

Diabetes affects over 15% of Gulf people



Turkey says it won't leave Syrian refugees to die



Bosnian first-graders reach out to deaf schoolmate



Costa and Chelsea keep heat on Van Gaal



BALL STARTS ROLLING IN BID TO SLASH SUBSIDIES

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OUTRAGE OVER N KOREA ROCKET LAUNCH

SEOUL: North Korea said yesterday it had successfully put a satellite into orbit, with a rocket launch widely condemned as another defiant step towards developing a missile capable of striking the US mainland. The launch, which violated multiple UN resolutions, amounted to the North doubling down against an international community already struggling to punish Pyongyang for its nuclear test barely a month ago. The UN Security Council met behind closed-doors in New York to issue unanimous condemnation of the rocket launch, but a new sanctions resolution under negotiation for weeks has yet to be put to a vote. South Korean President Park Geun-Hye urged the Security Council to respond quickly with "strong punitive measures".

In a special state TV broadcast, a female North Korean announcer, wearing a traditional Korean hanbok dress, hailed the "epochal" launch, personally ordered by leader Kim Jong-Un, as a major success. There was no immediate external confirmation that the final stage of the satellite-bearing rocket had successfully achieved orbit, although the US Strategic Command said it had tracked "the missile launch into space".

Continued on Page 13



North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un looks at the rocket launch of earth observation satellite Kwangmyong 4 yesterday.— AFP

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The National Assembly yesterday held a rare meeting with the Supreme Planning Council to review government plans to reform the economy in the face of falling prices of oil, which contributes to more than 95 percent of public revenues. The meeting discussed measures the government proposes to take to finance the budget deficit projected at a record KD 11.5 billion, mainly by lifting subsidies on electricity, water and petrol.

Kuwait remains the only country in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) not to raise the price of petrol as all other five members - Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates - have taken such measures. The meeting was attended by members of the economic development committee of the planning council, the assembly speaker and 26 MPs, in addition to a number of Cabinet ministers.

Minister of Public Works and State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Ali Al-Omair said after the meeting that the issue of subsidies occupied a small part of the meeting, which focused mainly on the wider scope of economic reforms and measures to cut government spending. The minister said that all sides are in agreement for the need to reform the Kuwaiti economy and tackle imbalances in it, represented in its total dependence on oil as the main source of income.

Omair said the government will brief MPs today of its detailed plans to raise the prices of electricity, water and petrol, ahead of a crucial Assembly session tomorrow.

Continued on Page 13

EQUATE IN TALKS TO REFINANCE \$6BN LOAN

DUBAI: Kuwait's EQUATE Petrochemical Co is in talks with banks to refinance a \$6 billion bridge loan that it secured last year and was partly used to fund the acquisition of petrochemical company MEGlobal, sources with knowledge of the matter said yesterday. The venture between Dow Chemical and Petrochemical Industries Co (PIC) of Kuwait is seeking funds split into portions of three years and five years, the sources said on condition of anonymity as the information is not public. One source, a Gulf-based banker, added the first tranche would be structured as a revolving credit facility and the second as a term loan. EQUATE did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Kuwait's finances have been hit by a slump in oil prices. This has squeezed banking system liquidity, forcing government and quasi-sovereign entities to scramble for financing ahead of possible US interest rate hikes in the coming months. EQUATE's loan would facilitate the exit of Dow from some of its ventures in Kuwait; the sale of ME Global is part of Dow's

bigger plan to optimize ownership in its Kuwait operations. EQUATE originally raised a \$6 billion bridge loan in December to buy MEGlobal from Dow and PIC, part of state-run Kuwait Petroleum, for \$3.2 billion, and to refinance some of EQUATE's existing debt. The loan is due to mature in Dec 2016 although it has an option to be extended for six months. EQUATE is taking indications from local and international banks for bullet as well as amortizing loans, the Gulf-based banker and a second source said. In a bullet loan, the principal is repaid at the end of the term, while in an amortizing structure, the borrower repays parts of the loan throughout the duration.

The current bridge loan was arranged by banks including JP Morgan, Citigroup, HSBC, Kuwait Finance House and National Bank of Kuwait. Established in 1995, EQUATE operates an integrated manufacturing facility producing more than 5 million tonnes annually of petrochemical products, including polyethylene and ethylene, that are marketed throughout the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Europe. — Reuters



MANCHESTER, New Hampshire: Republican presidential candidates New Jersey Governor Chris Christie (second right) and Donald Trump joke as Sen Marco Rubio (left) stands by during a commercial break in the Republican presidential debate at St Anselm College on Saturday. — AFP

RUBIO WILTS, TRUMP STRONG

MANCHESTER: Surging Republican hopeful Marco Rubio wilted under sustained attack in the latest US presidential debate, denting his stature going into tomorrow's New Hampshire primary dominated by frontrunner Donald Trump. The telegenic, 44-year-old Florida senator - who polls suggest has the best chance of winning the White House for the Republicans - was savaged by his rivals late Saturday for his lack of experience, floundering on a debate stage where he often shines.

A strong showing in New Hampshire would confirm Rubio as the establishment candidate-of-choice for the nomination after his strong third-place finish in Iowa, behind Trump and evangelical US senator Ted Cruz.

Chris Christie, Jeb Bush and John Kasich, meanwhile, need to wrest some of the momentum away from Rubio if they are to keep their presidential dreams alive as the voting schedule shifts south and west.

The most sustained attack was waged by New Jersey governor Christie, a no-nonsense former federal prosecutor who has campaigned hard in New Hampshire and denigrated Rubio for being controlled by his team. "Marco, the thing is this. When you're president of the United States... the memorized 30-second speech where you talk about how great America is at the end of it doesn't solve one problem," Christie said.

Continued on Page 13

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KUWAIT: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah reads a letter from President of Sudan Omar Al-Bashir, presented by Sudanese Minister of State Taha Othman Ahmed Al-Hussain. —KUNA photos



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets Sudanese Minister of State Taha Othman Ahmed Al-Hussain.

CROWN PRINCE RECEIVES LETTER FROM SUDANESE PRESIDENT

KUWAIT: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday a letter from President of Sudan Omar Al-Bashir to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, dealing with bilateral relations and means of boosting them.

The letter was delivered at Seif Palace by Sudan's Minister of State at The Presidency and Director of the President's Office Taha Osman Al-Husseini. The audience was attended by Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, Protocol Chief at His Highness the Crown Prince's Diwan Sheikh Mubarak Sabah Al-

Salem Al-Sabah and Kuwait's Ambassador to Sudan Talal Mansour Al-Hajeri.

Later, The First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah met Minister Hussain at the Foreign Ministry headquarters. The meeting was attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Khalid Sulaiman Al-Jarallah, Director of the Office of The First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ambassador Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah and other ministry officials.

Meanwhile, His Highness Sheikh Nawaf received National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem, His Highness the Prime Minister

Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Khaled Jarrah Al-Sabah.

His Highness also received Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Minister of Electricity and Water Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah. —KUNA

AMIRI ADVISOR: AMIR'S UN HONORING DESERVED



KUWAIT: Amiri Diwan Advisor Ambassador Mohammad Abulhasan (right) is seen with Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Oil Sheikh Talal Al-Athbi Al-Sabah. —KUNA

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the State of Kuwait truly deserved to be awarded by the UN as 'Humanitarian Leader' and 'Humanitarian Center' respectively, said Amiri Diwan Advisor Ambassador Mohammad Abulhasan.

The deserved UN honoring was due to the fact that Kuwait's humanitarian initiatives and activities were totally based on purely humanitarian purposes, he said to reporters on the sidelines of a seminar organized by the Ministry of Oil yesterday on His Highness the Amir's career.

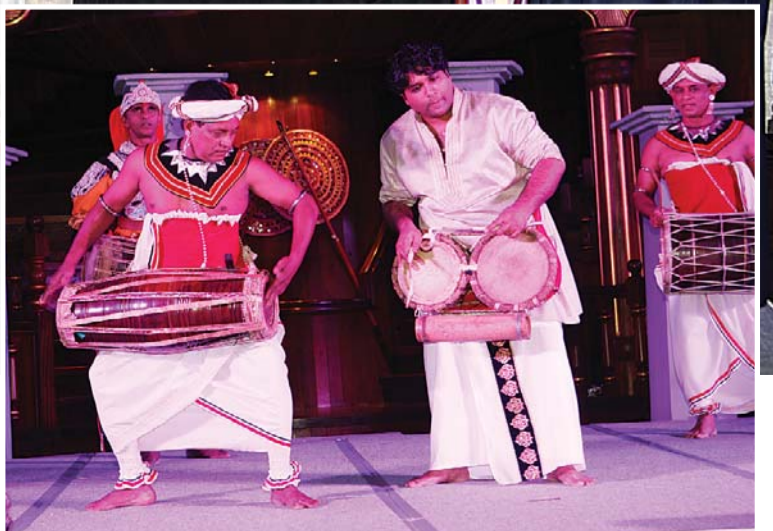
Unlike some other countries which have their own motives, the prime goal of Kuwait's humanitarian action is to provide help to the needy and the have-nots, the advisor added. He said he was highly proud of His Highness the Amir's UN humanitarian title, terming it as a really 'rare title.'

Meanwhile, Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Oil Sheikh Talal Al-Athbi Al-Sabah boasted that the ministry always organizes annual events in February, but this year's occasions coincide with the 10th anniversary of His Highness the Amir's assumption of power. The ministry will unprecedentedly present 7,000-8,000 documents this year on the occasion of the country's national festivals, the official added.

On oil prices, the official said it is the world market which sets oil prices, lamenting that supply is around 1.5-2 million barrels a day higher than demand. Non-OPEC producers, chiefly Russia and America, are mainly to blame for oil oversupply at the global market, he added. Kuwait's current oil production hits three million barrels per day, the oil official estimated, pointing out it has reached this level for one month. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Ambassador of Sri Lanka to Kuwait Kandeepan Balasubramaniam hosted a ceremony recently to celebrate his country's National Day. State officials led by Minister of Public Works Dr Ali Al-Omair, diplomats and other dignitaries attended the event. —Photos by Joseph Shagra



KUWAIT'S ENVOY PRAISES AUSTRALIA'S PEACEFUL ROLE

CANBERRA: Kuwait's Ambassador to Australia Najeeb Al-Bader expressed his appreciation yesterday for the prominent role of Australia in boosting the international peace and security, especially through its contribution to liberate Kuwait following the 1990 Iraqi invasion.

This came during a meeting with the Secretary of the Australian Government's Department of Veterans, Simon Lewis and First Assistant Secretary Client and Commemorations Division, Major General Dave Chalmers in Canberra, Australia, Kuwait's Embassy in Australia said in a statement.

Bader said that Australia's contribution in the international peacekeeping forces

in nine Arab countries, confirms the country's keenness on strengthening its relations with the Middle East region. He also pointed out to Australia's active participation in the international coalition forces led by the United States to fight the so-called Islamic state (IS) in Iraq and Syria.

He expressed satisfaction on the level of cooperation between the two countries in various fields, stressing the unanimity of views on all issues, especially the crises in the region. Meanwhile, Lewis expressed his pride of Australia's participation in Kuwait's liberation war, adding that the number of military forces participated amounted to 1,581, including the naval forces. —KUNA



CANBERRA: Kuwait's Ambassador to Australia Najeeb Al-Bader is pictured with the Secretary of the Australian Government's Department of Veterans, Simon Lewis. —KUNA

E-NEWSPAPER PARTICIPATES AT DUBAI ACCESS ABILITIES 2016

KUWAIT: Al-Amal voluntary electronic newspaper announced yesterday its participation in Access Abilities 2016, Middle East's largest 3-day expo on disabilities to be held in Dubai today. The newspaper is representing Kuwait at this expo, aims to highlighting the bright image of the Kuwaiti youth in volunteerism and serving humanitarian issues under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah "Leader of the Humanitarian Work," Abdullah Al-Shammari, head of the delegation and the newspaper editor-in-chief said.

The expo is under the Patronage of Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, Chairman of Dubai Airports, Chairman and Chief Executive of Emirates Airline Group, he said. During the expo, the Kuwaiti participation from the newspaper members and volunteers will show the awareness role played by the newspaper to serve people with disabilities and provide all the necessary information regarding this important humanitarian issue, he added.

Amal electronic newspaper was founded in 2009 with aim of serving this segment and aiding them to be as able as other citizens in serving the society. The news-



Abdullah Al-Shammari

paper was honored by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah with Al-Subah Award (first place) in 2009. It was also honored with the Diamond Award, presented by Burgan Bank as the best voluntary group that serves people with special needs in 2011.

It came in third place in the best electronic containment in Kuwait electronic Award by the Kuwait Center for the Advancement of Science in 2012. In the same year, it received the Sharjah Award for voluntary work as the best voluntary group in the Arab world. —KUNA

KUWAIT UNIVERSITY OPENS ACADEMIC ENROLLMENT FAIR FOR GRADUATES

KUWAIT: Kuwait University (KU) opened yesterday the fourth annual college admission fair for high school students, due for five days, and aiming to provide an opportunity for students to learn more about faculties in the university and its various majors.

University Vice President for Research Dr Taher Al-Sahaf told reporters, after the opening, that the exhibition also aims to acquaint students with admission requirements and guidelines, including job opportunities available for some, upon graduation.

Kuwait needs qualified professionals in many fields to advance the country and support the development process, he said, adding that there are academic majors saturated with large numbers of students, and others with students' shortage. Regarding



Dr Taher Al-Sahaf

number of students expected to be admitted for the next academic year, Sahaf said that such an issue would be determined by the University Board. —KUNA



SMART CITIES HELP ADDRESS GROWING DEMAND ON HOUSING CARE: MINISTER

KUWAIT: Minister of State for Housing Affairs Yasser Abul says he is looking forward to global experiments and examples pertaining to smart cities as a solution for facing the rise in demands for getting housing care.

This came during a speech the minister delivered on behalf of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah yesterday at the conference of 'the smart solution of future cities,' held on sidelines of the 19th Gulf Engineering Forum. Smart cities contribute to creating economic resources and opportunities for youth, providing environment solutions and achieving sustainable development, he said.

The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) will follow up on fruits of researches in this regard, he said, indicating that participation of experts at the conference will help people be familiar with legislations and laws in line with the government policy in collaboration with the National Assembly.

He expressed government's desire to know the latest developments pertaining to smart applications so as to use them in education, to develop youth and systems of protection and safety, and serve people with special needs.

Meanwhile, Saad Al-Muhalbi, head of the conference's supreme committee and Kuwait Society of Engineers, said about 70 research papers were accepted during the two-day conference which features up to 550 participants of experienced people. He added that the society organized the event out of its societal responsibility as economic, social and environmental factors are in favor of sustainable development.

The conference was held with the aim of

finding alternative solutions to contribute to achieving sustainable development amid the region's economic situation due to the decline in oil prices, the main source of GCC member states' income, he said. He noted that the State of Kuwait is planning to set up major housing projects like Sabah Al-Ahmad City, Nawaf Al-Ahmad City, about 270,000 housing units and others.

Also, Khalil Al Hosni, Secretary General of the Gulf Engineering Union, said the convention sheds light on smart solutions of the future cities and challenges which will face the coming generation. The event includes main axes represented in smart projects in the areas of health, information technology, smart building, energy and smart applications. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Minister of State for Housing Affairs Yasser speaks at the 'smart solution of future cities' conference yesterday. —Photo by Fouad Al-Shaikh

KUWAIT, EGYPT DISCUSS SECURITY COOPERATION

KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah met yesterday with Major General Khaled Fawzy, the Director of the Egyptian General Intelligence Directorate (EGID), and his accompanying delegation. Talks between the two sides dealt with enhancing and exchanging security information between the two brotherly countries. Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled reaffirmed deep rooted historic ties, while the Egyptian director praised existent security cooperation and ways to boost them at higher level.

Meanwhile, Interior Ministry's (MoI) Undersecretary Lieutenant General Sulaiman Al-Fahad held talks with Mexico's Ambassador to Kuwait Miguel Angel Isidro on gaining expertise from Mexican security training.

Lt Gen Fahad in a statement said he exchanged

with the Mexican Ambassador information in area of security, particularly in combating terrorism, money laundering, criminal evidence and fight against drug trafficking. The discussions also dealt with a planned visit by Ministry of Interior's delegation to Mexico for signing a security cooperation agreement. The Mexican Ambassador meanwhile expressed appreciation for the Kuwaiti side for the efforts in strengthening ties and boosting cooperation for the two countries' security.

The Undersecretary also held talks with Ambassador of Senegal to Kuwait, Abdou Lahad Mbacke, on boosting cooperation and deep-rooted relations shared between the two countries. For his part, the ambassador expressed gratitude for Kuwait's support towards Senegal in all fields. Both meetings were attended by ministry officials. —KUNA



A new turning inaugurated on Al-Nuwiseeb road yesterday.



KUWAIT TO WITNESS SEVERAL ROAD PROJECTS IN 2016: OFFICIAL

KUWAIT: Kuwait will witness this year a large number of roads' development ventures namely inauguration of a main highway, part of renovating Al-Jahra road, an official at the Ministry of Public Works announced yesterday.

Ahmad Al-Hsan, the Assistant Undersecretary for Roads' Engineering, made the announcement while inaugurating a turnings on Al-Nuwiseeb road, as part of up to eight new turnings, noting that they are designed to minimize accidents.

The official said draft plans had been worked out to renovate the fourth ring road, indicating that consultancy houses would be sounded out, pending endorsement and execution. The Ministry's road sector has already earmarked a budget estimated at KD 500 million, forecasting its endorsement by the Ministry of Finance in a few months.

Project to upgrade the first ring road is proceeding as scheduled, Hsan said, revealing that the relevant contract had been signed and work had begun five months ago. Moreover, he indicated at signing another contract to develop Al-Bede' roundabout. Work orders will be issued later this month for this project, in addition to main roads linking Al-Wafra road, Sabah Al-Ahmad district and Al-Khairan. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Ahmad Al-Hsan (center) speaks to reporters on sidelines of inaugurating a turning on Al-Nuwiseeb road. —Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh

GOVT COMMITTED TO MANPOWER EMPOWERMENT: MINISTER

KUWAIT: Kuwait's government cares for habituating national cadres and empowering them with special expertise in various domains in line with its advocacy of developing human resources for boosting development, a senior official re-affirmed yesterday.

