963	1	246	— 0.0			
GINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	620	— 0.0			
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	430	— 0.0			
WINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	— 0.0			
KUWAITRE	180	180	520	94	1	180	▼ -2.0			
FTI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	49.5	— 0.0			
WETHAQ	31.0	28.5	294,000	8,481	9	30.5	▼ -0.5			
BKIKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	— 0.0			
Insurance			335,020	18,537	11	948.35	▼ -3.56			
Trades										
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change			
SOKOUK	37.5	36.0	8007670	293,400	158	36.5	▼ -0.5			
KRE	62	61	332,000	20,332	9	61	▼ -1.0			
URC	97	97	5,863	569	1	97	▼ -1.0			
NRE	106	104	1,012,489	105,560	37	104	▼ -2.0			
SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	360	— 0.0			
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	470	— 0.0			
AREEC	200	200	1,000	200	1	200	— 0.0			
MASSALEH	0.0	0.0								

IBM UNVEILS PLAN TO HIRE 25,000 IN US

NEW YORK: US technology giant IBM said Tuesday it would hire 25,000 people in the country over the next four years, a day before President-elect Donald Trump meets with tech industry leaders. About 6,000 of those hirings will occur in 2017, IBM chief executive Ginni Rometty said in an opinion article published in the newspaper USA Today. IBM, which has undertaken in recent years a restructuring of its activities, will invest \$1 billion on employee training

and development in the next four years, said the IBM president, chairman and CEO.

"We are hiring because the nature of work is evolving and that is also why so many of these jobs remain hard to fill," Rometty said, noting that many industries were being reshaped by data science and cloud computing. "Jobs are being created that demand new skills— which in turn requires new approaches to education, training and recruiting,"

she said. "This is not about white collar vs. blue collar jobs, but about the 'new collar' jobs that employers in many industries demand, but which remain largely unfilled."

Rometty is a member of Trump's Strategic and Policy Forum, a group of US business leaders focused on boosting economic growth and jobs. The IBM jobs investment news came before the highly anticipated meeting Wednesday of the Republican property tycoon-

turned-next US president and the leaders of several major technology companies. Among those expected to attend are Amazon's Jeff Bezos, Apple's Tim Cook, Satya Nadella of Microsoft, Larry Page of Alphabet (Google) and Elon Musk of Tesla and SpaceX, according to US media.

Trump is expected to push them to create jobs after saying last week that he would like Apple-whose coveted iPhones are made in China-to open a

large factory in the United States. But he will be stepping into hostile territory. The tech sector overwhelmingly supported the Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton during this year's election campaign and has expressed fear about the effect Trump's policies will have on the industry. The sole notable exception is the controversial PayPal co-founder and early Facebook investor Peter Thiel, currently a member of Trump's transition team. —AFP



SAN CRISTOBAL: People queue up outside a bank in San Cristobal in an attempt to deposit money. Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro ordered the border with Colombia sealed for 72 hours, accusing US-backed 'mafias' of conspiring to destabilize his country's economy by hoarding bank notes. —AFP

VENEZUELANAS BACK AND FORTH TO BANKS AMID CASH CHAOS

CARACAS: Not long ago, Yajaira Perez was queuing to withdraw cash from the bank, fearing bills would run short. Now she is queuing anxiously to put it back in. Venezuela's food, medicine and currency crisis is now a cash crisis, too, with the government about to put millions of bank notes out of circulation. As usual, it is ordinary Venezuelans suffering—waiting in line for hours to deposit the doomed bills, when they could be working, studying or caring for their families.

"It's horrible, horrible. They can't do this a few days before Christmas," said Perez, a middle-aged housewife in a black and white headscarf. Queuing in the early morning at a bank in eastern Caracas, she embodies the often absurd impact of the economic crisis on people's everyday lives. Spooked by a shortage of banknotes, she had been withdrawing 100 bolivar bills to make sure she had ready cash. Then on Sunday, President Nicolas Maduro ordered the most common bank note, the 100-bolivar unit, to be scrapped by Thursday. "Little by little you put money aside in case of an emergency," Perez said. "Now I have to come back and I'm ending up with no cash at all."

Bread line

Some vendors have already stopped accepting the 100 bolivar notes for fear of not being able to deposit them by Thursday. Teresa Giraldo, 48, has been getting paid mainly in 100-bolivar bills for her job as a cleaner. "I went to buy bread and when I got to the front of the queue they wouldn't accept them," she said, standing in line. "Now I have to go through this to put them in the bank. Then I will have to come back in a few days and queue for more hours to withdraw the money again. This is crazy."

Bags of cash

The 100-bolivar bill is currently the highest-denomination bank note in

Venezuela, but on its own it is scarcely enough to buy a piece of candy. In a country with one of the highest rates of violent crime in the world, shoppers must carry round unwieldy wads of bills to pay for their purchases. Retirees had complained for months that their pensions were paid in unmanageable 50 and 20-bolivar denominations. Eventually the government agreed to pay them in bills of 100. Angel Retali, 71, queued Tuesday along with some 60 other people, holding his stacks of cash in a plastic bag. "You have to carry so much money around in a bag like this," he said. "Everyone knows what's in it, and it's not safe."

Border closed

The government is scheduled to start releasing new higher-denomination notes starting on Thursday, the biggest being a 20,000 bolivar bill. But in the meantime, Maduro scrapped the 100-bolivar bill to combat what he called a US-backed plot against Venezuela. He said billions of bolivars, in bills of 100, were stashed away by international gangs in Colombia, Brazil and even in Europe and Asia. He ordered the Colombia border to be closed for three days, saying this would stop the gangs depositing their hoarded banknotes.

The government said on Tuesday that police had arrested 117 people and seized the equivalent of \$155 million in raids on such gangs. In the western border region of Tachira, the crackdown caused added misery for people who rely on cross-border trade. Many locals in the city of San Cristobal are used to crossing to the Cucuta on the Colombian side to buy food and medicine. "We were going to go to Cucuta to buy some supplies that we can't get here and save a few bolivars," said Carmen Hidalgo, a retired teacher of 60. "Now, who knows what we'll be able to get." —AFP

TRUMP FISH: IRAQI RESTAURANT SPELLS OUT KURDISH FAITH IN PRESIDENT-ELECT

THE NEWEST ENTERPRISE BEARING TRUMP'S NAME

DUHOK: The newest enterprise bearing Donald Trump's name is not a five-star hotel or an exclusive golf club. It is a restaurant in northern Iraq serving fire-roasted carp for \$10 a kilo which the US president-elect probably doesn't even know exists. Trump Fish, whose logo features the businessman-turned-politician's distinctive yellow mane, opened about 10 days ago in the Kurdish city of Duhok, an hour's drive from the latest battle against Islamic State militants in Mosul.

Owner Nedyar Zawity says he registered the Trump name months ago with Kurdish authorities. The 31-year-old entrepreneur insists the branding is more about turning a profit than endorsing politics, but he likes Trump's strong personality and reputation as a successful businessman. Above all, he appreciates the president-elect's promise to ramp up support to the Kurds and their peshmerga fighters, a sensitive proposition in a country where competing pro-government forces vie for Western backing. "I personally love Trump for this," Zawity said. "The name Trump is beloved in Kurdistan." The Kurds, oppressed under successive Arab governments in Iraq, are perhaps the biggest victors of the new order born out of the US-led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein in 2003.

While Iraqi Arabs further south have been gripped by sectarian conflict for more than a decade, Kurdistan remained relatively safe, enjoyed an economic boom and steadily developed its autonomy. More recently, Kurdish peshmerga

fighters - whose name literally means "those who face death" - have proven vital US allies in the war against Islamic State, which seized a third of the country in 2014 when Iraqi forces collapsed. The Kurds have pushed for years to receive direct support instead of aid fun-

Kurds will be hoping that his endorsement of their military prowess will translate into political support for the long-held ambition of statehood for their autonomous region, which relies heavily for income on foreign aid and oil sales.



President-elect Donald Trump

neled through Baghdad - something Washington has resisted in pursuit of a strategy to prevent Iraq fragmenting.

Trump gave the Kurds hope that this might change when, during the campaign, he praised their fighters' skill and loyalty and called for them to be armed. "I'm a big fan of the Kurdish forces," he said in July. Trump's position on full Kurdish independence is unclear and his office did not respond to a request for comment. But many

Courting controversy

Trump Fish, located between an appliance shop and a laundromat, has not yet turned a profit, according to Zawity, who runs the eatery with his three brothers. The dining room was empty when Reuters visited at lunchtime, save a few customers who had ordered takeaway. The restaurant offers just one dish: masgouf, a grilled fish farmed in local rivers and seasoned with olive oil, pepper, lemon and spices. It is considered Iraq's national dish.

The Trump name has helped attract customers, according to Zawity, including Westerners who say they don't necessarily support the Republican figure but dine here for novelty's sake. "He is an American, maybe he is not my favorite, but he is still American. So I'm happy to try a restaurant with an American name with Kurdish-Iraqi food," said David Hirsch, a librarian at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Yet it has also garnered enmity from some quarters, including online critics who accuse Zawity of being an American or Israeli agent and have sent him threats. Some customers upset with Trump's campaign pledge to impose a temporary ban on Muslims entering the United States have boycotted the restaurant, he said. Echoing an opinion held by many Trump supporters in the region, Zawity attributes the proposed ban to the demands of campaigning and does not believe it will be implemented.

He even hopes to take his Trump caricature logo to the United States and open another restaurant there. "Give me a visa and I will go tomorrow," he said with a chuckle. Zawity could face resistance to such expansion from Trump's own operation, which relies heavily for revenues on branding and merchandising its name. The incoming leader of the world's superpower is less likely to challenge another show of Kurdish support: Local media reported last weekend that a peshmerga fighter on the front lines against Islamic State had named his newborn son "Trump." —Reuters

BRAZIL'S SENATE APPROVES 20-YEAR SPENDING FREEZE

BRASILIA: Brazil's Senate approved Tuesday a 20-year freeze on government spending billed as the centerpiece of austerity reforms aimed at restoring economic health to the troubled Latin American giant. The upper house voted 53 to 16 to lock in the spending ceiling. Center-right President Michel Temer says tough measures are needed to get Brazil's finances back under control, but his austerity policies have prompted violent protests and were criticized last week by a UN expert as "a historic mistake."

Police were out in force in the capital Brasilia to protect government buildings from demonstrators during the upper house vote, which was wrapped up unexpectedly quickly. Luis Jorge, a union leader who had come for the protests, expressed anger at the Senate for voting "before we could demonstrate. That makes us very angry." However, hundreds of people, many with their faces covered, clashed with police later Tuesday. Security forces fired tear gas to try to disperse the crowd.

A bus was burned during the demonstration, which drew about 2,000 people, police said. The police operation in the capital ended with 100 arrests, officials said. In Sao Paulo, left-wing protesters attacked the headquarters of FIESP, the country's main industrial association, before being driven back. The vote means that the spending cap is now mandated by the constitution, serving as the central plank in Temer's bid to "transform" the broken economy, which is in deep recession.

However, Temer is rapidly losing political clout as he and many of his senior allies fight to survive a slew of corruption allegations. Brazilians battered by nearly 12 percent unemployment and stubbornly high inflation are increasingly angry over the scandals and hostile to the austerity measures. A poll pub-



BRASILIA: Police charge on demonstrators protesting in front of the National Congress in Brasilia yesterday. Brazil's Senate has approved a 20-year freeze on government spending billed as the centerpiece of austerity reforms aimed at restoring economic health to the troubled Latin American giant. —AFP

lished Tuesday showed that 60 percent of Brazilians oppose the spending ceiling. Only 24 percent are in favor, according to the Datafolha poll published in the newspaper Folha. When the Senate held a first vote on the measure two weeks ago, protesters fought riot police outside Congress, burning cars and smashing windows.

'We need courage'

Temer, in an attempt to claw back public support, has unveiled stimulus measures that would attempt to give a short-term boost to the ailing economy, the largest in Latin America. But as the Senate began debating he defended his far-reaching austerity proposals, saying they were needed to change Brazil for the long term. In addition to the spending ceiling, a separate measure is being submitted to Congress proposing pension

reforms. At the center of the measure would be a minimum retirement age of 65, substantially higher than the current requirement, which varies widely between professions, but can be as early as 55 years old. "We need a lot of courage at this moment in Brazil to do things that are apparently unpopular but which will bring popularity later," he said in a statement. "We need to transform the country," he said.

Philip Alston, the UN poverty and human rights rapporteur, attacked the 20-year spending cap as "putting an entire generation at risk of social protection standards well below those currently in place." "This is a radical measure, lacking in all nuance and compassion," he said last week. "It will hit the poorest and most vulnerable Brazilians the hardest." However, there was a boost from the incoming US president, Donald Trump, who

"congratulated" Temer for the reforms in a phone conversation Tuesday, according to the Brazilian presidency.

Temer's entire government is struggling in the face of allegations tying senior figures and the president himself to the giant embezzlement and bribery probe centered on state oil company Petrobras. Temer came to power last August after the impeachment of leftist president Dilma Rousseff. As her former vice president, Temer was appointed to the post automatically for the rest of her term through 2018. Temer said he would focus on ending the political and economic chaos that had doomed the Rousseff government. However, the latest poll from Datafolha shows 63 percent of Brazilians want him to resign to allow early elections. Only 10 percent said they thought his government is doing a good job. —AFP

EXPORTS AND TOURISM FIGHT TO RECOVER AFTER NZ QUAKE

WELLINGTON: Parts of New Zealand's key export industries and its vital tourism sector are battling to get back on track a month after a deadly earthquake rocked the nation, crippling roads and slowing shipping. At one of the country's main ports in Wellington, 'no-entry' signs dot parts of the site hit by liquefaction, cracking or buckling, hampering shipments of items like meat and farm produce to destinations including China and Australia. While 150 km away in the resort town of Kaikoura, often touted as the nation's whale-watching capital, restaurants and hotels lie nearly empty as the roads that once carried in busloads of tourists through steep mountains remain closed.

Wellington's port and Kaikoura are at the forefront of fallout from the Nov. 14 quake, which New Zealand's central bank has initially estimated will cost the NZ\$250 billion (\$180 billion) economy up to NZ\$8 billion. "We are important to the regional economy, so it is important to resume (full) operations soon," said Derek Nind, CEO of CentrePort Wellington, the port in the country's capital which lies about 480 km from the epicentre of magnitude-7.8 temblor that killed two people. "We need to think how we build resilience into our ports. I am trying to get world experts to help us on that."

Nind added that the port, which handled trade worth NZ\$3.3 billion in 2015, was unlikely to run at full throttle until April, although it did manage to partially resume some operations in the days after the quake. Major problems at the site include container shipping and cold storage that remain out of bounds, while

Nind's own office is also in a no-go zone. Nind said it was not yet possible to assess how much business would be lost due to the quake. One sign of progress comes as the port says its key log shipping operations are "back to normal" in December after they were hit the month before.

That is good news for companies that rely on the port as one of the main shipping points for New Zealand's rapidly growing forestry industry, its third-largest export earner behind dairy and meat. "November will probably be our weakest month on calendar, although things have started to flow back now," said Steve Wilton, CEO of Masterton-based Forest Enterprises Ltd, the nation's No.1 Forestry investment firm. He said that the company had been diverting some of its logs to nearby Port Napier, but that had caused additional cost and delays.

Meanwhile, Philip Gregan, CEO of wine industry body NZ Wine said that one in five tanks in the producing region of Marlborough had been damaged during the earthquake. That has left winemakers scrambling to find temporary storage or ship wine out to be stored elsewhere to ensure the 2017 vintage is not affected. New Zealand's wine exports are worth NZ\$1.6 billion and growing fast in markets like China and the United States. "They've got a lot of work to do and they're working very hard to make it all happen. They would have loved if this earthquake had never happened, life would have been a hell of a lot easier - but that's not what happened," Gregan said. —Reuters

ADEEB AHAMED HONORED WITH GLOBAL BUSINESS LEADER AWARD

KUWAIT: The inaugural Gulf Indian Excellence Awards were held at the Hyatt Regency Dubai Creek Heights on Sunday. The gala event recognized leading successful Indian Business Leaders in the region who have made a mark in their sectors and have shown exceptional ability in their areas of excellence.

In recognition of his successful growth as a business leader across various sectors

around the region, Adeeb Ahamed, Director, Lulu Exchange and MD, Twenty14 Holdings was honoured with the Global Business Leader Award. Other winners in this category includes M A Yusuff Ali, MD, Lulu Group International, B R Shetty, Chairman, NMC Healthcare, Thumbay Moideen, President, Thumbay Group, Mickey Jagtiani, Chairman, Landmark Group and Joy Alukkas, Chairman, Joy Alukkas,

among others. Adeeb Ahamed is a multifaceted professional who began his journey in the region with the setting up of Lulu Exchange, a reputed financial services company. After successfully establishing LuLu Exchange with more than 130 branches across the globe within seven years, Adeeb went on to setup Twenty14 Holdings, a hospitality investment firm which owns prestigious properties around the world including

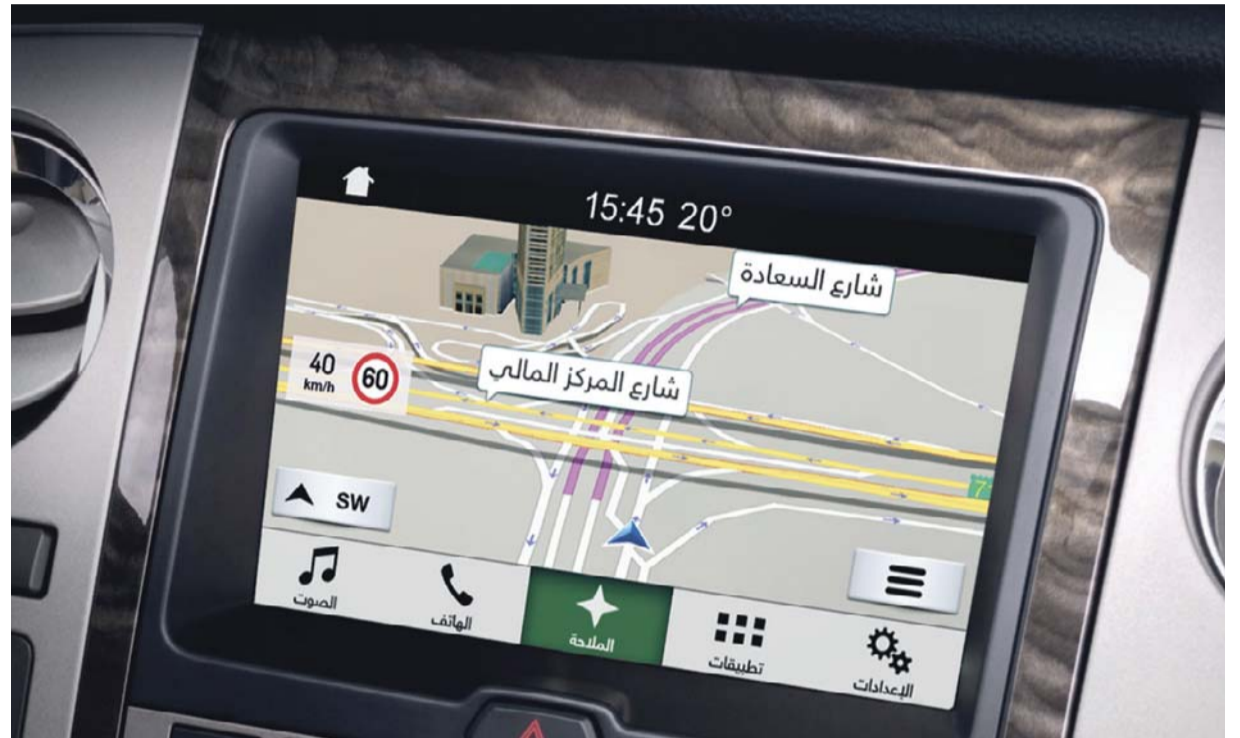
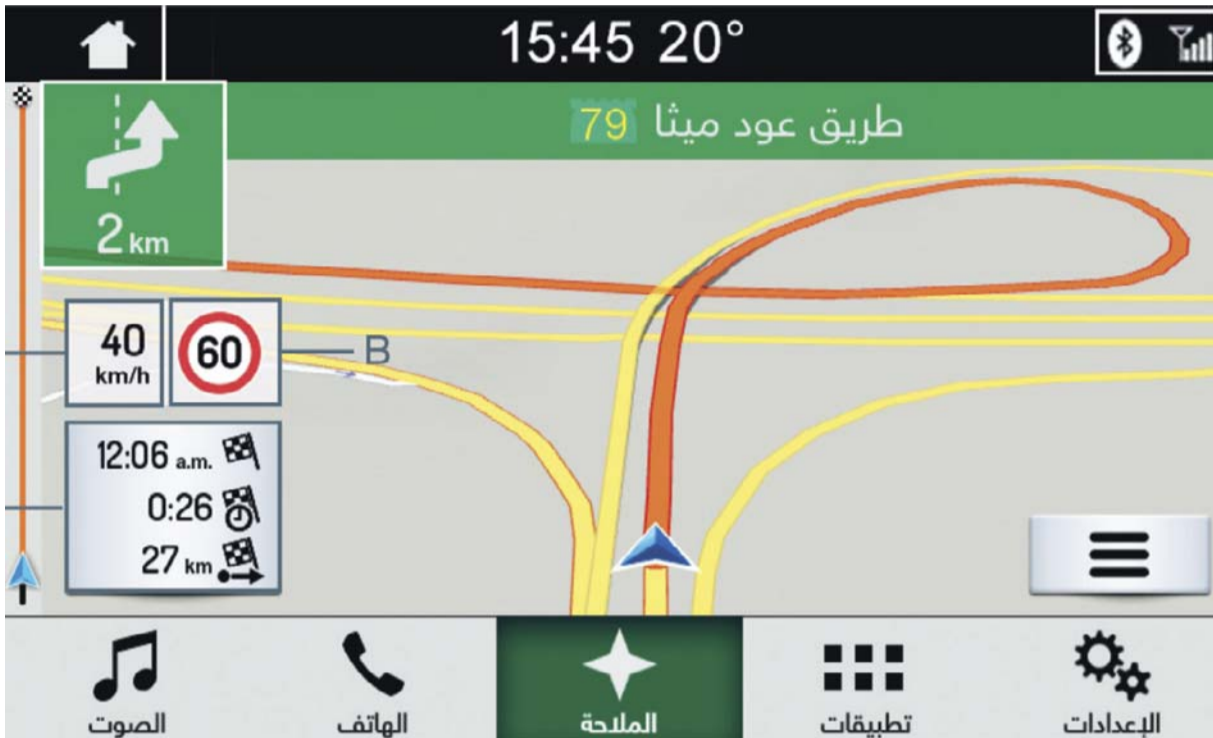
the Great Scotland Yard in London, Steigenberger Hotel Business Bay in Dubai and the Sheraton Oman Hotel in Muscat, among others. "I am absolutely delighted and deeply honoured to be acknowledged with this award. This recognition will allow me to further strengthen our commitment towards setting up new benchmarks in the sectors we are involved in.

This award also encourages me to further

inspire those around me and make a lasting, positive impact on their lives and community," said Adeeb Ahamed. Other awards including Transformational Biz Leader, Strategic Innovators of the Year, Creative Entrepreneurs of the Year and Business Innovators were also given away during the event. The event also featured panel discussions, conversations with the award winners and active participation of the audience.

FORD BRINGS INTELLIGENT SYNC3 INFOTAINMENT TO MIDDLE EAST

NEW DESIGN, NEW INTERFACE, NEW LANGUAGES, NEW FEATURES



DUBAI: The latest generation of Ford's innovative communications and entertainment system is set to make its Middle East debut as the high-tech new SYNC3 is launched on most 2017 MY models. In addition to other new languages, Ford's SYNC3 will support Arabic for the first time - both text and voice activation - enabling simpler control for Arabic-speaking drivers. Ford SYNC already enables drivers of 15-million vehicles worldwide to voice-activate essential in-car features, greatly improving ease of access to numerous phone and multimedia functions.

The system has also made a significant contribution to driving safety, enabling drivers to remain focused on the road while accessing the vast range of available communication and multimedia features.

For the third-generation system, Ford has drawn on more than 22,000 comments and insights gained from research clinics and surveys to ensure the new version is the most customer-centric designed system. Simplifying the user experience by putting the audio and phone options customers use most at their fingertips, SYNC 3 has been further improved through increased processing power and a reduction in the number of steps required for a command.

With pinch-to-zoom and swipe gestures, SYNC3 provides customers with a high definition experience of the eight-inch touch screen that is similar to smartphone screens, thus making it easier and more intuitive to use. "SYNC3 brings to life even more innovative new ways of staying connected on the



move," says Kalyana Sivagnanam, vice president marketing, sales and services, Ford Middle East and Africa.