The renewed confirmation of the Government commitment was expressed by Minister of Social Affairs and Labor, Minister of State for Development and Planning Dr Hind Al-Subaih, in a statement she addressed at a seminar, organized by the General Secretariat of Planning and Development, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

Minister Subaih underlined the UNDP's important role for empowering national cadres with the required experience, hoping to see, eventually, a large number of Kuwait youth occupying senior international posts. The seminar was held after Kuwait joined the UN convention for supporting junior employees; designed to guide the young Kuwaiti citizens acquire field expertise in international development cooperation. In 2013, Kuwait assigned 10 Kuwaiti personnel to be involved in the UNDP skills enhancing programs. Three had been employed by the UNDP and one by OPEC Development Fund. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Minister Dr Hind Al-Subaih attends a seminar organized in cooperation with the UNDP yesterday. —KUNA

CONDOLENCES

Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief,
management and staff

convey their deepest condolences to

Al-Ma'osherji family

on the sad demise of

Khaznah Abdullah Al-Ma'osherji

wife of Nayef Mubarak Al-Ma'osherji

May Allah Almighty bestow His mercy on her



DIVE TEAM ORGANIZES RAFT RACING AT UMM AL-GAZ ISLAND

KUWAIT: Kuwait Dive Team launched a competition yesterday for environment-friendly Raft racing at Umm Al-Gaz Island on the occasion of the country's celebrations of the National and Liberation Days. The competition aims to encourage people to do

sports, bring awareness towards protecting the environment and shed light on the artificial island which is one of the most prominent marine destinations in the country, team leader Waleed Al-Fadhil told KUNA. The competition has been setup in two

phases; the first is for kayaks rowing boats and the second for boards rowing. The starting point of the race is from the Sharq beach, moving on to Umm Al-Gaz Island, he said. The competition was in cooperation with Kuwait Kayak Club, Kuwait Fire Service

Directorate, Al-Shuwaikh Port Center, General Administration of the Coast Guards and Platinum Health Club.

Meanwhile, Bashar Al-Hunaidi, head of the Kayak Club said the competition was a wonderful and effective, adding that he

hoped to spread this kind of environment-friendly sport. The island, built 100 years ago, is situated in front of Souq Sharq and north west of Kuwait Towers. The island has a five-meter high Kuwaiti flag post that people can see from the beach. —KUNA



Wa'd Al-Bahari is honored at the conclusion ceremony of the 22nd Al-Qurain Cultural Festival.—KUNA photos

AL-QURAIN CULTURAL FESTIVAL CONCLUDES

KUWAIT: The National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) has wrapped up the 22nd Al-Qurain Cultural Festival with a concert performed by Wa'd Al-Bahari at Abdulhussein Abdulredha Theater on Saturday night.

NCCAL's Assistant Secretary General for the Culture Sector Mohammad Al-Asousi said this year's edition of the festival gained additional significance as it coincided with Kuwait's celebrations marking the selection as Capital of Islamic Culture for 2016.

"The festival featured a variety of cultural events, including artistic, musical, theatrical, poetic and literary events," he said in a statement to KUNA on the sidelines of the closing ceremony. "It has seen the honoring of winners of the state order of merit and incentive order, as well as symposia for artistic celebrities such as Abdullah Fadhlah and Aisha Ibrahim," Asousi pointed out.

While the country celebrates its well-deserved selection as Capital of Islamic Culture this year, the NCCAL will continue holding a range of cultural activities throughout the year in collaboration with the concerned state departments and civil society institutions, he added.

Meanwhile, NCCAL's Assistant Secretary

General for the Arts' Sector Dr Bader Al-Deweesh said the distinctive feature of this year's festival is that it provided a panoramic view of the Kuwaiti culture.

"The festival offered a complete range of the various manifestations of Kuwait's cultural spectrum with emphasis on the national Arab dimension," he said, referring to the participation of a number of Arab intellectuals in the event.

"By tracing the progress of the cultural movement in Kuwait, you can find that theater and music are the most popular arts. Therefore, the NCCAL had carefully selected the agenda of the festival in a way that suits the taste of the audience," Deweesh noted. He commended as fruitful and successful the partnership between NCCAL, on one hand, and the government bodies, the civil society and the private sector on the other. The concert, offered by Wa'd Al-Bahari at the closing ceremony, included popular songs such as 'Isma'ouni,' 'Wahashteeni,' 'Nassam Aliyina Al-Hawa,' 'Ahwa,' 'Khayef A'ouli Elli fi Albi,' and 'Layali Al-Ons fi Vienna. The 22nd Al-Qurain Cultural Festival opened on Monday, January 18, under auspices of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Wa'd Al-Bahari performs at Abdulhussein Abdulredha Theater.

DIABETES HITS OVER 15% OF GULF PEOPLE: OFFICIAL

GCC ANTI-DIABETES MEETING OPENS IN KUWAIT

KUWAIT: The GCC committee on diabetes control convened in Kuwait yesterday, focusing on how to find effective ways to prevent and control diabetes in the GCC member states. In a keynote speech, Assistant Undersecretary of the Kuwaiti Health Ministry and Member of the Executive Bureau of the GCC Council of Health Ministers for Technical Affairs Qais Al-Dweiri said GCC health meetings give top priority to joint medical programs, primarily in the field of controlling diabetes.

Five percent of the world's population are down with diabetes, as the World Health Organization (WHO) considers diabetes as a serious and costly disease which is becoming increasingly common, especially in developing countries, he said. He quoted the WHO as calling on member states to take urgent measures in order to control the serious disease through primary control programs.

Diabetes hits over 15 percent of the Gulf people, the GCC official said, adding that chronic diseases are to blame for 68 percent of deaths in the State of Kuwait. Kuwait has established Dasman Diabetes Institute in



KUWAIT: Assistant Undersecretary of the Kuwaiti Health Ministry Qais Al-Dweiri (right) attends a meeting for the GCC committee on diabetes control yesterday. — KUNA

order to prevent, control and mitigate the impact of diabetes and related conditions in Kuwait through effective programs of research, training, education, and health promotion and thereby improve quality of life in the population.

The institute was created in 2006 at the

behest of His Highness the later Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah as an independent body chaired by His Highness the Amir, he pointed out. On the meeting of the GCC committee on diabetes control, he said the officials will discuss an updated GCC plan to control diabetes in the GCC members. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Minister Hind Al-Subaih is pictured with volunteers after launching activities of the voluntary campaign on decorating walls.— KUNA

128 VOLUNTARY TEAMS APPROVED LAST YEAR

KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs and Labor, and Minister of State for Planning Affairs and Development Hind Al-Subaih said that about 128 teams of volunteers in different areas were approved last year since the issuance of the regulation organizing voluntary action.

In a press statement on Saturday on sidelines of launching activities of the voluntary campaign on decorating walls, the minister added the aim of registering these teams is to develop society, human resources and work atmospheres inside government institutions. It is also designed to support youth and benefit from experts in this field.

The ministry is paying much attention to voluntary action and is keen on registering such

teams so as to achieve several goals like providing necessary care for the society's categories, organizing voluntary actions and preparing required programs, she noted.

Promoting contributions of volunteers to serve the society, benefiting from skilled people in this regard and developing work atmospheres of the State's institutions are also among the goals, she said. She expressed her readiness to support talented youth within the framework of a policy based on developing their capabilities and innovations, underlining the importance of investing in youth in order to achieve human development. She affirmed the ministry's keenness on adopting youth issues and removing obstacles facing their innovations. The minister

voiced her gratitude to the companies which are interested in national products and deal with teams of volunteers with the aim of encouraging them to work. Meanwhile, Suleiman Al-Rawdan, head of the campaign, said the campaign was launched to paint buildings and walls which have some unacceptable "phrases" by some people, adding that it began its official activities by the end of last March.

The campaign seeks to decorate walls of Kuwait's institutions in line with the country's civilized renaissance and the concept of street art, he noted. It also aims to increase public awareness of visual pollution, enhance the concept of the street art and protect the State's general utilities, he concluded. —KUNA

Legalese

FINDING A JOB IN KUWAIT

By Attorney Fajer Ahmed

A common trend around the world currently with all that is going on is immigration. People are moving from one country to another, for different reasons of course, including looking for stability and peace, better lifestyles, job opportunities and so on.

The GCC generally has received in the past 10 years a surge of immigrants. The UAE now has nearly eight times more expats than UAE nationals, while Qatar has six times more expats and Kuwait has 2-3 times more expats! Therefore, I keep repeating this topic in general because I think it is of great importance to our readers. Everyone wants to know what the situation is for expats working in Kuwait, especially with all the news in the past few months about deportations for various reasons.

There was a general concern that the government was heading towards decreasing the amount of expats working in Kuwait in order to create more jobs for Kuwaitis. Recently though, the government met officials from various countries emphasizing the importance of creating diversity within Kuwait. Also, the government has promised violating expats that they could just pay their fines and will not be banned from entering Kuwait or the GCC in the future. All this news has created major concerns that I answer below:

Searching for jobs online

Question: How can I come for work in Kuwait? Are companies still hiring expats? Can I get a visa to look for a job?

Fajer: Yes, companies are still hiring expats of various nationalities for different jobs, unfortunately though from experience, it seems harder for certain nationalities to get job offers/work permits than others. There are no visas to be granted for you to come in to Kuwait to look for a job. Usually, how it works is you get a job offer and then a work permit to enter Kuwait and not the other way around. So if you would like to work in Kuwait, I suggest you look for jobs online and apply or maybe work with a company that has an office in Kuwait and you can then transfer to Kuwait.

Firing expats

Question: The company that I am working for has lost a lot of money lately, and has therefore fired expats first, claiming that this is the law. Is this true?

Fajer: There is no law that states that non-Kuwaitis are to be let go before Kuwaiti citizens when a company is bankrupt. With that said, there is also no law that makes it illegal for a company to fire non-Kuwaitis first. In fact from experience, some companies prefer to let go of expats first on the basis that preference is for Kuwaitis in their home country, stating that non-Kuwaitis can go back and find a job in their home country.

Absconding cases

Question: I have run away from my sponsor because of abuse and my visa has expired. I really want to go home now but I am afraid. What can I do?

Fajer: No matter how difficult the job gets or the pressure around you from any verbal abuse, do not abscond. Absconding in Kuwait has criminal consequences. Unless you are being physically abused, I suggest you file a complaint with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor.

As for the recent news that violators could just pay fines for violating the law and will not be punished, neither will you be. I trust the Kuwait government and therefore would like to believe that it is true. Yet, I have not received any emails or heard of any firsthand experiences that the above is either true or false. If you have had an experience recently, kindly share with me at ask@fajertlawyer.com

Moving to another GCC country

Question: I left Kuwait last year without informing my employer due to personal problems and I was not in the proper state of mind during that time. My residency validity is until Dec 2016. Now I am in my country of origin and I wish to move to another GCC country. My question is will I face any problem once I arrive to the GCC because of my history in Kuwait. Can my previous company ban me from entering the GCC?

Fajer: To be completely honest with you, the answer to this question depends on how your previous company dealt with the issue. It would be fair to assume that there could be an absconding case against you, or from experience, other cases. Well, how do you check? There is no easy way, but I usually suggest for my clients to give me a power of attorney from their home country (keep in mind this can take up to two months, but usually takes around 10 working days). With the POA, I can then have one of my team members go and check at court whether or not there is a case against my client. I then email my client informing him or her on what the outcome is and what steps they can take and whether or not it is safe for them to come back to the GCC.

For any legal questions or queries, email ask@fajertlawyer.com.

SUNNY BUT COLD OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS

KUWAIT: Weather in Kuwait today is expected to be sunny, with moderate northwesterly winds (12-31 km/h). Temperature meanwhile is forecast at 19-22 degrees. At night, it will turn cold. It will be also sunny tomorrow and Wednesday however coldness will set in after nightfall.—KUNA

GCC INFLATION LESS THAN 2 PERCENT, EXCEPT KUWAIT

SEMINAR ADDRESSES LIFTING SUBSIDIES

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Inflation rates in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries over the past ten months of 2015 were less than 2 percent except in Kuwait, a recent report shows. The GCC Statistical Center recently issued a report about the GCC Consumer Price Index (CPI) for 2015, which is the first of its kind issued by the center within an initiative to build a general GCC CPI database by 2020. According to the report, CPI is of great significance for decision makers and could be used to limit unjustified price increases. It also describes the changes in the average price level of goods and services purchased by households and is a statistical estimate constructed using the prices of a sample of representative items whose prices are collected periodically. Sub-indexes are computed for different categories and sub-categories of goods and services, being combined to produce the overall index with weights reflecting their shares in the total of the household expenditures covered by the index.

The report stressed that building a CPI database would help in using it in various socioeconomic fields. The report also tackled foreign factors affecting inflation rates in GCC states. It notes that for the past six years, GCC inflation rates resembled international ones with a slight difference that started vanishing in 2012.

Lifting subsidies

Speakers at a seminar held recently at Al-Fadhlah Diwan under the title of 'Lifting Subsidies in View of Falling Oil Prices' agreed that the government should speak to citizens openly about the current economic situation. They also agreed that reform should start with senior officials, fighting corruption and stopping the squander of public funds before resorting to lifting subsidies. The prime speaker and host Yousif Saleh Al-Fadhlah said that with the first encounter with financial deficits, the government resorted to citizens as if they were the reason behind such deficits. "On the contrary, many well-off citizens have been playing the government's role by building schools, clinics and mosques at their own expense," he underlined, reminding of a recent donation by Qoraiyya Al-Qatami to treat 600 cancer patients. Meanwhile, former minister Ali Al-Moussa said that organizing the seminar reflects shortcomings in the government's performance. He also urged the government to be transparent with citizens. Former minister Ahmed Baqer meanwhile reminded of previous predictions about the current deficit as a result of depending on one source of income 'that we do not even control the prices of'. Baqer also noted that tenders worth billions of dinars had been given to individual non-KSE firms, and thus the profits they made did not benefit the Kuwaiti people and

economy. On his part, economist Mohammed Ramadan called for avoiding citizens when considering economic reforms because it was merchants, industrialists and expats who most benefited from government subsidies. He also called to have graded categories to receive subsidies so that the most deserving families could actually get them.

Political pressure

National Democratic Alliance (NDA) Secretary General Bashar Al-Sayegh warned Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa against yielding to lawmakers' pressure with regards to appointing senior officials in various educational facilities. He referred to the recent appointment of vice directors at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET). He also warned the ministry against using educational facilities as 'means to settle political and parliamentary conflicts'. "It is the minister's responsibility to distance the educational sector and facilities from political and parliamentary appeasements, especially since the outcome is already bad according to the minister's opinion," Sayegh said. He claimed that responding to pressure from the parliament, the Civil Services Commission (CSC) recently approved a list of certain names it had previously rejected and appointed them in educational facilities.

POLICE RAID BROTHEL DEDICATED FOR SENIOR CITIZENS IN MAHBOULA

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Ahmadi detectives yesterday raided a brothel in Mahboula that served senior citizens only, and arrested one man and three women inside. Detectives obtained a warrant from the public prosecution to raid the apartment after monitoring it for a week based on information that illegal activities were taking place there. Investigations had revealed that CCTV cameras were placed outside the apartment's door and building's entrance in order to detect police's activity. Furthermore, the investigations indicated that the brothel only welcomed

senior citizens six days a week except Friday from 8:00 am to 7:00 pm. The raid happened after a senior citizen that detectives sent under cover gave his signal. Police arrested a Kuwaiti man and three women, two Sri Lankan and one from Madagascar, inside the apartment. Furthermore, they found KD 49 in cash paid by two people who had left the apartment before the raid happened. The detainees were sent to the proper authorities for further action.

Man hurt in accident

A motorist was injured in a collision reported at the Fahaheel Highway yes-

terday. Firefighters arrived to the scene shortly after the accident was reported, and they helped free the man who was trapped inside his vehicle. Paramedics transported the driver to the nearest medical facility.

House fire

Firefighters tackled a blaze that was reported at a house in Subahiya yesterday. No injuries were reported in the incident. Preliminary investigations revealed that the fire started inside a tent set up at the house's yard. Further investigations are ongoing to reveal the exact cause of the fire.

UNION PROTESTS 'UNLAWFUL' ELECTION

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Members of the Change List running for the elections of the Ministry of Public Works (MPW) labor union's board of directors yesterday demonstrated outside the Public Authority of Manpower's building in Jabriya, in protest against what they described as 'fake polling results' in the election of the syndicate's chairman. Head of the Change List Anwar Al-Muhaini said the recent election was held in violation of articles 18 of the syndicate's charter and article 30 of the government's law. He added that the election was held before the general assembly convened in full. Muhaini also claimed that many of the winners had applied to run for the elections after the deadline on Sept 30 and it was not supervised by the government. On his part, the manpower authority's Public Relations Manager Dr Madloul Al-Thafieri met with the demonstrators on instructions from Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Hind Al-Subaih and told them that the minister had ordered the formation of a committee to investigate the election's validity.

Labor rights

Chairman of Kuwait Society for Human Rights (KSHR) Khaled Al-Ajmi received an International Labor Organization (ILO) delegation headed by the regional advisor for immigrant affairs Hans van de Glind and program supervisor Jumana Karame, ILO coordinator in Kuwait Dina Beheri and the coordinator of the national project to enhance the manpower authority's capabilities Jaber Ali Al-Ali. Van de Glind reviewed the role ILO plays in protecting labor rights as well as the programs it carries out in the Arab region and its efforts to fight human trafficking, forced labor and abuses against workers, namely immigrants. He added that Kuwait has come a long way in protecting labor rights by passing the domestic labor law and setting unified contracts.

Investigations law

Third electoral constituency candidate Abdullah Al-Kandari demanded amending article 10 of the investigations law number 35/2001. He pointed out that the public prosecution was the sole body that investigates both crimes and misdemeanors worldwide, while the two are separated in Kuwait between the public prosecution and the investigations department.

Telecom authority

Minister of Communication and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Essa Al-Kandari and his undersecretary Hameed Al-Qattan yesterday visited the Public Authority for Telecommunications and Information Technology where they were received by the authority's CEO Salem Al-Othainah and discussed several issues including transferring the Ministry of Communication's responsibilities to the authority as per law number 37/2014.

Bad truffle

Municipal Council member Yousif Al-Ghareeb made several inquiries about the truffles municipality inspection teams recently seized at the truffle market. The Hawally committee at the municipal council yesterday also approved a proposal made by Ghareeb to ban the publication of food supplement ads in local dailies.

Mubarakiya Market

The Capital committee at the Municipal Council approved a project to develop the Mubarakiya Market, said the committee chairman Hassan Kamal, noting that the committee also agreed to a proposal to make the pedestrian bridge between Adailiya and Khaldiya an air-conditioned one.

In my view

FROZEN ISSUES

By Talal Al-Ghannam



local@kuwaittimes.net

Good morning dear and honorable readers and welcome back after the nice and warm holidays. I come back writing my columns with full of what I call frozen issues on my agenda. These issues must be handled and dealt with seriously rather than having them sit on shelves inside officials' offices. Many of the issues which I will talk about today deal directly with the daily lives of citizens and expatriates and they can be so pressing to the authorities if not dealt with and resolved for good.

The first issue is the flying pebbles or stones following the fall of two or three inches of rain. The majority of people including nationals and expatriates have been affected by the flying pebbles on all main highways right after few inches of rain have fallen. It is for sure a lucrative business for all auto glass shops when rain comes down, and I am sure owners of those shops pray day and night so that Allah will make it rain cats and dogs. Some car owners have automobiles worth more than 40,000 Kuwaiti dinars and for sure they would not want their front windshields broken or shattered by the flying pebbles thrown by some irresponsible contractors. I have been in the United States for almost 6 years and I swear to God that never during my stay I had encountered a flying pebble or had my car's windshield replaced. The roads there are smooth as silk and people can sue the county or the city in case that sort of thing happens because people in America pay too much taxes and that money goes for the construction of the best roads and infrastructure. Here in Kuwait, if that happens to anyone, who is to blame? Your best bet is to rent a car or use public transportation.

The second issue is the thousands of rain-made holes. You drive along and find a little distance away well-like holes in the streets. You try to avoid them by zigzagging, but end up hit by the car on your left or your right. Should we accept the fact of driving straight and have to fall in one of those well-like holes and have to fix our cars every day? Or to go with the fact of avoiding such holes and try not to hit any nearby car? It is hard to imagine or resolve this issue.

The last issue I would like to elaborate on is the issue of domestic workers and their rights to keep hold of their passports. By law, the worker is entitled to keep hold of his or her passport as this document is a property of the national of that country and no one has the right to keep that document. So many laws have been issued regarding this issue but still many sponsors and companies believe they have the right to lock up the passport of the workers so that they cannot escape. I hope one day these strict rules are implemented for the sake and best interest of all parties concerned.

Till the next article insha Allah

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Al-Anbaa

IDEAL US PRESIDENT FOR ARABS, GCC

By Sami Al-Nisf

One cannot be more wrong than to claim that US policies are fixed and not affected by the change of American presidents. Yes, indeed, US policies have some fixed principles, yet there are some variables that change by changing presidents, who are constitutionally responsible for US foreign policy.

Reading Andrew Scott Cooper's book about the period before toppling the Iranian shah, which was translated by Dr Hamad Al-Essa, and a book written by the Iranian court minister who was very close to the shah, Assad Alam, one can easily detect how US' intimate relations with the shah in the mid-1970s under the Republican Ford and his rightist FM Henry Kissinger changed to the opposite under Democrat Carter and his leftist national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, which led to the shah's fall.

Moreover, when Kuwait was occupied in 1990 if president Bill Clinton was in office and adopted policies that prioritize improving the US economy, reducing deficit levels and making financial surpluses, it might have remained occupied until today, because he could barely pass a decision on war through the Congress.

Whoever wins the American presidential elections in November will have a significant direct impact on the Middle East and the GCC over the period of 2016-2020 and beyond. A candidate might be the best for Arab causes (Palestinian, Syrian, Iraqi, Libyan, etc) while another might be better for GCC states' issues such as oil and the consequences of the Iranian nuclear agreement.

For instance, candidate Donald Trump would be the worst for GCC states because he has already vowed to leave GCC states without protection unless they paid for such protection. In addition, he comes from the industrial north and finds pleasure in falling oil prices which make his factories, businessmen and drivers happier. Arab-wise, and as far as the Palestinian cause is concerned, Trump might not be that bad, because he is a rebel who does not belong to the usual political systems, which makes him not yield to the Zionist lobby because he might find Israel and its demands as political and financial burdens the US should not shoulder.

Despite being Jewish himself, the leftist Democratic candidate who is an extreme Communist, Bernie Sanders, might be better for Arab causes but he might not necessarily be on good terms with the conservative rightist GCC states. The young Republican candidate Marco Rubio has good connections with the Zionist lobby that could be detrimental to Arabs and GCC states. On the other hand, the moderate Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton might be suitable because of her long experience with regional issues. Finally, the conservative Republican candidate Ted Cruz, who comes from Texas, the land of oil, might be the most suitable for GCC states and the worst for other Arab causes.

An article recently published by the leftist Israeli newspaper Haaretz ranked the current US presidential candidates according to what is best for Israel in the following order: Rubio, Cruz, Clinton, Sanders and Trump. I believe that for the best of GCC states, the following order should be considered: Cruz, Clinton, Rubio, Sanders and Trump, while for the best of Arabs and the Palestinian cause, the following order would be best: Clinton, Trump, Sanders, Cruz and Rubio.

— Translated by Kuwait Times



Al-Anbaa

2017 ELECTIONS AND BEYOND

By Thaar Al-Rasheedi

I know it is too early to discuss the 2017 parliamentary elections, but out of asking hypothetical questions about an event that is only one and a half years away and out of reviewing the current situations in view of current political changes, we have the right to ask the following questions.

According to current given political elements and information and statements made by those who had boycotted the 2013 elections, the boycotting phase has gone on forever except for some certain names who might soon announce political retirement without referring to any boycotts, which means that everybody will take part in the coming elections, and accordingly, the percentage of change in the coming parliament will exceed any previous ones because those who had boycotted the elections as well as new faces would come to parliament, making a minimum change of 70 percent. This means that only 15-17 current MPs might make it to the coming parliament

while the others will be replaced.

The constituency that is expected to witness change most is the fifth, followed by the fourth, and then the third. Some observers expect the former opposition to use the same anti-government speeches on running in the coming elections. In fact, the former opposition will not have to use the same previous political tones and will sound calmer and closer to the people in most cases.

As for the opposition's chances in the coming parliament, I believe they will have the same seats as they got in the 2009 parliament - 18-20 seats (3-5 in each constituency). Such predictions can be inferred in view of the current shifts in political alliances and the division in the two largest political opposition blocs. According to the above, the 2017 parliament is expected to revive its monitoring tools, and will then look much like the current one.

— Translated by Kuwait Times

This means that only 15-17 current MPs might make it to the coming parliament while the others will be replaced

Crime

Report

Cell phone gang tied to Central Prison

KUWAIT: Two Arab men were recently arrested for using several civil IDs of expats who had already left the country to purchase mobile phone lines and sell them for high prices to inmates of the central prison, said security sources. Case papers indicate that a citizen had reported that the two suspects, who worked for him in a mobile phone store, had committed several financial violations and resold mobile lines for more than one person. On arresting the two, they admitted to committing the crimes and explained that they used over 25 civil IDs they had in registering the lines under the names of people who had left Kuwait for good. They added that a Ministry of Interior employee they knew had been providing them with information about the ID holders so that they could register the lines and resell them to inmates.

Man shoots up brother's house

A citizen was recently arrested in Jahra for attacking his brother's house with a gun, said security sources. Case papers indicate that a citizen called the police reporting that his brother had attacked his house pointing a gun at him. The citizen provides the police with his brother's information but when policemen arrived at the man's house, he escaped and was later found hiding among some vehicles where he was chased on foot and apprehended. A case was filed pending further investigations.

Wanted man in roundabout

A citizen was recently arrested in Saad Al-Abdullah area for reckless driving around a roundabout, said security sources. They noted that when detectives rushed to the scene and arrested him, they found that the vehicle he was driving had been reported stolen and that the man had a criminal record and was wanted on eight separate cases.

Forger arrested

An Asian man, who had been wanted for forgery, was recently arrested in Khaitan, said security sources. Case papers indicate that a police patrol noticed that the suspect ran away on seeing it but he was chased and apprehended. Upon checking, policemen found out that he was wanted for a forgery case. The suspect was referred to criminal investigators pending deportation.

Vehicle thieves busted

Two citizens were recently arrested in Sulaibiya industrial area for smashing vehicles' windows and stealing their contents. Case papers indicate that a police patrol arrested the suspects red-handed while they in the process of smashing a car's window. A case was filed and the suspects were referred to relevant authorities.

Officer insulted

A citizen and his wife were recently charged with insulting and threatening a public officer on duty, said security sources. Case papers indicate that a traffic policeman reported that on ticketing a woman, she insulted him and called her husband who arrived at the scene and asked about the reason of the ticket before he threatened to 'show' the policeman once he was 'out of uniform.' A case was filed. — Al-Rai, Al-Anbaa

NO HOMOSEXUAL STUDENTS DISMISSED: ESSA

KUWAIT: Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa stressed that no studies had been made during his tenure in relation to behavioral phenomena in boys and girls' schools. Essa also denied any intention to dismiss or expel homosexual students or those with sexual disorders from educational facilities. The minister explained that should the students in this case be expelled, "they would return by the power of law." The minister pointed out to a number of 'individual cases' related to sexual orientation in educational facilities, arguing that similar cases can also be seen in various other state departments. "We need a legislation in order to limit this phenomena," he underlined, denying reports of taking any measures against such cases in schools, universities or colleges. "Some cases found in schools are handled discreetly by



Dr Bader Al-Essa

social and psychiatric workers in various educational areas where parents are sometimes called to meetings even at afternoon periods," Essa concluded. — Al-Rai

70 E-CRIMES REPORTED SINCE JAN 12

KUWAIT: A total of 70 e-crime reports have been made so far since the new e-crimes law took effect on January 12, 2016, said informed sources. The first day of the law's implementation saw Public Prosecutor Dherar Al-Asousi receive 15 e-crime reports, which he passed down to attorneys for investigations, the sources said.

Further, the sources explained that most of the cases reported involve embezzlement, forgery, data theft, illegal access to secret systems, vice and public manner-related crimes. Moreover, the sources highlighted that users of some Twitter accounts were

still ignorant of the fact that circulating slanderous information was incriminated by law, and that such accounts could be referred to public prosecution.

According to the e-crimes law, 'e-fraud crimes' are those used to affect a secured electronic or data system, data web, document, electronic record, computer system, electronic signature or electronic information through programming, revelation or publication of a digit, password, code or any other secret information with the aims of making unlawful gains or benefits or harming others. — Al-Qabas

KD 185M BONUSES DESPITE AUSTERITY

KUWAIT: Nearly KD 185 million are expected to be paid to public sector employees as 'excellent performance' bonuses by the end of the current fiscal year, according to financial sources' estimations. The number could double if bonuses received by oil sector employees are added, the sources said. The sources argued that it would be difficult to carry on with austerity measures in view of such figures. "Almost 99 percent of public sector employees annually get 'excellent,' 'very good' and 'good' performance assessments without being subjected to real assessment measures," the sources added. — Al-Qabas

MOHAMMED AL-ZAABI RECEIVES HIS 2015 BMW X6 FROM KIB

KUWAIT: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) has announced the grand prize winner during its 7th and last draw of the "Double Your Winning with Al-Dawli Cards" campaign that was held on January 13th, 2016 at 360 Mall. Thereafter, a special ceremony was organized where the bank presented the keys of the 2015 BMW X6 to the lucky winner, Mohammed Adel Abdullah Al-Zaabi.

On this special occasion, the AGM of Retail Banking - E-Banking and Alternative Channels at KIB, Waleed Al-Qattan congratulated the lucky winner of the grand prize, as well as the other winners of the cash prizes and air tickets to many exceptional destinations. Moreover, he stressed on KIB's continuous strive to provide its customers with innovative products and services, and various promotional campaigns that cater to their demands and expectations.

Qattan stated that KIB's products, solutions and promotions are a solid proof of its prominent stand as a leading Islamic institution.

It's worth noting that KIB aspires to provide its customers with the latest offers and inno-

vative products at all times. It offers a wide selection of cards with exceptional benefits, in addition to the features that represent the highest level of security to customers.

Customers can easily apply for 'Al-Dawli' Cards through visiting their nearest branch. If they are interested in finding out more about the cards' features and the Bank's Sharia-compliant

services and products, they can visit the website www.kib.com.kw or contact the 'Al-Dawli Weyak' service on 1866866, or download our mobile application.



ZAIN'S NATIONAL DAY TVC EXCEEDS 1.3 MILLION VIEWS IN FIRST WEEK

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced that its latest televised commercial 'Ya Bilady' reached over 1.3 million views on its official YouTube channel during the first week of its official launch. The TVC was released in line with Kuwait's National Day celebrations in February, and is dedicated to the people of Kuwait and to HH the Amir on the occasion of his 10-year ascendency to power.

The production received overwhelming feedback as soon as it was first released on January 29th in line with the 10th anniversary of HH the Amir's ascendency to power. The TVC also comes as a dedication to Kuwait's 55th Independence Day and 25th Liberation Day, to affirm its role as a leading Kuwaiti company with National contributions across all fields.

The National Day Production entitled 'Ya Bilady' - translates to 'My Country' - was prepared throughout a period of three months, and witnessed the participation of 150 Kuwaiti children from various public and private schools. The children were trained for many weeks before shooting, and were provided with snacks and entertainment throughout the training sessions. The shooting of the production

took place in various locations in Kuwait, including the newly-opened Shaheed Park and the Mubarakya Traditional Souk. These locations were specifically handpicked to reflect the TVC's nationalistic spirit and provide a patriotic scene. Additionally, throughout the clip at various moments there were snippets of HH the Amir and other recognizable Kuwaiti identities.

The lyrics for the song were written by Yousef Al-Shatti who carefully chose the rich Arabic wordings, with the music composed by singer, songwriter and actor Bashar Al-Shatti and were beautifully performed on screen by Kuwaiti star Nabeel Shuaib and the children.

Zain introduced this production in two versions, the first as a regular musical video, and the second for the first time in Kuwait, Zain utilized a video using the 360 camera technology, which allowed viewers to enjoy virtual maneuvering while watching the video, as if the viewer is actually living the moment.

With the wide success of this National Day celebration production, Zain offers all customers a free ringtone of "Ya Bilady" by simply sending 55 to 99000. To view the TVC, please visit zain.to/yabilady



**New Year's fireworks
 a bit quieter in
 Chinese capital**

THE GRAVE-DIGGERS OF MAIDUGURI: BURYING BOKO HARAM



TAINAN: A rescue worker brings down a victim from the collapsed Wei Kuan complex building. —AFP

RESCUERS RACE TO SAVE BURIED QUAKE VICTIMS
 OVER 120 REMAIN BURIED; SAFETY QUESTIONS BEING RAISED

TAINAN: Rescuers raced yesterday to free around 120 people buried under the rubble of an apartment complex felled by an earthquake in southern Taiwan that left 31 confirmed dead, as an investigation began into the collapse. The death toll rose as emergency workers dug for survivors of the 6.4-magnitude quake that toppled the 16-storey complex of almost 100 homes in the city of Tainan on Saturday.

Officials said an investigation had been launched as questions were raised over the safety of the residential blocks in the complex. Tainan mayor William Lai said survivors and relatives had reported legal "violations" but gave no further detail. "I've contacted judicial units and prosecutors have formally launched an investigation," said Lai. "We've also commissioned three independent bodies to preserve evidence during the rescue so we can assist the residents if they want to

file lawsuits in the future. We will hold the builder responsible if they have broken the law."

Cracks in the wall

Local media reported the construction company that built the complex had gone out of business and also raised questions over the quality of the materials used. Yueh Chin-sen, whose mother-in-law's family of eight is still trapped, said the residents had complained of defects in the building.

"They complained that the building wasn't well constructed as there were cracks in the walls and tiles fell off after several quakes in recent years," he said. "I hope the government will prosecute the builder on criminal charges as people lost their lives." Rescuers said 118 residents were still missing, with 103 of them trapped "very deep" in the rubble, according to Lai. "There's no way

to get to them direct, it's very difficult," Lai said, adding that emergency workers were having to shore up the ruins to ensure they were secure before digging. Several survivors were pulled from the rubble yesterday, more than 24 hours after the quake struck, as rescuers used life detectors in their desperate search. One 20-year-old man was freed from the ruins after emergency workers spent eight hours carefully digging him out.

Agonizing wait

Census records show around 260 people living in the blocks but Lai said it was now thought that more than 300 had been inside. Officials have said that some students renting rooms would not have been registered as living in the building, and additional family members may have returned there to celebrate the Lunar New Year holiday start-

ing today. Rescuers drilled down into the rubble yesterday, urging survivors to stay strong as they tried to reach them.

Around 200 have been rescued so far and more than 50 others were able to escape unaided. Emergency workers used cranes, ladders and sniffer dogs to trace and extract survivors. Among the 29 people confirmed killed by the quake, 27 died in the apartment complex collapse, including several children. Tearful relatives huddled by the ruins, hoping for news.

Chen Yu-mei told how her three-month-old son was trapped inside with her sister's family of seven. "He's a small child, I'm worried sick," she told AFP, her voice cracking and eyes red from crying. Another woman said her son had been found dead but she was holding out hope for her daughter-in-law and two grandchildren still trapped inside.

"I won't give up hope, I will wait here until I see them come out safe," she said. Survivors spoke of their terror and relief. One man told AFP how he was rescued after tapping on a wardrobe that was trapping him. "I knocked on the closet to get the attention of rescuers who broke the window to get me," said Su Yi-ming, 48, who lived with his family on the sixth floor of the Wei-kuan complex.

Su escaped unhurt while his wife and their two children sustained minor injuries. The quake struck at a shallow depth of 10 kilometers at around 4:00 am Saturday (2000 GMT Friday), 39 kilometers northeast of the island's second-largest city of Kaohsiung. Taiwan lies near the junction of two tectonic plates and is regularly hit by earthquakes. The island's worst tremor in recent decades was a 7.6 magnitude quake in September 1999 that killed around 2,400 people. —AFP

BOSNIANS PROTEST AGAINST HIJAB BAN



SARAJEVO: Hundreds of Muslim women wearing the traditional Muslim headscarf also known as hijab protest in Sarajevo's historical center. — AFP

SARAJEVO: Some 2,000 people, mostly women, protested yesterday in downtown Sarajevo against a recent ban on wearing a hijab headscarf in the majority Muslim country's judicial institutions. "We gathered to protest against prejudices, discrimination and marginalization," Samira Zunic Velagic, one of the protest organizers, told the crowd.

"The ban of wearing hijab in judicial institutions is a serious attack against Muslim honor, personality and identity, a violation ... aimed at depriving them of their right to work," she added. The protest was sparked by a recent decision of Bosnia's high judicial council, a body tasked with supervising the functioning of the judiciary, to ban "religious signs" in judicial institutions.

The decision which concerns judges and other employees in the sector, but does not explicitly mention hijab—a scarf which covers hair, ears and neck—was strongly condemned by Bosnia's Muslim

political and religious leaders as well as numerous local Muslim associations. The protestors marched for around an hour through the capital's centre carrying banners that read "Hijab is my Daily Choice," "Hijab is my Right" or "Hijab is my Life."

"We came here to say that we are not the victims of this scarf. We came to defend our rights. It is our crown, our liberty, our honor," Elisa Hamovac, a 33-year-old stay-at-home mother, wearing a light blue hijab, said. Muslims make up around 40 percent of Bosnia's population of 3.8 million and are mostly followers of a moderate form of Islam. The others are mostly Orthodox and Catholic Christians. Hijab was banned by the communist authorities while Bosnia was still part of the former Yugoslavia until 1992 when it proclaimed independence. Today many Muslim women wear hijab, with some being completely veiled. However, most are not veiled. —AFP

SALE OF USED TOWER CRANES, HOISTS AND PORTACABINS

Major Contractor invites sealed bid offers for purchase of used Tower Cranes, Construction Hoists and Portacabins on «as is where is» at their Project Site located at the Shadadiyah Campus of Kuwait University.