"SYNC3 is designed to complement modern smartphones, with an intuitive touch screen and an exciting array of new features, is significantly faster, and offers a higher resolution interface that is simpler, and easier to read and use than its predecessor. For customers in the Middle East, considered to be among the most connected customers in the

world, this is a substantial step to staying connected on the move."

More features

Smartphone integration has been stepped up with several fantastic new features, including Apple CarPlay, which allows iPhone users to make phone calls, access music, send and receive text messages, and get directions optimized for traffic conditions via voice control while the drivers' eyes stay focused on the

road. The system is also compatible with Siri Eyes Free which allows for easy access to Siri with iPhones connected via Bluetooth. Android users will be able to activate Android Auto*, which makes the platform's apps and services such as Google Search, Google Maps and Google Play Music accessible in a safe and seamless manner through SYNC3.

More than navigation

Navigation sees a greatly-improved sys-

tem, including 3D support with landmarks, a Mecca compass, and enhanced junction view providing detailed lane visuals and guidance. Navigation also auto zooms out when the next manoeuvre is more than three kilometers away to making it easier to see the full route. SYNC 3 also provides full dead reckoning support - which means being able to navigate even after the loss of GPS signal - unlike smart phone navigation apps in the region.

The navigation also includes more than 3.5 million "points of interest", and over 3.5 million kilometers of road. Even the idea of getting lost should be a distant memory, thanks to free map updates for five years - a necessity for the ever-changing landscape of the Middle East. One of the main highlights is the Smart Fuel Indicator, for instance, when a vehicle is low on fuel and the navigation map is displayed; SYNC 3 will automatically show the positions of petrol stations on the map, making sure customers never leave themselves high and dry.

Ziad Chaaban, EES Engineer, Product Development, Ford Middle East and Africa, added: "SYNC3 now offers unique features for the Middle East, like user ability to control media and climate, via their Bluetooth-connected phone, just by speaking to SYNC. Of considerable importance to Middle East customers is the language choices for SYNC 3 navigation, which includes Arabic for the very first time, while customers will also have the opportunity to update their maps - free for five years - from the comfort of their own homes."



ETIHAD AIRWAYS MAKES FLYING FROM KUWAIT TO THE US EASIER

PRECLEARANCE ALLOWS TRAVELERS TO AVOID LONG IMMIGRATION QUEUES

ABU DHABI: Travelers flying on Etihad Airways from Kuwait to the United States are able to experience the benefits of arriving in the US having pre-cleared US Customs and Border Protection in Abu Dhabi. The US preclearance facility at Abu Dhabi International Airport Terminal 3 is the only one of its kind in the Middle East and provides travelers with a unique opportunity to pass through all required checks including US customs, immigration and security, conveniently before they board their flights to the US, enabling them to avoid long queues on arrival.

With this unique facility, guests can also

through-check their baggage to their final destination in the US, where they arrive as domestic passengers, allowing them to save valuable time connecting to other flights or on to their final destination. US destinations served by Etihad Airways include New York (JFK), Chicago (ORD), Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW), Los Angeles (LAX), San Francisco (SFO) and Washington D.C. (IAD). First and Business Class guests travelling to any of the six US destinations from Abu Dhabi can use the stylish US Premium Lounge, located within the US preclearance facility, after having cleared US Immigration and Customs.

ZAIN MAKES A STRATEGIC INVESTMENT IN US-BASED COLLE CAPITAL PARTNERS

KUWAIT: Zain Group, a leading innovator of mobile communications in eight markets across the Middle East and Africa, has made a strategic investment in Colle Capital Partners, (www.collecapital.com) a global, opportunistic, early stage technology venture fund based in New York, with a presence in San Francisco.

Colle Capital Partners has a diversified technology focus with an emphasis on data in the following sectors: Energy, Media, Telecommunications, Health IT, Security, and Software Development. The fund's managers have access to unique, high quality investment opportunities and the fund was oversubscribed. Its Managing Partner -Victoria Grace - is a professional venture investor with a successful track record of over a decade.

Zain's investment in Colle Capital Partners forms part of its Zain Digital Frontier and Innovation (ZDFI) business unit strategy, which was established in 2014, and charged with launching Zain into the digital space with the view to growing the company through new innovative business streams, which add to its financial viability and market capitalization. Zain has previously made three investments in technology-focused venture capital and early-stage investment companies, and this latest participation further establishes a bridge between successful digital startups and Zain.

The investment in Colle Capital Partners also extends the geographic range of Zain's potential partner entities to the United States, taking them beyond the Middle East and Eastern Europe where the company's current investment ventures have their pool of influence. Zain's strategy to participate at an early stage in the lifecycle of a company and help the team to achieve its commercial goals by supporting its early-stage development drove its interest in Colle Capital Partners. The fund is driven by a desire to invest in people, with a goal to identify and support teams that



Scott Gegenheimer CEO of Zain Group



Victoria Grace - Colle Capital Managing Partner

demonstrate intellect and passion as well as agility in their thinking and execution.

Commenting on Zain's latest strategic investment, Group CEO, Scott Gegenheimer said, "We are delighted to add Colle Capital Partners to MEVP, Wamda and EarlyBird as early stage investment companies we have made investments in, with this fund being particularly nimble and highly selective. We are keen to extend our reach to the US as we are well aware of that market's innovation and hi-tech credentials, and we believe ideas and solutions from that geography will drive real-life digital applications and create new revenue streams in our region."

Victoria Grace, Founder and Managing Partner of Colle Capital Partners said, "We are thrilled to be partnering with Zain in our efforts. We aim to bring to our portfolio companies not just capital but also access to forward thinking, strategic partners that will create significant synergies for our companies

beyond US borders. We are already engaged with Zain on a number of efforts and view this as a win-win partnership."

Emre Gurkan, Chief Strategy & Business Development Officer of Zain Group said, "Mobile operators must innovate to remain relevant and the exploration of new opportunities to differentiate ourselves is vital to our future prosperity. At Zain, we have taken a pro-active step to cooperate with a broad range of partners that we believe share our vision of digital transformation. The inclusion of Colle Capital Partners into our growing ecosystem of partners will add value to our progress in this area for the benefit of our customers and other stakeholders." Boosted by this latest investment, ZDFI will continue to focus on the areas of innovation; digital services; corporate venturing; and smart cities, with the ultimate aim of Zain becoming a regional innovation trendsetter.

TOP 12 TIPS FOR STAYING SAFE ONLINE

As the popularity of online shopping increases in Kuwait, so does the likelihood of falling foul of cyber crooks, not necessarily because they are putting in extra effort during the festive season, but simply because more of us are doing more online shopping at this time of the year, and we're on the lookout for the hottest deals.

Sophos has put together the following cyber security tips to help you focus on family, food and fun over during this season, rather than dealing with the headache of stolen credit card details or important documents lost to ransomware.

1) Clean up your passwords before you start shopping

Don't use the same password on more than one website. If the crooks get one password, they'll immediately try it on all your other accounts. Make your passwords as long and complex as you can; in fact, consider using a password manager, which will come up with a unique password for each website automatically.

2) Update your devices

When patches come out, most of them fix security holes that the crooks either already know about or will find out about soon. Don't put off security updates because "later will be fine". Follow our advice: patch early, patch often.

3) Back up your files

Whether you're taking your laptop on holiday, or staying at home with your faithful desktop this festive season, don't forget to back up your precious documents on all of your devices. That way if your files are lost, stolen, "reconfigured" by a teenaged "expert", or, worst of all, held for extortion by ransom

ware, you can still get your data back.

4) Watch out for booby-trapped ATMs when shopping on the High Street

Watch out for modified ATMs when you withdraw money. Crooks often glue fake parts onto or around ATMs in the hope of covertly reading both your card data and your PIN. If you see an ATM with any components that look as though they don't belong, report it to the bank and the police. That way you protect yourself and everyone else too.

5) Beware of login links in emails

With so many emails flying around over the festive shopping period, it's a popular time for cyber crooks to use fake 'phishing' emails to trick you into handing over personal data. When an email urges you to click on a link to login to your account and change your password, or some similar sort of subterfuge, it's probably crooks trying to trick you onto a fake site that will look exactly like the real thing, except that the crooks get your password, not the real website. If you want to check a transaction on one of your accounts, open your browser and browse to the website yourself.

6) Look for the padlock in the URL bar when shopping online

A padlock in the address bar and a URL that starts with "HTTPS" means the website uses an encrypted or secure connection. All major websites, not just financial institutions, use HTTPS these days, so if you see a site that's asking for personal information but doesn't have the padlock, you can be sure it's a fake.

7) Watch out for bogus courier emails

During this time, you may very well get products delivered to your home, so you'll be expecting a visit from a courier company.

Crooks know this and send fake emails about bogus delivery problems, hoping to draw you into their web. If you want to contact a courier company to check on a delivery, look up their phone number or email address yourself - don't use any links or infor-

9) Turn off Flash on your devices

Want to do one single, simple thing to improve your security, now and forever? Turn off Flash, or uninstall it altogether if you can. Booby-trapped Flash files are still a popular way of spreading malware, and with fewer



Paul Ducklin

mation from an email.

8) Don't email your credit card details

Sometimes you'll try to buy that special gift, but your credit card won't go through. In perfectly good faith, the seller may ask you to email through your card details to try again later. But that email could end up in the hands of cyber crooks, even if the seller handles it with care once they've received it. Remember: if in doubt, don't give it out!

and fewer sites actually requiring Flash, it's safer to do without it altogether.

10) Change default passwords before using any new home video devices

Whether it's a new baby monitor, home surveillance system, or any other internet-enabled camera, it probably has a default password. If you don't change the password then you are making it easy for a cybercriminal to hack in and watch whatever you're film-

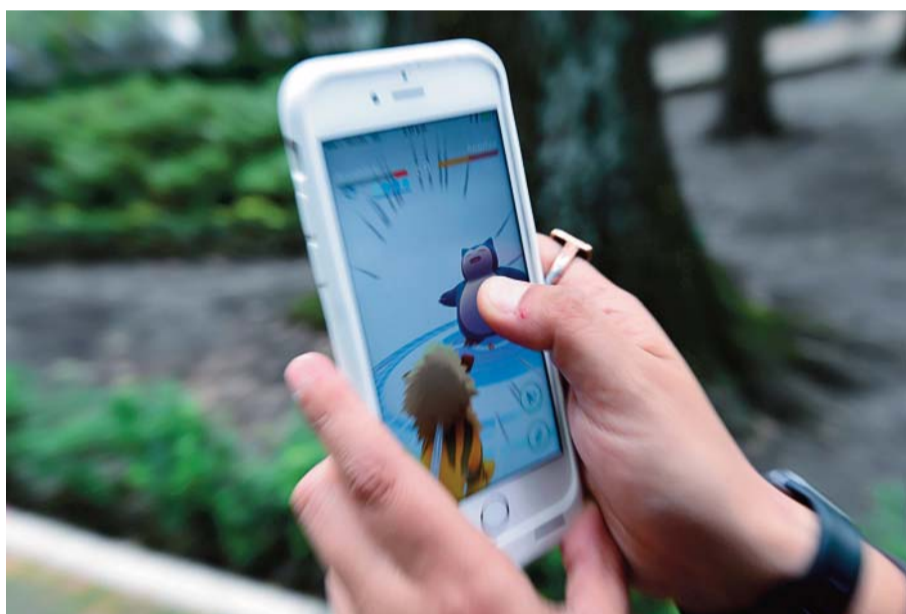
ing. That could be you, your house, your baby, or something else that you'd prefer to keep away from prying eyes.

11) Think before you share on social media
Maybe it sounds obvious, but over sharing on social media is a bad idea, and there is no better time to remind you of this than the party season. Whether it's photos of other people, your credit card details, the fact that you're holding a really amazing party on Friday night or anything else, stop and think before you share. Once you post it, you'll never be able to take it back.

12) Upgrade the software on any new devices before using them

Even "new" computers and hardware devices usually need updates right away. After all, between when they were made and when you first use them, the crooks have had time to find new security holes to attack. If you want to protect your new devices, always patch before using them, even if it's Christmas Day and you're dying to try out your brand new present.

Finally, make sure your computers at home are secure. Sophos Home is free and allows you to protect up to 10 Windows and Mac computers from malware, ransomware, phishing and more. You can have different settings for adults and kids, and the web filter lets you block ads. It's an easy-to-use solution that takes minutes to download and get started. And remember, when 2017 comes around, all of these tips will still be valid. In other words, as much as we're urging you not to let your computer security guard down over the festive season, we're also encouraging you to keep your security guard up every day. Cyber security is for life, not just for this season.



MEXICO: This file photo shows a woman playing the newly launched Pokemon Go game at a public park in Mexico City. —AFP

DOES POKEMON GET YOU ON THE GO? FOR A BIT: STUDY

PARIS: It has been hailed as a revolutionary way to get people moving, using smartphones to pursue cartoon creatures through city parks and streets on foot, instead of taking the car or metro. But has Pokemon Go made people more active and healthy? A study yesterday reported mixed success. In the first week of playing the game, people took 955 additional steps per day on average—equating nearly half the World Health Organization's recommended physical activity level, researchers found. But this soon petered out, with activity levels "back to pre-installation levels" of around 4,250 steps per day by week six of playing the game which has become a global phenomenon.

"The results suggest that the positive health impact of Pokemon Go is moderate and diminishes after six weeks of playing," said a statement from the Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health, whose researchers conducted the study. The team measured daily walking among a group of 1,182 adults aged 18-35 in the United States. All used an iPhone 6 smartphone, which automatically records the number of steps you take while carrying the device. They compared the average number of steps taken

per day for four weeks prior to downloading Pokemon Go, and for six weeks thereafter.

Pokemon Go is an augmented reality game which uses overlaying graphics to get people chasing cute cartoon creatures that appear in their vicinity, as seen through their phone camera. The game has been downloaded over 500 million times since its launch in July, according to the study published in the journal BMJ. The study did not comment on the reasons for the relapse. "We are only at the beginning of understanding how augmented reality gaming can potentially be beneficial to health," said Katherine Howe, who co-authored the study.

"They give people a reason to go outside, walk, and socialize. Imagine the potential of developing these games to not only increase physical activity but to also boost mental well-being, mood, cognitive abilities and social interaction," she added. The study did point out the potential risks, such as traffic accidents caused by people distracted while playing with their phones. One weakness of the research was that it did not register any physical exercise done while not carrying the phone. —AFP

GOOGLE'S SELF-DRIVING CAR PROJECT: WAYMO

SAN FRANCISCO: The self-driving car project that Google started seven years ago has grown into a company called Waymo, signaling its confidence that it will be able to bring robot-controlled vehicles to the masses within the next few years. "We are getting close and we are getting ready," Waymo CEO John Krafcik said Tuesday after unveiling the company's identity. To underscore his point, Krafcik revealed the project had hit a key milestone in the journey to having fully autonomous cars cruising around public roads.

In a trip taken in October 2015, a pod-like car with no steering wheel and brake pads drove a legally blind passenger around neighborhoods in Austin, Texas without another human in the vehicle. It marked the first time one of the project's cars had given a passenger a ride without a human on hand to take control of a self-driving car if something went wrong. Krafcik called that trip taken by Steve Mahan, former director of the Santa Clara Valley Blind Center, an "inflection point" in the development of self-driving cars.

It came a year before a Budweiser beer truck equipped with self-driving technology owned by ride-hailing service Uber completed a 120-mile trip through Colorado while being steered by a robot while a human sat in the

back of trailer. In doing so, Krafcik and other supporters of self-driving cars believe the technology will drastically reduce the number of deaths on the roads each year because they contend robots don't get distracted or drunk, nor ignore the rules of the road, like humans do.

While Google's self-driving cars were still in the research-and-development stage, its leaders indicated the vehicles would be commonplace by 2020. Krafcik declined to update the timetable Tuesday, saying only that "we are close to bringing this to a lot of people." Waymo's transition from what once was viewed as a longshot experiment to a full-fledged company marks another step in an effort to revolutionize the way people get around.

Making better drivers

Instead of driving themselves and having to find a place to park, people will be chauffeured in robot-controlled vehicles if Waymo, automakers and Uber realize their vision within the next few years. Waymo's name is meant to be shorthand for "a new way forward in mobility." The newly minted company will operate within Google's parent company, Alphabet, which was created last year to oversee far-flung projects that have nothing to do with Google's main business of online search and advertising. —AP

TECH LEADERS TO MAKE PEACE OR PRESS THEIR CASE WITH TRUMP

TRUMP SKEWERED AS A 'DISASTER FOR INNOVATION'

SAN FRANCISCO: Silicon Valley leaders were among Donald Trump's most outspoken opponents during the presidential campaign. Yesterday, though, many of them will come face-to-face with the president-elect for the first time since the election. The tech industry had multiple concerns about Candidate Trump, among them fears that he would stifle innovation, curb the hiring of computer-savvy immigrants and infringe on consumers' digital privacy. Those worries may not have abated, but that's not stopping technology leaders from heading to Trump Tower in New York to make their peace - or press their case - with Trump and his advisers.

The CEOs planning to attend include Apple's Tim Cook, Alphabet's Larry Page, Microsoft's Satya Nadella, Amazon's Jeff Bezos, Intel's Brian Krzanich, IBM's Ginni Rometty, Oracle's Safra Catz and Cisco Systems' Chuck Robbins. Facebook's chief operating officer, Sheryl Sandberg, will be on hand instead of its CEO, Mark Zuckerberg, who was one of many tech executives to express misgivings about Trump's pledge to deport millions of immigrants.

Tech vs. Trump

It could be a prickly meeting. No other industry was more open in its contempt for Trump during the campaign. In an open letter published in July, more than 140 technology executives, entrepreneurs and venture capitalists skewered Trump as a "disaster for innovation." And Trump's denigration of Mexicans, his pledge to deport millions of immigrants now living in the US illegally, and his crude remarks about women were widely viewed as racist, authoritarian and sexist by an industry that prides itself on its tolerance. Trump, in turn, sometimes lashed out at the industry and its leaders. He lambasted Bezos for the campaign coverage of his newspaper, The Washington Post, and suggested that Amazon could face antitrust scrutiny if he was elected.

Trump also rebuked Cook for fighting a government order requiring Apple to unlock an encrypted iPhone used by a shooter in last year's terrorist attack in San Bernardino, California. And Trump's repeated screeds against immigrants raised fears that he might dismantle programs that have enabled tech companies to hire tens of thou-

sands of foreign workers with the skills to write computer programs, design web pages and build mobile apps. The industry is also worried that Trump might try to undermine "net neutrality," a regulation requiring internet service providers to offer equal access to all online services. Trump's harsh characterization of the media as dishonest and unfair has raised other fears that he might even try to restrict free speech online.

Out of strife, peace?

Some in Silicon Valley think the industry's best move would be to keep its distance until Trump changes his tone. Former Google

meeting declined to comment ahead of the gathering.

But Oracle's Catz said in a statement that she plans to tell Trump "that we are with him and are here to help in any way we can. If he can reform the tax code, reduce regulation, and negotiate better trade deals, the US technology community will be stronger and more competitive than ever." Other tech institutions are also signaling an end to the animosity. The Internet Association, a trade group whose members include Google, Facebook and Amazon, praised Trump in an open letter last month for his use of Twitter and other digital tools to help him get elected.

Trump spokeswoman Hope Hicks said by email that the president-elect "looks forward to meeting with this important group of industry leaders and true innovators."

Common ground: Tax cuts

The technology industry already supports one of Trump's ideas. He has promised to temporarily reduce the corporate tax on foreign profits from the current 35 percent to 10 percent to give US companies an incentive to bring their overseas cash back home. It's a cut that Cook has been pushing Congress to make because Apple has \$216 billion, or 91 percent of its total cash, in overseas accounts. Other tech compa-



SEATTLE: In this file photo, Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos walks onstage for the launch of the new Amazon Fire Phone, in Seattle. —AP

executive Chris Sacca, now a tech investor, argues that industry leaders should steer clear of the meeting altogether. Sitting down with the president-elect "would only make sense after Trump has given public assurances he won't encourage censorship, will stop exploiting fake news, will promote net neutrality, denounce hate crimes, and embrace science," Sacca said. "If and until then, tech figures who visit are being used to whitewash an authoritarian bully who threatens not just our industry, but our entire democracy." Most of the companies with executives attending Wednesday's

The letter also appealed to Trump's emphasis on the economy, citing statistics estimating that the internet sector accounted for nearly \$1 trillion of the country's gross domestic product.

Some conservatives say they're actually worried that Trump might get too friendly with tech. Peter Flaherty, the president of the National Legal and Policy Center, charges that big technology companies exploited their close relationship with President Obama "to feather their nests and push for policies that benefit them at the expense of the American worker."

nies in line to benefit the most from a tax reduction include Microsoft, Cisco, Microsoft and Google's corporate parent, Alphabet.

But Trump might not be doing many other favors for technology companies given his history of holding grudges against his opponents, said Larry Irving, a former government affairs executive for Hewlett-Packard who now runs a consulting firm. "Everything Trump has done so far suggests that he rewards loyalty and punishes disloyalty," Irving said. "The tech industry better have some pontoons ready." —AP

UBER SELF-DRIVING CARS HIT THE STREETS OF SAN FRANCISCO

SAN FRANCISCO: Uber is bringing a small number of self-driving cars to its ride-hailing service in San Francisco - a move likely to excite the city's tech-savvy population and certain to antagonize California regulators. Yesterday's launch in Uber's hometown expands a public pilot program the company started in Pittsburgh in September. The testing lets everyday people experience the cars as Uber works to identify glitches before expanding the technology's use in San Francisco and elsewhere.

California law, however, requires a test permit for self-driving prototype vehicles, and Uber does not have one. The company argues that the law doesn't apply because its cars require a human backup. Uber has a history of testing legal boundaries. Although the company has been around less than a decade, it has argued with authorities around the

world about how much of its drivers' histories should be covered in background checks and whether those drivers should be treated as contractors ineligible for employee benefits.

The streets of San Francisco

Uber's self-driving tests in San Francisco will begin with a "handful" of Volvo luxury SUVs - the company wouldn't release an exact number - that have been tricked out with sensors so they can steer, accelerate and brake, and even decide to change lanes. The cars will have an Uber employee behind the wheel to take over should the technology fail. Users of the app may be matched with a self-driving car, but can opt out if they prefer a human driver. Self-driven rides cost the same as ordinary ones.

The cars will be put to the test in the congested streets of San Francisco. The city can be a daunting

place to drive given its famously steep hills, frequent fog, street and cable cars, an active bicycle culture, and roads that are constantly being repaved, remarked and restricted for bike lanes and traffic management. Uber believes its technology is ready to handle all this safely, though its executives concede the vehicles are nowhere near able to drive without a human ready to take control in dicey situations.

There was room for improvement during a Tuesday test drive attended by The Associated Press. The car was destined for a local pizza parlor, but didn't pull directly in front of the restaurant, and instead stopped in the middle of the street. The cars may strike some riders as over-cautious, too. During the test drive, one idled in a traffic jam even though an adjacent lane was clear, prompting the human driver to make the move himself. —AP

ZIKA VIRUS CAN KEEP GROWING IN INFANT BRAINS AFTER BIRTH

NEW YORK: US researchers have found evidence of the Zika virus replicating in fetal brains for up to seven months after the mother became infected with the virus, and they showed the virus can persist even after birth, according to a study published on Tuesday. The findings confirm earlier observations from case studies suggesting that the mosquito-borne Zika virus can grow in fetal brains and women's placentas.

"Our findings show that Zika virus can continue to replicate in infants' brains even after birth, and that the virus can persist in

placentas for months - much longer than we expected," Julu Bhatnagar, lead of the molecular pathology team at CDC's Infectious Diseases Pathology Branch and the study's lead author, said in a statement. The findings help explain how the virus causes devastating birth defects and pregnancy losses even if a woman had only a minor illness.

Last month, the World Health Organization declared that Zika no longer constitutes an international emergency, but stressed the need for a long-term effort to address the virus, which has been

linked to thousands of birth defects and neurological complications. For the study, CDC researchers tested tissues from 52 patients with suspected Zika virus infection, including brain tissues from eight infants who had microcephaly and later died.

Persistence and implications

They also tested placental tissues from 44 women - 22 of whom delivered apparently healthy babies and 22 whose pregnancies ended in miscarriage, abortion, stillbirth or who delivered babies with

microcephaly. Zika has been shown to cause microcephaly, a rare birth defect in which infants are born with undersized heads and brains, which can cause life-long disability. The researchers found Zika genetic material in fetal brain tissue and placentas more than seven months after the mothers contracted the virus.

In one case, they also found evidence of the virus growing in an infant with microcephaly who died two months after birth. Of the eight infants who had microcephaly and later died, all tested positive for Zika. The mothers of all eight of these infants

contracted Zika during the first trimester of pregnancy, adding to prior evidence that Zika is most dangerous early in pregnancy.