Interested parties may obtain the details and can inspect the Tower Cranes, Hoists and Portacabins at his own cost and arrangement between the hours of 8.00 AM and 3.00 PM Sunday through Thursday at the location stated. Sealed Bids shall be submitted before 4.00 PM Thursday 15 February 2016.

Location: Contractors Project site at Sabah Al-Salem University City, Kuwait University, Shadadeya,

Further Information may be obtained from:
 Mr. Nader +965 50706003, 60081152,
 or Mr. Noushad +965 69977134

NETANYAHU CALLS ON WORLD TO CONDEMN SYNAGOGUE ARSON

JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday called on the world to condemn a suspected arson attack against a makeshift synagogue in the West Bank where Jewish Torah scrolls were burned.

The scrolls were stored inside a tent that was used as a synagogue near a West Bank outpost that overlooked the site where the bodies of three Jewish teenagers were found in June 2014. Their abduction and murder was carried out by Palestinians said by Israel to be members of the militant group Hamas and set off a series of events that ultimately led to that summer's 50-day war in Gaza.

Netanyahu said this weekend's desecration of the makeshift synagogue that was named after the teenagers was a result of the type of Palestinian incitement that has fed the current five-month-long wave of Palestinian violence. "We will do everything to find

who did this and bring them to justice but I expect all those, here and around the world, who justifiably condemn any desecration of a mosque ... to equally cry out about this heinous act," he said at the start of his weekly Cabinet meeting.

Israel has been coping for years with vandalism attacks against mosques and churches that have been blamed on Jewish extremists. But attacks on synagogues have been rare. The Anti-Defamation League, a US group that battles anti-Semitism worldwide, called the incident "an act of anti-Semitism." Education Minister Naftali Bennett said that "the images of burnt holy books in a synagogue are taken straight out of the darkest nights of our people's history."

The suspected attack comes amid five months of near-daily Palestinian assaults, mainly stabbings, against Israeli civilians and security personnel

that have killed 27 Israelis. Some 155 Palestinians, the majority of whom Israel says were attackers, were killed by Israeli fire during that time. The rest died in clashes with Israeli security forces. Israel says the violence is fueled by a campaign of Palestinian incitement. Palestinians say it stems from frustration at decades of occupation. The violence continued yesterday with an Israeli soldier stabbed in the south of the country and his attacker shot dead.

Police spokeswoman Luba Samri said the soldier was standing near the central bus station in the southern city of Ashkelon when he was stabbed in his torso and lightly wounded. The stabber was shot and apprehended. He later died of his wounds. Police said the stabber was a Sudanese foreign national but they still believe the attack to be politically motivated. — AP



JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu opens the weekly cabinet meeting at his Jerusalem office. — AP



Syrian refugees are pictured in a camp as Syrians fleeing the northern embattled city of Aleppo wait on February 6, 2016 in Bab Al-Salama, near the city of Azaz, northern Syria, near the Turkish border crossing. — AFP

TURKEY READY TO LET IN SYRIAN REFUGEES ONLY 'IF NECESSARY'

THOUSANDS REMAIN STRANDED ON BORDER

ONCUPINAR: Turkey said it was ready "if necessary" to let in tens of thousands of Syrians fleeing a major Russian-backed regime offensive, as aid agencies warned yesterday of a "desperate" situation. Thousands of people, including many women and children, are stranded at the Turkish border after an exodus triggered by fierce fighting near Syria's second city Aleppo.

"If they reached our door and have no other choice, if necessary, we have to and will let our brothers in," Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan told reporters. Turkey's Oncupinar border crossing, which faces the Bab Al-Salama frontier post inside Syria, remained closed yesterday to thousands of refugees gathered there for a third day, an AFP reporter said.

They waited desperately for the moment the gate will open, as Turkish aid trucks delivered food inside Syria. Carrying what few belongings they still have, Syrians queued up in the cold and rain in squalid camps near the Turkish border, waiting for tents being distributed by aid agencies.

Others are reportedly sleeping in the open, in fields and on roads. The medical aid agency Doctors Without Borders (MSF) said camps for displaced people in the north of Aleppo province were overwhelmed. "From what MSF can see the situation in Azaz district is desperate, with ongoing fighting and tens of thousands of people displaced," said Muskilda Zancada, the head of the group's Syria mission. "We are still conducting assessments but so far have seen problems with lack of space to accommodate peo-

ple, and insufficient water and sanitation in many areas."

Border closed

It said three MSF-supported hospitals had been bombed in recent days although the extent of the damage was unknown because their proximity to the frontlines made access too difficult. More than 260,000 people have died in Syria's nearly five-year-old conflict, which involves a tangled web of mainstream rebels, Islamists, jihadists, Kurds and pro-regime forces supported by Russia and Iran.

More than half the population has been displaced and hundreds of thousands have tried to reach Europe, sometimes paying with their lives while making the risky Mediterranean Sea crossing. The European Union on Saturday said it was Ankara's international obligations to keep its frontiers open to refugees, while also pressing the Turkish government to help stem the flow of migrants to Europe.

A Turkish official said the Oncupinar crossing was "open for emergency situations." "Seven injured were taken to Turkey on Friday and one on Saturday for treatment at Turkish hospitals," he said.

The governor of the Turkish border province of Kilis, Suleyman Tapsiz, said Saturday that Turkey-already home to 2-2.5 million Syrians was taking care of 30-35,000 refugees who had gathered around the nearby Syrian city of Azaz. Another 70,000 may head for the frontier if Russian air strikes and Syrian regime military advances continued in Aleppo, he added.

Food crisis looms

Syrian government forces backed by intense Russian air strikes have closed in on Aleppo city in their most significant advance since Moscow intervened in September in support of President Bashar Al-Assad's government.

Syria's mainstream rebels are now threatened with collapse after the regime severed their main supply line to Aleppo city. Opposition forces and roughly 350,000 civilians inside rebel-held parts of Aleppo city face the risk of a government siege, a tactic that has been employed to devastating effect against other former rebel strongholds.

"As supply lines to East Aleppo are nearly cut, MSF is worried about an impending food, water and fuel crisis in the coming weeks," said Zancada. Top diplomats from countries trying to resolve the conflict are set to meet again on February 11 after the collapse of peace talks last week.

Syria reacted angrily on Saturday to suggestions that Saudi Arabia and Turkey, which support rebel groups, could send in ground troops, saying "any aggressor will return to their country in a wooden coffin". Erdogan meanwhile dismissed Russia's claims that Turkey was actively preparing to invade Syria, calling Moscow "an invader" that together with Assad was responsible for the deaths of thousands of civilians. Ties between Moscow and Ankara have been in tatters since Turkey shot down a Russian warplane on the Syrian border in November, saying it had entered Turkish airspace. — AFP

UAE IN FAVOR OF US-LED GROUND TROOPS IN SYRIA

ABU DHABI: An international campaign against the Islamic State group in Syria should include a US-led ground intervention, said yesterday the United Arab Emirates' state minister for foreign affairs Anwar Gargash.

"Our position throughout is that a real campaign against Daesh (Arabic acronym for IS) has to include ground elements," Gargash told reporters in Abu Dhabi. "We are not talking about thousands of troops but we are talking about troops on the ground that will lead the way," he said. "And of course, an American leadership in this effort is a prerequisite." In November, Gargash said that the UAE, a member of the US-led coalition against IS, would "participate in any international effort demanding a ground intervention to fight terrorism."

Saudi Arabia on Thursday said it is ready to join any ground operation by the US-led coalition against IS in Syria. The Saudi proposal was welcomed by the United States but it was ridiculed by the regime of Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad and its key ally Iran. Russia, another key Assad ally, accused Turkey—a staunch backer of the opposition

alongside Saudi Arabia and Qatar—of preparing for "an armed invasion" of Syria. Ankara dismissed the claim.

The United States has for weeks been calling on partners in the 65-member coalition bombing the IS group in Iraq and Syria to contribute more. US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter, who last month chastised some countries for doing "nothing at all", is meeting next week in Brussels with defense officials from Saudi Arabia and other coalition members to outline the next steps in the anti-IS campaign.

Gargash said yesterday that his country has been "frustrated at the slow pace of confronting Daesh"—which controls parts of Syria and Iraq. "We have always said that there are two things lacking—a genuine political process in Baghdad that... (would) encompass the Sunnis and a ground presence for the operations against Daesh."

An Iraqi tribal leader told AFP on Wednesday that Sunnis must be given a greater role in the political process of the war-torn country where the government is led by Shiites, in order to prevent the possible rise of organizations even more extreme than IS. — AFP

MIGRANT WOMEN DEAD FROM COLD IN BULGARIA

SOFIA: Two female migrants found dead in a mountainous rural region of Bulgaria died due to freezing conditions, authorities said yesterday, as asylum seekers continue to try to reach the EU despite harsh winter weather. The women were part of a group of 19 migrants, including 11 children, found Saturday by border police near the southeastern town of Malko Tarnovo. Their nationality was still unclear.

"Two women have died—one younger and another middle-aged. Our border guards made every effort to help them, carrying them in their arms to try to warm them up, but it happened because of the cold," Interior Minister Romyana Bachvarova announced yesterday told private bTV television.

The area was under harsh winter conditions with high winds, some 30 of snow and freezing temperatures. A ministry statement said one of the victims was a teenager-aged between 14 and 16 — and the other was between

30 and 40 years old. All of the children, aged between 4 and 16, were taken to hospital with frostbite and two adults were in critical condition, a hospital spokesman told Focus news agency.

This is the second report in Bulgaria this winter of migrants succumbing to cold, after the frozen bodies of two men were found in a mountainous area at Bulgaria's border with Serbia in January. As refugees continued to flow from Greece through the Balkans on their way to western Europe, aid workers have sounded alarms over inadequate shelter from the current freezing temperatures and snowy conditions, particularly for children.

In January, almost 62,200 migrants and refugees entered Europe through Greece, most of them from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, the International Organization for Migration said. Close to a third of them were unaccompanied minors. — AFP

MANY DUAL CITIZENS IN IRAN FACING ESPIONAGE CHARGES

DUBAI: There are several detained dual citizens in Iran, most of whom face espionage charges, the judiciary spokesman was quoted as saying yesterday, although he did not give details of any individual cases.

The comments come after an Iranian-British former BBC journalist, Bahman Daroshafaei, was detained last week in Tehran. His family said on Saturday they had not been informed of any charges against him. Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said in London on Thursday that he did not know about the case.

Tehran released four Iranian-Americans on Jan. 16 in a prisoner swap deal with Washington, including Jason Rezaian, the Washington Post's Tehran bureau chief who was arrested in July 2014 and accused of espionage. "We have several dual citizens in jail. Their charges are mostly the same (as Rezaian's)," the judiciary spokesman Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei was quoted as saying by the Fars news agency.

Ejei said that no verdict had been reached on Rezaian's espionage charges. "It is still important to know what he and those related to him were doing in Iran. So their case is still open." The prisoner swap was announced as world powers, including the United States, implemented a landmark nuclear deal with Iran. In exchange for the release of five Americans from Iran, the White House offered clemency to seven Iranians who were convicted or facing trial in the United States.

Another Iranian-British citizen, Kamal Foroughi, remains in detention after being arrested in 2011 while working in Tehran as a business consultant. Iranian-American businessman Siamak Namazi, who was detained by Iranian authorities in October while visiting relatives, is still in jail. — Reuters

ALGERIA PARLIAMENT ADOPT CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

ALGIERS: Algeria's parliament adopted a package of constitutional reforms yesterday that authorities say will strengthen democracy, but opponents doubt it will bring real change. The reforms are meant to address longstanding public grievances in the North African nation, and possibly to prepare for a smooth transition amid concerns over the health of 78-

year-old President Abdelaziz Bouteflika.

The package was passed by 499 votes to two, with 16 abstentions, Senate speaker Abdelkader Bensalah said. A two-term limit on the presidency-lifted in 2008 to allow Bouteflika to run for a third time—will be reintroduced and the president will be required to nominate a prime minister from the largest party in

parliament. Bouteflika—whose public engagements have become rare since suffering a stroke in 2013 — will be allowed to finish his fourth term, which ends in 2019, and run for a fifth if he wishes. The package also prevents Algerians with dual nationality from running for high posts in public office, which has sparked criticism among the Franco-Algerian community.

It foresees the creation of an independent electoral commission and recognition of the roles of women and youth. Freedoms of assembly and the press will be explicitly guaranteed. The Amazigh language spoken by the indigenous Berber population will also be recognized as official, alongside Arabic. After the vote, Prime Minister Abdelmalek Sellal hailed the president as "the architect of the new Algerian republic". But critics disagree, saying the reforms are little more than a show and will do little to reduce the influence of the powerful elite, including Bouteflika's National Liberation Front party and army generals.

'Constitutional power grab'

Former lawmaker and regime opponent Djamel Zenati said that "with the current revision, our country's constitution finally brings together the main elements necessary to build a democracy".

But as "violating laws has become the law" in Algeria, it is hard to believe those in power are being even "the slightest bit sincere", he wrote in El Watan newspaper.

Former Prime Minister Ali Benflis, who was Bouteflika's rival in the 2014 presidential polls, slammed the reforms as a "constitutional power grab" to "solve only the regime's—not the country's—problems". The president and his supporters have moved in recent months to take control of the security services, dissolving the powerful Department of Intelligence and Security and jailing or sidelining top officials. Bouteflika and his inner circle have held a firm grip on power since 1999 and, as the end of his rule appears to close in, there are fears of instability in the mainly Muslim country of 40 million, a key energy producer. "This project crowns the process of political reforms promised by the head of state," Sellal told parliamentarians.

The reforms guaranteed "democratic change by means of free elections" and were "a bulwark against the vagaries of political change," he said, referring to parts of the constitution that cannot be altered if Islamists form a majority. Unlike many countries in the region, including its neighbours Libya and Tunisia, Algeria has been relatively stable since the 2011 Arab Spring. — AFP



ALGIERS: Algerian parliamentary group leaders applaud during a vote on a package of constitutional reforms. — AFP

TEXAS DADDY: JAPAN'S RIGHT-WING DARLING

AUSTIN: Somewhere in the Dallas area, a retired man sitting in a home office is making social media videos backing Japanese right-wing views that have made him a celebrity among hawks in the Asian country. Hardly known in the United States, Tony Marano, 66, is called the "Texas Daddy" in Japan, where he has spawned a small industry that includes books, speaking tours, T-shirts emblazoned with his cartoon likeness and scores of videos, some of which have been viewed more than 300,000 times. To his critics, however, he is a mouthpiece for Japanese nationalists.

"I am just expressing my opinion," said Marano in an accent that gives away his Brooklyn upbringing. "Why are they fearing this little guy? I don't mean any harm to them." He is one of a small group of

Westerners embraced by Japan's right wing, but stands out with his jocular demeanor and sharp tongue.

Marano, who often wears T-shirts in videos and suits for speeches, unexpectedly grabbed attention in Japan about seven years ago when he began criticizing Sea Shepherd, a US-based marine conservation group, in its aggressive campaigns to halt Japanese whaling. Videos he posted from Texas made their way to Japan, where they developed a following.

He became more intrigued about Japan, conducting more research and posting more videos. His notoriety snowballed as more people began paying attention. A publishing deal followed and within a few years, his Japanese supporters set up an office called the Texas Daddy Japan Secretariat. He has published seven

books in Japanese and is set for more exposure with another three books this year, the office said.

Truth to power

Marano is a former telephone company employee who has spent about half of his life in Texas and put together a YouTube video channel called "PropagandaBuster." He speaks little Japanese. Marano says his mission is to bolster a military alliance among the United States, South Korea and ally Japan, and to speak truth to power.

He has released more than 80 videos in the past year that run with Japanese subtitles provided by the Secretariat, which has seven translators and three editors to prepare the works for the Japanese audience. One hot topic has

been the women forced to work in Imperial Japanese military wartime brothels and euphemistically known as "comfort women."

Scholars continue to debate the number of women across Asia who were sexually exploited. South Korean activists say there may have been as many as 200,000 Korean victims, but only a few have come forward. Marano and many in Japan's right wing cite a 1944 US Army report that said women were willing prostitutes, a position critics said is wrong. "To say that the Japanese Imperial Army was on a sexual rampage, that is inaccurate," Marano said. "This whole comfort women story stinks."

About two years ago, Marano triggered a firestorm of criticism on South Korean social media when he waved

Japanese flags and sat next to a statue dedicated to comfort women in Glendale, California. He said he received death threats. Japan and South Korea in December reached an agreement to resolve the issue that has been a thorn in their relations for decades, in which Japan made an apology and promised about 1 billion yen (\$8.5 million) for a fund to help former comfort women.

The Japan-US Feminist Network for Decolonization, an advocate for the women, accuses Marano of historical denialism on comfort women and being unaware of what is being published under his name in Japanese. "The positions he takes are based on the complete distortion of the historical documents," said Emi Koyama, the co-founder of the California-based group. — Reuters



PORTSMOUTH: Democratic presidential candidate former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton greets supporters during a get out the vote organizing event at Great Bay Community College. — AP

FACING NH LOSS, CLINTON LOOKS FORWARD TO COUNTER SANDERS

MAKING HEADWAY AMONG WOMEN, MINORITY VOTERS

CONCORD: With a victory seemingly out of reach in New Hampshire, Hillary Clinton is looking ahead to the next round of voting to reposition her campaign to counter the rising primary threat of insurgent Sen Bernie Sanders.

Clinton hopes to use a narrower-than-expected loss in this first primary state as a springboard into contests later this month in Nevada and South Carolina, where she hopes a more heavily-minority electorate will build the foundation for a delegate-by-delegate drive toward the Democratic nomination. Part of that strategy means cutting into the double-digit advantage that Sanders has enjoyed in New Hampshire for several months. Her aides fear that a huge win here will help him make headway among women and minority voters, two key blocs of the coalition that twice elected President Barack Obama. Sanders' strength with younger voters only heightens the threat he poses to what was once her decisive national lead.

But while Clinton has vowed to fight for every vote in New Hampshire, at least some of her operation is moving on. This weekend, former President Bill Clinton wooed voters in Las Vegas, campaign surrogates knocked doors in San Antonio and Clinton's aides announced a meeting with top civil rights leaders next week in New York City.

Unusual step

Clinton herself is planning on leaving the state for a quickly scheduled visit to Flint, Michigan, an unusual step for a candidate trailing in the polls here. Aides said she was invited by the city's mayor, Karen Weaver, and plans to hold a town hall meeting with residents before flying back to New Hampshire in the evening. She's frequently pointed to the crisis of

lead-poisoned water in the city as an example of racial and economic injustice, an issue that resonates among Democrats but particularly with African-American voters.

"People in New Hampshire probably care about what's happening to the kids, the families in Flint," said Clinton's chief strategy Joel Benenson. "People voting, particularly in a Democratic primary and I would hope even voting in the Republican primary, care about the disgrace of what's happened." Clinton aides argue that the heavily white and liberal electorates of New Hampshire and Iowa, where Clinton barely eked out a win, make them outliers in the Democratic primary race. They say Clinton will find more success in the South Carolina primary on Feb 20 and the Nevada caucuses a week later, where polls show her with a wide lead.

In recent days, she's been using the state as a testing ground for new campaign messages targeted at specific demographic groups, alluding to her gender with vows to break "the highest and hardest glass ceiling" and promising young voters that she'd "be for them" even if they support Sanders.

'That's the revolution'

On Saturday, Clinton said during a town hall meeting in Henniker that her proposals to address college affordability and to build upon Obama's health care law were superior to Sanders' approach. She also cast her plans as more fiscally responsible. "I think it's important that those of you who are trying to make this decision by Tuesday really look at whether the numbers add up because, you know, it matters," she said.

The day before, during a blizzard in Manchester, she joined a fleet of female senators for a volunteer rally.

While they were flown into the state to back her bid, their message seemed aimed at a far broader audience. "When folks talk about a revolution, the revolution is electing the first woman president of the United States. That's the revolution," said Michigan Sen Debbie Stabenow, a clear dig at Sanders call for a "political revolution." Sanders, too, has been casting ahead, hoping to boost his profile among black voters who make up more than half of the South Carolina electorate. On Saturday night, he left the state for an appearance on NBC's "Saturday Night Live" with comedian Larry David, whose imitations of Sanders on the show have quickly gone viral.

The day before, his campaign scheduled a press conference to tout the endorsement of former NAACP president Ben Jealous. Though the campaign canceled the event because of heavy snow, Jealous told reporters on a conference call that Sanders "has the courage to confront the institutionalized bias that stains our nation." He was quickly dispatched to South Carolina for campaign events on Saturday with Erica Garner, whose father died in 2014 after a white New York police officer put the black man in a choke hold.

Sanders backers believe that as African-Americans learn more about the Vermont senator, they will warm to his liberal message. Clinton is one of the best known political figures in the world and has strong backing among Latinos and black voters. "Before a few weeks ago, I never gave Bernie Sanders the time of day," said state Rep. Justin Bamberg, who recently switched his backing from Clinton. "But if you look at Sanders he has been solid as concrete with regards to his passion for racial, social and economic justice." —AP

STATES TAKING ACTION TO KEEP GUNS OUT OF ABUSERS' HANDS

IOWA CITY: More than a dozen states have strengthened laws over the past two years to keep firearms out of the hands of domestic abusers, a rare area of consensus in the nation's highly polarized debate over guns.

Lawmakers and governors of both parties have supported bills stripping gun rights from those who have been convicted of domestic violence-related crimes or are subject to protective orders. The measures have been backed by victims' advocates, law enforcement groups and gun control supporters who see easy access to firearms as a major contributor to domestic violence killings.

Similar proposals are expected to be debated in several states this year. "Domestic violence is definitely an area where there is the most agreement between the gun lobby and gun-violence prevention advocates," said Allison Anderman, staff attorney with the Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence in San Francisco.

Cautious approach

The National Rifle Association has taken a cautious approach toward such bills, opposing the farthest-reaching measures but staying neutral or negotiating compromises on others. For example, the NRA has fought provisions that would require people to surrender their guns before they have a chance to con-

test allegations made in a request for an emergency protective order.

"There is no evidence that simply taking away people's guns without a fair hearing makes the victims any safer," NRA spokeswoman Catherine Mortensen said. The push in the states is driven by stories of women and children killed or wounded by known abusers, and by statistics showing that hostile relationships often turn deadly when guns are present.

An average of 760 Americans were killed with guns annually by spouses, ex-spouses or dating partners between 2006 and 2014, according to an Associated Press analysis of FBI and Florida data. Florida's statistics are not included in the FBI's report, which covers all other states and District of Columbia, but were analyzed separately by AP.

The total is an undercount because not all law enforcement agencies report such information, and it doesn't include children and other bystanders who were killed. More than 80 percent of those killed were women. "The system failed my son, and I am going to do whatever it takes to make sure it never happens to another child or another woman," said Hollie Ayers, 44, a Pennsylvania woman whose 21/2-year-old son, Michael, was shot and killed in front of her by her abusive ex-husband in 2013. "Michael's life to me was priceless. If you can at least

reduce the amount of homicides, this is a no-brainer to me."

Ayers, who was shot in the face and the leg, said she constantly thinks about her son, who loved tractors and puzzles. Her ex-husband killed himself after the rampage. Ayers had warned that he had guns and had said that he, his ex-wife and the child "would be better off dead" before she obtained a permanent protection-from-abuse order, court records show. But the judge did not order her ex-husband to surrender his weapons, even after he violated the protective order.

Hollie Ayers is pushing for a Pennsylvania law that would require people to turn over their guns when judges issue protection orders against them. Kim Stolfer, president of the Pennsylvania group Firearms Owners Against Crime, said his organization isn't on board with the idea yet. He said such legislation could be exploited by vindictive ex-spouses who level false allegations of abuse. "We need some balance, and it's rapidly going the wrong way," he said. In announcing executive action on gun control last month, President Barack Obama said protecting domestic abuse victims is one of his goals. His changes include strengthening the federal background check system, which has denied gun sales 120,000 times since 1998 because of domestic violence convictions.—AP

CONDOLENCES

The Management & Staff of
Al Mojil Drug Co.(K.S.C.C)

Express their heartfelt
Condolences
on the sad demise
of their beloved member



Dolores Sequiera

On 6th February 2016

May Her Soul Rest In Peace

FAMOUS LA BRIDGE HAS BEGUN COMING DOWN

LOS ANGELES: The end has begun for a downtown bridge that played a supporting role in many Hollywood chase scenes down the concrete-lined Los Angeles River. Giant jackhammers reduced 220 feet of the 6th Street Bridge roadway to rubble by Saturday morning and were working on bringing down three massive support columns, said Mary Nemick of the city's Public Works Department.

She said crews were working ahead of schedule and that officials anticipate reopening the U.S. 101 freeway four hours ahead of schedule on Sunday. "Things have gone really well on the demolition," Nemick said.

The bridge spans the US 101 freeway

and the concrete-lined Los Angeles River. Its concrete bottom and sides are a Hollywood favorite; the bridge has been in countless films. Think rival gang members Danny and Leo racing in "Grease" or big chases in "Terminator 2" and "Gone in 60 Seconds."

A 2.5-mile section of the freeway was closed Friday and a segment under the bridge covered with 2 feet of dirt to protect it from the tons of concrete that crashed down on it. Detouring drivers on other freeways didn't find too much of a problem, with delays ranging from about 15 minutes to 25 minutes, said Laurie Wonder of the California Department

of Transportation. "It's actually been better than we expected. People are heeding the detour rules and heeding our warnings" to stay away from the area, she said. Considered state-of-the-art when it was built in 1932, the bridge has been suffering from a chemical reaction that for decades has weakened its concrete.

Eventually, the entire 3,500-foot bridge will be replaced by a new roadway that has the potential to become another Hollywood backdrop. A 2019 opening has been set after \$449 million in work. Arches above the roadway of the new span are designed to resemble the intermittent arcs of a stone skipping across water. —AP

PUPPETEERS DETAINED FOR 'GLORIFYING TERRORISM'

MADRID: Two puppeteers were detained in Madrid on Saturday after staging a children's show during which they allegedly praised terrorism, judicial sources said. The controversy centers around a performance on Friday, when the artists displayed a sign that read "Gora Alka-ETA", a play on words that combines the "Gora ETA (Long Live ETA)" chant of the banned Basque separatist group with the made-up word alka, to create a slogan that sounds

like "Long Live Al-Qaeda".

Judicial sources said other scenes from the puppet show also shocked the audience, including one featuring the hanging of a judge and another showing the rape of a nun. The puppeteers were on Saturday charged with "glorifying terrorism" by a judge from the National Audience, which handles terror-related cases, a judicial source said.

Madrid's new leftist mayor Manuela Carmena in

a statement called the puppeteers' actions "offensive, completely misplaced" and announced that the play-part of Madrid's carnival celebrations had been suspended. A support group for the victims of terrorism (AVT) on Twitter said it intended to file a complaint over the show and called for Madrid's culture councillor Celia Mayer to be sacked.

The ETA group has claimed responsibility for the deaths of over 800 people over 40 years, but

renounced violence in its struggle for independence four years ago. The puppet company behind Friday's performance, known as "Titeres desde abajo" (Puppets from below), advertises itself as specializing in "popular theatre" and children's entertainment. The troupe, based in the southern city of Granada, has in the past performed at events organized by anarchist groups, according to its website. — AFP



MAIDUGURI: A man digs graves for victims or dead members of Boko Haram Islamists being expected for burial at Gwange Cemetery in Maiduguri. — AFP

THE GRAVE-DIGGERS OF MAIDUGURI: BURYING BOKO HARAM AND THE PAST

'THEY HAD GUNS, WE HAD SHOVELS'

MAIDUGURI: Even the dead weren't safe from Boko Haram when the Islamist insurgency erupted in the northeast Nigerian city of Maiduguri nearly seven years ago. "They began to destroy this one," said Babagana Modu, gesturing to a mound of baked earth and sand-the grave of a prominent Muslim cleric. "We tried to stop them but we couldn't. They had guns and we didn't. We only had our shovels," the 30-year-old said. The dead may no longer be able to tell tales but the grave-diggers of the Gwange cemetery certainly can.

They talk of a place where piles of bodies were routinely dumped from trucks and some were even brought to be killed. But in recent times, Modu and his colleagues say their workload has decreased as attacks become more sporadic and a sustained counter-insurgency brings a relative calm to the much-targeted city.

"At the height of the insurgency, 200, 300, 400 bodies were being brought here. Sometimes the sanitation department trucks were bringing three truckloads of dead bodies," said Modu. "If they still had more left, they would go back and bring them the next day. This road just outside the cemetery was not passable because of the stench."

'Relative peace'

Modu's estimation may be an exaggeration but not by much. At least 17,000, possibly more, have died overall across the Muslim-majority north. The police and military launched a crackdown in Maiduguri after a series of Boko Haram attacks at the end of July 2009. Some 800 Islamists, includ-

ing the group's then leader Muhammad Yusuf, were killed in just a few days in what is considered the start of Boko Haram's insurgency.

Modu's boss, Bulama Ali, speaks of smaller numbers, although he admitted there was a time when the cemetery was almost full. "In the past we would get up to 20 to 30 bodies every day. Now we get five to 10. Most of these are deaths from natural causes." It's an indication that there's relative peace returned to Maiduguri and the metropolis, he added.

Sixty-year-old Ali's 22 staff are volunteers, young men dressed in fading replica football shirts, dusty trousers and flip flops. Some started work with their fathers at a young age and know little else. They now dig graves in the parched earth, cut down trees for the wood to cover the bodies or make earthenware pots that serve as grave markers for families of the deceased.

Three-meter-long mounds of earth for adults and smaller ones for children rise out of the ground, uniformly facing east towards the Muslim holy city of Mecca. Groups and individuals quietly pay their respects to the dead off the sweeping paths lined by neem trees, with the sounds only of bleating goats, birdsong and the rustle of lizards darting through fallen leaves.

Recognition for the dead

Not all graves are marked. Those that are and with dates from 2009 onwards only hint at the possibility of a connection to the insurgency. "It's not our business to ask how they died," said Ali. The young grave-diggers, though, are well aware

of who lies just under the earth towards the high perimeter wall.

"From here to the wall over there and from there to the other end of the cemetery... is all Boko Haram dead bodies," said Modu, pointing to a stretch of open ground and scrub the size of a football pitch. Islamic custom dictates the dead are washed and wrapped in a shroud before being placed on their right side and the body covered with wood and earth. Boko Haram's dead were not extended the courtesy. Instead, they were simply dumped and covered, leaving only small ridges in the ground to indicate what lies beneath.

Civilian suspects who died in custody, including at Maiduguri's notorious Giwa Barracks that has seen human rights groups accuse the military of flagrant abuse, also have their final resting place in Gwange. The grave-diggers themselves recall being rounded up in the days when any young man was a Boko Haram suspect, particularly in Gwange, once a hotbed for militant sympathizers.

Now, as Maiduguri tries to overcome its turbulent recent past, the young men who have witnessed more than most the ultimate effects of the insurgency want some recognition. "We work from morning to 6:00 pm before we shut the gates," said 25-year-old Ibrahim Abubakar. "We work here and nobody cares to come around and even give us anything to buy food. This really hurts us. This is the largest cemetery in the city. The (state) government ought to give us some attention." — AFP

DIVISIVE POLISH PARTY LEADER KACZYNSKI PULLS THE STRINGS

WARSAW: When Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban had a secret five-hour meeting in a secluded mountain resort with the most powerful person in Poland, he didn't convene with his counterpart or the Polish president. Instead he spoke with Jaroslaw Kaczynski, the leader of Poland's ruling party, a man who has no official government position.

The mysterious meeting recently in a guest house on Poland's southern border enhanced the perception that Kaczynski, rather than Prime Minister Beata Szydlo or President Andrzej Duda, is the main decision-maker in Poland today, and that, like Orban, he might steer his nation down an anti-democratic path.

The 67-year-old Law and Justice party leader, whose identical twin brother Polish President Lech Kaczynski died in a 2010 plane crash in Russia, has been in the Polish public eye since childhood. He and Lech first won fame as child actors in the 1960s. During the 1980s, they embarked on their political careers by joining Nobel Peace Prize laureate Lech Walesa's anti-communist Solidarity movement.

But observers say Jaroslaw Kaczynski changed dramatically after the death of his twin. "He hardened. He is a lonely man and this is very visible in the way he does politics. He wants to rule with a strong hand and it's clear that all the power comes from his office," says Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz, who was prime minister in a Law and Justice government in 2005-2006.

Consolidating power

Last year Kaczynski led his conservative party to two electoral victories, so it now controls both the presidency and the Cabinet and has a majority in Parliament. In Poland's 26 years of democracy, no other party has ever enjoyed so much power. As the new government took office, it moved swiftly to consolidate that power, passing laws that gave the ruling party some influence in the Constitutional Tribunal and direct control over public media. It also strengthened the state's surveillance powers.

The European Union is alarmed, and recently opened a preliminary inquiry into whether the government is guilty of a "systemic threat to the rule of law." Liberal Poles are also furious at the changes, and have turned out for large street protests over the past two months. Kaczynski is viewed as the mastermind of these changes.

"He has built himself into this head of state without any real position and this is very comfortable for him. He has no direct responsibility and is free to change the pawns on his chess board," Marcinkiewicz told The Associated Press. Marcinkiewicz has his own experience taking directions from Kaczynski, who eventually took the prime minister's job from him in 2006. He says Kaczynski now gives instructions to the government on a daily basis. Kaczynski mixes social welfare ideas with support for national and Catholic traditions and opposition to gay marriage and abortion. His party swept to power denouncing the



Jaroslaw Kaczynski

inequalities of the previous government's liberal market policies, striking a chord with voters by promising to help those left out of Poland's economic success.

"He is an honest man who surely is not after private gains, but who really thinks about the kind of life people have," says one supporter, 42-year-old cook Agata Remisz. Still, many are wary of the government's tactics. Walesa, who fell out with the Kaczynski brothers in 1991, has denounced the Law and Justice-led government as a threat to democracy.

'Great intellect'

"Kaczynski is definitely a great intellect and his diagnosis of the situation in Poland is right, but the cure he applies is very disputable," the former president told the AP. Never married, Kaczynski lives alone in a modest house in Warsaw, where he lived with his mother until her death in 2013. Since Lech's death, he only wears black in public and has said he will be in mourning for the rest of his life.

He rarely gives interviews and prefers adulatory Catholic outlets. According to a recent book, "Jaroslaw Kaczynski's Secrets" by journalist Michal Krzymowski, he only reluctantly watches TV news. The same book describes how he took great pains to spare his ill mother the shock of his brother's death. For almost two months he told her the president was making a lengthy return from a visit to America by ship because of volcanic ash that had grounded many planes. He even had a fake copy of a newspaper printed with that story for her to read. Eventually, when his mother was better, he told her the truth. In foreign relations, Kaczynski is distrustful of Russia, which he sees as a constant threat to Poland. He also cultivates resentment against Germany for its brutal World War II occupation of Poland. The party also sows divisions inside Poland. The first government sought to purge communist-era collaborators, a key Kaczynski policy, but many said its methods were too vengeful.

During the 2015 election campaign, Kaczynski took an anti-migrant stance, saying they could carry threatening "parasites." He also denounced his pro-EU opponents as the "worst sort of Poles," ones that follow foreign values. — AP

UK'S LABOR LEADER BACKS EUROPE STAY

LONDON: Britain's opposition Labor leader Jeremy Corbyn said Saturday that staying in the European Union was in the country's best interests. The left-wing veteran, who has displayed a eurosceptic streak throughout his political life, said his party would make the case for a "social Europe" during the referendum campaign. Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron wants to finalize a renegotiation of Britain's terms of membership at an EU summit on February 18 and 19. He has committed to stage an in-or-out referendum on the outcome of his attempt, by the end of 2017.

Newspapers expect the referendum could come as soon as late June. Corbyn said Labour wanted Britain to stay in the 28-country bloc. "Our party is committed to keeping Britain in the EU because we believe it is the best framework for European trade and cooperation and in the best

interests of the people of Britain," he told activists in Nottingham, central England.

"But we also want to see progressive reform in Europe: democratization, stronger workers' rights, sustainable growth and jobs at the heart of the economic policy and an end to the pressure to privatise and deregulate public services. "And we will be pressing the case for a real social Europe during the coming referendum campaign." He said Labor would be standing up for "public ownership" during the campaign and resisting "potential threats" to public services posed by a trans-Atlantic free trade pact being negotiated between the EU and the United States.

The Leave.EU campaign group claimed Corbyn was a "lifelong opponent" of the EU but had been "gagged" by moderate, centrist figures within his party. "Jeremy Corbyn voted to leave the EEC (European

Economic Community) in 1975 and against the Maastricht Treaty which transformed it into the EU, saying it took powers to set economic policy away from parliament and handed them to an unelected set of bankers," said spokesman Jack Montgomery.

"No one really believes his private opinion has changed," Cameron's proposed changes include a four-year "emergency brake" limiting welfare payments to migrants, as well as a "red card" system for national parliaments to overrule draft EU laws. A draft deal "shows real progress" but "more work" is still needed, Cameron said Tuesday.

A poll published Friday showed 45 percent of Britons now wanted to leave the EU, ahead of 36 percent who wanted Britain to stay in the bloc. The survey of 1,675 adults was conducted by pollsters YouGov on February 3-4 for The Times newspaper. — AFP

WOMAN KIDNAPPED IN BURKINA FASO SET FREE

NIAMEY, Niger: Islamic extremists have freed an Australian woman kidnapped last month in northern Burkina Faso, although her husband remains in captivity despite pleas from the family and efforts by officials to secure his release.

Jocelyn Elliott and her husband - surgeon Ken Elliott - were kidnapped on Jan. 15 near the Burkina Faso town of Djibo, where they have run a medical clinic for four decades. Al-Qaeda's North Africa wing claimed responsibility for the kidnapping, though the group said in an audio recording Friday that it would release Jocelyn Elliott so as "not to make women involved in the war." Both Elliotts are in their 80s.