"We don't know how long the virus can persist, but its persistence could have implications for babies born with microcephaly and for apparently healthy infants whose mothers had Zika during their pregnancies," said Bhatnagar, whose findings were published in CDC's Emerging Infectious Diseases journal. There are no treatments or vaccines for Zika, which previously had been seen causing only mild disease.—Reuters

FAMILY PLANNING FOR 'HEALTHIER, WEALTHIER' AFRICA: MELINDA GATES

'FAMILY PLANNING IS IMPERATIVE THAT IT'S VOLUNTARY'

ABIDJAN: Family planning helps people in Africa to be healthier and wealthier, as women without contraceptives become locked in "a cycle of poverty," Melinda Gates told AFP as a conference on the topic was held in Ivory Coast. "When a woman has access to contraceptives she can lift herself out of poverty, and if she doesn't have access to contraceptives, it locks her inside a cycle of poverty for the rest of her life," said the wife of Microsoft co-founder and billionaire Bill Gates, whose foundation is very active in the field.

"Family planning has huge health benefits for the woman and for her children, and it has economic benefits," Gates told AFP by telephone from the Ivorian economic capital Abidjan during the fifth annual meeting of a West African partnership on the topic. Experts from nine countries met in Abidjan with technical and financial backers in the Ouagadougou Partnership, which aims to bring family planning to 2.2 million more people across the region by 2020. "If (a woman) has less children and can space them, she is less likely to die. Her children grow up healthier and the family is wealthier," said Melinda Gates.

Demographic dividend

"Family planning is absolutely part and parcel of economic development, just like agriculture and education," she added, stressing that "it's imperative that it's voluntary." The woman has to be educated about it and decide if she wants to use it. There are examples all over the world. If you coerce people, that is not a thing to do... China has backed away from its policy. "One thing you see more and more African countries talk about is the 'demographic dividend.' They know they want to bring down their maternal mortality rate, they know it will help lift people out of pover-



PARIS: This file photo taken shows Co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Melinda Gates posing in Paris. —AFP

ty and ultimately increase their GDP (gross domestic product)."

The Ouagadougou Partnership acknowledges that the goal of 2.2 million women in five years "may seem low", but argues on its website that the target is "in reality very ambitious" in light of limited funds, socio-cultural barriers, a low contraceptive prevalence rate and

"timid political commitment." Gates is more upbeat, since an initial target of one million women has already been exceeded. In her eyes, ongoing success depends on educating "the power structures—husband and faith leaders—around the women, and then you talk to the women."

"I've been to dusty villages in

remote places in Niger and talked to women who know about family planning and are using it. I said, 'I'm skeptical. How is the word going to get out?' 'We're getting the word out,' women replied. 'We meet. We meet at the well, when we grind millet, when a new baby is born. We know we're not getting enough water, it's not raining as much, we're not getting much off our farms. We want to have less children ... and we're educating our sisters'"

Life-and-death emergency

Religious leaders in Muslim communities have accepted that "family planning is allowed even in the Koran," said the co-founder of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. "When you meet with faith leaders, they will tell you they know a mother, a sister, a wife that died in childbirth. They know it's better for women to use contraceptives, so you have to start there." In Niger, one of the world's poorest countries with the highest global birthrate at 7.6 babies per woman, schools for husbands have started and men have begun to understand that the best option for their children to survive into adulthood is to have fewer of them, rather than more.

"When family sizes come down... and they're only feeding two children so they've got more income on what comes out of their farm," Gates said. Such families set a compelling example, but medical follow-up is vital. Gates met a woman in Niger with a tiny plot of land and six children to raise while her husband was off looking for work. "I can't have more children. Can't you see that this is a life-and-death emergency for me?" Gates quoted the woman as saying, but no contraceptives were available. "The governments have to fix the supply chain and make sure women have access," she said. —AFP



GREENLAND: In this file photo, a fisherman drives a boat during Secretary of State John Kerry's tour of the Jakobshavn Glacier and the Ilulissat Icefjord, located near the Arctic Circle in Ilulissat, Greenland. —AP

ARCTIC'S YEAR OF CRAZY EXTREMES AS WARMING HITS OVERDRIVE

WASHINGTON: Warming at the top of the world has gone into overdrive, happening twice as fast as the rest of the globe, and extending unnatural heating into fall and winter, according to a new federal report. In its annual Arctic Report Card, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration on Tuesday tallied record after record of high temperatures, low sea ice, shrinking ice sheets and glaciers. Study lead author Jeremy Mathis, NOAA's Arctic research chief, said it shows long-term Arctic warming trends deepening and becoming more obvious, with a disturbing creep into seasons beyond summer, when the Arctic usually rebuilds snow and ice.

Scientists have long said man-made climate change would hit the Arctic fastest. Mathis and others said the data is showing that is what's now happening. "Personally, I would have to say that this last year has been the most extreme year for the Arctic that I have ever seen," said Mark Serreze, director of the National Snow and Ice Data Center in Boulder, Colorado, who wasn't part of the 106-page report. "It's crazy." NOAA's peer-reviewed report said air temperatures over the Arctic from October 2015 to September 2016 were "by far the highest in the observational record beginning in 1900."

The average Arctic air temperature at that time was 3.6 degrees (2 degrees Celsius) warmer than the 1981-2010 average. It's 6.3 degrees (3.5 degrees Celsius) warmer than 1900. Other extremes the report detailed: Ocean temperatures were 9 degrees (5 degrees Celsius) higher than the 30-year average off the coasts of Greenland. Arctic sea ice didn't set a record for the annual minimum, but in

October and November when sea ice normally starts growing back, it didn't.

Extreme in numbers

Sea ice from mid-October through November was the lowest on record. Dartmouth University professor Donald Perovich, author of the chapter on sea ice, said sea ice conditions have sunk from a B-plus grade 11 years ago to a D-minus grade "and that's because I'm an easy grader." Snow cover in North America reached a record low for spring, falling below 1.5 million square miles in May for the first time since satellite observations began in 1967. Though not a record, Greenland's ice sheet continued to shrink, starting early, on April 10.

It was the second earliest start of the Greenland melt season on record. What's happening is due to both man-made warming and a large El Nino that just ended, Mathis said. "Not only is it extreme in any number of measures - air temperature, loss of sea ice and on and on - but there are so many things we haven't seen, particularly this extremely warm fall," said study co-author Brendan Kelly, executive director of the Study of Environmental Arctic Change at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

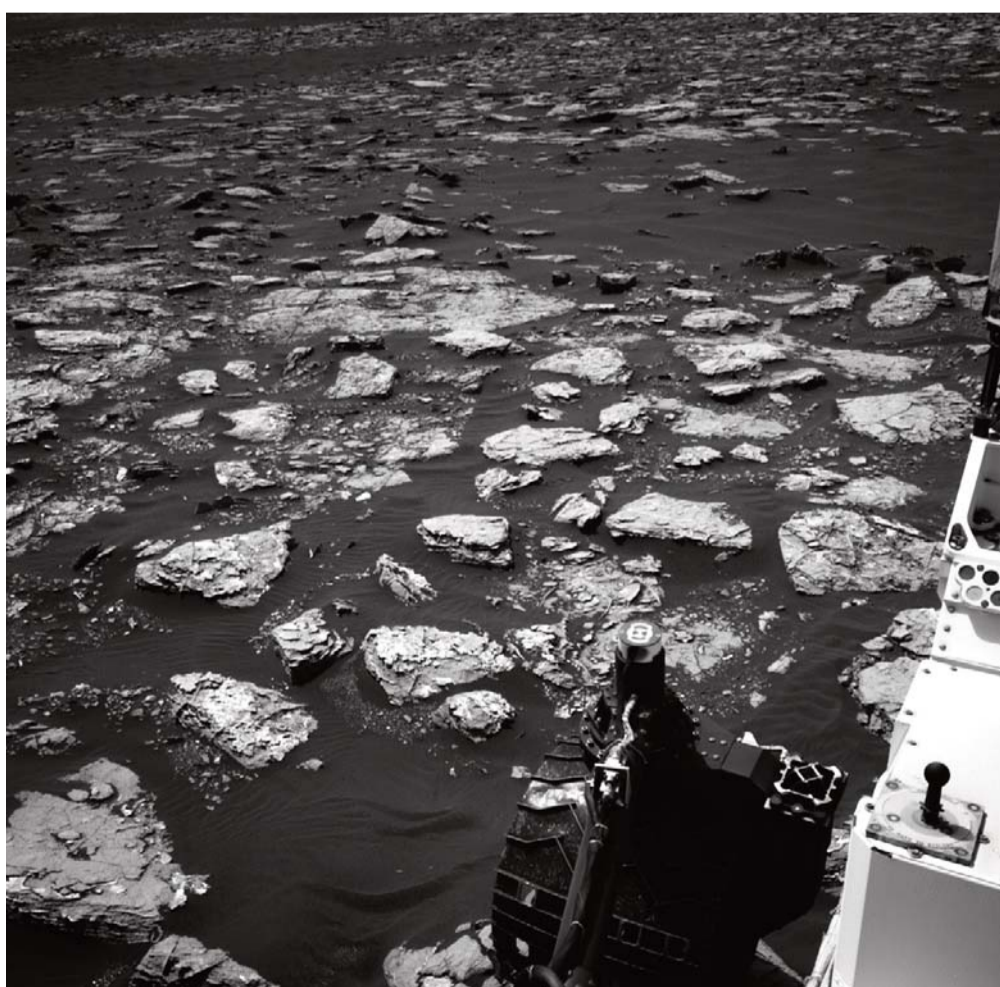
In 1979, Kelly cruised the Bering Straits region with a native hunter who told him dozens of Yupik words for sea ice. One was tagneghneq, for a charcoal grey thick multi-year ice. That ice is pretty much gone, Kelly said. This is more than an Arctic problem, because the cold air escaping changes weather conditions, such as weakening the jet stream, Mathis said. "What happens in the Arctic doesn't stay in the Arctic," Mathis said. "The Lower 48 may have to deal with more extreme weather events in the future." —AP

NASA TROUBLESHOOTING DRILL CRISIS ON MARS CURIOUSITY ROVER

LOS ANGELES: Engineers are troubleshooting a snag on NASA's Curiosity that's preventing the rover from moving its robotic arm and driving to another spot on Mars, the space agency said Tuesday. The problem involves a motor in the rover's drill that is used to bore into rocks. Curiosity has been taking pictures and tracking the weather, but doing little else for the past two weeks. "We're keeping busy with using the other instruments on the rover while they do these tests," said Ashwin Vasavada, project scientist at the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory, which manages the mission.

The team gave a health update on Curiosity while discussing research findings at the American Geophysical Union meeting in San Francisco. Since landing in Mar's Gale Crater in 2012, Curiosity has uncovered geologic evidence of an ancient environment that could have supported primitive life early in the red planet's history. It clocked nine miles (15 kilometers) since landing, arriving two years ago at its main target - a Martian mountain dubbed Mount Sharp - where it plans to climb to higher and younger rock formations. Before the snag, the six-wheel rover found more evidence of a watery history on the slopes of Mount Sharp including the presence of certain chemicals that suggests a warmer and wetter past unlike the current frigid, harsh environment.

As NASA diagnosed Curiosity, the long-lived Opportunity rover has been surveying the rim of a huge crater near the Martian equator. Opportunity landed on Mars in 2004 and has outlasted its twin, Spirit, which lost contact after seven years of exploration. Mars was supposed to get another visitor this year, but a European Space Agency spacecraft crashed while trying to land in October. The mission was not all lost: A companion spacecraft successfully slipped into orbit around Mars, joining five others currently circling overhead.—AP



NEW YORK: This image taken by NASA's Curiosity rover shows rocky ground on the lower flank of Mount Sharp, a mountain on Mars. —AP

FRACKING CAN HARM DRINKING WATER

WASHINGTON: Hydraulic fracturing to release natural gas and oil can have a negative impact on the quality and availability of drinking water in the United States, the US government said Tuesday. This assessment is the most complete compilation to date of national scientific data on the relationship of drinking water resources and hydraulic fracturing," said Thomas Burke, the Environmental Protection Agency's science adviser.

The final EPA report "provides scientific evidence that hydraulic fracturing activities can impact drinking water resources in the United States under some circumstances," and is based on a review of over 1,200 cited scientific sources. Hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, involves pumping large quantities of water and chemicals at high pressure deep into the Earth to fracture rock to stimulate the flow of natural gas or oil.

The EPA report was issued at the request of Congress. The EPA's initial

assessment had found no evidence that fracking could systematically harm water supplies. But the final report reversed course, and deleted that sentence. It also "identified certain conditions under which impacts from hydraulic fracturing activities can be more frequent or severe," including fracking in areas where water availability is low, and disposing of wastewater in unlined pits.

The report did not document specific instances of drinking water impacts. Nor did it estimate how common fracking pollution of drinking water might be. "The value of high-quality science has never been more important in helping to guide decisions around our nation's fragile water resources," said Burke. "EPA's assessment provides the scientific foundation for local decision makers, industry, and communities that are looking to protect public health and drinking water resources and make more informed decisions about hydraulic fracturing activities." —AFP

IF TRUMP SKEWS SCIENCE, SCIENTISTS MUST SPEAK UP

WASHINGTON: Scientists must confront climate change deniers and speak up if US President-elect Donald Trump tries to sideline climate research, Interior Secretary Sally Jewell said yesterday. "If you see science being ignored or compromised, speak up," Jewell will tell a meeting of earth and space scientists in San Francisco, according to a draft of the speech seen by Reuters.

Trump has called climate change a hoax and sought to fill his cabinet with oil industry allies like Texas Governor Rick Perry, the Energy Department nominee. Last week, the Trump team asked the US Department of Energy to supply names of officials who took part in international climate talks - a request that the agency has rejected. The scientific fact of climate change cannot be ignored no mat-

ter who is in the White House, Jewell will say. And she will urge climate experts to publicly defend their work.

"Think about where to raise your voice and then do it," Jewell will tell a meeting of the American Geophysical Union (AGU) - a global association of researchers. "The American people must be able to trust science." As President Barack Obama's top

steward for public lands, Jewell has helped manage terrain that holds vast reserves of oil, gas and coal. But over nearly four years in office, Jewell has also warned that burning fossil fuels will irreparably harm the planet. Jewell will say that national historic sites that she now manages - like the 17th century colonial outpost, Jamestown - could eventually be swallowed by rising seas.

Policymakers must confront climate change realities, Jewell said. Christine McEntee, head of the AGU, said her members were concerned that the Trump administration might not value scientific discovery and rigor. Developments at the Energy Department were particularly alarming, she said, but climate researchers were prepared to defend their methods and discoveries. —Reuters

SCIENTISTS SNIFF OUT ANSWER TO 'ASPARAGUS PEE' MYSTERY

PARIS: Scientists have sniffed out the reason why some people think their pee has a pungent smell after eating asparagus while others do not—it is all down to genes. French novelist Marcel Proust once fancifully described the smell as “transforming my humble chamber pot into a bowl of aromatic perfume” but it seems he was in the minority as three in five people are unable to detect the odor, according to a study published yesterday.

From data on 6,909 participants, 58 percent of men and 61.5 percent of women had asparagus anosmia, or the inability to detect the smell, according to the results in the BMJ medical journal's Christmas edition, traditionally reserved for studies that are quirky but scientifically sound. Among this majority, researchers from the Harvard School of Public Health found 871 genetic coding variants, or SNPs, on genes associated with smell-suggesting the inability is inherited.

Asparagus pee

Professionals have long debated the cause of the pungent aroma that only some people detect in their urine a few hours after eating the vegetable. Does the difference arise because some people do not produce “asparagus pee”, or because they are simply unable to smell it? The new research goes some way towards answering the question. “This study was conceived during a scientific meeting attended by several of the co-

authors in bucolic Sweden, where it became apparent that some of us were unable to detect any unusual odor in our urine after consuming new spring asparagus,” wrote the team.

They went in search of existing studies on the phenomenon, and found two US-based projects in which participants were asked about “asparagus pee” in a broader health questionnaire in 2010. Using that data for their own analysis, the team classified “asparagus smellers” as people who “strongly agreed” that they discharged a distinctive odor after eating asparagus. The rest were listed as suffering from asparagus anosmia. The team called their study: “Sniffing out significant ‘Pee values’: genome wide association study of asparagus anosmia”—a play on the term “P value” used to denote statistical significance in scientific studies. With one question closer to being answered, many still remain, said the authors.

If asparagus is packed so full of nutrients, why would it make some people give off a smell that may put them off ever eating it again? What drove the evolutionary selection that caused some to lack the asparagus-smelling gene variants? “And, will scientists take the results of our study and apply gene editing techniques to convert smellers to non-smellers?” asked the team. More research is needed, they said, “before considering targeted therapies to help anosmic people discover what they are missing”. —AFP



TANZANIA: This undated photo provided by Raffaello Pellizzon in December 2016 shows fossilized footprints of a human ancestor, believed to be *Australopithecus afarensis*, at the Laetoli site in northern Tanzania. —AP

ANCIENT HUMAN ANCESTOR WAS ONE TALL DUDE, FOOTPRINTS SAY

‘RESEARCHERS NAME THE NEW CREATURE S1’

NEW YORK: He stood a majestic 5-foot-5, weighed around 100 pounds and maybe had a harem. That's what scientists figure from the footprints he left behind some 3.7 million year ago. He's evidently the tallest known member of the pre-human species best known for the fossil skeleton nicknamed “Lucy”, reaching a stature no other member of our family tree matched for another 1.5 million years, the researchers say. The 13 footprints are impressions left in volcanic ash that later hardened into rock, excavated last year in northern Tanzania in Africa.

Their comparatively large size, averaging a bit over 10 inches long (26 centimeters), suggest they were made by a male member of the species known as *Australopithecus afarensis*. The prints were found at a site called Laetoli, which is famous for another set of smaller footprints left by other *A. afarensis* individuals. Those made headlines in the 1970s as the earliest clear evidence of upright walking by our ancestors. The newly discovered prints are only about 160 yards (150 meters) away.

Researchers named the new creature S1, for the first discovery made at the “S” site. From the footprints, they calculated that he stood about 5-foot-5 (roughly 165 centimeters) and weighed around 100 pounds (about 45 kilograms). They figured that he loomed at least 8 inches (more than 20 centimeters) above the individuals who made the other tracks, and stood maybe 3 inches (7 centimeters) taller than a large *A. afarensis* specimen previously found in Ethiopia. “Lucy”, also from Ethiopia, was much shorter at about 3 1/2 feet (107 centimeters).

New discovery

The findings are described in a report released yesterday by the journal *eLife*. Authors include Giorgio Manzi of Sapienza University in Rome, Marco Cherin of the University of Perugia in Italy, and others. Nobody knows the ages or sexes of any of the track-makers, although the size of the latest footprints suggest they were made by a male. It's quite possible that the new discovery means *A. afarensis* males were a lot bigger than females, with more of a difference than what is seen in modern

humans, the researchers say. That's not a new idea, but it's still under debate.

The large male-female disparity suggests *A. afarensis* may have had a gorilla-like social arrangement of one dominant male with a group of females and their offspring, the researchers said. But not everybody agrees with their analysis of S1's height. Their estimate is suspect, says anthropologist William Jungers, a research associate at the Association Vahatra in Madagascar who wrote a commentary on the study. That's because scientists haven't recovered enough of an *A. afarensis* foot to reliably calculate height from footprints, he said in an email.

Philip Reno, an assistant anthropology professor at Penn State who didn't participate in the new work, said he believed the height estimate was in the right ballpark. But he's not convinced that S1 was really taller than the large Ethiopian *A. afarensis*. So rather than setting a record, “I think it confirms about the size we thought the big specimens were,” Reno said. Manzi and Cherin said they can't be sure S1 was taller than the Ethiopian specimen. “We only suggest,” they wrote in an email. —AP



WASHINGTON: This file photo taken on August 6, 2013 shows asparagus displayed for sale at Eastern Market in Washington, DC. —AFP

TIGER SEIZED IN OHIO ANIMAL CRACKDOWN EUTHANIZED

TOLEDO, Ohio: One of six tigers seized nearly two years ago in a crackdown on exotic animal owners in Ohio has been euthanized just months after it was found in poor health and removed from a South Dakota sanctuary. The tiger seized from a roadside sanctuary near Toledo in 2015 was among a dozen animals removed from the Spirit of the Hills Wildlife Sanctuary in South Dakota and sent to another sanctuary in Colorado.

Federal inspectors said this fall that the tiger had a bleeding mass in her mouth that affected her ability to eat. Ohio Department of Agriculture officials said last month the tiger had been getting better in Colorado, but she had to be euthanized on Sunday because she was suffering from an aggressive form of cancer, said Mark Bruce, a department spokesman. Ohio took custody of 11 animals from Kenny Hetrick's sanctuary outside Toledo after officials said he ignored warnings about needing a permit for the

exotic animals. Inspectors also reported that his cages weren't secure enough to prevent an escape. His lion named Leo was euthanized a few months after the state seizure because Ohio officials said it was in failing health, and the other animals were moved to sanctuaries in other states. Ohio officials hauled away the animals under a new state law that came about after a man in eastern Ohio released dozens of his exotic animals before killing himself in 2011.

Hetrick and his family have been fighting the state in court, arguing that his animals were improperly taken and should be returned. A county judge in November ruled the state unfairly denied a permit to Hetrick, who first began taking in abused and unwanted animals during the mid-1970s. The judge initially told state officials to return the tigers, bear and three other big cats within a week, but he later put a hold on the order while the state appealed. —AP

STUDY SUGGESTS STATINS LINKED TO LOWER DEMENTIA RISK

MIAMI: Some cholesterol-lowering drugs, known as statins, appear to be linked to a lower risk of Alzheimer's disease in certain people, suggested a study out Monday. However, not all patients benefited, and the report stopped short of establishing any cause and effect, so experts said rigorous clinical trials are needed to further explore the issue.

The research in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Neurology* was based on an analysis of the medical records of nearly 400,000 people in the United States. Researchers at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles examined use of the four most commonly prescribed statins: simvastatin, atorvastatin,

pravastatin and rosuvastatin.

Black men saw no lower risk in Alzheimer's disease associated with any statin. But other racial and ethnic groups did, particularly if they were taking simvastatin, which was associated with a lower risk of Alzheimer's for white, Hispanic and black women, and white and Hispanic men.

Atorvastatin was associated with a lower risk of Alzheimer's among white, black, and Hispanic women and Hispanic men. Both pravastatin and rosuvastatin were associated with reduced Alzheimer's risk for white women.

Across the board, women saw a 15 percent lower risk of Alzheimer's if they took statins, and men saw a 12 percent reduced risk. “This suggests that

certain patients, facing multiple, otherwise equal statin alternatives for hyperlipidemia treatment, may reduce Alzheimer's disease risk by using a particular statin,” said the study.

Rosa Sancho, head of research at Alzheimer's Research UK, urged caution in interpreting the results. “Although this study highlights a link between statin use and a lower risk of Alzheimer's, we can't say from this research that statins can prevent the disease,” said Sancho, who was not involved in the study. “Until there is firm evidence from clinical trials, we would not recommend people take statins for the purpose of preventing Alzheimer's disease.”

High cholesterol is already a

known risk factor for Alzheimer's. And some previous studies have suggested statins may have a protective effect against Alzheimer's disease, the most common form of dementia. “But these studies have produced mixed findings,” said Doug Brown, director of research and development at the Alzheimer's Society. “This new study goes some way towards clearing up this confusion by analyzing large amounts of existing data of people who use different types of statins over a long period of time,” he added.

“However, their data does not provide direct evidence that statins can influence dementia risk. This question will need to be answered by clinical trials.” —AFP

CLINIC PAGE

248 33 199

Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
فهد علي المخيزيم

استشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM

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

ASDA'A BURSON-MARSTELLER IS MEDIA AND MARKETING COMPANY OF THE YEAR

Leading Dubai-based public relations agency recognized for corporate leadership across Middle East ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller has been announced as the "Media & Marketing Company of the Year" at the annual Arabian Business Achievement Awards 2016, which were held in Dubai recently. The Agency's Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Sunil John, picked up the award during a gala dinner at the Armani Hotel Dubai, where the United Kingdom's former Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, gave a keynote speech.

Selected by an independent panel of judges, the award recognizes ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller's strong track record. During the last 12 months, the Agency has developed strategic campaigns for governments in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Egypt, as well as for a roster of local and multinational blue-chip

clients, including Emaar, Etisalat, Emirates NBD, Qatar Airways, GE, Ford and Nestle. The Agency is also behind the annual Arab Youth Survey, one of the most widely cited pieces of public opinion research on the region by media throughout the world.

ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller employs 160 professionals across 11 wholly owned offices throughout the Middle East. The Arabian Business Achievement Awards seek to recognize and reward outstanding corporate leadership across a range of sectors, with nominations being drawn from across the Gulf and wider Middle East region. For more than a decade, the awards have been one of the most prestigious events in the region, and have traditionally seen participation from some of the biggest names in business and politics, both regionally and internationally.

"The Media & Marketing category covers a signifi-

cant range of sectors in the Middle East, which makes us all the more honored to have won this award," said Sunil John, Founder and CEO of ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller. The award caps a stellar year for ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller, which also won the Public Relations Agency of the Year in the Middle East and Africa for the sixth year running at this year's International Business Awards, as well as collecting a coveted SABRE In 2 Award EMEA for Thought Leadership in PR for its work on the Arab Youth Survey.

At the end of November, Sunil John was presented with the Chairman's Award at the Middle East PR Awards 2016. ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller also picked up a MEPR Gold award in the Corporate Reputation category for its work on the Arab Youth Survey, as well as two Silver Awards for its work with GEMS Education and Emirates Islamic Bank.



HILTON KUWAIT RESORT CELEBRATES ANNUAL TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY

Hilton Kuwait Resort hosted its Annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony in Song Bird Cafe on 13 December to usher in the festive and magical holiday season. In-house guests and visitors from leading corporations were present to witness this holy and pleasant moment together.

The event began with the Christmas carol while the guests enjoyed canapes, traditional Christmas delights and drinks. The guests started the countdown to Christmas at this sparkling event with the arrival of Santa Claus who appeared carrying gifts to the children, creating a truly merry festive ambiance.

The lighting of the Christmas tree at Hilton Kuwait Resort has become a wonderful tradition since starting several years ago. This tradition has marked the beginning of Festive Season; a simple yet meaningful gesture to show appreciation to valued guests and partners who have made the year 2016 a truly blessed and bountiful one.



LULU EXCHANGE AWARDED ISO 9001:2015 CERTIFICATE

Lulu Exchange, the leading worldwide remittance and foreign exchange services provider, was awarded the ISO 9001:2015 management system certificate by TUV NORD. The certificate was awarded to Lulu Exchange for the quality management system associated with executing remittance operations and dealing in sale and purchase of foreign currencies. The certificate was presented to KNS Das, GM, Lulu Exchange by Shibu Davies, GM - Certification & Auditing, TUV Middle East in the presence of the senior management of Lulu Exchange.

"We are extremely proud of our team for attaining the ISO 9001:2015 certification. This ISO certification brings with itself greater commitment to higher standards, quality service and customer focus," said Adebh Ahamed, CEO, Lulu International Exchange. ISO certification for management system is based on principles such as customer focus, risk-based approach, process approach, commitment from top management and continual improvement. The focus of this

endeavor is to provide convenient financial transactions that fulfill the core customer need for a secure, quality, speedy and value-laden service.

"It was our great pleasure to award ISO 9001:2015 certificate to Lulu Exchange. The organization has demonstrated great commitment towards this quality management system through management commitment, detailed process definition, compliance and team work. This is the first Financial Exchange, which is certified by TUV NORD in the region for the 9001:2015 standards. We congratulate Lulu Exchange on this achievement," said Shibu Davies.

"A lot of planning, implementation and execution effort has gone into the ISO 9001:2015 certification. Our march towards excellence and continuous improvement has just begun. This recognition reflects that we are on the right path and we have to constantly reinvent ourselves to meet and exceed expectations," added Adebh Ahamed.



ESF CELEBRATES ONE WORLD AT ANNUAL EVENT

The English School Fahaheel's educational and colorful "International Day" took place in a cool winter's morning as all 42 nationalities got together to celebrate one another's history, culture, music and of course delicious delicacies. Under the theme "One World One ESF", colorful stalls adorned the covered play areas as students experienced

countries of the world dressed in their traditional outfits. A Dance show also took place as part of International Day at the Lloyd Webber Theatre. The winners at this year's event were as follows: Best stall USA, best costume Year 12 Girls for England, best performance Pakistan and the overall winner was Spain.





13TH FREE MEDICAL CAMP BY SPDK

Society of Pakistani Doctors in Kuwait (SPDK) arranged its 13th Free Medical Camp for expat community on 25th November 2016 at Pakistan School, Mangaf, Al Ahmadi Governorate. Ambassador of Pakistan H E Ghulam Dastagir and Talal Khalifa Al-Jari, Director of Schools, inaugurated the camp formally at 2 pm. 35 doctors from different specialties organized different clinics including but not limited to General, Medical, Heart, Skin, Bone, Surgery, Neurosurgery, Women, ENT and Eye clinics. 850 patients of different nationalities were provided with free services as registration at reception, blood pressure and blood sugar measurements, medical checkup and specialist consultation, ECG for eligible patients and medicines as well. Light refreshments and tea was served for all. President SPDK, Dr. Shuja Ud Din announced conclusion of camp at 6.30 pm. SPDK is thankful to Pakistan School Mangaf's management, Volunteers and community for their support and active participation. SPDK is a platform for Pakistani doctors to make a difference. Society is commuted to provide health awareness and health services to expat community in Kuwait through regular health education events and Biannual Free Medical Camps.



FARWANIYA GOVERNOR RECEIVES ARTIST JAWAD AL-SHAKARJI

Farwaniya governor Sheikh, Faisal Al-Humoud Al-Malek Al-Sabah recently received artist Jawad Al-Shakarji and his spouse, the movie director, Ateka Al-Khateeb at his office where they exchanged cordial talks about cinema and its importance as cultural and effective educational tool. Al-Sabah also received acting deputy director of the social development

bureau at HH the PM's Diwan, Dr. Wafa Al-Aradi. Al-Sabah also received Dr. Mubarak Al-Shemmari who presented a copy of his thesis on the occasion of recently getting a Ph.D on rehabilitating people with vision disability. Finally, Al-Sabah received the Ministry of Awqaf's administrative affairs manager, Terad Al-Enezi.



DAR AL-ATHAR AL-ISLAMIYYAH PRESENTS THE KARLSRUHE CONCERT DUO

On December 11, 2016, Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah, in cooperation with the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, presented the "Karlsruhe Concert Duo". The Karlsruhe Concert Duo, founded in 1997 by the cellist Reinhard Armleder and the pianist Dagmar Hartmann, is successful and in demand in

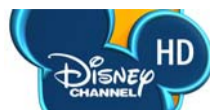
Germany and abroad. The ensemble has established itself not least by winning several international competitions. The Duo is highly praised for fascinating its public by the depth of its interpretations, brilliant technique and its imaginative choice of programs.





- 00:50 River Monsters
- 01:45 Bondi Vet
- 02:40 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
- 03:35 Tanked
- 04:25 Into The Pride
- 05:15 Gator Boys
- 06:02 River Monsters
- 06:49 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
- 07:36 Swamp Brothers
- 08:00 Swamp Brothers
- 08:25 Too Cute! Pint-Sized
- 09:15 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
- 10:10 Biggest And Baddest
- 11:05 Tanked
- 12:00 Too Cute! Pint-Sized
- 12:55 Bondi Vet
- 13:50 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
- 14:45 Gator Boys
- 15:40 Biggest And Baddest
- 16:35 Tanked
- 17:30 Into The Pride
- 18:25 River Monsters
- 19:20 Wildest Islands Of Indonesia
- 20:15 Tanked
- 21:10 Rogue Nature With Dave Salmoni
- 22:05 Biggest And Baddest
- 23:00 Wildest Islands Of Indonesia
- 23:55 Gator Boys

- 12:15 World's Top 5
- 13:05 How It's Made: Dream Cars
- 13:30 Storage Hunters UK
- 13:55 The Liquidator
- 14:20 Edge Of Alaska
- 15:10 Diamond River Hunters
- 16:00 Deadliest Catch
- 16:50 Fat N' Furious: Rolling Thunder
- 17:40 Wheeler Dealers
- 18:30 How It's Made: Dream Cars
- 18:55 How Do They Do It?
- 19:20 Diamond River Hunters
- 20:10 Storage Hunters UK
- 20:35 The Liquidator
- 21:00 Salvage Hunters
- 21:50 Marooned With Ed Stafford
- 22:40 Shallow Water Invasion
- 23:30 Fat N' Furious: Rolling Thunder



- 00:10 Hank Zipzer
- 00:35 Binny And The Ghost
- 01:00 Violetta
- 01:45 The Hive
- 01:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 02:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 02:40 Hank Zipzer
- 03:05 Binny And The Ghost
- 03:30 Violetta
- 04:15 The Hive
- 04:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 04:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 05:10 Hank Zipzer
- 05:35 Binny And The Ghost
- 06:00 Violetta
- 06:45 The Hive
- 06:50 Mouk
- 07:00 Dog With A Blog
- 07:25 Dog With A Blog
- 07:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
- 07:55 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
- 08:20 Elena Of Avalor
- 08:45 Star Darlings
- 08:50 Liv And Maddie
- 09:15 Jessie
- 09:40 Jessie
- 10:05 Jessie
- 10:30 Camp Rock
- 12:20 The 7D
- 12:35 Austin & Ally
- 13:00 Liv And Maddie
- 13:25 Liv And Maddie
- 13:50 Shake It Up
- 14:15 Shake It Up
- 14:40 Dog With A Blog
- 15:05 Dog With A Blog
- 15:30 Good Luck Charlie
- 15:55 Good Luck Charlie
- 16:20 Girl Meets World
- 16:45 Girl Meets World
- 17:10 Elena Of Avalor
- 17:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
- 18:00 The Next Step
- 18:25 Descendants Wicked World
- 18:30 Liv And Maddie
- 18:55 Star Darlings
- 19:00 Jessie
- 19:25 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 19:30 Austin & Ally
- 19:55 Descendants Wicked World
- 20:00 Backstage
- 20:25 Tsum Tsum Shorts
- 20:30 Elena Of Avalor
- 20:55 Best Friends Whenever
- 21:20 Jessie
- 21:45 Jessie
- 22:10 Jessie
- 22:35 H2O: Just Add Water
- 23:00 Binny And The Ghost
- 23:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch



- 00:00 America's Book Of Secrets
- 01:00 Ancient Aliens
- 02:00 Missing In Alaska
- 03:00 Ancient Impossible
- 03:50 Patton 360
- 04:40 Last Days Of The Nazis
- 05:30 America's Book Of Secrets
- 06:20 America's Book Of Secrets
- 07:10 The Universe
- 08:00 Ancient Aliens
- 09:00 Missing In Alaska
- 10:00 Ancient Impossible
- 11:00 Patton 360
- 12:00 Heroes Of War
- 13:00 America's Book Of Secrets
- 14:00 Ancient Aliens
- 15:00 Missing In Alaska
- 16:00 Ancient Impossible
- 17:00 Patton 360
- 18:00 Heroes Of War
- 19:00 Ancient Aliens
- 20:00 Missing In Alaska
- 21:00 Ancient Impossible
- 22:00 Patton 360
- 23:00 Your Bleeped Up Brain



- Discovery Family HD
- 00:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
- 01:20 Dogs: The Untold Story
- 02:10 Wildest Africa
- 03:00 Destroyed In Seconds
- 03:25 Destroyed In Seconds
- 03:50 Ultimate Survival
- 04:40 How It's Made
- 05:05 How It's Made
- 05:30 Dirty Jobs
- 06:20 Mythbusters
- 07:00 Kenny The Shark
- 07:25 Awesome Adventures
- 07:50 Bad Dog
- 08:40 How It's Made
- 09:05 How It's Made
- 09:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
- 10:20 Mythbusters
- 11:10 Dirty Jobs
- 12:00 Bad Dog
- 12:50 Ultimate Survival
- 13:40 How It's Made
- 14:05 How It's Made
- 14:30 World's Toughest Jobs



- 00:40 Killer Instinct With Chris Hansen
- 01:30 Deadly Women
- 02:20 Suspicion
- 03:10 Murder Among Friends
- 04:00 Killer Instinct With Chris Hansen
- 04:48 I Almost Got Away With It
- 05:36 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
- 06:24 Beauty Queen Murders
- 07:12 Blood Relatives
- 08:00 I'd Kill For You
- 08:50 I Almost Got Away With It
- 09:40 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
- 10:30 Beauty Queen Murders
- 11:20 Blood Relatives
- 12:10 Disappeared
- 13:00 I'd Kill For You
- 13:50 I Almost Got Away With It
- 14:40 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
- 15:30 Beauty Queen Murders
- 16:20 Blood Relatives
- 17:10 Swamp Murders
- 18:00 I'd Kill For You
- 18:50 I Almost Got Away With It
- 19:40 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
- 20:30 Beauty Queen Murders



- 00:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
- 01:20 Dogs: The Untold Story
- 02:10 Wildest Africa
- 03:00 Destroyed In Seconds
- 03:25 Destroyed In Seconds
- 03:50 Ultimate Survival
- 04:40 How It's Made
- 05:05 How It's Made
- 05:30 Dirty Jobs
- 06:20 Mythbusters
- 07:00 Kenny The Shark
- 07:25 Awesome Adventures
- 07:50 Bad Dog
- 08:40 How It's Made
- 09:05 How It's Made
- 09:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?



- 00:00 Doc McStuffins
- 00:30 Minnie's Bow-Toons
- 00:35 Zou
- 00:50 Loopedidoo
- 01:05 Art Attack
- 01:30 Henry Hugglemonster
- 01:45 Calimero
- 02:00 Zou
- 02:15 Loopedidoo
- 02:30 Art Attack



MUTANT WORLD ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

- 22:00 Miles From Tomorrow
- 22:30 Miles From Tomorrow
- 23:00 The Adventures Of The Disney Fairies
- 06:00 Supa Strikas
- 06:25 Supa Strikas
- 06:50 Counterfeit Cat
- 07:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 07:15 K.C. Undercover
- 07:40 Atomic Puppet
- 08:10 Lab Rats
- 08:55 Danger Mouse
- 09:00 Lab Rats: Rise Of The Secret Soldiers
- 09:50 Kirby Buckets
- 10:20 Kirby Buckets
- 10:45 Gravity Falls
- 11:10 Gamer's Guide To Pretty



- 08:05 Pawn Stars
- 08:30 Storage Wars Texas
- 08:55 Banger Boys
- 09:45 Banger Boys
- 10:35 Shipping Wars
- 11:00 Shipping Wars
- 11:25 Time Team
- 12:15 Shark Wranglers
- 13:05 Ice Road Truckers
- 13:55 Counting Cars
- 14:20 Counting Cars
- 14:45 Fifth Gear
- 15:35 Pawn Stars
- 16:00 American Pickers
- 16:50 Storage Wars
- 17:15 Storage Wars
- 17:40 Swamp People
- 18:30 Time Team
- 19:20 American Pickers
- 20:10 Pawn Stars
- 20:35 Pawn Stars
- 21:00 Forged In Fire
- 21:50 Billion Dollar Wreck
- 22:40 Time Team
- 23:30 Forged In Fire

- 16:20 My Restaurant In India
- 16:45 Grandma's Boy
- 17:15 Grandma's Boy
- 17:40 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen
- 18:10 Around The World In 80 Dishes
- 19:05 What's For Sale?
- 19:30 Winroads
- 20:00 Lucky Chow
- 20:25 My Restaurant In India
- 20:50 Grandma's Boy
- 21:15 Grandma's Boy
- 21:40 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen
- 22:05 Around The World In 80 Dishes
- 22:55 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
- 23:20 A Is For Apple
- 23:45 Lee Chan's World Food Tour



- 00:20 Brutal Killers
- 01:10 Animals Gone Wild
- 02:00 Mother Croc
- 02:50 Hollywood Bear Tragedy
- 03:45 The Invaders
- 04:40 Make You Laugh Out Loud
- 05:35 Mother Croc
- 06:30 Hollywood Bear Tragedy
- 07:25 The Invaders
- 08:20 Make You Laugh Out Loud
- 09:15 Unlikely Animal Friends Compilations
- 10:10 Extreme Animal Babies
- 11:05 Madagascar's Fantastic Creatures
- 12:00 Life On The Barrier Reef
- 12:55 Clouded Leopard
- 13:50 Making Panda
- 14:45 The Invaders
- 15:40 Make You Laugh Out Loud
- 16:35 Big Baboon House
- 17:30 Extreme Animal Babies
- 18:25 World's Creepiest Killers
- 19:20 The Invaders

- 20:10 Make You Laugh Out Loud
- 21:00 Big Baboon House
- 21:50 Extreme Animal Babies
- 22:40 World's Creepiest Killers
- 23:30 Life On The Barrier Reef



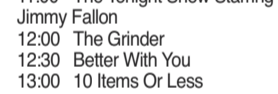
- 00:10 Science Of Stupid Sports
- 00:35 Science Of Stupid Sports
- 01:00 Years Of Living Dangerously
- 02:00 Mars
- 02:55 Startalk
- 03:50 Science Of Stupid Sports
- 04:15 Science Of Stupid Sports
- 04:45 Chasing UFOs
- 05:40 Strippers: Cars For Cash
- 06:35 Brain Games Compilation
- 07:30 The Raising Of The Costa Concordia
- 08:25 Mega Factories
- 09:20 Chasing UFOs
- 10:15 Explorer
- 11:10 Classified: Secret Service Files
- 12:05 Locked Up Abroad - Short
- 12:30 Locked Up Abroad - Short
- 13:00 Mega Factories
- 14:00 Inside Turkish Airlines
- 15:00 Beyond Magic With DMC
- 16:00 Explorer
- 17:00 WW2 Hell Under The Sea
- 18:00 Locked Up Abroad
- 19:00 Taboo
- 20:00 Explorer
- 20:50 WW2 Hell Under The Sea
- 21:40 Locked Up Abroad
- 22:30 Taboo
- 23:20 Strippers: Cars For Cash



- 00:00 Mad Dogs
- 01:00 Marvel's Agents Of S.H.I.E.L.D.
- 02:00 Scream Queens
- 03:00 The Strain
- 04:00 Good Morning America
- 06:00 Lie To Me
- 07:00 Drop Dead Diva
- 08:00 The Voice
- 09:00 The Voice
- 11:00 Live Survivor: Millennials vs Generation X
- 14:00 Drop Dead Diva
- 15:00 Live Good Morning America
- 17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 18:00 Castle
- 19:00 Once Upon A Time
- 20:00 Blindspot
- 21:00 Lethal Weapon
- 22:00 Empire
- 23:00 Satisfaction



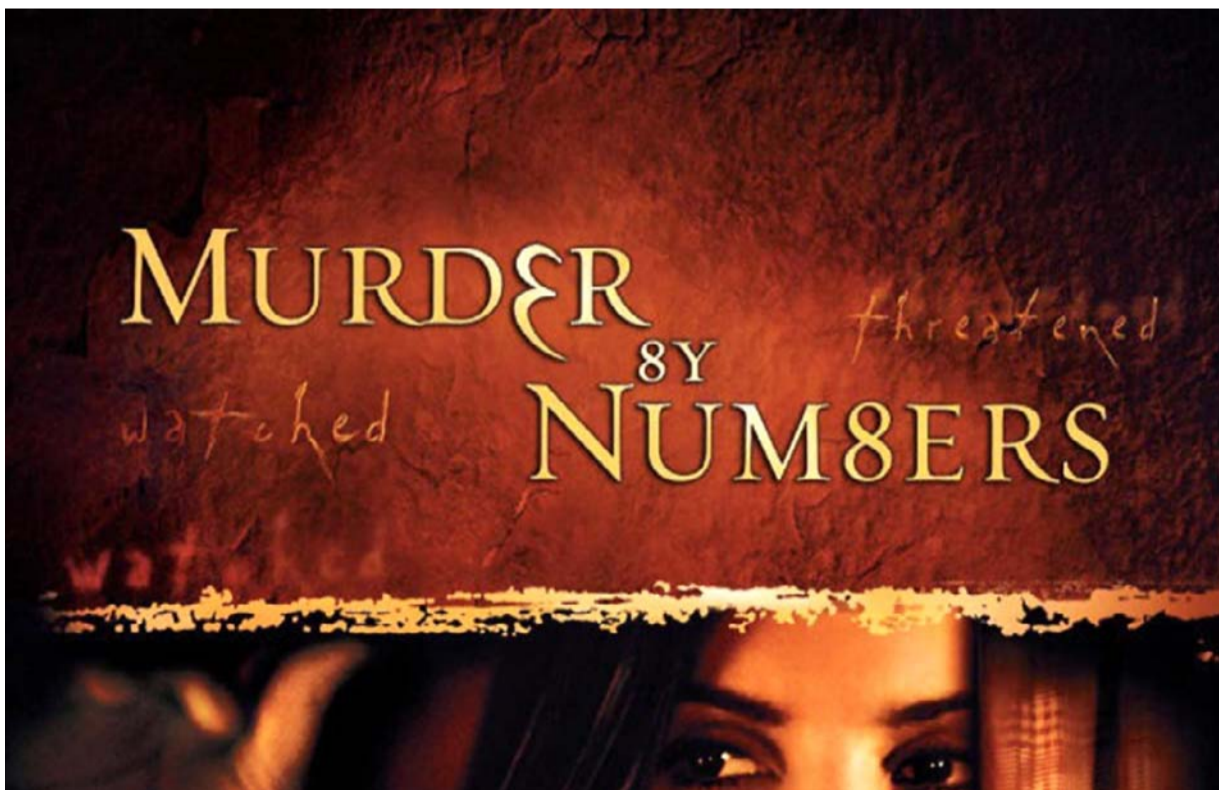
- 00:30 Cougar Town
- 01:00 Cougar Town
- 01:30 Family Guy
- 02:00 Family Guy
- 02:30 It's Always Sunny In Philadelphia
- 03:00 Last Man Standing
- 03:30 The Simpsons
- 04:00 Better With You
- 04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
- 05:30 10 Items Or Less
- 06:00 The Grinder
- 06:30 Men At Work
- 07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
- 08:00 Better With You
- 09:00 10 Items Or Less
- 09:30 Last Man Standing
- 09:30 Truth Be Told
- 10:00 Young & Hungry
- 10:30 Men At Work
- 11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
- 12:00 The Grinder
- 12:30 Better With You
- 13:00 10 Items Or Less
- 13:30 Men At Work
- 14:00 The Simpsons
- 14:30 Truth Be Told
- 15:00 Young & Hungry
- 15:30 Cougar Town
- 16:00 Cougar Town
- 16:30 The Grinder
- 17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
- 18:00 Last Man Standing
- 18:30 The Last Man On Earth
- 19:00 The Last Man On Earth
- 19:30 Young & Hungry
- 20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
- 21:00 Cougar Town
- 21:30 Cougar Town



- 01:15 Elf: Buddy's Musical Christmas
- 02:45 Justice League: Attack Of The Legion Of Doom
- 04:15 Ghatotkach - Master Of Magic
- 06:00 Rugrats In Paris: The Movie
- 07:45 Jungle All The Way 2
- 09:30 Space Warriors
- 11:15 Moomins And The Comet Chase
- 12:45 Justice League: Attack Of The Legion Of Doom
- 14:15 Mamma Moo And Crow
- 16:00 Tarzan
- 18:00 Space Warriors
- 20:00 Memory Loss
- 22:00 Mamma Moo And Crow
- 23:30 Tarzan



- 01:00 Paranoman
- 03:00 House Arrest
- 05:00 The Last Song
- 07:00 Paranoman
- 09:00 Looney Tunes: Rabbit's Run
- 11:00 The Last Song
- 13:00 Scooby-Doo! And Kiss: Rock And Roll Mystery
- 15:00 Clockstoppers
- 17:00 K-9 Adventures: Legend Of The Lost Gold
- 19:00 Goosebumps
- 21:00 Batman Unlimited: Animal Instincts
- 23:00 Clockstoppers



MURDER BY NUMBERS ON OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL

- 10:20 Mythbusters
- 11:10 Dirty Jobs
- 12:00 Bad Dog
- 12:50 Ultimate Survival
- 13:40 How It's Made
- 14:05 How It's Made
- 14:30 World's Toughest Jobs
- 15:20 Mythbusters
- 16:10 Kenny The Shark
- 16:35 Awesome Adventures
- 17:00 Secret Space Escapes
- 17:50 How The Universe Works
- 18:40 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
- 19:30 How It's Made
- 19:55 How It's Made
- 20:20 Mythbusters
- 21:10 Secret Space Escapes
- 22:00 How The Universe Works
- 22:50 Destroyed In Seconds
- 23:15 Destroyed In Seconds
- 23:40 Ultimate Survival

- 21:20 Blood Relatives
- 22:10 I Am Homicide
- 23:00 Six Degrees Of Murder
- 23:50 Nowhere To Hide