On Saturday, Jocelyn Elliott was freed in neighboring Niger, where she appeared alongside President Mahamadou Issoufou in the town of Doso, located about 90 miles southeast of the capital, Niamey. Issoufou worked with Burkina Faso intelligence services to secure her release, said Abdourahmane Alliou, a spokesman for Niger's president.

Yesterday, Australian media carried a statement from the Elliotts' family urging that Ken Elliott also be freed. "We are trusting that the moral and guiding principles of those who have released our Mother will also be applied to our elderly father who has served the community of Djibo and the Sahel for more than half his lifetime," the statement said.

The militant group behind the kidnapping, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, rose to prominence in large part through kidnap-for-ransom operations targeting foreign aid workers and tourists. In recent months, the group has grabbed

headlines with claims of responsibility for high-profile strikes in West Africa, killing 20 people in an attack on a hotel in Mali's capital in November and 30 people in an attack in Burkina Faso's capital the same day the Elliotts were kidnapped. — AP



BURGOS, Spain: Two women leave the church as participants throw feathers and resin during the celebration of "El Gallo de Carnaval" (The Carnival's Cock). The Gallo Carnival is a pagan festival in which people participate singing, dancing and attacking the 'Gallo' that is defended by Zarramacos. — AFP

WORK PLACEMENT FOR SWEDEN'S MIGRANTS

STOCKHOLM: Sweden is pushing local governments to create temporary work placements for migrants as the country attempts to integrate a dramatic influx of refugees, an official said yesterday. "We have seen many good initiatives in the private sector, where private-sector companies have a major responsibility for facilitating the establishment of new arrivals. Here it is of course important that the public sector takes responsibility," says Minister for Public Administration Ardalan Shekarabi told state-run Swedish Radio.

One important source for work could be temporary internships within the Sweden's higher education system, according to Shekarabi. "There is a great interest among the nation's colleges and universities to offer academic internships," he pointed out. Local governments are also being asked to provide at least 1,000 internships per year for new arrivals until 2018.

The integration of immigrants has become a major issue after Sweden took in about 160,000 migrants in 2015 —

more as a percentage of its population than any other European Union (EU) country. The many obstacles for newcomers include finding work and accommodation at a time of housing shortages, learning Swedish and coping with anti-immigration sentiment, with the far-right Sweden Democrats garnering up to 27 percent of voter sympathies in recent polls. Half of all refugees in Sweden are unemployed after seven years and only 60 percent find work after 15 years, according to Statistics Sweden. — AFP

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SRI LANKA'S TAMIL LEADERS CALL FOR UN HELP ON 4,000 MISSING

JAFFNA: Sri Lanka's ethnic Tamil leaders yesterday asked the top UN human rights official to help determine the fate of more than 4,000 civilians reported missing in the country's long civil war amid the government's assertion that most of them are probably dead.

The UN official, Zeid Raad al-Hussein, met with the chief minister of Sri Lanka's Northern Province, the center of the civil war, which ended in 2009. Zeid is on a four-day visit to Sri Lanka to review measures taken by the government to investigate alleged war abuses during the war.

Both the Sri Lankan government and the defeated Tamil Tiger rebels are accused of serious human rights violations. According to UN estimates, up to 100,000 people were killed in the 26-year war, but many more are feared to have died, including up to 40,000 civilians in the final months of the fighting.

The UN Human Rights Council last year adopted a consensus resolution in which Sri Lanka agreed to an investigation with foreign participation. Zeid said he discussed

several issues with Northern Province Chief Minister CV Wigneswaran and other provincial officials, including the missing people, detentions without trial and military-occupied private land. He said he would take the issues up with the central government.

Smallest link

"The discussions very much focused on the challenges faced by the province, but also the plans and achievements in that regard, and the people who aspire to see more information in terms of those detained and those missing and the issue of release of lands," Zeid said. He said the discussions would continue during his visit. Wigneswaran said he gave Zeid a list of the more than 4,000 people reported missing, with dates and places where they were seen last. Many civilians have not been heard from since they were picked up by police or military personnel at their homes or abducted by pro-government militia during the war. Relatives say there are many whom they personally handed over to the military at the

end of the fighting, after the military requested the surrender of anyone who had even the smallest link to the now-defeated Tamil Tiger rebels, promising their early release.

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, who was elected last year, has said most of those reported missing are probably dead. He said that the new government found no secret detention centers being run by the state, as suspected by families of the missing, and that there are only 292 people in government detention.

Wigneswaran said Zeid opposed the suggestion of negotiating an amnesty for Tamil rebel suspects detained for years without trial. Zeid said releasing innocents through a quick and proper legal process would be the best course of action. Since defeating his nationalist predecessor last year, Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena has released some land and promised speedy trials for detainees. But Tamils have complained that the authorities are slow in fulfilling their promises.



COLOMBO: UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Raad al-Hussein, right, pauses to speak to media as he leaves a hotel. — AP



BEIJING: In this Friday, Feb 5, 2016 photo, people buy fireworks for Chinese Lunar New Year at a store. — AFP

NEW YEAR'S FIREWORKS A BIT QUIETER IN CHINESE CAPITAL

SKIES MIGHT NOT BE AS SPECTACULAR THIS YEAR

BEIJING: Much of China's population can expect standard sleep after the country starts ringing in the Year of the Monkey. The rat-a-tat snaps of firecrackers, whistling rockets and mortar-like fireworks with possibly enough gunpowder to down a small aircraft will make sure of that. But whisper it quietly: the skies this year might not be as spectacular, nor the streets so loud. In Beijing, fireworks sales are down by a half this year after already falling a third in 2015. The central city of Zhengzhou is one of five provincial capitals outlawing firecrackers altogether. Shanghai is also banning them in the city center but, in a nod to marriage customs, handing out free electronic ones to newlyweds.

Whether it's due to expanding municipal restrictions, pollution concerns, a sagging economy or simply fading interest in a country that prides itself on having invented gunpowder, there's a growing sense, at least among Chinese urbanites, that setting firecrackers just isn't the essential tradition it used to be.

Public safety and pollution

Wang Liwei, a 74-year old resident of east Beijing, said he's heard plenty of public announcements warning about the effect of fireworks on public safety and pollution. In Beijing, where residents often deal with winter smog, the government has blanketed the streets with bold-typed signs urging moderation while the subway system has rolled out posters showing a teddy bear hiding behind a gas mask, a string of firecrackers dangling from a paw.

"Everyone around me has seen on TV or heard the radio the last few years so we know what it does to pollution," Wang said. "My children and grandchildren don't shoot as many as we used to, and that's not a problem. Why do you have to go crazy with it?" But he pointed out he opposed any official ban like what the

city had during the 1990s - which many residents flouted anyway. "You still have to shoot a few and show the tradition to the kids," he added. "It just wouldn't have any New Year flavor otherwise." Nine years after Beijing lifted a decade-long ban, residents now seem to be voluntarily cutting back on firecrackers. Television stations have aired reports that fireworks stalls scattered around the city are offering 50 percent discounts if not closing early this year. With a few days left before the New Year, merchants at the historic Tianyi market in west Beijing grumbled about sales that were down by at least a third this year, with most blaming the poor economy rather than changing habits. "I definitely think it's because of the economy," said Teng Qi, a 27-year old from Zhejiang.

Province who ran a shop in the basement floor. "It is very disappointing. We're now just blindly getting by." Believed to ward off evil spirits and misfortune, firecrackers have long been purchased for events ranging from weddings and funerals. But for many Chinese, particularly of an older generation, the acrid smell alone is enough to recall joyful memories of the Spring Festival and all its trappings, from the round-table family feasts to the cash-stuffed red envelopes doled out by grandparents.

For police, though, it's something of a nightmare. There were over 15,000 fires related to fireworks during the 2015 New Year period, down 11 percent from a year prior, according to the public security ministry. Last week, Beijing police began sending notices via text messages and issued pleas on social media.

"Please set as few firecrackers as possible during the Spring Festival Period, minimize air pollution and help keep the capital's skies blue!" said one such post by the police security bureau on Wednesday with a statement that detailed how many injuries Beijingers sustained in 2015. Authorities in the capital appear set

on the policy of allowing 24-hour fireworks on New Years Eve and New Years Day and 18-hour windows every day for the following two weeks. But bursts of firework-related mayhem in recent years have prompted officials and media commentators to call for tighter restrictions.

Scorched a forest

One such episode came in 2011 when revelers accidentally scorched a forest in Zhejiang, a five-star hotel in Shenyang and a 1,000-year old Buddhist temple housing holy scriptures in Fujian-all in the span of three days. And in perhaps the best-known instance, employees at Central China Television in 2009 burned down a newly completed tower adjacent to their Beijing headquarters, one of the capital's iconic developments. But even if the densely populated cities were quieting down to the relief of authorities, many said the countryside won't be giving up their fireworks for a long time yet.

"Where I'm from, firecrackers are a must for all the big occasions," Chen Tang, a 28-year old restaurant worker in Beijing, said one day before he was due to take a train home to rural Anhui Province. "Weddings, funerals, even when someone buys something big, like a television." Yet others shrugged off what they thought was a slightly fading tradition.

Hunched over his lunch at his stall, Deng Zhi, a 53-year old Tianyi merchant, said he associated firecrackers with his childhood in west Beijing, just a few blocks away. But that was a different time, he said. "When I was little, of course I loved to set off firecrackers at New Year, but it's not a big deal that we don't use them so much now," he said. He pointed his chopsticks at a pork belly dish. "When I was little, I also loved being able to eat fatty meat at New Year," he said. "Now I can eat this every day if I want. Times change." — AP

PHILIPPINES' ELECTION SEASON GETS STARTED

MANILA: The Philippines' raucous democracy cracks into top gear this week as campaigning begins for national elections, with familiar themes of corruption, dictatorship and celebrity star-power to dominate.

The three-month campaign launches tomorrow with most interest on a crowded contest to succeed President Benigno Aquino, who has won global applause for six years of strong economic growth and a bruising anti-graft campaign. There are myriad other sub-plots, including a bid by dead dictator Ferdinand Marcos's son to take the vice presidency and eight-time world boxing champion Manny Pacquiao's run for a Senate seat.

The jailhouse campaigns of two politicians charged with murder who are running in local mayoral elections, as well as graft-tainted ex-president Gloria Arroyo's run for a third term as congresswoman while behind bars, fuel a sizzling political atmosphere of chaos and chicanery. There are four major contenders in the battle to move into the presidential palace and most analysts predict the deciding factors will-as usual-be name recog-

niton and charisma rather than ideology or policy.

"In the Philippines, elections are like a circus with the candidates trying to attract attention with their performances," Earl Parreno, an analyst at the Manila-based Institute for Political and Economic Reform, said.

"Programs and policies are secondary... it's a personality contest." Aquino won in a landslide six years ago largely due to the popularity of his parents, who led the democracy movement that saw Marcos flee into US exile in 1986. Aquino, 56, is still relatively popular but the constitution limits him to a single term.

His preferred successor is US-educated investment banker Mar Roxas, a trusted ally with many years governing experience who is vowing to continue the pair's "straight path" agenda of steady reforms and fighting graft. But Roxas, 58, is trailing in polls and analysts say he has a huge task to ignite an electorate that generally perceives him as having little charisma. "He is dry, he can't connect to ordinary people," Parreno said. — AFP



This combo shows file photos taken in October 2015 of Philippines presidential and vice-presidential candidates, (top L to R) the head of the main opposition party and current vice president Jejomar Binay and his running mate Senator Gringo Honasan; the adopted daughter of a late movie star, Senator Grace Poe, and her running mate Senator Chiz Escudero; (bottom L to R) current President Benigno Aquino's preferred successor and US-educated investment banker, Mar Roxas, and his running mate Congresswoman Leni Robredo; and late dictator Ferdinand Marcos's son and vice-presidential candidate Bongbong Marcos with his mother and former first lady Imelda Marcos. — AFP

MALAYSIA'S TWITTER POLICE TARGET CRITICS OF PM NAJIB

KUALA LUMPUR: Digitally savvy Malaysian police have been taking to social media to issue warnings to critics of scandal-hit Prime Minister Najib Razak in an unusual online campaign that critics say is unlikely to work.

Najib is facing the biggest political crisis in his seven-year premiership over a multi-billion dollar scandal at state fund 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) and over deposits of \$681 million in his private bank account. Najib, chairman of the 1MDB advisory board, has denied any wrongdoing and says he did not take any money for personal gain. Attorney General Apandi Ali last week closed investigations of Najib and said the \$681 million was a donation from a Saudi Arabian benefactor and most of it had been returned. That has not stopped Malaysians taking to social media to voice their exasperation.

A caricature of Najib with a clown face and the words "in a country full of corruption, we are all sedition," was widely shared recently. The police responded within hours, with an online warning to the artist who drew it, Fahmi Reza, telling him they were watching his Twitter account and he should use it "prudently and in line with the law", he said.

"The ruling elite of this country has always

been intolerant to dissent. They're always afraid of losing their throne," Fahmi said. "But the people have changed. The culture of protest and resistance is growing stronger." Fahmi was not the first person to be warned over social media comment as the police for the first time make use of Twitter to identify people who are being watched and caution them about repercussions.

"Action will be taken against individuals who spread false information," is a typical warning to appear on Twitter, often accompanied by the Twitter handle of the person it is being directed at. Responding to criticism of the attorney general's decision to drop the investigations of Najib, police told another Twitter user: "Investigations will be carried out on the posts made by the owner of this Twitter account."

A police spokeswoman confirmed that the Twitter account issuing the warnings was an official Malaysian cyber unit account but she declined to comment on specific warnings, such as the one issued to Fahmi. She referred queries to the head of the police cyber unit but he declined to make any immediate comment. The Home, or interior, Ministry which is in charge of the unit, did not respond to a request for comment. — Reuters

AFGHANISTAN HOPES TO MEET WITH TALEBAN THIS MONTH

KABUL: Afghanistan expects to hold direct talks with the Taliban by the end of this month, an official said yesterday. Foreign Ministry spokesman Ahmad Shakib Mostaghani told reporters that Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and

the United States had agreed on a roadmap toward peace talks at a meeting in Islamabad the day before. He said the government hopes to "put an end to the futile violence which is imposed on our people."



KABUL: Delegations from Afghanistan, Pakistan, The United States of America and China discuss a road map for ending the war with the Taliban at the Presidential Palace. — AP

The last direct talks between Kabul and the Taliban broke down after just one session last summer when Kabul announced that the Taliban's reclusive, longtime leader Mullah Mohammad Omar died two years ago. The next four-country meeting is scheduled for Feb. 23 in Kabul. The Taliban are not taking part in those talks, which aim to lay the groundwork for peace talks.

The Afghan government has long accused Pakistan of granting the insurgents safe haven across the porous border, charges denied by Islamabad. But Pakistan is widely believed to have influence over the Taliban and is seen as a key player in any peace efforts.

At the Saturday meeting, the third since the peace process was re-launched last month, the four nations called for direct negotiations between the government and the Taliban to take place soon, despite an escalation in the war since the drawdown of the international combat mission in 2014. Afghan forces have struggled to fight off the Taliban, who have spread their footprint across the country, leading to high casualties among Afghan forces and fear among the population that the insurgency is gaining strength. — AP

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ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
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CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163
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COMMERCIAL : 24835618

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Focus

ILLUSION BUILT
ON AID HERALDS
HOPE, HUNGER

By Ed Stoddard and Mabvuto Banda

As she walks along a dirt road in central Malawi, Louise Abale carries her precious maize wrapped in a brightly colored cloth and balanced on her head. Because of drought in Malawi and across southern Africa the grain has doubled in price in the space of a year, and now costs around 200 kwacha (\$0.28) a kilo. Like many, Abale is struggling to pay for maize, a staple of the diet, and says her own - stunted - crop will not be ready for harvest for two months. "It's too expensive, I have almost no money," she said.

In all 2.8 million people in Malawi, or 17 percent of the population, now face hunger, according to the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP). Drought and floods have hit the maize crop, exposing the fragility of gains which had seen Malawi's rates of malnutrition slashed in the past two decades. That progress was partly rooted in a fertilizer grant for small-scale farmers. But now the government, starved of donor funds following a graft scandal over two years ago, can ill afford such payments and says it must scale down the program.

Ironically, policies aimed at ensuring basic food security are partly to blame for a cycle of rural poverty and aid dependency in this land-locked African nation, leaving the population vulnerable to climate shocks, economists say. "There is no doubt that the fertilizer subsidy was only feasible due to donor support," said Ed Hobe, an analyst at Africa Risk Consulting. "At best, it was unsustainable without continued donor support, at worst, it was an illusion built on aid."

Launched in 2005, the Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP) provides qualifying farmers - those with limited income but a plot of productive land - with two coupons which can be redeemed for two 50-kg bags of fertilizer. The recipients make a modest contribution, with the government footing most of the bill. Because the government is subsidizing the production of maize - the main source of calories for many poor households - it also bans the export of the grain.

The program is credited by the government and some aid agencies with lifting maize production and cutting hunger. The data appear to back that up. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) says the percentage of Malawi's malnourished population fell to 21.8 percent in 2012-14 from 45 percent two decades earlier. But FISP's role here is difficult to untangle as most of those gains were made before 2005. Still, there is evidence of benefits, including indirect ones. Stunting among Malawi children - a key nutrition measure - fell to 42.4 percent in 2014 from 49 percent in 2002.

Unintended Consequences

But the program has also had unintended consequences. The focus on food security, including the ban on maize exports, has discouraged investment in more productive commercial farming methods. "Our concern with the export ban is that it limits the scope to expand production among more medium and large-scale farms if they are unable to market the surplus," said Richard Record, World Bank Senior Country Economist, World Bank in Malawi.

In the long run such a ban stunts food production, especially in an age of increasingly high-tech farming, economists say. FISP also diverted state funds from other areas. In all, FISP has accounted for as much as 9 percent of government expenditure and over half the agricultural budget, leaving scant funds to invest in rural transport links and other projects that would benefit the countryside. "The FISP was not matched by increased investment in rural infrastructure especially roads and irrigation," said Hobe of Africa Risk Consulting.

This retards development of other sectors in the farm value chain, such as canning, which can kick-start industrialization, economists and analysts say. Initially FISP met its objective: providing calories to the rural poor. Between 2007 and 2014 Malawi produced bumper maize crops, with surpluses recorded since 2007 - until last year. A study in the "The American Journal of Agricultural Economics" found a 15 percent boost in maize production under FISP coincided with a 15 percent decrease in the amount of land devoted to the grain. This suggests small-scale farmers diversified to cash crops such as tobacco and cotton.