- 00:40 Prototype This
- 01:30 Weird Or What?
- 02:20 Curiosity: How Does Life Begin?
- 03:10 How Do They Do It?
- 03:35 Food Factory
- 04:00 Penn & Teller Tell A Lie
- 04:48 Prototype This
- 05:36 Curiosity: How Does Life Begin?
- 06:24 Weird Or What?
- 07:12 How Do They Do It?
- 07:36 Food Factory
- 08:00 How Do They Do It?
- 08:26 Prototype This
- 09:14 Weird Or What?
- 09:14 Penn & Teller Tell A Lie
- 10:50 How Do They Do It?
- 11:14 Food Factory
- 11:38 Curiosity: How Does Life Begin?
- 12:26 Prototype This
- 13:14 Weird Or What?
- 14:02 How Do They Do It?
- 14:26 Food Factory
- 14:58 Penn & Teller Tell A Lie
- 15:30 Curiosity: How Does Life Begin?
- 16:26 Prototype This
- 17:14 Weird Or What?
- 18:02 Penn & Teller Tell A Lie
- 18:50 Prototype This
- 19:40 Weird Or What?
- 20:30 How To Build... Everything
- 20:55 How To Build... Everything
- 21:20 How Do They Do It?
- 21:45 Food Factory
- 22:10 Race To Escape

- 03:00 Calimero
- 03:15 Zou
- 03:30 Loopedidoo
- 03:45 Art Attack
- 04:10 Henry Hugglemonster
- 04:25 Calimero
- 04:45 Loopedidoo
- 05:00 Art Attack
- 05:25 Henry Hugglemonster
- 05:35 Calimero
- 05:50 Zou
- 06:00 Loopedidoo
- 06:15 Art Attack
- 06:35 Henry Hugglemonster
- 06:50 Calimero
- 07:00 Zou
- 07:20 Loopedidoo
- 07:35 Art Attack
- 08:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 08:30 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
- 09:00 Goldie & Bear
- 09:30 Doc McStuffins
- 10:00 Doc McStuffins
- 10:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 11:00 Sofia The First
- 11:30 The Lion Guard
- 12:00 Doc McStuffins
- 12:30 Little Mermaid
- 13:00 Sofia The First
- 13:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 14:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 14:30 Doc McStuffins
- 15:00 The Lion Guard
- 15:30 Sofia The First
- 16:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 16:30 Doc McStuffins
- 17:00 The Lion Guard
- 17:30 PJ Masks
- 18:00 The Adventures Of The Disney Fairies
- 18:30 Goldie & Bear
- 19:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 19:30 Little Mermaid
- 20:00 PJ Masks
- 20:30 Sofia The First
- 21:00 Sofia The First: The Floating Palace

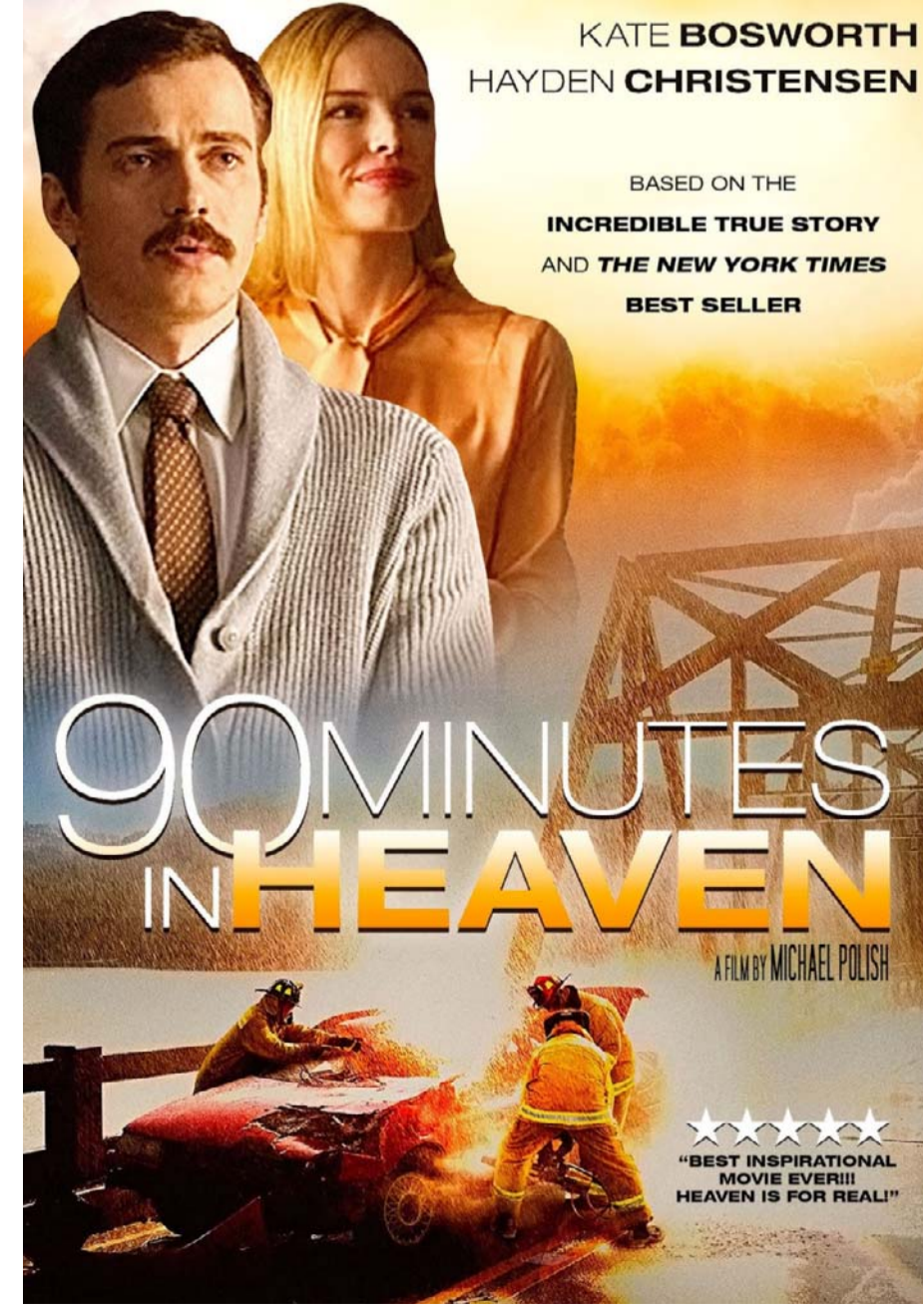
- Much Everything
- 11:35 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
- 12:00 Counterfeit Cat
- 12:30 K.C. Undercover
- 12:55 K.C. Undercover
- 13:20 Star Wars Freemaker Adventures
- 13:45 Lab Rats
- 14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 14:15 Lab Rats
- 14:40 Counterfeit Cat
- 14:50 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 15:05 K.C. Undercover
- 15:30 Atomic Puppet
- 15:55 Lab Rats
- 16:25 Danger Mouse
- 16:50 Future-Worm!
- 17:15 Lab Rats: Bionic Rebellion
- 18:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 18:10 Supa Strikas
- 18:35 Supa Strikas
- 19:00 Star Wars Freemaker Adventures
- 19:25 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
- 19:55 K.C. Undercover
- 20:20 Counterfeit Cat
- 20:45 Mighty Med
- 21:10 Pickle And Peanut
- 21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse



- 00:20 Fifth Gear
- 01:10 American Pickers
- 02:00 Storage Wars
- 02:25 Storage Wars
- 03:40 Fifth Gear
- 04:30 Pawn Stars
- 05:00 Time Team
- 06:00 Shipping Wars
- 06:25 Shipping Wars
- 06:50 American Pickers
- 07:40 Pawn Stars



- 00:10 Places We Go
- 00:35 My Restaurant In India
- 01:00 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
- 01:25 A Is For Apple
- 01:50 The Best Job In The World
- 02:15 Food School
- 02:40 Mega Food
- 03:30 Winroads
- 03:55 Places We Go
- 04:20 Lucky Chow
- 04:45 Croatia's Finest
- 05:10 Croatia's Finest
- 05:35 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen
- 06:00 Around The World In 80 Dishes
- 06:50 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
- 07:15 A Is For Apple
- 07:40 The Best Job In The World
- 08:05 Food School
- 08:30 Mega Food
- 09:20 Winroads
- 09:45 Places We Go
- 10:10 Lucky Chow
- 10:35 Croatia's Finest
- 11:00 Croatia's Finest
- 11:25 Top Chef Top Table: Seoul
- 11:50 Around The World In 80 Dishes
- 12:40 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
- 13:05 A Is For Apple
- 13:35 Lee Chan's World Food Tour
- 14:00 Food School
- 14:30 What's For Sale?
- 14:55 What's For Sale?
- 15:25 Winroads
- 15:50 Lucky Chow



90 MINUTES IN HEAVEN ON OSN MOVIES HD

CLASSIFIEDS



Kuwait Times
 Now you can browse
www.kuwaittimes.net
 e-mail: info@kuwaittimes.net



KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (15/12/2016 TO 21/12/2016)

Time	Programme	Time	Programme	Time	Programme
1:00 PM	MOANA	11:15 PM	MOANA-3D-4DX	10:15 PM	THE NEIGHBOR
3:15 PM	MOANA	12:00 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY-3D-4DX	12:30 AM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY
5:30 PM	MOANA	2:15 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY-3D-4DX	11:30 AM	360°-1
7:45 PM	MOANA	4:30 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY-3D-4DX	2:30 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY-3D
10:15 PM	TAHT AL TARABEZA	6:30 PM	MOANA-3D-4DX	5:30 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY-3D
12:30 AM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY	9:30 PM	MOANA-3D-4DX	8:30 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY
12:30 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY	11:45 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY-3D-4DX	11:30 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY
3:30 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY-3D	1:00 PM	AVENUES-3	12:45 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY
6:30 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY	3:45 PM	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH	3:45 PM	TAHT AL TARABEZA
9:30 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY	6:30 PM	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH	6:00 PM	LAF WA DAWARAN
12:30 AM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY	9:15 PM	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH	8:15 PM	TAHT AL TARABEZA
12:30 AM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY	12:05 AM	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH	10:30 PM	TAHT AL TARABEZA
12:00 PM	MOANA	11:30 AM	THE LAST KING	12:30 PM	INTO THE FOREST
2:30 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY	1:45 PM	MISS SLOANE	3:00 PM	INTO THE FOREST
4:45 PM	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH	4:15 PM	MISS SLOANE	5:15 PM	INTO THE FOREST
7:00 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY	7:00 PM	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH	7:30 PM	INTO THE FOREST
9:15 PM	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH	9:00 PM	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH	9:45 PM	INTO THE FOREST
11:30 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY	11:00 PM	THE LAST KING	12:05 AM	INTO THE FOREST
12:45 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY	1:00 AM	THE LAST KING	1:15 PM	AL-KOUT.1
3:00 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY	11:45 AM	MARINA-1	4:00 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY
5:15 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY	2:00 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY	6:45 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY
8:15 PM	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH	3:45 PM	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH	9:30 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY
10:15 PM	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH	6:00 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY	12:15 AM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY
12:15 AM	TAHT AL TARABEZA	8:15 PM	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH	12:45 PM	MOANA
11:45 AM	MOANA	12:30 AM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY	3:00 PM	MOANA
2:00 PM	MOANA	11:30 AM	MARINA-2	5:15 PM	MOANA
4:15 PM	MOANA	2:30 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY	7:30 PM	MOANA
6:30 PM	MOANA	5:30 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY	9:45 PM	MISS SLOANE
8:45 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY	8:30 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY	12:30 AM	MISS SLOANE
11:00 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY	11:30 AM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY	1:15 PM	AL-KOUT.3
1:15 AM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY	12:30 PM	MARINA-3	3:45 PM	MISS SLOANE
12:00 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY	2:45 PM	MOANA	6:00 PM	TAHT AL TARABEZA
3:00 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY	5:00 PM	MOANA	8:45 PM	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH
6:00 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY-3D	7:15 PM	MOANA	10:45 PM	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH
9:00 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY	9:30 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY	12:45 AM	TAHT AL TARABEZA
12:05 AM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY	11:45 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY	12:15 PM	AL-KOUT.4
1:30 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY	12:30 PM	INTO THE FOREST	2:30 PM	INTO THE FOREST
3:45 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY	2:45 PM	INTO THE FOREST	4:45 PM	INTO THE FOREST
6:00 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY	5:00 PM	INTO THE FOREST	7:00 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY
8:15 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY	7:30 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY	9:15 PM	INTO THE FOREST
10:30 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY	10:30 PM	TAHT AL TARABEZA	11:30 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY
12:45 AM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY	12:45 AM	TAHT AL TARABEZA	11:45 AM	BAIRAQ-1
11:30 AM	MOANA	11:30 AM	AVENUES-2	11:45 AM	MOANA
1:45 PM	MOANA	1:45 PM	MOANA-3D-4DX	2:00 PM	MOANA
4:00 PM	MOANA	1:45 PM	MOANA-3D-4DX	11:55 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY
6:15 PM	MOANA	11:30 AM	THE NEIGHBOR	8:15 PM	THE NEIGHBOR
8:30 PM	ROGUE ONE STAR WARS STORY-3D				

ACCOMMODATION

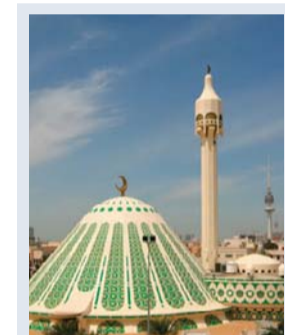
For Filipino Bachelor ONLY near Big Jamiya Farwaniya. Available on December 25, Contact 66826412 or 97512782
13-12-2016

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Chejalla Nageshwar Raju (old name) S/o. Chejarla Pedda Chengal Raju, R/o. H.No. 2/150, Bommavaram (V) & (P), Obularipalli (M), Y.S.R. Kadapa, Dist., A.P. hereby state that I have changed my name as CHEJARLA NAGESWAR RAJU (new name). (C 5247)
13-12-2016

FOR SALE

For sell new white faux fur (artificial) coat size M and pre owned like new black leather coat size M made in Turkey Tel. No: 55020291
12-12-2016



PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr:	05:10
Shorook	06:34
Duhr:	11:43
Asr:	14:33
Maghrib:	16:51
Isha:	18:14

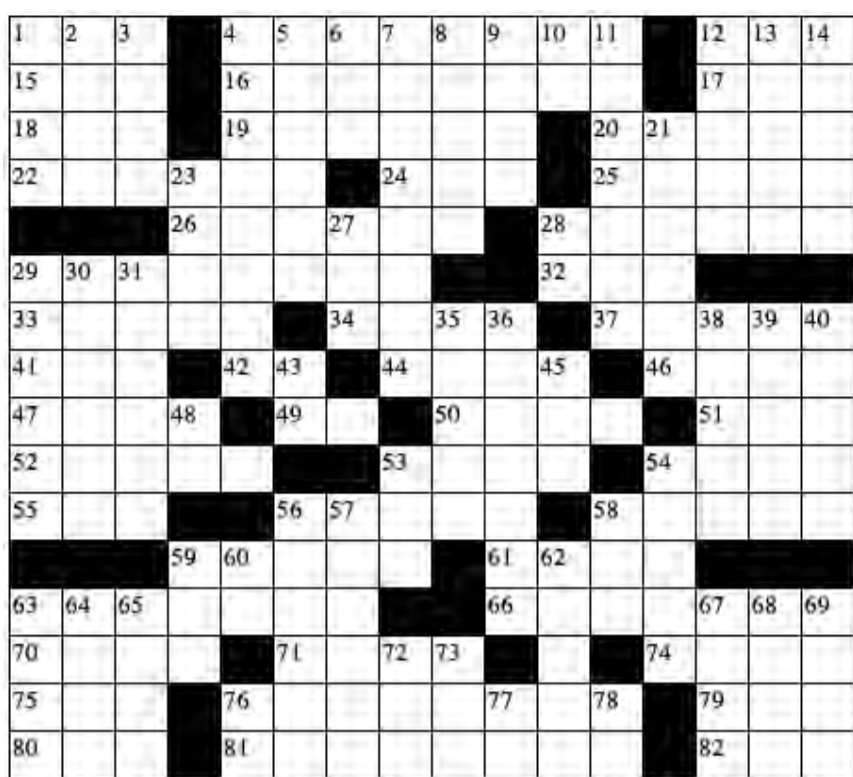
Flight Schedule

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Thursday 15/12/2016				Departure Flights on Thursday 15/12/2016			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
KLM	411	Amsterdam/Dammam	00:20	KAC	788	Jeddah	13:45
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	MSR	155	Istanbul	13:50
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40	FEG	931	Alexandria	13:55
KAC	102	London	00:55	KNE	231	Riyadh	13:55
THY	772	Istanbul	00:55	QTR	1078	Doha	14:10
MSC	411	Asyut	01:00	SVA	500	Jeddah	14:15
RJA	642	Amman	01:05	FDB	059	Dubai	14:20
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15	KAC	692	Muscat	14:30
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30	KAC	414	Bangkok	14:35
DLH	635	Doha	01:55	GFA	221	Bahrain	14:40
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00	KAC	542	Cairo	14:45
AXB	395	Kozhikode	02:00	KAC	672	Dubai	14:50
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:05	KNE	529	Jeddah	14:55
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:15
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30	OMA	645	Muscat	15:35
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	UAE	857	Dubai	15:45
KKK	6506	Istanbul	02:55	ABY	127	Sharjah	15:50
FDB	069	Dubai	03:05	KAC	154	Istanbul	15:55
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10	SAW	705	Damascus	16:00
MSR	612	Cairo	03:10	KNE	531	Jeddah	16:05
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	JZR	535	Cairo	16:10
KAC	546	Cairo	03:55	JZR	779	Jeddah	16:10
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	QTR	1072	Doha	16:10
MSC	501	Alexandria	04:05	FDB	051	Dubai	16:25
KAC	418	Manila	04:25	KAC	662	Abu Dhabi	16:35
ETD	9891	BRU	04:30	RJA	640	Amman	16:55
KAC	284	Dhaka	04:55	JZR	787	Riyadh	17:00
FEG	933	Sohag	05:00	KAC	118	New York	17:00
JZR	503	Luxor	05:10	SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15
JZR	529	Asyut	05:15	GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30
KAC	354	BLR	05:20	JZR	777	Jeddah	17:45
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:20	NIA	251	Alexandria	17:55
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:45	UAE	875	Dubai	18:00
THY	770	Istanbul	05:55	FDB	063	Dubai	18:10
KAC	364	Colombo	06:05	JZR	177	Dubai	18:20
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:20	KAC	522	Al Najaf	18:25
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	06:25	MSR	620	Cairo	18:30
BAW	157	London	06:40	QTR	1080	Doha	18:50
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	07:00	ABY	123	Sharjah	19:25
KAC	204	Lahore	07:15	KAC	502	Beirut	19:30
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:30
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	KAC	674	Dubai	19:45
QTR	8511	Doha	08:00	FDB	057	Dubai	19:50
KAC	302	Mumbai	08:20	KAC	166	Rome	19:55
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40	KAC	168	Paris	19:55
KAC	382	Delhi	08:45	KNE	381	Taif	19:55
IRA	667	Esfahan	09:00	KAC	562	Amman	20:00
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	MSR	618	Alexandria	20:05
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	OMA	647	Muscat	20:10
KAC	352	Kochi	09:10	JZR	189	Dubai	20:15
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	QTR	1088	Doha	20:35
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:45
IRA	673	Ahwaz	10:10	FDB	5053	Dubai	20:50
AVV	653	Sohag	10:10	KAC	616	Bahrain	20:50
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	JAI	572	Mumbai	20:55
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00	KAC	786	Jeddah	21:15
KAC	774	Riyadh	11:05	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:20
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:15	MEA	402	Beirut	21:20
MSC	403	Asyut	11:15	ALK	229	Colombo	21:25
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	UAE	859	Dubai	21:40
FDK	801	Damascus	11:45	GFA	219	Bahrain	21:45
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	KAC	676	Dubai	21:45
KAC	744	Dammam	12:10	KAC	174	Munich	22:00
FEG	953	Asyut	12:35	QTR	1082	Doha	22:00
JZR	561	Sohag	12:40	KLM	417	Amsterdam	22:05
JZR	239	Amman	12:45	JZR	125	Bahrain	22:05
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	NIA	151	Cairo	22:10
FDB	075	Dubai	12:50	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:15
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	AIC	981	Chennai/Ahmedabad	22:25
AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:10	JZR	241	Amman	22:45
BON	101	Sarajevo	13:30	JZR	185	Dubai	22:45
KAC	564	Amman	13:40	KAC	156	Istanbul	23:25
				FDB	071	Dubai	23:45
				JAI	574	Mumbai	23:50

CROSSWORD 1461



ACROSS

1. (used of animals especially a horse) Of a moderate reddish-brown color n 1.
4. Someone who (fraudulently) assumes the appearance of another.
12. A defensive missile designed to shoot down incoming intercontinental ballistic missiles.
15. A sweetened beverage of diluted fruit juice.
16. A naval battle in the War of Greek Independence (1827).
17. A member of the Dravidian people living in southeastern India.
18. The cry made by sheep.
19. A projection used for strength or for attaching to another object.
20. Wheelwork consisting of a connected set of rotating gears by which force is transmitted or motion or torque is changed.
22. A member of the Semitic speaking people of northern Ethiopia.
24. The supernatural being conceived as the perfect and omnipotent and omniscient originator and ruler of the universe.
25. Not invited or requested.
26. (Arthurian legend) A nephew of Arthur and one of the knights of the Round Table.
29. Deep-rooted coarse-textured plant native to the Mediterranean region having blue flowers and pinnately compound leaves.
32. The rate at which red blood cells settle out in a tube of blood under standardized conditions.
33. The act of using.
34. A member of an Iroquoian people formerly living on the south shore of Lake Erie in northern Ohio and northwest Pennsylvania and western New York.
37. A diacritical mark (an inverted circumflex) placed above certain letters (such as ç) to indicate pronunciation.
41. A colloid that has a continuous liquid phase in which a solid is suspended in a liquid.
42. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
44. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
46. A small constellation near the South Pole between Tucana and Ara.
47. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
49. Date used in reckoning dates before the supposed year Christ was born.
50. Advanced in years.
51. An emotional response that has been acquired by conditioning.
52. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
55. A flat wing-shaped process or wing-like part of an organism.
61. A cord that is drawn through eyelets or around hooks in order to draw together two edges (as of a shoe or garment).
63. Wild llama.
66. A member of a North American Indian people of central Arizona.
70. Again but in a new or different way.
71. Starch resembling sago that is obtained from cuckoo-pit root.
74. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
75. An artificial language that is a revision and simplification of Esperanto.
79. The compass point that is one point east of due south.
80. (prefix) Reverse of or absence of.
81. (Greek mythology) Daughter of Zeus and Demeter.
82. Relating to or characteristic of or occurring on the sea or ships.

DOWN

1. A small cake leavened with yeast.
2. (Old Testament) In Judeo-Christian mythology.
3. Not only so, but.
4. Having or employing wavelengths longer than light but shorter than radio waves.
5. A landlocked republic in southern central Africa.
6. Any of various coarse shrubby plants of the genus Iva with small greenish flowers.
7. A city of northern Morocco at the west end of the Strait of Gibraltar.
8. A colorless and odorless inert gas.
9. Bound or secured closely.
10. In operation or operational.
11. Playful in an appealingly bold way.
12. Jordan's port.
13. A chisel of tempered steel with a sharp point.
14. Do wrongly or improperly.
21. Take or catch as if in a snare or trap.
23. Highly excited.
27. (informal) Of the highest quality.
28. A brittle gray crystalline element that is a semiconducting metalloid (resembling silicon) used in transistors.
30. An isogram connecting points receiving equal amounts of sunshine.
31. West Indian tree having racemes of fragrant white flowers and yielding a durable timber and resinous juice.
35. Small tropical American tree bearing edible plumlike fruit.
36. With eagerness.
38. Tropical American tree producing cacao beans.
39. American civil rights worker in Mississippi.
40. An Asian peninsula (off Manchuria) separating the Yellow Sea and the Sea of Japan.
43. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
45. A piece of furniture that provides a place to sleep.
48. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
53. A kind of person.
54. Having the leading position or higher score in a contest.
56. Leave voluntarily.
57. Islands in the Atlantic Ocean belonging to Portugal.
58. Being five more than ninety.
59. The compass point midway between west and northwest.
60. (astronomy) The angular distance of a celestial point measured westward along the celestial equator from the zenith crossing.
62. American professional baseball player who hit more home runs than Babe Ruth (born in 1934).
64. Cancel, annul, or reverse an action or its effect.
65. (in Gnosticism) A divine power or nature emanating from the Supreme Being and playing various roles in the operation of the universe.
67. (football) Of advancing the ball by throwing it.
68. A French abbot.
69. The United Nations agency concerned with atomic energy.
72. A transuranic element that has not been found in nature.
73. The sound made by a cow or bull.
76. A public promotion of some product or service.
77. Being one more than fifty.
78. A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You have a very strong mental drive. You may be very convincing in what you say and think. With all of this emotional energy, you could speak or communicate very well. Being more closely involved with another person may well become your highest priority. Marriage, contracts and partnerships are seen as a means to success and happiness; they have many lessons to teach you. This may mean you go into business with a relative. Lots of good news comes pouring in at this time. Your career direction gets a lift and life's problems should be easy to solve. You find yourself benefiting from an older individual or someone in authority. Life could assume a dreamlike stance. When you suggest a movie, a line forms-enjoy!



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You may find it difficult to buckle down to your more pragmatic duties and you find yourself instead in a rather dreamy kind of mood. Your friends or associates may not go along with your dreamy side just now-but everyone has off days occasionally. You may find it hard to concentrate on your work. Perhaps more rest or a daily vitamin would really help to improve your day. As a new life-phase begins, most of your life satisfaction comes from your work, health and diet-if you take good care of them. This kind of thing could lead to love and a new self-image. It should be easy for you to enjoy and value your own life situation. There are positive interactions with a friend or loved one.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

All lines of communication should be open to you. You may feel particularly in touch and connected with others. Scientific research has your attention and you enjoy checking it out when you can. Most of your day is spent in getting ahead in the workplace, but the most fun you have is in doing this research. It's a time when you can probably expect extra support from others who are just as fascinated with your discoveries as you are. You enjoy being called to perform or express your talent. Your charm and beauty are appreciated this evening. Perhaps you will be enjoying a special date with a loved one. An anniversary or some other celebration can be enjoyed at this time. You are a good listener, even though at times it may take great effort.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

If you are attending class, a lecture or just really needing to listen to a presentation, remember that it might be wise to carry a small tape recorder for your use. You can always take notes later and really be able to have all the facts readily available. There may be some circumstances, in general, in which you find yourself meditating. Not paying attention can get you out of a conversation. An environmental happening has your attention this afternoon and you want to contact your mate or friend that has a similar interest as you. This is a good time to enjoy your associations and ties to friends and family and even the people gathered around to enjoy the same hobby as you. Knowing a little about many things can come in very handy in many situations.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Choosing the best path for you may be at odds with your sense of value. You may not rate highly the easy way or a clear-cut option and you may choose instead a more difficult path when it comes to a profession. This may mean you have decided to test jet planes, or go into space or dive into the depths of the ocean and make many discoveries. Whatever you do, it will be forward moving and very exciting. Friendships and involvement in group activities play a more important part in your life just now. Your timing should be almost perfect and those around you should find you most alive and at ease in party surroundings this evening. You may find yourself enjoying the support and harmony that is given to you by your many friends.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You could be flexing your independence today, as well as getting right in the middle of anything that is new, unusual or different. You may just relish getting away from the old tried and true routine and setting your sails in another direction for a change. Something or someone could be instrumental in causing you to stop and smell the roses, or to realize just how much beauty you have in your life and in those around you. At the same time, everything could take on added value and importance. Be careful that you do not overspend or indulge too much just now. Try to enjoy yourself, but use common sense in the process. You may have decided that this is the day to take a sick day off from work to purchase the gifts early and get them in the mail.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Concerning the professional side of your life, business matters seem to be working in your favor. You will probably find it easy to express yourself and communicate with the best of them. You may appear very easygoing with even the most difficult customer. Gathering and exchanging information will become more paramount in your life, a very educational experience. Your acquaintances and family could have a big impact on your goals and make a huge impression. A very socially active period is coming up for you. Getting your affairs rearranged and organized will help you along your career path. You foster peace and patience at home. You are touched and encouraged by the goodwill of friends and find ways to congratulate their efforts.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You should be feeling good about making your own way and discovering solutions to whatever problems you have. The good life and all that is fine and luxurious may be what you value most. You may have your eye on a particular area of the city in which you would enjoy living. This is where you concentrate your goals. Expressing yourself comes quite naturally and works very well with your thoughts and ideas. Others will follow your lead at this time due to your power of persuasion. Some nice compliment may reach you today in the form of flattery on your preferences or personal effects. It should be a breeze to enjoy and find value in your own life circumstances, or to feel especially good-hearted toward a friend or loved one.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 19)

Love, marriage and family are the supports for your creative ambitions. Money, traditions and domestic expectations are in a state of being redefined. If you do not have a routine in your day that includes payment in money, you soon will have. Experience is your teacher and you learn to understand human nature by observation, experimentation and social contacts. You enjoy creating works of art and pleasing friends, as well as members of your own family. You have the potential to leave a lasting impression on film, electrically supported communications media or in people's minds. Teaching or reforming the structure of another person's thinking is dear to your heart. You turn the most negative into a most positive.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You may find it easy to read people and that should give you a better understanding of their needs. This, in turn, will put you in a good position to communicate with groups and the community in general. You will find it necessary to be out of the office later in the day-perhaps making deliveries, etc. After work, you could be helping a friend. You have no problem in convincing others that what you say to help them is the most beneficial path to take. You just naturally have a talent for helping others. A pleasant conversation will ensue with someone you love. Interacting with those in your neighborhood, as well as your family, helps appease a big emotional need. Being able to have people understand just what you mean is quite important.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

There is competitive and dynamic energy present today. A meeting may create opportunities for you to add fire to your cause. Try not to turn a talk into a sermon. Use a subtle approach to those in authority. Those who have resisted your ideas can soon be won over to respond more favorably. You realize that you need to eliminate a few activities from your list of things to do. You push your body to exertion and expect the same effort from others-careful. This may be a good time to tidy up your affairs or to rearrange your living conditions. Involvement with humanitarian organizations can bring satisfaction through activity. When you perform a humanitarian effort, cut back on your own extracurricular activity; balance.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Deep and penetrating discussions and investigative conversations could find you at your mental best this morning. You help your company reach a deal to buy equipment or some other item that will help give a faster time to market. Your perceptive abilities are at a high. You have no problem in getting your thoughts and ideas across to others-good communication. You are talented at cutting through the red tape and getting at what is beneath a problem. You demonstrate your ability to understand others' needs. This is important when it comes to interaction with others concerning groups and society this evening. A new person will be welcomed into the family this evening. This could be a birth or a marriage.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Adverbs

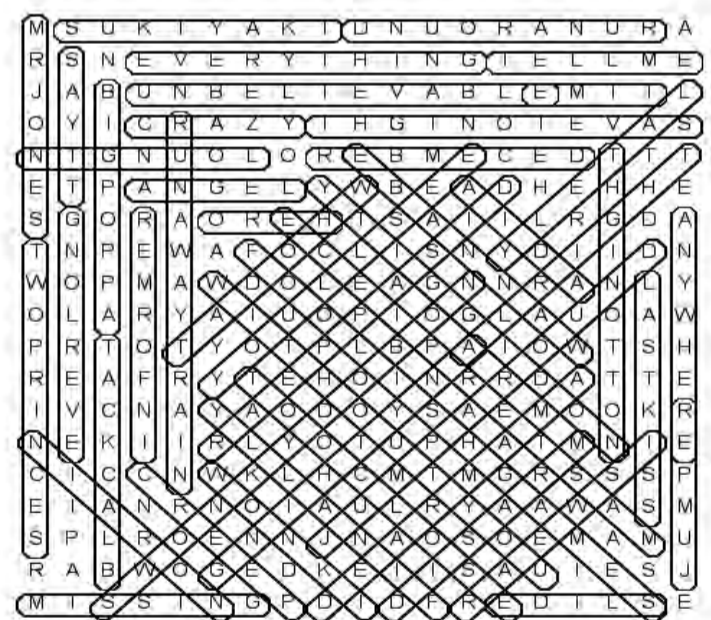
Find and circle all of the adverbs that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message.



- | | | | | |
|-----------|---------|---------|-----------|-----------|
| ACROSS | BEHIND | HENCE | ONCE | SOMETIMES |
| AGAIN | BELOW | HIGH | PRESENTLY | SOMEWHERE |
| ANGEL | BRISKLY | HOWEVER | QUICKLY | SOON |
| ANYTHING | DOWN | HOWEVER | QUICKLY | THEN |
| ANYWHERE | EARLY | LITTLE | QUITE | THERE |
| BIG POPPA | EASILY | LONG | RARELY | TODAY |
| BLACK CAT | FAST | LOUDLY | RATHER | TOMORROW |
| CRAZY | FIRST | MONTHLY | REALLY | UPWARD |
| CREEP | FOREVER | NEARBY | SHORT | WEEKLY |
| DEAR MAMA | FORWARD | NEVER | SLOWLY | WISELY |
| DECEMBER | GENTLY | NOWHERE | SOFTLY | YESTERDAY |
| DISAPPEAR | GREATLY | OFTEN | | |

Yesterday's Solution

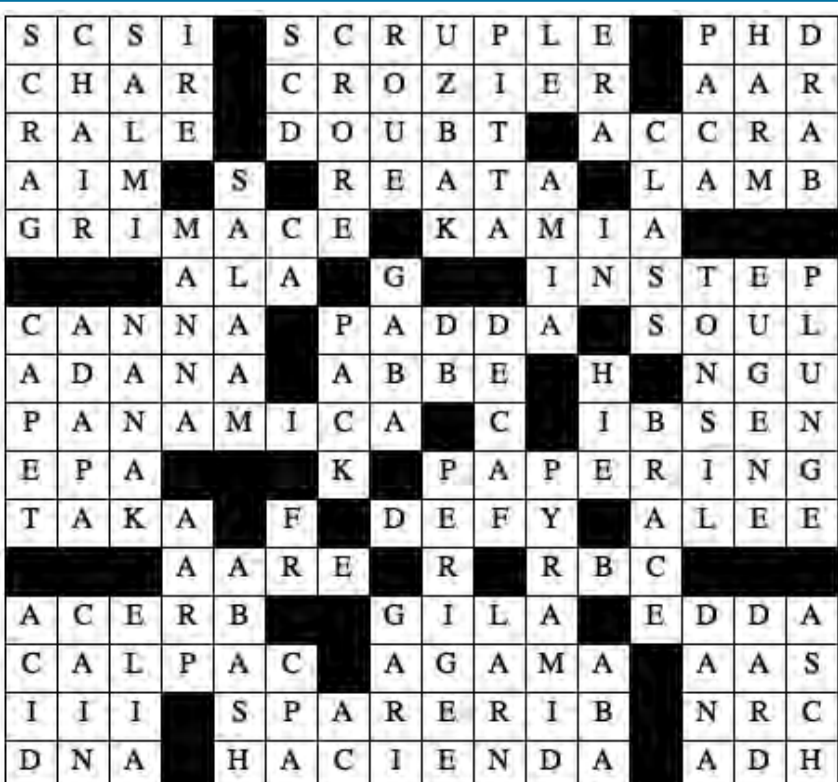
90's Songs 4



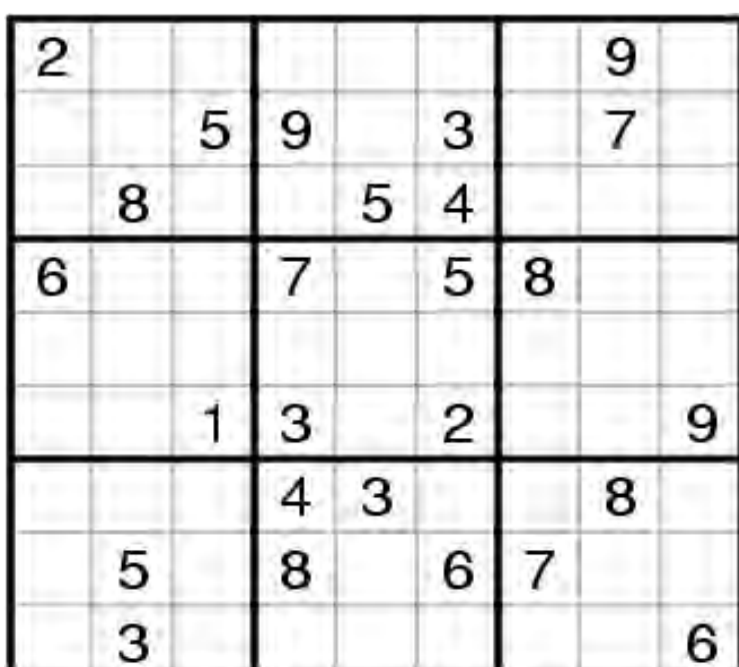
- | | | | |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| ADIA | DISARM | LATELY | SAY IT |
| ALRIGHT | EVERLONG | LOUNGIN | SLIDE |
| ANGEL | EVERYTHING | MASTERPIECE | SUKIYAKI |
| ANYTHING | FINALLY | MISSING | TELL ME |
| ANYWHERE | FOOLISH GAMES | MR. JONES | TIME |
| BIG POPPA | HERO | NO DIGGITY | TOO CLOSE |
| BLACK CAT | I KNOW | NO RAIN | TWO PRINCES |
| CRAZY | I SWEAR | NOBODY KNOWS | UNBELIEVABLE |
| CREEP | INFORMER | NOT TONIGHT | WANNABE |
| DEAR MAMA | JUMP AROUND | RUN-AROUND | WHO DAT |
| DECEMBER | JUMPER | RUNAWAY TRAIN | WITHOUT YOU |
| DISAPPEAR | LAST KISS | SAVE TONIGHT | YOU'LL SEE |

The hidden song title is: ANOTHER DAY IN PARADISE

Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



For labor-related inquiries and complaints:
Call MSAL hotline 128

Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khalidiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadisiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322



PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaheel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khalidiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khalidiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlis Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	Lithuania	00370
Albania	00355	Luxembourg	00352
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antiga	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Niger	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lesotho	00266		

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630
Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw



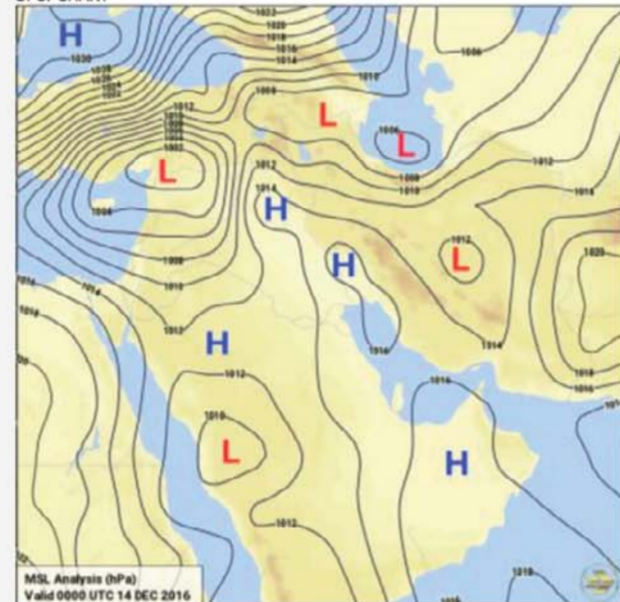
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 14/12/2016-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 23 °C

By Day : Partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening gradually at times south easterly wind, with speed of 15 - 40 km/h with a chance for scattered light rain
By Night : Partly cloudy with light to moderate south easterly changing to south westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 38 km/h with a chance for scattered light rain

SFC. CHART



Four-Day Forecast

	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Expected Weather	sunny + raising dust	sunny	partly cloudy	Mostly Sunny
Min Temp °C	10	05	05	06
Max Temp °C	18	17	18	19
Wind Direction	north westerly	north westerly	north westerly	north westerly to light variable
Wind Speed km/h	15 - 40	15 - 38	12 - 35	08 - 30

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

Warnings & Weather Watches

no warnings or weather watches

Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C REC	Max °C EXP
KUWAIT CITY	15	22
KUWAIT AIRPORT	08	23
ABDALLY	07	22
BUBYAN	14	19
JAHRA	12	23
FAILAKA ISLAND	13	20
SALMIYAH	17	20
AHMADI	16	21
JAL ALIYAH	09	22
QAROH ISLAND	19	24
UMM AL-MARADEM	19	24
NUWAISIB	13	23
WAFRA	12	24
MANAGISH	11	22
SALMY	07	21
MUTRIBA	07	25

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	20
Min Temp (°C)	04
Max Rel Hum (%)	89
Min Rel Hum (%)	29
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	21 S
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm

Sunrise	06:34
Sunset	16:51

Prayer Times

Fajr	05:10
Sunrise	06:34
Zuhr	11:43
Asr	14:32
Sunset	16:51
Isha	18:14



PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists	
Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabeea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223

Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daory	25731988
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426

General Practitioners	
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhazeem	23926920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abdallah Al-Refae	25333501

Urologists	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abdallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

Plastic Surgeons	
Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	22547272
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	22617700
Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60

Family Doctor	
Dr. Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581

Psychiatrists	
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047
Dr. Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0

Gynaecologists & Obstetricians	
Dr. Adrian arbe	23729596/23729581
Dr. Verginia s. Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliytami	25343406
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272
Dr. Salem soso	22618787

General Surgeons	
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148

Internists, Chest & Heart	
Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisen	25728004
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446
Dr. Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3

Paediatricians	
Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maarouf	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gujare	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282

Dermatology	
Dr. Mohammed Salam	
Bern University	23845955

Dentists	
Dr. Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abdallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdalateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abdallah Al-Duweisen	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111

Neurologists	
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875

Gastrologists	
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abdallah Al-Ali	22633135

Endocrinologist	
Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330
Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari	25658888
Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr	25329924

Physiotherapists & VD	
Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. Musaed Faraj Khamees	22666288

Rheumatologists:	
Dr. Adel Al-Awadi	2



Felicity Jones felt 'nervous' after being cast in 'Rogue One'

The 33-year-old actress plays the role of rebel soldier Jyn Erso in the hotly-anticipated new movie and has admitted the requirements of the all-action part tempered her excitement at being cast. Speaking at the launch event for 'Rogue One: A Star Wars Story' at London's Tate Modern on Tuesday night, Felicity said: "I remember whooping. [Director] Gareth Edwards called me on the telephone and said, 'We'd love you to play the part of Jyn Erso. I sort of went, 'Oh, that's awesome.' 'At the same time, I was a little bit nervous because I knew it meant I would have to start going to the gym a lot and training - and that I would never be out of sweatpants for seven months. And that was true, that was how it was for the entirety of shooting." Felicity plays the central role in the eagerly awaited spin-off movie, and has revealed she took inspiration from the likes of Sigourney Weaver and Harrison Ford - who appeared as

Han Solo in the 'Star Wars' movies - for the part. She told HeyuGuys: "I'm always looking constantly for inspiration. You know, you're a bit of a magpie and you're looking at different people. "You know, there's Sigourney Weaver in 'Alien' - I remember watching that, thinking that was a great reference. "But also Harrison Ford ... there were certain sequences I was looking at in 'Rogue One' and I thought, 'What would Harrison Ford do in this moment?' So I went back and watched his 'Star Wars' films but also other films he's done and I guess somewhere between those two people was where I was trying to find Jyn."

Miller loves traditional gifts for Christmas

The 34-year-old actress has been thinking about what four-year-old Marlowe - her child with her former partner Tom Sturridge - would love as a gift and has decided the traditional toy is the thing to get her to put a smile on her face when December 25th rolls around. Speaking to Vogue Australia, Sienna said: "For my daughter, maybe a rocking horse would be nice. That just came to me ... My favorite Christmas memory was last year when for the first time my daughter was aware of what Christmas was and she saw her stocking at the end of her cot." Although she has a present plan for Marlowe, the 'Foxcatcher' star admits she leaves everything to the last minute when it comes to present shopping and is the sort of person you will see "crying in a department store" on Christmas Eve. Sienna - who stars in the 2016

Burberry Festive Film - admitted: "I love getting pyjamas - I buy people what I like to get. I gave everybody pyjamas last year that were really beautiful and I think make women feel kind of special ... But honestly I'm that person on Christmas Eve who's running around crying in a department store. So I end up being wildly overgenerous because it's last minute. I'm good at giving gifts, but I'm not organized." The blonde beauty's favorite thing about the holiday season is that she gets a chance to take a break from her career and reconnect with her family. Sienna likes nothing more than slipping into a comfortable set of pyjamas and relaxing with her loved ones, even though they would prefer it if she dressed up.



LEE DANIELS THINKS WOMEN ARE 'SMARTER THAN MEN'

The 56-year-old director has been praised for his ability to give strong voices to the women in his works - such as Taraji P Henson's role of convicted criminal Cookie Lyon in television series 'Empire' - and has revealed he writes women in the way he does because he thinks "women are far more complicated". Speaking on 'The Late Show with Stephen Colbert', the 'Precious' director said: "They (women) are smarter than men. "I just think women are far more complicated, and I find that they are really interesting and fascinating to write for. So yeah, so most of my work comes from crazy Cookie's and such, you know." And 'The Paperboy' producer is set to continue the theme of strong women into his next project 'Star', which sees Queen Latifah take on the role of Carlotta Brown, the owner of a beauty salon who is the surrogate mother to three girls trying to achieve musical stardom. Previously, Lee stated that he wrote 'Star' with the intention of reversing television stereotypes, by making "the black girl to be rich". He said: "It's not just about the girls finding family. We're talking about race. "At the time, (Donald) Trump was not president. But I knew we were at civil war. I wanted this girl in this girl group to be white. I wanted her to have a sister who was half-black. And I wanted the black girl to be rich. And then I wanted them to tear each other apart because you know there are no girl groups. "The reason that there are no girl groups is that they only last a couple of years." 'Star' is set to premiere on Fox today.



Lawrence gets really overwhelmed at parties

The 26-year-old actress has attended her fair share of award ceremony bashes over the years, but she doesn't always enjoy going because the large volume of people present overwhelms her, and she ends up "trapping" two people she can talk to. Speaking on 'The Late Show with James Corden', the 'Passengers' actress said: "I get really overwhelmed by the amount of people, then I find two people and I imprison them and I trap them and I'm like 'It's you and me!" The 'Hunger Games' star has sketchy memories of one Oscars after-party where she got "really, really wasted". Jennifer - who won the Best Actress Oscar in 2013 for her performance in 'Silver Linings Playbook' - added: "One year for the Oscars, I think it was the 'American Hustle' year, I juice cleansed and

then got really, really wasted. Then something was smoking and then I barfed, at Guy Oseary's house. I vomited, cheers Guy. "I remember going up to Ellen Page and saying, 'I need to get in my car', and she was like, 'Not my problem!' And I was like, 'Take me home Ellen!' "Elsewhere on the show, Jennifer discussed her idea for a brand new mobile app that would allow people to see what their baby would look like if the other parent was their pet dog. She said: "Or a cat ... of course you could do it with a cat, but I don't recommend it because cats are from the underworld. "It's all in the details, it has to be very real."

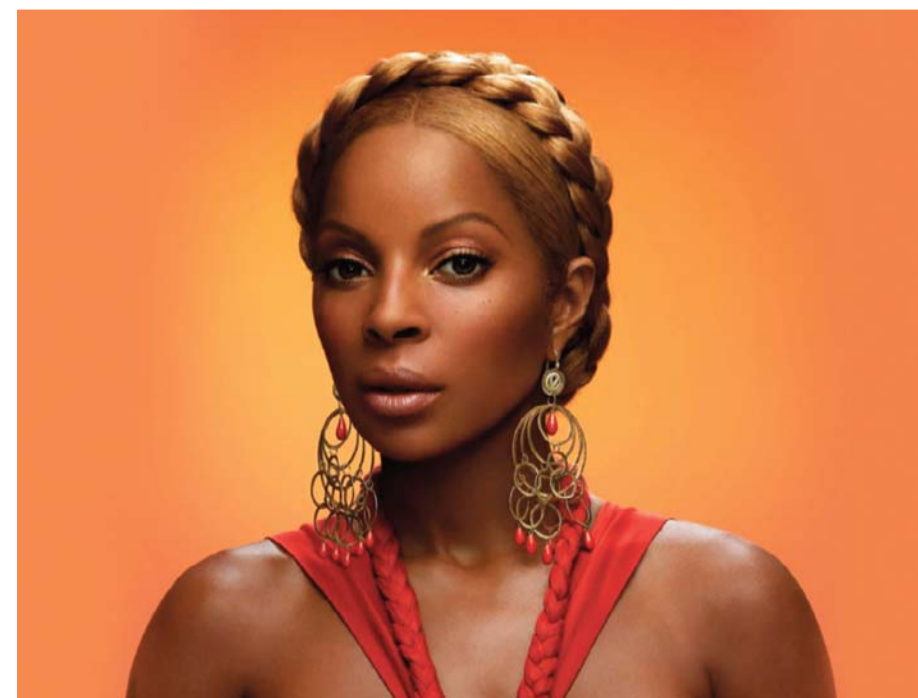
Scott Disick slashed \$1m off the price of home

The 33-year-old television personality has knocked the hefty amount off the asking price for his mansion in the Hidden Hills and it is now listed for \$7.8 million. However, Scott - who has Mason, six, Penelope, three, and 23-month-old Reign with 'Keeping Up With The Kardashians' beauty Kourtney Kardashian - could still make around \$2 million from the sale after buying the 7 bed house for \$6 million, TMZ reports. Meanwhile, Scott and Kourtney have reportedly started dating again and the 37-year-old star is pleased how Scott is "consistently on his best behaviour" and has been for the last two months. A source said: "He has been consistently on his best behaviour for the past two months. He's not been partying or drinking. This is the first time we've seen Scott be this good in a very long time. Yes, that is always something Kourtney wanted for Scott - to calm down and be at home." Whilst another insider added: "Their love for each other never went away. He's been trying to win Kourtney over for a while now, but his constant partying was a huge issue. He's been spending a lot more time with Kourtney and the kids and proving himself to show that his family is the priority ... He's doing his best to keep himself in check. "Kourtney is definitely the reason for that. He still has his own place, but he loves her. He's always loved her and wanted his family back together. They're best friends - that's never changed, even when things were rough between them ... Scott has just been over the partying. He got sick of it and decided to clean up his act. He was having people over at his house to party until 6 a.m. all the time, and he hasn't been doing that either."