Donor Drought Drains FISP Coffers

Today FISP is no longer viable, government officials and analysts say. Donor funds for the budget have dried up in the wake of a scandal over two years ago dubbed "cashgate", in which state officials siphoned millions of dollars. "We are going to have to be scaling down expenditure on FISP, we are reacting to diminishing resources of funds for the budget," Finance Minister Goodall Gondwe told Reuters. —Reuters

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HOW DONALD TRUMP TOOK ON THE NFL

By Jeff Horwitz

Donald Trump was known in New York by 1984 as a flashy newcomer to Manhattan real estate. But football, not business, was what drew 60 young women to the Trump Tower in early January of that year. The women had come to audition for the Brig-A-Deers, the cheerleading squad of the New Jersey Generals, part of the upstart United States Football League. Trump had recently bought the team. Judged by a panel that included Andy Warhol, gossip columnist Cindy Adams and other celebrities, the event was a splashy media affair. But organizer Emily Magrish grew worried when some women who had been cut from consideration in earlier rounds showed up to picket outside.

"I was convinced Trump was going to fire me on the spot," Magrish said of the protest. "Instead, I got a bonus. He thought I'd done it on purpose." The Generals have been largely forgotten, but Trump's ownership of the USFL team was formative in his evolution as a public figure and peerless self-publicist. With money and swagger, he led a shaky spring football league into an all-or-nothing showdown with the NFL, building an outsized reputation in the process.

Now a leading Republican presidential candidate, Trump has shown the same combativeness and showmanship in the campaign - and proved yet again that he will not hesitate to confront an established order. But 30 years after the USFL's demise, whether Trump killed the league or nearly saved it remains contested among those involved. One point of agreement: "Donald was the big, crazy-spending owner, and the NFL guys were scared to death of him," said Bill Tatham Jr., who owned the USFL's Arizona Outlaws along with his father and came to admire Trump's tactics. "But he wasn't the half-cocked guy his enemies try to portray him as."

Another similarity that USFL observers see to today: Trump set himself up to come out on top regardless of whether his presidential campaign succeeds. Before the USFL, "I was well known, but not really well known," Trump told AP. "After taxes, I would say I lost \$3 million. And I got a billion dollars of free publicity."

A Roaring Start

The USFL was founded with an explicit goal: avoid fights with the NFL. Games would be played in the spring. Each team could pick up a few stars. Rigorous salary caps would rule out an inter-league bidding war. Though the new league sought to stay out of a duel, it was in a good position to capitalize on some of the NFL's weaknesses. A 1982 players strike cut the NFL's season from 16 games to nine, owners were feuding over franchise locations and antiquated rules discouraged obvious crowd-pleasers such as post-touchdown celebrations.

Thanks to novelty and a few marquee players - most notably the Generals' Hershel Walker, a Heisman Trophy winner - the league got off to a promising start. But by the end of the inaugural season, the initial enthusiasm had ebbed and some cornerstone franchises were struggling. The original owner of the Generals, an understated Oklahoma oilman named Walter Duncan, had enough of the league after just one year and sold the team to Trump.

To people who cared about sports - as opposed to New York development deals - Trump's name wasn't widely known at the time. But the team proved to be a perfect vehicle to carry him and his then-wife Ivanka Trump into the public eye. The tryouts for the Brig-A-Deers earned coverage in The New York Times, the New York Daily News and the New York Post, with a Post reporter even auditioning for the squad herself.

The cheerleading squad was just the beginning. During the first six months of his ownership, Trump's name appeared 161 times in newspapers tracked by the Factiva research service - more than it had appeared in the prior four years. "He didn't want to be in the Daily News' real estate section," said Kevin MacConnell, the Generals' former director of public relations. Thanks to the Generals, he said, "he was on the front page of The New York Times and the Post."

Some of the publicity came from Trump's pricey acquisition of marquee players such as quarterback Doug Flutie. Yet much of the attention came at no cost. Shortly after buying the Generals, Trump began publicly courting legendary Miami Dolphins Coach Don Shula, insinuating that serious contract talks were

under way. Hiring away the NFL's top coach was never a serious possibility, those involved at the time said. But Trump stoked talk of a deal for weeks, "not thinking Shula would ever accept it," said Gary Croke, the Generals' assistant head of public relations.

Such sports-page dramas were good for the team's ticket sales, which surged after Trump bought the team. But many in the Generals' front office became convinced that Trump's interest in publicity did not always align with the team's interest. Around the time of the Shula play, Trump began talking up moving the team to Manhattan - anathema to the New Jersey residents who were the team's fan base. "I called him and said, 'What are you doing? People are trying to sell tickets here,'" said Kathy Fernandes, executive assistant to the team's president. "He said, 'I just

subject of heated debate decades later. An eventual study by consulting firm McKinsey and a poll of the league's fans both suggested that the USFL should stay in the spring. Had the league kept its head down and built up its spring operations, 'it would've had staying power,'" Croke said.

Former owners such as Tatham and Steve Ehrhart, who was also the USFL's general counsel, disagreed, citing the collapse of teams in major markets such as Los Angeles and Chicago. "We couldn't make it work financially or break through the power of the NFL and baseball," Ehrhart said. Trump came to the league already convinced of that conclusion. While one contingent of the owners had deep enough pockets to weather several more money-losing seasons, another group of owners was nearly bust. At one away game,

from the Seahawks during the team's 1983 playoffs, guaranteeing that the raid would be the talk of NFL pregame shows.

When the New York Giants got into a public contract dispute with star Lawrence Taylor, Trump wired \$1 million into the linebacker's bank account and signed Taylor to play with the Generals in 1988 - five years off. The Giants had to pay Trump to nullify that contract just weeks later. "They gave me a million dollars and hated me ever after," Trump recalls gleefully. "The Giants went nuts when I signed him - it was huge publicity."

The Art of the Insult

With much of the league exhausted and in debt, Trump's advocacy for a frontal assault on the NFL paid off. Following the 1984 spring season, the owners voted to move the USFL to the fall in 1986, filing an October federal antitrust lawsuit against the NFL in New York. The lawyer handling the case for the USFL, combative showman Harvey Myerson, was Trump's pick. Moving to the fall cost the USFL its spring television contract, leaving the league without vital support. After a lame-duck spring season in 1985, the USFL pinned its future on its case against the NFL.

One welcome outcome for the USFL would have been a legal settlement that brought a handful of new teams into the NFL. If any team were to make that cut, it was likely to be Trump's, based on Generals attendance and its strong roster of players. "He had New York, he had the leverage," Tatham said. But Trump himself - and his delight at getting under the NFL's skin - may have foiled prospects for a deal. Years after the USFL's failure, Croke said he asked Ralph Wilson, then owner of the Buffalo Bills, whether the NFL had considered a merger. "He said, 'We actually thought about that, and your team was one that interested us. But Trump pissed us off so much that we didn't want him in the league,'" Croke recalled.

Trump says he's convinced that a merger would have ultimately happened if the USFL owners had enough money to bargain from a position of power. But with some USFL owners nearly broke, the NFL saw no need to bargain. The case went to a jury - where the NFL painted Trump as the villain. Jurors unanimously upheld the USFL's contention that the NFL was a monopoly. But with the USFL asking for \$1.3 billion in damages, the jurors split. They awarded the USFL one dollar. "What the NFL did was smart," Trump says now. "They purely said this is a Donald Trump thing, and he doesn't need the money."

While the USFL appealed the judgment, Tatham worked to put together a coalition of owners willing to keep their teams playing in the meantime, but Trump wouldn't bite. "It was a very calm discussion, he was a very calm thinker," Tatham said. "If Donald was this emotional, crazy guy, we'd have played. But he really isn't." In 1988, the appellate court refused to alter the jury's original \$1 verdict. The league voted to disband. Trump says he has no regrets. "I'm not a minor league kind of person," Trump said. "I came in on the basis that I wanted to challenge the NFL, and maybe there'd be a merger, maybe there wouldn't be."

Look Familiar?

Thirty years after the USFL's collapse, many who participated in league see Trump's presidential campaign as a replay of his football days. Some in lower perches in the league say Trump suckered the league into self-destruction by supporting his attempt to break into the clubby world of the NFL. Doug Allen, who was the players' union representative in contract talks with the USFL, says Trump's initial infusion of charisma and money into the league turned from blessing to curse. "Even if the league wasn't going to make it, that wasn't the way to go out of business," Allen says. "He didn't care if he wrecked the league, or what happened to players in the long run."

But Tatham and Ehrhart - who supported the USFL's move to the fall - saw Trump's effort as a savvy gamble that brought the USFL within a hair's breadth of busting into the country's biggest sporting monopoly. They see a parallel in Trump's current campaign, with his unconventional strategy and ability to run circles around rival candidates. "I said before the first debate that it was going to be Trump and the seven dwarfs," said Ehrhart. Said Tatham: "I think Donald Trump looks at the United States like his franchise in the USFL." He added, "Don't ever think he doesn't know what he's doing." —AP



In this March 8, 1984 file photo, Donald Trump shakes hands with Hershel Walker in New York after agreement on a 4-year contract with the New Jersey Generals USFL football team. —AP photos



In this Aug 2, 1985, file photo, Donald Trump (right), New York real estate magnate Stephen Ross (left) and USFL Commissioner Harry L. Usher participate in a news conference in New York to discuss the agreement they have reached in principle to merge the Houston Gamblers and New Jersey Generals football franchises.

and sold five apartments in the Trump Tower this week."

The team provided Trump with a calling card of sorts for his other endeavors. When Trump's ambitions to build a casino empire in Atlantic City necessitated friends in New Jersey politics, the state's governor, Thomas Kean, declared a "New Jersey Generals Day" in 1985, appearing on field with Trump to give him an award. State troopers in Kean's protection detail came out to meet Trump and his own security crew, Magrish said, "and, boy, did he love that." "I think the Generals were very helpful in getting approvals I never would have gotten without them," Trump told the AP of his efforts to break into the New Jersey's regulated gaming industry. "Atlantic City sort of fueled my empire."

Trump's Push into the Fall

The USFL bled money during its first two years. Owners overspent on talent and the league expanded at a rate that its audience could not justify. Whether fixing these mistakes would have been enough to make a spring league viable remains the

subject of heated debate decades later. An eventual study by consulting firm McKinsey and a poll of the league's fans both suggested that the USFL should stay in the spring. Had the league kept its head down and built up its spring operations, 'it would've had staying power,'" Croke said.

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from the Seahawks during the team's 1983 playoffs, guaranteeing that the raid would be the talk of NFL pregame shows.

ANSCOMBE OUT OF WALES'S OPENER



DUBLIN: Wales full-back Gareth Anscombe was ruled out of his side's Six Nations opener against Ireland in Dublin yesterday due to a tight hamstring, a Welsh Rugby Union spokesman said. The Cardiff Blues back was still expected to train fully next week ahead of Wales's second match against Scotland in Cardiff on February 13. Anscombe's place in Warren Gatland's starting XV was taken by Scarlets' Liam Williams, who has played only an hour of rugby since a foot injury ruled him out of last year's World Cup. There were no changes to the Wales replacements bench. — AFP

PARIS REPLACES INJURED RICHARDSON FOR AUSTRALIA

SYDNEY: Paceman Kane Richardson has been ruled out of Australia's final one-day international against New Zealand with back trouble and will be replaced by Joel Paris, Cricket Australia said yesterday. Richardson was a late withdrawal from Saturday's second ODI and CA said he would return home "for further investigation into the issue." Paris had been with Western Australia's Sheffield Shield squad in Lincoln, New Zealand, where he took four wickets for 37 in the drawn match against New South Wales. Paris made his ODI debut in this season's ODI series against India. Richardson faces an anxious wait to determine the extent of his back injury with Australia set to announce their World T20 squad later this week. Richardson's injury adds further problems for selectors already faced with injuries to T20 skipper Aaron Finch and allrounder James Faulkner, who both have hamstring issues. Australia levelled the three-game Chappell-Hadlee Trophy ODI series with a four-wicket win over the Black Caps in Wellington on Saturday. The third and final match will be played in Hamilton today. Paceman James Pattinson is also with the Australia squad in New Zealand but he has been instructed to focus on the first Test against New Zealand in Wellington starting on February 12. — AFP

ETIXX BARRED FROM TOUR OF QATAR

DOHA: Tour of Qatar organisers have blocked multiple winners Etixx from competing in this year's race starting today citing "disciplinary problems" with the Belgian team. "I've decided not to send them an invitation despite their wish to participate," Qatar Cycling Federation president Sheikh Khalid Bin Ali Al Thani told a press conference in Doha yesterday. "On several occasions the team has displayed disciplinary problems," he explained. "For example they take too long to change and give interviews even though they are expected on live television, and they take too long to reach the podium." The sheikh accused the team of "lacking respect". Etixx have dominated the Tour of Qatar, with Tom Boonen winning four editions (2006, 2008, 2009, 2012) and Niki Terpstra successful in 2014 and 2015. A total of 18 teams will line up for the 2016 race which finishes on Friday. — AFP



4TH GOLF TOURNAMENT OF CROWNE PLAZA KUWAIT AL THURAYA CITY



KUWAIT: Crowne Plaza Kuwait Al Thuraya City is proud to announce the continuous success of its annual golf tournament. The fourth edition took place on Saturday, 6th February, at Sahara Kuwait, a 18-hole championship golf course built to PGA standards. The 27 participating teams of four were composed of Crowne Plaza management officials and their business partners. The tournament kicked off at 7 am with

registration, a continental breakfast, and a golf trick show performed by Mark Reynolds. The one-hour show was followed by shotgun start at 10 am. In addition to the tournament's team prizes, the 108 players competed for individual prizes in the nearest-the-pin and longest-drive contests. The prizes were awarded right after buffet lunch accompanied by live jazz music. Achieving great scores, the team of Song Mok Cho, Shin Hyuk Choi, Peter Cho, and So

Suck Kwon won first place. Members of the second place winner team were Young Soo Son, Nam Gyu Cho, Sei Jin Pyo, and Jong Kuk Choi. Third place was claimed by the team of Ho Suk Seo, Dae Sung Park, Ji Hun Song, and Seong GuJeong. The men's nearest-the-pin and longest-drive contests were won by Abdulwahab Al Musallam and Abdelaziz Al Sarawi, respectively. The nearest-the-pin and longest-drive contests for women were won

by Ji Eon Kim and Myung Ok Cha, respectively. Ramy Haykal, Area General Manager for Inter Continental Hotels Group, congratulated all participants for showing great sportsmanship and thanked them for a wonderful day at the golf resort. He also thanked Sahara Kuwait's team for their crucial support in ensuring the event's success. "It is really nice to see all tournament participants having a great time together," he shared. "We look forward to

hosting the tournament once again next year and to making it bigger and better every coming year." Golf is a game of precision and focus, two qualities the Crowne Plaza Kuwait Al Thuraya City applies in its everyday operations to ensure its hotel guests have a memorable stay. The hotel trains its staff to create and maintain a restful environment and provides innovative products and services to make this happen.



GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN: Switzerland's Lara Gut, center, winner of an Alpine ski women's World Cup Super G race, celebrates on the podium with second-placed Germany's Viktoria Rebensburg, left, and third-placed United States' Lindsey Vonn, in Garmisch Partenkirchen, Germany, yesterday. — AP

LARA GUT WINS SUPER-G WORLD CUP

GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN: Lara Gut of Switzerland won her first Super G race of the season yesterday to cut into Lindsey Vonn's overall World Cup lead. Viktoria Rebensburg of Germany edged Vonn for second place as the American narrowly missed out on winning back-to-back races on the Kandahar hill. Vonn won Saturday's downhill. Still, Vonn set an all-time high with her 42nd podium finish in a Super-G. Renate Goetschl of Austria had 41. Vonn's 27 World Cup wins in Super-G races is already a record for both men and women. She had won seven of the last eight Super-G races going back to January 2015. But Gut found the winning line on a dark and bumpy course to win by .15 seconds. Vonn was .23 seconds back in third. "I didn't risk everything and Lara did," said Vonn, who had won the three previous Super-G races this season. Gut now has 17 career wins, eight of them in Super-G. "I didn't think very much, I just let go," Gut said after her fifth win of the season. Gut is now 87 points behind Vonn in the overall World Cup standings. Vonn also remains atop the

Super-G standings. "When I ski the way I can, I am able to mix it up with the best," said Gut, who finished a disappointing 14th in Saturday's downhill. "I just made fewer mistakes than the others." "It's much better when I focus only on the skiing and not think about the points. It's not true that Lindsey is unbeatable, all of us just have to step on it," Gut said. Rebensburg made the podium for the second straight day after finishing third in the downhill. She also won the last two giant slaloms. "I couldn't have wished for a better weekend before home fans," Rebensburg said. "Lara put together a really good run. I thought I had lost time at the bottom but it was just the opposite." Vonn said the conditions were tough. "I didn't have a good feeling for the snow. The flat light, the bumps and the spring snow, the whole thing combined to make me more hesitant than I normally am," Vonn said. "I played it safe, made it to the finish line healthy and I think that was the right decision. "I am not in the position with the points where I have to risk everything," she said. — AP

JANKA WINS SUPER-G AT 2018 OLYMPICS TEST

JEONGSEON: Former overall World Cup champion Carlo Janka won the super-G test event for the 2018 Pyeongchang Olympics by a large margin yesterday, while several pre-race favorites failed to finish their runs in a race that was much more challenging than the downhill a day earlier. The Swiss racer clocked 1 minute, 26.16 seconds for a 0.82 advantage over Christof Innerhofer of Italy. Vincent Kriechmayr of Austria finished third, 1.06 behind. "I took some risks and everything worked over the jumps, over the waves. I had a perfect bib today," said Janka, who started seventh. "I had some information on the start from the other guys down in the finish and it worked very well for me." Janka has struggled with injuries since winning the overall title six years ago. This was the first super-G victory of his career and his 11th World Cup win in all. Janka's victory also gave the struggling Swiss men's team its first win of the season. "We are a small team at the moment because of a lot of injuries," Janka said. "It's good for all the coaches and teammates. Hopefully we take some confidence out of this. Innerhofer had been an outspoken critic of the downhill course, which he derided as too slow and easy. "The super-G was different," Innerhofer said. "It was a nice super-G, because as you see there are a lot of guys who (make) mistakes. It's difficult because it's a lot of bumps at beginning and the speed is OK. You start at the steepest point of this downhill so the speed is OK." "We had the same speed as for the downhill," Innerhofer added. "It's right to have 95 kph (60 mph) in the super-G." Pre-race favorites Dominik Paris of Italy, Kjetil Jansrud of Norway and Andrew Weibrecht of the United States each had trouble.