Beckham is not into Christmas gifts

The retired soccer star doesn't want much for Christmas this year whilst also revealing his wife Victoria is after some nice pyjamas. He said: "Socks is always a good one. You know, I'm an Englishman so we - us Brits we love nice socks, so I've asked for socks this year. Victoria's list - nice pajamas. She loves some nice PJ's, comfy and cozy." And the 41-year-old star has confessed he would love to see Victoria collaborate with their son Cruz, 11, who just released his debut single 'If Every Day Was Christmas' for charity. He told Entertainment Tonight: "Oh, I don't know about that. You'd have to ask Victoria. I doubt, I doubt that. I'd love to see it, but I'm not sure it's gonna happen." Meanwhile, David previously revealed how proud he is of Cruz for giving back with the single. He said: "The amazing thing about this, we only realized Cruz has a cute little voice about nine months ago. Scooter has been a family friend for a while, so he said to bring him in, see if he enjoys it. "For us, we always want in our children, we always hope they're listening to us or pay attention to us as parents, so we do a lot of work for charity for obviously UNICEF and my wife does for the UN. And Cruz came to us and said 'How about I do a Christmas song for charity? And all the proceeds go to charity.' There's nothing more to this than that at the moment. "He's 11-years-old, he's still at school, he's concentrating at school. That's the most important thing. But he wanted to give back and he's done this amazing little Christmas song that's got a lot of attention. And you know we are very proud of it. He came to us with the idea. It's kind of cool but he's having fun." - Bangshowbiz



Blige demanding estranged husband to return her Grammys

The 'No More Drama' hitmaker is in the midst of messy divorce from Martin 'Kendu' Isaacs and claims he hasn't given her back one of the Grammys she won as well as other "achievement awards", a Range Rover and Mercedes C300. Documents obtained by TMZ reveal Mary is requesting these all to be sent back to her but will let her ex-husband keep the Mercedes SL550, which is said to cost around \$80,000 new. Meanwhile, the 45-year-old singer previously admitted she has "finally got her life back" after she split from Martin. She said: "I've finally got my life back. My fans have saved me. I have to keep going for them ... I chose life. At any time we all go through dark times. You might lose something when you make a positive choice and lose something when you make a negative choice, so for me it's best to just lose whatever you're going to

lose to get your life back. "My fans have saved me too. It's only when you hear people's testimonies that 'you saved my life' or 'helped me get out of an abusive relationship' that you realise going through these hard times makes you stronger." However, by Mary's own admission, the divorce has been very "hard" and painful for her. She added: "I'm in the thick of it. I'm in the middle of a divorce. It's just how hard life is. It's the pain. Not even knowing someone that you thought you knew for years is horrible ... "But there's hope in it as well, because I have to keep the joy so I can live and survive. I can't just die in all this sadness. In spite of my pain and crying and releasing everything on stage to my fans, I kept my joy and that's what keeps me going. Life is real."

FEATURES



Prince performs during the halftime show at the Super Bowl XLI NFL football game at Dolphin Stadium in Miami.



File photo shows Lin-Manuel Miranda and the cast of "Hamilton" performing at the Tony Awards at the Beacon Theatre in New York.



Beyoncé performs during halftime of the NFL Super Bowl 50 football game.

IN 2016, POLITICS DOMINATED POP CULTURE AND VICE VERSA

Our politics is often reflected in our popular culture, and vice versa - especially in an election year. That relationship seemed closer than ever in 2016, when a TV personality was elected president, reality shows and beauty contests were referenced in presidential debates, and even a Broadway show ignited partisan sparring.

At times, it seemed like the election overshadowed everything, but of course there was more. The diversity issue again roiled Hollywood. The old-style musical made a glamorous comeback. One of Hollywood's most scrutinized couples called it quits. And we said a series of painful goodbyes: to legendary rock stars, cinema and TV greats, and The Greatest himself. Our annual, highly selective journey down pop culture memory lane:

JANUARY

Ground Control to Major Tom: We shall miss you. The death of DAVID BOWIE casts a pall over the pop culture scene as the year begins. The elegant rock star succumbs to cancer - an illness he fought in secret - just a few days after his 69th birthday and the release of his final music video, "Lazarus," which begins with the line: "Look up here, I'm in heaven."

FEBRUARY

A year after #OscarsSoWhite in 2015, the Oscars are ... #SoWhiteAgain! For the second year, all 20 nominated actors are white. The lack of diversity leads to some sweeping membership changes at the Academy. Meanwhile, the Super Bowl halftime show is allegedly headlined by Coldplay. But it's BEYONCÉ who rules with a commanding performance of her new song, "Formation," proving that Queen Bey is still very much among our royalty.

MARCH

The ROLLING STONES perform in Cuba, a once-unthinkable event that happens a week after President Obama visits the island nation. Speaking of Obama, he hosts a White House concert performance of "HAMILTON," part of a remarkable 2016 for LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA and his rap-infused Broadway musical about founding father Alexander Hamilton. We say goodbye to GARRY SHANDLING.

APRIL

HAMILTON wins the Pulitzer for drama (to add to a Grammy and, soon, 11 Tonys), and current Treasury Secretary Jack Lew reverses a plan to bump Hamilton from the \$10 bill after fans kick up a fuss - undoubtedly the first time a Broadway show influences currency policy. And April showers bring Purple Rain: Rock legend PRINCE dies a shocking death at 57 of an accidental opioid overdose, launching countless poignant tributes.

MAY

"It's not over 'til I say it's over," says BERNIE SANDERS to HILLARY CLINTON, of the fight for the Democratic nomination. Actually, that's LARRY DAVID talking to KATE MCKINNON on "Saturday Night Live." As MCKINNON hones her acclaimed, manically ambitious portrayal of Clinton - one of nine actresses to portray her in SNL history - DONALD TRUMP (in real life) clinches the Republican nomination. We'll

have to wait a few months to see who plays him on SNL...

JUNE

The greatest is gone: MUHAMMAD ALI dies at 74 after a three-decade battle with Parkinson's disease. It's CLINTON's turn to clinch her party's nomination, becoming the first woman in U.S. history to lead a major party ticket. At the Tony awards, host JAMES CORDEN opens with a tribute to the Orlando nightclub shooting victims, and MIRANDA does the same with a tearful sonnet, declaring that "love is love is love is love."

JULY

Hollywood always turns out for Democrats, and the Democratic National Convention is no exception. Performers include KATY PERRY, ALICIA KEYS, CAROLE KING, DEMI LOVATO, BOYZ II MEN and PAUL SIMON, among many others. In media news,

ROGER AILES is out at Fox News Channel, following allegations of sexual harassment. And the retired JON STEWART - missed by many fans in an election year - returns to late night, bearded and in a bathrobe, for an appearance with STEPHEN COLBERT.

AUGUST

SCOTT BAIO is the biggest celebrity at the Republican National Convention. And some sports news: In Rio, MICHAEL PHELPS ends his historic Olympic career (or so he says) with a mind-boggling 23rd career gold. But the US swim team's achievements are overshadowed by RYAN LOCHTE's drunken night and evolving explanation. Goodbye, Willy Wonka and Leo Bloom: Actor GENE WILDER - whose name could easily describe his famous eyes and untamed hair - dies at 83 of complications of Alzheimer's.

SEPTEMBER

The first CLINTON-TRUMP debate draws 84 million viewers, the most ever for a US presidential matchup, and yields at least one catchy meme: The "Hillary Shimmy." Clinton tries her hand at comedy with ZACH GALIFIANAKIS on "Between Two Ferns." JIMMY FALLON famously musses TRUMP's hair, and is criticized for the friendly encounter. Bye Bye, BRANGELINA: One of the most high-profile couplings in Hollywood is over.

OCTOBER

Hello, Nasty Woman: Trump's frustrated comment about Clinton in their third, extremely contentious debate becomes one of the more famous exchanges of the season, launching "nasty woman" merchandise like the "Madam President If You're Nasty" T-shirt. We meet ALEC BALDWIN's Trump on SNL. TRUMP - the real one - tweets: "Alec Baldwin portrayal stinks." And the candidate's "grab 'em" comments on "Access Hollywood" emerge, sending his campaign into damage control.

NOVEMBER

Something happens in early November ... what was it again? Meantime, let's remember singer LEONARD COHEN, dead at 82. Many find themselves singing "Hallelujah," his much-covered ballad - including a somber MCKINNON on "SNL," a few days after the

election. BALDWIN reprises Trump, the real TRUMP settles into meetings at Trump Tower, and his vice president-elect, MIKE PENCE, goes to HAMILTON, where the production appeals to him directly from the stage to work on behalf of all Americans. Pence says he doesn't mind, but Trump tweets: "Apologize!"



Kate McKinnon portrays Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton during a sketch on "Saturday Night Live."

DECEMBER

It's been quite a year for the musical, and not just on Broadway. "Hairspray Live!" continues the live TV musical fad. And movie audiences are enchanted by a candy-colored, old-fashioned musical ode to Tinseltown itself, "La La Land," by young director DAMIEN CHAZELLE. Finally, for those craving a little consistency in this turbulent year, it's perhaps nice to know that December arrives bearing the same Christmas gift as it did last year: A new "STAR WARS" movie. — AP



Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump and Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton during the presidential debate at Hofstra University. — AP photos

Lost 'sensual' Da Vinci drawing discovered in France

A lost drawing by the Renaissance master Leonardo da Vinci has been discovered in the papers of a French provincial doctor, a Paris auction house said Tuesday. The dreamily sensual sketch of Saint Sebastian is thought to be worth around 15 million euros (\$15.8 million) and is an "extraordinary discovery", the Tajan auction house said.

It has been authenticated by the French specialist Patrick de Bayser and Carmen C Bambach, curator of Renaissance drawings at New York's Metropolitan Museum and a Da Vinci expert, it added. The dramatic study, which it is thought Leonardo did in his late twenties or early thirties after he was acquitted of sodomy, is one of eight he is known to have drawn.

The find is extremely rare, with the last Da Vinci drawing that came to market a sketch of a horse and rider-equaling the world record for an Old Master drawing when it sold for \$10 million in 2001. It was then said to be the most significant drawing by the artist and polymath to be sold at auction since the 1930s.

Mirror writing

De Bayser told AFP he came across the new sketch, done with a quill pen, during a routine trawl through material sent to the auction house for valuation. He thought it was possibly by a 15th-century Florentine artist until he turned the torn paper over. On the back he found a couple of scientific sketches about an optical experiment showing the shadow thrown by a candle and some "spectacular" back-to-front writing.

Da Vinci regularly used the technique so his writing could only be read using a mirror. De Bayser then noticed that the shading in the drawing of Saint Sebastian, which showed the martyr with wild hair pinned to a tree trunk, went from right to

left. "That meant that it was drawn by a left-handed artist" like Da Vinci. "I was immediately convinced it was by Leonardo," he told AFP. It is now thought the sketch may have come from one of the artist's famous notebooks.

Two other studies of Saint Sebastian by Da Vinci have survived, one at the Bonnat-Helleu Museum in Bayonne in southwestern France and the other at the Kunsthalle in Hamburg. Carmen C Bambach believes the newly discovered sketch came from the same period as the Hamburg drawing, from between 1478 and 1483. The owner of the 19.3 x 13 cm (7.6 x 5 ins) sketch wants to remain anonymous, the auction house said. — AFP



The Lost 'sensual' Da Vinci drawing discovered in France.

Polaroid photos make a comeback

At a photography studio in Cleveland, instructor Nicole Follen is trying to convince her students to step back in time and technology-to the age of the humble Polaroid. She wants the students to create something they can touch and feel-perhaps even something that - gasp-isn't perfect. So, she guides her class in how to transform digital photos taken on their smartphones into Polaroid-style instant photos that hark back to the bygone analog era. "You go from something so digital to having a mark in your photography," Follen said. "You have to work for it."

Once upon a time, before digital cameras, people trying to capture moments on film only had the clunky box cameras that spit out square photos with wide white borders that you needed to shake to develop. Now, Follen uses a printer that links to smartphones and churns out prints similar to those that were all the rage in the 1970s.

Across the United States and Europe, instant photography is making a comeback-and not just in hipster enclaves like Brooklyn. Leading the trend are those planning weddings and other special occasions. A simple internet search unearths endless do-it-yourself suggestions for asking guests to participate in creating instant memories. "There's something about Polaroids that just feels so cozy," wrote one bride on a Reddit comment thread. "I love the photos we have," wrote another. "A few of the pictures were kept by our guests, but we have an amazing keepsake!"

Sales growth

Weddings are a natural setting for instant film because the process makes photos more personal, said Nicole Kaney, a Florida-based wedding planner. Photos snapped with instant cameras "tend to be a little more carefree and relaxed" than those taken with digital cameras, which are sometimes endlessly finessed for social media, she said. The throwback trend has led to the creation of new instant cameras to meet demand. Used classic cameras by Polaroid meanwhile

sell for prime sums, sometimes hundreds of dollars, on eBay. Companies making new versions are seeing sales growth few would have predicted even a few years ago. Fujifilm, which makes a new line of Instax instant cameras and film, said in a recent earnings report that sales remained strong in the United States and Europe, even as its sales of digital cameras decreased.

The Japanese company says it sold five million instant cameras worldwide in fiscal 2015 and expects to sell 6.5 million in fiscal 2016. The Impossible Project, the company that bought Polaroid's last remaining instant film plant in the Netherlands - rescuing it from extinction - is also

mistic about instant photography in the analog form, even though the company discontinued instant film production in 2008. "We think this category will continue to grow and thrive, and then there will be more products in different formats, different size prints, different types of printing devices-whether they're printers or cameras," said Polaroid CEO Scott Hardy.

A new instant camera licensed under the company name was released last January, with an updated version released in September. Tom Lewis, who teaches photography at the Kansas City Art Institute, said he is seeing the appeal of instant photography firsthand among a younger



bullish about its own future. The company founded by Florian Kaps, an Austrian biologist-turned-entrepreneur, now makes Polaroid-style instant film, an instant camera with a modern touch (it has Bluetooth and a mobile app), and an instant film printing device, which is what Follen uses in her studio, the Cleveland Print Room.

'Something nostalgic'

"Florian really saw this kind of niche product that would never fade away," said Mark Appleton, head of North American sales for The Impossible Project. Even Polaroid itself is opti-

generation who is used to digital photos that are somewhat disposable.

Students "seem to be more considered in their approach to the instant film" versus what they do with phone cameras, Lewis said. Students are framing instant photos as works of art and using them in collages, he said, adding that some "see it in terms of something nostalgic, something they missed out on." — AFP

FEATURES



Concept art from Pixar's 'Coco'



A giant model of Luxo Jr, Pixar's iconic desk lamp mascot, is seen at its campus in Emeryville, California.

Pixar's first original story under Trump a 'love letter to Mexico'

It is known for movies about monsters, insects and children's toys but Pixar's latest, very human story is "a love letter to Mexico" at a time of simmering racial tension. Taking the country's Day of the Dead festival as its theme, "Coco" will hit US theaters some 12 months after Donald Trump's November 8 election victory on an anti-immigration ticket that enflamed Hispanic communities across America. It has been hailed as a welcome corrective to a divisive presidential campaign in which Trump called many Mexican immigrants rapists and vowed to build a wall between the United States and its southern neighbor.

"We're creating it for the world and it's going to hopefully have a great positive influence around the world," said "Coco" director Lee Unkrich, who has been at Pixar since 1995's "Toy Story," directing its two sequels. "But for Mexico particularly, we're trying to create on some level a love letter to Mexico and I hope people embrace it that way."

Pixar showcased early artwork for the movie as it opened the doors to its secluded headquarters in the Bay Area of San Francisco to the news media, with its 21st year as a feature film studio drawing to a close. Starring newcomer Anthony Gonzalez, Gael Garcia Bernal (Amazon's

"Mozart in the Jungle") and Benjamin Bratt ("Doctor Strange"), "Coco" tells the story of a 12-year-old Mexican musician who journeys to the Land of the Dead in search of his ancestors.

Pixar's 19th feature-length movie follows 21 years of unparalleled success marked by \$11 billion in box office receipts and 13 Oscars since "Toy Story" blazed a trail as the world's first computer-generated feature film.

Creativity

The company began life in 1979 as the Graphics Group, the computer division for Lucasfilm, charged by George Lucas with developing a digital film and sound editing system and advancing computer graphics. John Lasseter, the legendary founding director of the division's feature output, came on board in 1983, and three years later it was bought by Apple guru Steve Jobs and given its now-famous name.

After winning plaudits for a series of pioneering shorts, the studio turned its attention to full-length movies, joining with Disney to produce "Toy Story," which went on to become the highest-grossing film of 1995, making \$374

million worldwide. "Of course we were completely buoyed by how well it did, critically and commercially, I knew at that point I wanted to continue to be a part of what we were doing at Pixar and luckily they wanted me to continue helping them," Unkrich told AFP.

Jobs relocated the company in 2000 to a 22-acre campus in Emeryville, near San Francisco, where every detail was carefully designed to encourage creativity among its 600-strong workforce, which has since doubled. Employees can swim in an outdoor heated salt water pool, play soccer or beach volleyball, enjoy picnics in an amphitheater or gather in the main building, designed with the same modernist architectural vision as the Apple Store.

No more sequels

Pixar had already won best animated picture Oscars for "Finding Nemo" and "The Incredibles" by the time Disney bought the company for \$7.4 billion in 2006, making Jobs its largest single shareholder. A hatful of further statuettes followed as "Ratatouille," "WALL-E" and "Up" saw Pixar's reputation transformed from new kid on the block to animation's king of the castle.

It has not all been plain sailing—"Cars 2" was seen as a creative misstep and panned by critics while the domestic box office receipts for "The Good Dinosaur" came in below its production budget. Unkrich recalls "Toy Story 2" being plunged into crisis when the production team realized with the deadline looming that the story was not working.

The crew got back on course after Jobs—who died in 2011 -- took Unkrich aside and advised him that the achievements he was most proud of were always when "there wasn't enough time and there weren't enough resources but somehow people came together and got the work done." "Coco" is leading a new wave of original Pixar films under development following the studio's recent announcement that it was putting sequels on the back burner after 2019's "Toy Story 4."

"With each new one we make, there's never any guarantee that they're going to work or be accepted," says Unkrich. "We try our best every time to make engaging films that we're interested in and we just hope the rest of the world likes them." — AFP



In this March 16, 2015 file photo, Molly Ringwald, left, and Ally Sheedy walk the red carpet for "The Breakfast Club" 30th Anniversary Restoration World Premiere during the South by Southwest Film Festival in Austin, Texas. — AP

'Lion King', 'Breakfast Club' added to National Film Registry

While not usually regarded as a golden age of American cinema, the 1980s produced plenty of popular classics - and a few more of them have now been added to the prestigious National Film Registry. The Library of Congress announced Wednesday that "The Breakfast Club," "The Princess Bride" and "Who Framed Roger Rabbit" are among the 25 movies tapped for preservation this year. They join three other more obscure 1980s titles on this year's list.

The national library also picked a few more recent favorites, including "Thelma & Louise," Disney's "The Lion King" and "Rushmore." The library selects movies for preservation in its audio-visual vault in Culpeper, Virginia, because of their cultural, historic or artistic importance. This year's picks bring the total number of films in the registry to 700. The choices have become increasingly diverse and eclectic since the registry began in 1989.

Still, the library always makes room for some crowd-pleasers. Considered a feminist landmark for its portrait of women who stand up to abusive partners and find liberation on a crime spree, "Thelma & Louise" achieved a rare distinction when its co-stars, Geena Davis and Susan Sarandon, were both nominated for the best-actress Oscar. (Jodie Foster won that year, for "The Silence of the Lambs.") It's the third movie directed by the prolific Ridley Scott to join the registry, following "Alien" and "Blade Runner."

"I am very honored and proud to be acknowledged by the Library of Congress," Scott said in a statement. "Blade Runner" will now have two great ladies to keep him company. Lauded for its sensitivity, "The Breakfast Club" (1985), from writer-director John Hughes, is the most enduring collaboration of the so-called "Brat Pack," a short-lived troupe of young stars that included Anthony Michael Hall, Judd Nelson and Ally Sheedy.

Two years later, "The Princess Bride" charmed audiences with its mix of fantasy, action and humor and its innovative screenplay that allowed a young boy (Fred Savage) to provide running commentary on the story. With its mix of live action and animation, "Who Framed Roger Rabbit" was a genuine breakthrough that looks quaint in retrospect. Director Robert Zemeckis' wacky 1988 film noir, set during

Golden age

Hollywood's golden age, imagined cartoon characters living alongside their human collaborators and grappling with off-screen complications including blackmail and murder. In "Roger Rabbit," humans sharing space with cartoons was so novel it had to be part of the plot. Now, thanks to the perfection of digital effects in movies such as "Titanic" and the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy, movie audiences can hardly distinguish between what's real and what's animated. "Rushmore" (1998) is the first movie from whimsical auteur Wes Anderson to be added and is one of just a handful of films to be selected fewer than 20 years after its release. Movies must be at least 10 years old to be included.

One of a few Disney animated movies not based on fairy tales, "The Lion King" (1994) was part of the studio's early-1990s renaissance. It proved so sturdy that a Broadway adaptation with avant-garde costumes became wildly popular.

This year's other '80s selections are "The Atomic Cafe" (1982), a compilation of clips about the threat of nuclear war; "The Decline of Western Civilization," director Penelope Spheeris' 1981 documentary about the hardcore punk rock scene in Los Angeles; and "Suzanne, Suzanne", a 1982 documentary short about a black woman's struggles with addiction.

Director Alfred Hitchcock now has seven films on the registry with the inclusion of "The Birds" (1963). Other titles joining the list are "Blackboard Jungle" (1955), "Funny Girl" (1968), "East of Eden" (1955) and "Point Blank" (1967). The oldest of this year's selections is "Life of an American Fireman" (1903), considered by film historian Charles Musser to be an innovative early American film for its use of editing, storytelling and the relationship between shots. Among the lesser known but historically significant selections is a series of short films by Solomon Sir Jones, a Baptist minister and amateur filmmaker. Shot on then-new 16mm cameras, his silent films documented African-American communities in Oklahoma between 1924 and 1928. — AP

INTIMATE FILM SHOWS SYRIA IN NEW LIGHT

When a group of friends took their cameras to the streets of Damascus to document Syria's 2011 uprising, they could not have foretold how events would spiral out of control and change their lives forever.

Obaidah Zytoon, a radio host with big dreams for her country, was full of hope for freedom when she started filming the demonstrations that broke out against President Bashar al-Assad in March 2011. Five years later, she is in Copenhagen living as a refugee. Zytoon is one of the lucky ones. Most of her friends did not make it out of Syria alive.

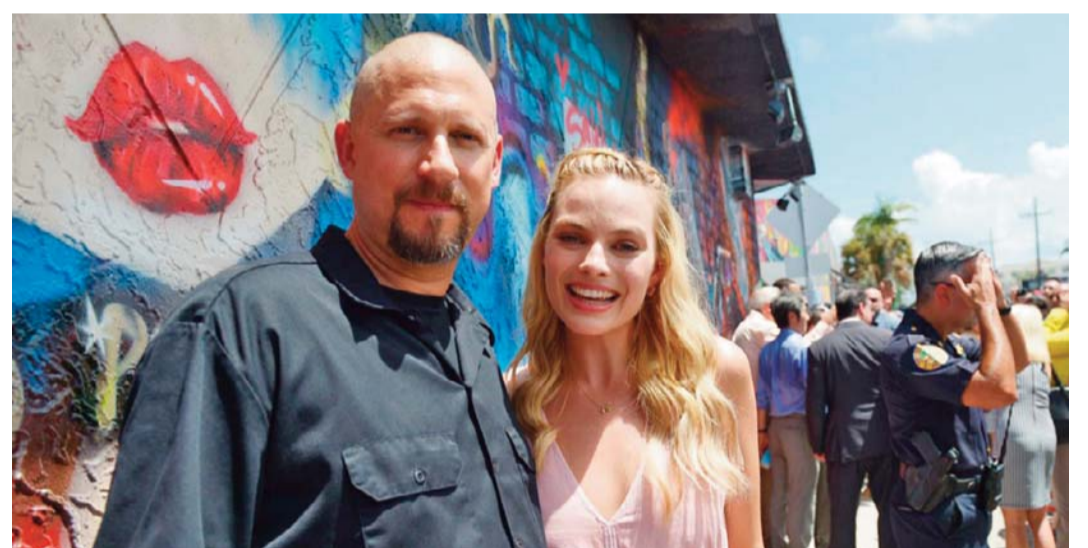
Much of the death and destruction documented in Zytoon's hometown of Zabadani in the film is eerily similar to images coming out of the battle of Aleppo this week, where Syrian government forces and their allies finally broke rebel resistance to hand Assad his biggest victory of the civil war. "What remains is the crime," Zytoon narrates as she watches dogs eating a dead sheep amidst the death and destruction of war.

The War Show, which premiered in the Middle East this week at the Dubai Film Festival, is a disturbing documentary that compiles footage shot inside Syria from 2011 to 2013, taking viewers through a journey of euphoria and revolution to disappointment and despair. In one scene at the beginning, the friends sit together at a Damascus apartment smoking hash and discussing revolution. "By 2014, we will all be free," one of them says. Another replies that by 2014 they will all be dead.

Human stories

The harrowing effect is amplified as viewers become deeply involved in the lives of Houssam, Hisham, Lulu, Rabea, Amal and Argha, joyful young Syrians who fall in love, play heavy metal, go to the beach and dream big, only to meet tragic ends. "You were the love of his life, you know," Zytoon tells her friend Lulu in Turkey after they discover that Hisham, who had gone missing for years after being picked up at a checkpoint, had died in prison after repeated torture.

Rabea, a musician who Zytoon described as "universal" in his views on life, gets assassinated in his car. He is found dead by his sister, who desperately tries to put part of his shattered forehead together to bring him back to life. Zytoon collaborated with Danish filmmaker and co-director Andreas Dalsgaard to bring those stories to life after meeting him in Turkey and showing him the footage.—Reuters



David Ayer and Margot Robbie

David Ayer, Margot Robbie reteam for female DC villains movie

"Suicide Squad" star Margot Robbie and director David Ayer are reteaming on the female DC villains movie "Gotham City Sirens," with Robbie reprising her role as Harley Quinn. Ayer will direct and produce the project. Robbie is also executive producing. The heads of DC's film arm, Geoff Johns and Jon Berg, will also be involved. "Gotham City Sirens" has not yet been given a release date.

"Sirens" was a comic series launched by DC in 2009 with the Harley Quinn, Catwoman and Poison Ivy characters. Geneva Robertson-Dworet, who has also written scripts for the "Tomb Raider" remake and Warner's "Sherlock Holmes 3," is writing the screenplay.

While "Suicide Squad" received underwhelming reviews, the film was a solid box office hit, grossing

\$745 million worldwide. Since then, the studio has taken its time in figuring out the next move in the "Suicide Squad" universe, including a sequel and other spinoffs, which are in development. Robbie's Quinn emerged as a fan favorite even before "Suicide Squad" debuted, and Robertson-Dworet was brought on early in the process of developing the spinoff. The planning is for Robbie to film her Tonya Harding pic "I, Tonya" in the first quarter of 2017, and follow that up with this film next summer. Ayer most recently helmed the Netflix action-fantasy pic "Bright" with Will Smith and Joel Edgerton. — Reuters

Alan Thicke of 'Growing Pains,' dead at 69

Canadian actor Alan Thicke, best known for his leading role in the 1980s family sitcom "Growing Pains" and as the father of R&B singer Robin Thicke, died on Tuesday, his spokeswoman said. He was 69. "Alan's sudden passing has been confirmed. At present, we have no further details," Monique Moss said in a brief email.

A source close to the family told Reuters by telephone that Thicke suffered a heart attack and was transported to Providence Saint Joseph Medical Center in Burbank, California, where he was pronounced dead. Grammy award nominated-singer Robin Thicke told the Los Angeles Times newspaper that his father was playing hockey with another of his

sons, 19-year-old Carter Thicke, when he suffered the heart attack.

"I saw him a few days ago and told him how much I loved and respected him," Thicke told the newspaper, adding that his father was an inspiration for his own musical career. "The good thing was that he was beloved and he had closure." Alan Thicke was beloved by many fans for his role as psychiatrist and father Jason Seaver in ABC's "Growing Pains," which ran from 1985 to 1992. Thicke's work in the show earned him a nomination for a Golden Globe for the best performance by an actor in a television series in 1988.

Thicke was also a popular host for television events, including the Emmy Awards, and a prolific composer of television theme songs, among which was the theme for Wheel of Fortune, his website said. Thicke also appeared in an array of television shows, including "The Outer Limits," "Murder She Wrote," and "Married with Children," according to IMDb. More recently, Thicke was set to appear in "Fuller House," a remake of the popular 1990s family sitcom produced by Netflix.

"Season 2 Fuller House looking good. I even like the ones I'm not in!" Thicke said in a tweet earlier on Tuesday. His death was quickly mourned on social media. "America loved Alan Thicke. I'm so sad he's gone. Sending so much love to his family," comedian Ellen DeGeneres said in a tweet. The National Hockey League tweeted: "The NHL family is sad to learn of the passing of longtime hockey fan Alan Thicke." — Reuters



In this Sunday, April 26, 2015 file photo, Alan Thicke poses in the pressroom at the 42nd annual Daytime Emmy Awards at Warner Bros. Studios in Burbank, California. — AP

FEATURES



This image released by HBO shows Kit Harington in a scene from "Game of Thrones." — AP photos

The best returning shows of 2016

By TV critic Maureen Ryan

Every show on this list has to go through a rigorous vetting process known as my life: I don't hang on to season passes for returning shows unless they really deliver the goods most weeks. And it's the relationships that keep bringing me back, for the most part. A good television show is really the chronicle of a tangle of relationships worth following; friendships that seem real, even in the most strange or surreal circumstances; families that are believably supportive and exasperating; marriages that are full of resonant echoes, even if they're nothing like my own.

When you've spent years with a fictional family or a group of friends, or an intriguing mixture of the two, and the show has done the hard work of getting you invested in their loyalties, betrayals and small victories, there's a good chance I'll stay with it. Even if it sometimes takes me forever to clear that DVR backlog.



This image released by USA Network shows Rami Malek as Elliot Alderson in a scene from, "Mr. Robot."

"The Americans" (FX): This drama about Russian agents working to undermine America is, as I noted in my list of the Top 20 Shows of 2016, "a glorious, heart-breaking thing of beauty, and it creates momentum and unfurls character development with assured and thoughtful discipline."

"Black-ish" (ABC): "Few comedies pack as much into 21 minutes as this nimble program, which comments on topical issues with incisive wit and cutting vigor and also supplies the kind of warm (but not treacly) family dynamics we've come to expect from ABC comedies," as I noted in my Top 20 Shows of 2016.

"Better Call Saul" (AMC): In its second season, this meditation on thwarted aspirations and self-sabotage got richer and deeper, while still displaying the kind of tight plotting and bone-dry humor that were the hallmarks of "Breaking Bad" at its best. "Saul" was more energetic, less clinical and ultimately more appealing in its second go-round, partly due to Bob Odenkirk's continued mastery of the comedic and dramatic dimensions of the role, and partly thanks to killer supporting performances from Rhea Seehorn, Patrick Fabian, Michael McKean and the dependably great Jonathan Banks.

"BoJack Horseman" (Netflix): "BoJack" continues to mine existential despair and Hollywood angst with perceptive compassion, and the way it mixes surreal flourishes with restrained emotional nuance remains truly impressive. And as my Variety colleague Sonia Saraiya points out in her list of the 20 best TV episodes of the year, the show's underwater episode was a tour de force.

"Brooklyn Nine-Nine" (Fox): We shouldn't take this show for granted; turning out really sharp and enjoyable ensemble comedy every week is not easy, but this show and this deft cast make it look that way. It continually finds ways to mine the vast comic talents of its cast, and it's especially fun to see Andre Braugher, already a master of every kind of dramatic scene, lean into his comedic side with such hilarious results.

"Crazy Ex-Girlfriend" (The CW): This CW hour-long comedy "has taken a bunch of conflicting ideas, tied them to smart

subversions of rom-com conventions, given the whole thing a bunch of energy, added great dance numbers and catchy choruses, and thanks to this amazing cast, I can't get enough," as I noted in my Top 20 Shows of 2016.

"Game of Thrones" (HBO): "Game of Thrones" does a number of things well: In scale and scope, there's nothing like it on TV, and its most memorable epic scenes, like the Battle of the Bastards, leave everyone jabbering about the show that night through the next day. It can also be lacerating in quieter moments, many of which focus on a character's pain or a long-anticipated confrontation or reconciliation. When those moments of intensity—personal, political or visual—really come together, "Game of Thrones" is often spectacular in all senses of the word. Of course, the drama's shortcomings are also easy to identify: It still doesn't quite have a handle on how to handle sexual violence (which it still relies on way too much), there are a lot of moving parts to all these storylines and they don't always mesh well, and in a show that always leaves its fans wanting more of their favorite characters, it gives far too much screen time to plodding filler like the Dorne plot or predictable arcs about one-dimensional characters like Ramsay Bolton. Still, thanks to this show's cast, its visual poetry, its perceptive moments and its complicated take on the costs of gaining and losing power, this HBO tentpole is unmissable.

"Mr. Robot" (USA): However timely "Mr. Robot" was before, in this surreal post-election world, its intense and off-kilter exploration of the real vs. the unreal and the malleability of the truth feels especially prescient. Sure, the USA drama dragged out certain elements of its second season far too long, kept some characters off-screen or apart in ways that undercut its momentum, and undertook some narrative experiments that didn't quite land. But the desire to change things up and take risky chances was laudable, and the second half of the season contained some thrilling formal experimentation and undeniable moments of suspense, connection and loss.

"Silicon Valley" (HBO): This HBO comedy has always had a lot of tricky elements to balance: It satirizes various excesses of the tech world and startup culture with razor-sharp glee, but it takes great care to make sure that none of its characters end up looking like walking punchlines or predictable cartoons (well, the possible exception is the pompous billionaire Gavin Belson, but actor Matt Ross should have a shelf of Emmys for his ferociously spot-on performance). Once again, the show delivered an enjoyable and crisply executed balancing act, as the principals (and principles) behind Pied Piper were tested by a system seemingly designed to separate humans from their souls.

"Suits" (USA): The consequences of the fraud at the heart of the show's premise finally played out in a devastating way, and the prison arc "brought new energy and urgency to the show. 'Suits' has always been underrated, and its sixth season is one of its best," as I wrote in a recent column.

"Transparent" (Amazon): Despite some third-season turbulence, as the Pfefferman clan continued down the road of transformation, this show "once again found moments of unexpected grace and trembling discovery," as I noted in my Top 20 Shows of 2016.

"Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt" (Netflix): As was the case with a very different show—"Better Call Saul"—I wanted to like the first season of this show a bit more than I actually did. But like the AMC drama, "Kimmy" did a better job of fleshing out its characters in its second year. "Kimmy's" funny yet heartfelt exploration of its lead character's ongoing recovery from trauma gave the show a depth and heart that grounded all the whimsical, topical and goofy stuff, and proved once again that Ellie Kemper and Titus Burgess are treasures we may not deserve. — Reuters

Kanye West emerges from hospital to meet Trump

Rap superstar Kanye West on Tuesday delivered a surprise even in this most unusual of political years—he met President-elect Donald Trump, marking the artist's first appearance since a reported mental breakdown. West, a rare artist and even rarer African American celebrity to voice support for Trump, said he went to discuss issues of concern to minorities with the populist leader.

Trailed by an entourage including his own cameraman, West silently walked into Trump Tower and returned to the lobby 40 minutes later with the president-elect himself who, asked what the two discussed, said: "Life." "Just friends, just friends. He's a good man. Long time. Friends for a long time," said a visibly upbeat Trump, who wrapped an arm behind West's shoulder.

West, sporting a fitted black sweatshirt and white sneakers, at first stood sullenly with his arms folded as reporters peppered him with questions—including on whether he would make good on his earlier vow to run for president in 2020. "I'm just here to take a picture right now," West finally said before flashing a smile.

West later took to his and Trump's favorite medium, Twitter, to elaborate, saying he came to discuss "multicultural issues" and had raised bullying, education and violence in his hometown Chicago. "I feel it is important to have a direct line of communication with our future President if we truly want change," West wrote. And, in a wry reply to questions on his own presidential aspirations, tweeted "#2024"—or after a theoretical Trump second term.

Meeting amid mental health scare

Entertainment site E! News said Trump wanted to make West an "ambassador of sorts" involved in "entrepreneurial leadership." Quoting an anonymous source on West's side, E! News said Trump reached out as he believed the rapper—who earlier this year said he was \$53 million in debt—was "a great role model when it comes to business."

West last month stunned a California audience with a lengthy speech in which he said he did not vote but would have backed Trump as he appreciated the businessman's outspokenness. West was soon hospitalized after a series of erratic comments on stage, including alleging that his sometime collaborator Jay Z was sending hitmen to kill him and lashing out at Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg for not paying the rapper's debt. The celebrity news website TMZ said that West's doctor feared he had suffered a mental breakdown and that West had flown to New York on Monday to see a psychiatrist.

Notably absent at Trump Tower was the rapper's wife, reality television star Kim Kardashian. She has kept a low profile since gunmen broke into her Paris hotel room and robbed her of \$10

million worth of jewelry—and gossip pages have recently speculated on the state of the couple's marriage.



Singer Kanye West and President-elect Donald Trump talk at Trump Tower after meetings on December 13, 2016 in New York. — AFP

Similar styles

The New York Post reported that Trump will also meet the Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli, who is performing Thursday at Madison Square Garden, and appeal to him to sing at the January 20 inauguration. Only a smattering of artists backed Trump, who pulled off an upset through support from white working-class men after a campaign in which the tycoon excoriated Mexicans, Muslims and other minorities.

West previously campaigned for President Barack Obama and accused President George W. Bush of not caring about African Americans after the patchy response to Hurricane Katrina. The 39-year-old was also among the first in hip-hop to speak forcefully against homophobia. But West has drawn growing comparisons to Trump, with the rapper delighting in self-aggrandizing social media postings and criticism of establishment rules.

West has likened himself to Michelangelo and has alleged that the Grammys are rigged, threatening to boycott the music industry awards if he is not nominated for Album of the Year. He was not—although he is up in eight other categories. — AFP



In this March 25, 2016 file photo, the Rolling Stones' Mick Jagger performs a free concert in Havana, Cuba.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF A ROCK ERA

The year 2016 began with David Bowie releasing one of the most acclaimed albums of his vast career, a sign of new creative energy from the rock legend. Two days later, he was dead, from an undisclosed battle with cancer. Three months after that, another pop icon, Prince—who had covered Bowie's classic "Heroes" at one of his final concerts—also died, succumbing to an accidental overdose of painkillers despite his outward signs of vigor.

By late 2016, Leonard Cohen put out an album ominously entitled "You Want It Darker"—and the storied songwriter and poet, who spent his life reflecting on spirituality and mortality, passed away within weeks. The past year—so momentous on the political front—also marks a symbolic turning point for rock, with a generation of musical elders starting to exit the stage.

The year culminated with another milestone—the Nobel Committee for Literature endorsed rock as part of the literary canon, selecting music icon Bob Dylan as this year's laureate and hailing his "new poetic expressions." The sense of a rock era's passing could also be felt in California in October with Desert Trip, a new music festival that is likely to go down as the most profitable in history.

Some 150,000 fans, disproportionately older, came out to hear six top rock acts including The Rolling Stones, Paul McCartney and Dylan—with a subtext that it was unclear how much longer the septuagenarian greats would be playing.

Other major musicians who died in 2016 included: Maurice White, founder of funk all-stars Earth, Wind and Fire; Eagles frontman Glenn Frey; country icon Merle Haggard; two-thirds of the prog-rock trio Emerson, Lake and Palmer (only Carl Palmer is left); Jefferson Airplane co-founder Paul Kantner; and Phife Dawg of hip-hop groundbreakers A Tribe Called Quest.

Like jazz in another time

It is obviously coincidence that so many artists died in quick succession. But there is also a precedent—the 1980s and early 1990s, when towering figures in jazz were dying. In a loose parallel to Dylan's Nobel prize and the establishment recognition it represents, the US Congress in 1987 designated jazz as "an American national treasure."

Lawmakers at the time were hoping to step up education and historical preservation of jazz—a process well under way for rock, with Dylan earlier in 2016 announcing that his archive would go to the University of Tulsa, alongside papers of his Oklahoma-born inspiration Woody Guthrie.

Like with jazz in the late 20th century, the deaths in 2016 come at a time when music purists fret that the future will have fewer cohesive albums of the type of Bowie's final work,

"Blackstar." The top stars who died in 2016 consciously made music away from the spotlight.

Bowie lived with his family in a New York penthouse and was rarely seen. Cohen retreated to Los Angeles where he spent time in a Buddhist monastery and the prolific Prince secluded himself in his Paisley Park complex in Minnesota. For Bowie and Prince, "basically for the last couple of decades, they either were in isolation or at least had autonomy over what they were doing," said Theo Cateforis, an associate professor of music history and cultures at Syracuse University.

"And that seems unusual for a newer artist who has such accessibility and is expected to have a Twitter feed and be in some sort of constant engagement," he said. "Their passing allows us to reflect on what careers were like in previous eras—and that that kind of artist may be less and less frequent in the future."—AFP



In this Dec 15, 2003 file photo, singer/songwriter David Bowie launches his United States leg of his worldwide tour called "A Reality Tour," at Madison Square Garden in New York. — AP photos



A woman dressed as an angel poses with masked participants prior to the start of the traditional Krampus run, near the Christmas market in Munich Germany Sunday Dec 11, 2016. A Krampus is a horned folklore figure described as half-goat, half-demon. — AP

Critics take sabres to Star Wars 'Rogue One'

Thousands of fans finally got to see the new Star Wars spin-off film yesterday as it opened across Europe, dividing critics. "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story" has already notched up the highest first day pre-sales ever in the United States following last year's record-breaking "The Force Awakens". But there was less enthusiasm on the other side of the Atlantic with the first screenings in Paris only three-quarters full.

And several critics took their light sabres to the plot with the French daily Liberation branding it "stutteringly cosmic" and The New York Times calling it a "thoroughly mediocre movie" that millions would sit through "and convince themselves that it's perfectly delightful". But Sweden's Svenska Dagbladet daily was won over, declaring that "despite some forced dialogue and wearying back and forth... 'Rogue One' is two hours and 13 minutes of hugely entertaining space action."

Not that the faithful were put off. Parisian product manager Catherine Jolivet, 35, who has grown up with the saga, said she was cheered by the fact that "female characters have become so important" as she queued up for her ticket. Just like "The Force Awakens", the grittier "Rogue One" has a female lead, with Felicity Jones starring as intergalactic bad girl Jyn Erso, recruited by the Rebel Alliance to destroy the

Death Star, a planet-sized weapon of mass destruction.

Oedipal twist

In a typical Star Wars Oedipal twist, her father Galen, played by Mads Mikkelsen, is none other than the brilliant scientist gone bad who has designed the Death Star. The story, about a maverick rebel force who mount an almost suicide mission to steal the plans for the imperial Death Star, is set just before the very first Star Wars epic, "A New Hope".

Although it has only fleeting though spectacular appearances by Darth Vader and Princess Leia from the beloved 1977 movie, it has all the familiar ingredients including Stormtroopers, X-wing fighters and a cute robot character. Nor has the hype quite reached the same pitch as last year's "The Force Awakens"—which came a decade after the end of the last Star Wars trilogy.

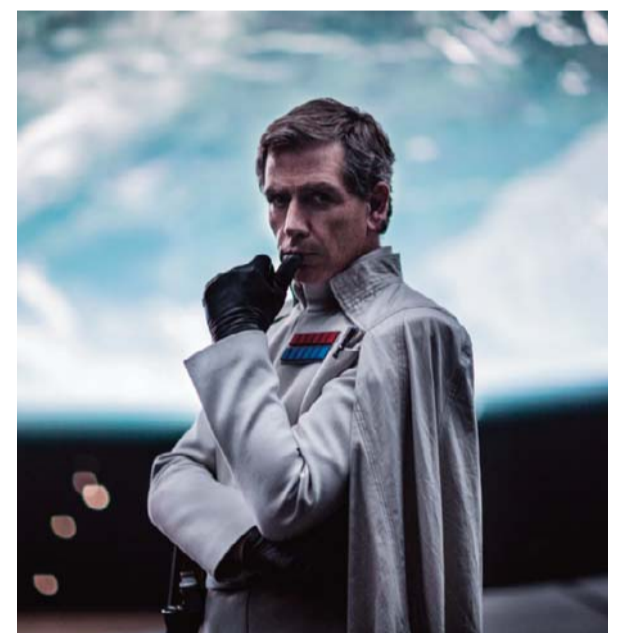
Huge box office

"The Force Awakens" helped Disney to record \$5 billion (4.7 billion euros) box office takings last year, and the studio has left nothing to chance as it rolled out the new film Wednesday across France, Belgium, Switzerland, The Netherlands and Scandinavia. Audiences in North America will have to wait until Friday, while those in Britain and most of

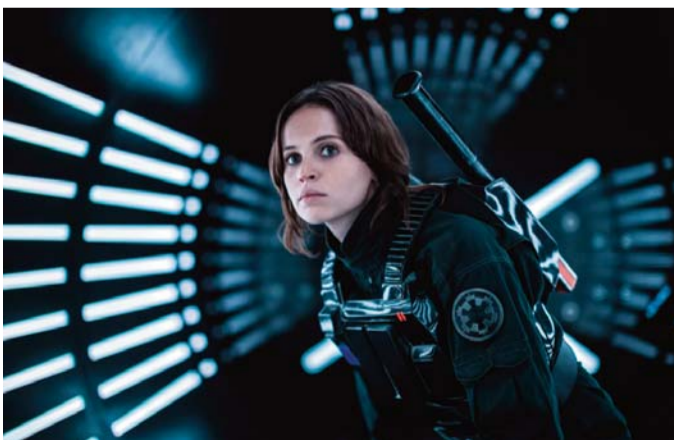
Asia will get to see it a day earlier. It will not open in China until January 12.

The studio has gone to extraordinary lengths to make sure no details of the plot have leaked out beyond the two trailers it posted in the run-up to the release. Directed by the British-born maker of "Godzilla" Gareth Edwards, the movie is more of a war film than previous adventures with one sequence seen as a nod to Francis Ford Coppola's 1979 classic "Apocalypse Now".

Pundits expect "Rogue One" to open at \$130-\$150 million, some way behind the \$248 million debut weekend for "The Force Awakens" and end up with a final global total of around \$1.4 billion. The spin-off is part of an attempt to revitalize the franchise since Disney bought Lucasfilm in 2012 when it was still reeling from grim reviews for the prequel trilogy. The idea is to bring out a sequel trilogy with a movie every other year starting with "The Force Awakens" in 2015 — and intersperse those releases with an "anthology trilogy" of one-off, stand-alone movies like "Rogue One". — AFP



Ben Mendelsohn as Director Krennic



This image released by Lucasfilm Ltd shows Felicity Jones as Jyn Erso in a scene from, "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story." — AP photos



Diego Luna as Cassian Andor



A scene from, "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story".



British author JK Rowling

Handwritten JK Rowling fairytales sold at UK auction

A rare collection of fairytales handwritten by JK Rowling as a gift to her "Harry Potter" publisher sold for nearly £370,000 at a UK auction on Tuesday. The copy of "The Tales of Beedle the Bard" reached £368,750 (\$467,000, 439,700 euros) in the sale at Sotheby's auction house in London.

The collection of fairytales was created within the "Harry Potter" series and helped the young wizard and his friends defeat his nemesis Lord Voldemort. The copy auctioned this week was given in 2007 to publisher Barry Cunningham, who gave his backing to the first "Harry Potter" book and thus launched a global literary craze. "To

Barry, the man who thought an overlong novel about a boy wizard in glasses might just sell... THANK YOU," Rowling wrote at the front of the book.

The collection is bejewelled with semi-precious stones and features a sterling silver mounted skull on the cover. Rowling wrote a total of six copies of the tales by hand, which were given to those most closely connected to the "Harry Potter" series, while a seventh book was written for sale at a charity auction. That copy raised £1.95 million at the Sotheby's auction in 2007, which was donated to Rowling's children's charity Lumos.

Intense interest in the wizarding world continues nearly

two decades after Rowling's first of seven volumes, "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone", was published in 1997. Earlier this year a 1930s-era oak chair on which Rowling sat while writing the first two "Harry Potter" books sold for \$394,000 through Heritage Auctions. Rowling received the chair-one of a mismatched set of four-free when she was a young single mother living in subsidized housing in the Scottish city of Edinburgh. — AFP