LOSING CONTROL

Paris misjudged an approach a jump and flew off course, Jansrud did well not to crash after hitting a small bump and losing control and then Weibrecht went wide at the same spot and got stuck in soft snow. "I just got a bad report," Weibrecht said. "I had a plan but I corrected it on the report. I should have just trusted my plan. Ten centimeters (4 inches) of snow fell on the course



JEONGSEON: Winner Carlo Janka of Switzerland holds his trophy during the award ceremony for a men's World Cup super-G race, also a test event for the Pyeongchang 2018 Winter Olympics, at the Jeongseon Alpine Centre in Jeongseon, South Korea, yesterday. — AP

overnight, making conditions softer than Saturday's downhill won by Jansrud. "There was quite a bit of loose snow on the outside of the track," Weibrecht said. "I could have made it if they had cleared the snow a little bit better. But once I hit that I had no chance of making a recovery." This was the first of 28 test events for the next Winter Games and the inexperienced course crew was tested by the fresh snowfall. "It's their first time ever doing a ski race, so just trying to figure out the spots people might potentially ski, they don't know that," Weibrecht said. "Not their fault." Weibrecht also rated the super-G as more difficult than the downhill. "It's definitely a really tricky course," Weibrecht said. "But when you don't have any room for error on a tricky course that makes it especially difficult." Weibrecht then rushed home to Lake Placid, New York, to meet his baby girl, who

was born Thursday. Organizers offered him a seat on a private jet to Incheon airport.

INJURED

Marcel Hirscher of Austria finished seventh to increase his lead in the overall standings to 89 points ahead of Aksel Lund Svindal, the Norwegian who is out injured for the rest of the season. Svindal's lead in the super-G standings remained 120 points ahead of Weibrecht, with Aleksander Aamodt Kilde of Norway third, 125 points back, after finishing fourth yesterday. There was sunny weather at race time and about 1,000 fans showed up. The crowd reserved some of its loudest cheers for the only Korean competitor, Kim Hyeon-tae, who finished 42nd and last, more than seven seconds behind in his World Cup debut. — AP

VUNIPOLA THE BEDROCK OF JONES' NEW ENGLAND

EDINBURGH: Eddie Jones appears to be on a mission to tell every player in his England squad that he can be the best in the world in his position but those global ambitions for Billy Vunipola look less fanciful after his barnstorming display against Scotland.

The man-of-the-match number eight was immense in the 15-9 Murrayfield victory that gave Jones a satisfying first taste of the Six Nations, carrying repeatedly with real menace, always making ground and

dragging in Scottish defenders galore.

Openside flank James Haskell also had a game to remember, while Chris Robshaw slotted in solidly enough on the blindside. Scotland edged the breakdown battle with their superior speed and agility, and Jones is likely to tweak his back row once he settles in, but Vunipola looks to be at the back of the scrum for the duration.

"I've read all the articles about him being too slow to be a number eight but he

didn't look that way to me. His carrying was outstanding, as was his defence," said Jones, who earlier in the week had named Vunipola as one of his three vice-captains to Dylan Hartley. "He's a big guy with footwork; maybe he didn't realise he had that, but he's starting to use it now. He's a great reader of the game. He attacks well off the nine and we're trying to get him to do more wider, but he's still young at 22."

Pundit Stuart Barnes said Vunipola's per-

formance was "ominous for the rest of England's Six Nations opponents", starting with Italy in Rome next Sunday.

Jones has suggested that he might use that game to experiment a little more after opting for a tried-and-tested squad and, eventually, familiar forward-based tactics against Scotland. The feeling among England fans in the bars of Edinburgh was that the performance was largely forgettable but, in the circumstances, completely

acceptable. "There is not a Six Nations coach in history who wouldn't settle for an away win at Murrayfield in their first game and I can assure you Eddie Jones will be very happy with that," England's World Cup-winning coach Clive Woodward wrote in the Daily Mail. "You can pick holes in their performance but they needed a significant win to boost confidence after the World Cup and when they train today there will be a spring in their step." — Reuters

FLOWER BELIEVES PSL CAN BENEFIT PAKISTAN YOUNGSTERS

DUBAI: Former Zimbabwe captain and ex England coach Andy Flower yesterday says the Pakistan Twenty20 league can benefit the country's budding players in the same way Indians have benefitted from their league.

The 47-year-old, who is now looking after England's youth side and is serving as Peshawar team coach in the Pakistan Super League (PSL), said: "I think this tournament will be very good for Pakistan's youngsters in the way the IPL (Indian Premier League) is being very good for Indian cricket."

"I think there are five excellent sides and we should have brilliant cricket over the next couple of weeks and we have seen skilful performance and there is a lot of talent." The PSL have 69 local and 29 foreign players, with high profile names in West Indian Chris Gayle and Darren Sammy, former England batsman Kevin Pieteresen and Australia's Shane Watson.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) aims to boost the national team—currently eighth in one-day and seventh in Twenty20 rankings—and to groom some young players. "I think it's an interesting

initiative by PCB and its important for Pakistan cricket and that it is a success. It has started successfully," said Flower, who played 63 Tests and 213 one-day for Zimbabwe during an illustrious career.

"The PSL is absolutely a launching pad for Pakistan youngsters, some of the benefits they get by mixing with overseas players and gain from their experience and they also get confidence by sharing the same nets and dressing room," said Flower.

He singled out Peshawar's left-arm spinner Mohammad Asghar as a player for the future.

"The very good example is Asghar and his performance will do him a world of good," said Flower of the spinner who has taken five wickets for just 31 runs in eight overs in his team's two wins.

"The other factor is that the league might take away some of the myths of some of the international cricketers and allow the youngsters to understand that they are also human beings like them who are good at playing cricket and that can grow their confidence," said Flower. The ongoing PSL ends on February 23. — AFP



SYDNEY: Lewis Holland of Australia weaves through the New Zealand defense during the World Rugby Sevens Series Cup final in Sydney, Australia, yesterday. — AP

ALL BLACKS EDGE AUSTRALIA AT THE DEATH TO WIN TITLE

SYDNEY: Teenager Rieko loane scored a dramatic last-gasp try to give New Zealand a 27-24 win over Australia in a thrilling final yesterday and dash hopes of a home triumph in the inaugural Sydney Sevens.

With time having already expired, the 18-year-old silenced the 37,000 crowd at the Sydney Football Stadium by securing a hat-trick to give the All Blacks back-to-back titles after their Wellington triumph on home soil last weekend. loane was named player of the tournament for his seven tries but his 20-year-old brother Akira, who set up Rieko's first try with a trademark burst down the sideline, won the Man of the Match award after another tackle-busting performance.

Australia, under new coach Andy Friend but without marquee Wallabies signing Quade Cooper, never trailed in the final until loane

crossed at the death and will take confidence from their performance over the weekend.

"They had us on the ropes in the first half," said New Zealand skipper Tim Mikkelsen. "We know from last week what kind of lift you get from your home crowd. We just needed the ball, we're a difficult team to beat when we have the ball." Fiji, beaten 14-12 in the semi-finals by the All Blacks, will depart for the next round in Las Vegas top of the series standings on points difference after their victory over pacesetters South Africa in the third-place playoff.

The Fijians, South Africa and New Zealand are all tied on 69 points after four rounds of the 10-stop championship, which this year is acting in part as preparation for rugby's return to the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro in August.

Australia and Argentina have 54 points in fourth and fifth place. New Zealand might yet

drop down a spot or two, however, after World Rugby announced they were investigating pictures that appeared to show they had eight men on the pitch in their victory over Australia in the pool stage on Saturday.

Sonny Bill Williams is probably the biggest name to have quit the 15-man game in a bid for Olympic glory but the twice World Cup winning All Black had a mixed final yesterday.

He showed his athleticism with a brilliant try-saving tap tackle in the early minutes of the final but was sin-binned later in the same half for a high tackle on Australia's Allan Fa'alava'au.

Apart from the final result, organisers could not have asked for a better weekend after more than 73,000 fans, many of them in fancy dress, created a truly festive atmosphere at an event which had languished on the Gold Coast for the last few years. — Reuters

CBK LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN FOR @TIJARI HOLDERS TO ATTEND F1

KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) recently launched a new promotional campaign for its @Tijari youth account holders to grant three lucky winners a chance to attend the Formula One race in Bahrain on April 3rd, 2016.

CBK explained that each of the three prizes include tickets for two people to attend the pre-race training, the quality-

ing race and the final Formula One race in addition to flight tickets and accommodation at a Five Star hotel.

CBK added that all @Tijari account holders would get an entry in the draw for each KD 10 they spend using their ATM cards in the period of February 7 until March 17. New clients will get one extra chance on opening their @Tijari accounts.

DUTCH DEFEAT RUSSIA IN FED CUP SEMI-FINALS

MOSCOW: Kiki Bertens won a decisive singles rubber in Moscow yesterday, beating Svetlana Kuznetsova of Russia in straight sets to lead the Netherlands into the Fed Cup semi-finals.

Bertens won 6-1, 6-4 in one hour 26 minutes to give the Dutch squad an unassailable 3-0 lead in the opening round tie at the hardcourts of the Olympic indoor arena.

"Today I felt good, while Svetlana (Kuznetsova) played yesterday a four-hour match," Bertens said. "And I believed that if I started good and won the first set — even if it went to a third set — I believed that my body would feel better than hers. Two-time former Grand Slam champion Kuznetsova clearly failed to recover from her four-hour marathon defeat on Saturday to Richel Hogenkamp, the longest match ever in the Fed Cup. Bertens grabbed two breaks of serve to take the opening set in 35 minutes. Then in the second set, 24-year-

old Bertens got the break of serve she needed in the seventh game and went on to seal the victory on her second match point with a powerful forehand, which Kuznetsova returned into the net.

Dutch team skipper Paul Haarhuis said he had not expected such an easy victory against last season's runners-up Russia. "I did not expect a 3-0 win as Russia are a very strong team," he said.

"But our girls played really well, they fought hard. Every day you have the chance to beat the higher-ranked player. That's what the girls believed in and what they've actually done."

On Saturday Hogenkamp beat Kuznetsova 7-6 (7/4), 5-7, 10-8 to give the Netherlands a shock 2-0 lead after Bertens overcame Ekaterina Makarova 6-3, 6-4. After beating four-time champions Russia the Dutch squad will now face the winner of the tie between France and Italy for a place in the Fed Cup final. — AFP



MOSCOW: Netherlands' Kiki Bertens eyes the ball for a return to Russia's Svetlana Kuznetsova during the Federation Cup tennis world group first round match between Russia and Netherlands in Moscow yesterday. — AFP

YASIR SHAH GETS THREE MONTH DRUGS BAN: ICC

DUBAI: Pakistan leg-spinner Yasir Shah has been banned for three months after pleading guilty to a failed dope test last year, the International Cricket Council (ICC) said yesterday.

"Shah has been suspended from all cricket-related activities for three months after pleading guilty to breaching Article 2.1 of the ICC Anti-Doping Code," the ICC announced in a statement. "Shah had provided a urine sample as part of the ICC's random in-competition testing programme after the conclusion of the one-day international between England and Pakistan in Abu Dhabi, UAE on 13 November 2015. "His sample was subsequently tested and found to contain chlortalidone. This is classified as a "Specified Substance" under World Anti-Doping Agency's Prohibited List and is prohibited both in-competition and out-of-competition." Shah has emerged as a match-winner for Pakistan in Tests after ace spinner Saeed Ajmal lost form due to having to remodel an illegal bowling action. "Shah admitted the violation and a three-month suspension has been imposed, backdated to 27 December 2015, the day when he was provisionally suspended. Shah will, therefore, be eligible to return to cricket on 27 March 2016."

The ICC said it accepted that the doping offence had been inadvertent as the medication had been taken "for therapeutic reasons, specifically to treat his blood pressure. "He was able to satisfy the ICC through evidence and submissions prepared on his behalf by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) that



Yasir Shah

he had no intention to enhance his sporting performance or to mask the use of another performance enhancing substance.

"He had, instead, mistakenly taken his wife's blood pressure medication that was identical in appearance to his own but which contained the prohibited substance chlortalidone."

The head of the Pakistan Cricket Board's medical panel, Sohail Salim, said he was satisfied with the ICC decision. "We are happy that we made a genuine reply in Shah's case," Salim told AFP. "At the time of Shah's suspension a lot of former cricketers, experts and doctors were giving their opinions without any knowledge and that was disturbing." Under anti-doping rules Shah could have been hit with a two to four year ban.

Shah said he was delighted at the news. "I am delighted and thankful to Almighty," Shah told AFP by phone from Swabi, Pakistan. "I was attending a religious congregation and was waiting for this news with bated breath. "The most difficult phase of my life is over now," said Shah. "I have been bowling in the nets so as soon as I am eligible to play I will get into the groove. "The target, of course is to be part of Pakistan's tour of England where my team will need me," said Shah of Pakistan's tour where they play four Tests, five one-day internationals and a Twenty20 starting in July. Shah has 76 wickets in 12 Tests. His 12 wickets helped Pakistan beat Australia 2-0 in 2014 and took 25 in 2-1 win over Sri Lanka last year. — AFP

MANNING, NEWTON TO DUEL AS AMERICA STOPS FOR SUPER BOWL 50

SANTA CLARA: A perfectly scripted quarterback duel between Peyton Manning and Cam Newton will take center stage as America comes to a standstill for the 50th edition of the Super Bowl.

More than 100 million households across the United States and millions more worldwide will tune in to see if Manning can inspire the Denver Broncos to an upset victory over Newton and the Carolina Panthers.

The climax of the National Football League season is the biggest event on America's sporting calendar, a money-spinning commercial juggernaut which sees millions gather for day-long viewing parties in bars and homes.

The 39-year-old Manning-poised to become the oldest starting quarterback in Super Bowl history when the teams run out at Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara-will be a sentimental favorite for many.

The five-time NFL Most Valuable Player has battled through to Sunday's showpiece after arguably the most challenging season of his 18-year career which included a mid-term slump that saw him benched as Broncos starter.

POIGNANT FAREWELL?

Manning's fourth Super Bowl appearance is also shrouded by the poignant knowledge that it may well be his final game.

Manning has consistently stated that he has not yet decided on his future in the build-up to the game, which kicks off at 3:30pm local time (2330 GMT).

"I haven't made my mind up and I don't see myself making a decision until after the season," said Manning, who passed Brett Favre this season to become the all-time leader in passing yards at 71,940.

The key to Manning's hopes of adding a second Super Bowl ring to the one he earned with the Indianapolis Colts in 2007 may well rest with Denver's formidable defense. But whether Denver's defense can put the brakes on Newton and the free-scoring Panthers remains to be seen.

The Panthers demolished the Arizona Cardinals in the NFC title game, winning 49-15 against a side who had been expected to threaten them.

At the heart of the Panthers dominance this season-they carry a 17-1 record into the Super Bowl-has been Newton, whose scoring statistics have almost seen him redefine the role of quarterback.

The 26-year-old's twin threat of passing and running ability-which includes a staggering 10 rushing touchdowns in the regular season-has asked questions that few opposition defenses have been able to answer.

STAR-STUDED CROWD

A star-studded capacity crowd of 73,000 will cram into the \$1.2 billion (1.1 billion euro) home of the San Francisco 49ers to watch the Manning-Newton duel.

Pop diva Lady Gaga will sing the national anthem while British rockers Coldplay will headline the halftime entertainment show which will also feature performances from Beyonce and Bruno Mars.

Only a limited number of tickets with a face value of between \$500 and \$1,800 went on general sale, with most ending up on the resale market.

The Stubhub website said the average price of a ticket on the secondary market was \$4,900.

A vast security blanket will be draped over the event, which has seen an estimated one million visitors descend on San Francisco for the game and festivities linked to the extravaganza.

Federal officials revealed this week they had consulted officials in France "constantly" to help plan against a Paris-style terror attack, while emphasizing there was no evidence of a credible threat.

"Our intelligence and analysis directorate, me, the deputy secretary and numerous others have consulted the French, and we continue to do so," Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson said Wednesday.

"We try to anticipate things that could happen from multiple different directions. We're always informed by recent events and what we see and the world situation," Johnson added. — AFP

AFC CHAMPION • DENVER BRONCOS



OFFENSE
Total yards (avg.)
Regular season: 355.5

248.1	107.4
Passing	Rushing
Postseason: 284.0	
180.0	104.0

First downs
Regular season: 314

85	201	28
Rushing	Passing	Penalty
Postseason: 31		
21	2	8

DEFENSE
Yards allowed (avg.)
Regular season: 283.1

199.6	83.6
Passing	Rushing
Postseason: 366.0	
301.5	64.5

SCORING (PPG)
Regular season

22.2	Points for
18.5	Points allowed
Postseason	
21.5	Points for
17.0	Points allowed

PLAY SELECTION (PCT.)
Regular season

59.6	40.4	52.3	47.7
PASS	RUSH	PASS	RUSH



COACHES' CORNER

Career record (Reg. season)
W 73
L 68

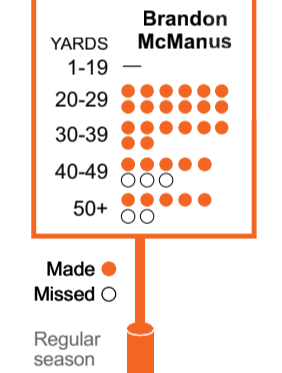
Gary Kubiak

Spent eight seasons coaching the Texans after being John Elway's backup for much of his playing career. Elway summoned him to replace John Fox after last January's postseason debacle against Indianapolis.

PLAYERS WITH SUPER BOWL EXPERIENCE



FIELD GOALS



Constructing a contender

Team makeup

Current 53-man roster

Drafted	Free agents
21	28
Traded 1	Waiver 3

RED ZONE

Production inside the 20-yard line, includes postseason:

23	21	4
OFFENSE	Field goals	No score
Touchdowns	goals	score

DEFENSE

25	10	9
Touchdowns	Field goals	No score

Battle tested

Passing yds: 2,249 (reg.) • 398 (postseason)

Touchdowns: 9 (reg.) • 2 (postseason)

Win Loss

WEEK	TDS	YARDS
1	175	
2	256	
3	324	
4	213	
5	266	
6	290	
7	BYE	
8	340	
9	281	
10	35	
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16	69	
17		

WC —

DIV 222

CONF 176



NFC CHAMPION • CAROLINA PANTHERS



OFFENSE
Total yards (avg.)
Regular season: 366.9

224.3	142.6
Passing	Rushing
Postseason: 385.5	
237.5	148.0

First downs
Regular season: 357

136	197	24
Rushing	Passing	Penalty
Postseason: 40		
15	2	23

DEFENSE
Yards allowed (avg.)
Regular season: 322.9

234.5	88.4
Passing	Rushing
Postseason: 345.0	
276.0	69.0

SCORING (PPG)
Regular season

31.2	Points for
19.2	Points allowed
Postseason	
40.0	Points for
19.5	Points allowed

PLAY SELECTION (PCT.)
Regular season

48.8	51.2	39.1	60.9
PASS	RUSH	PASS	RUSH



COACHES' CORNER

Career record (Reg. season)
W 47
L 32
T 1

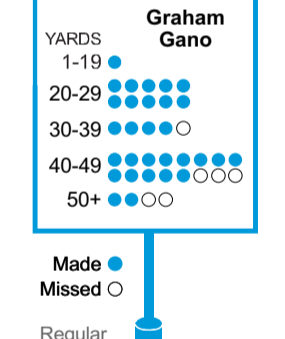
Ron Rivera

NFL Coach of the Year in 2013 and is a front-runner for the award this season. A solid defensive assistant and coordinator for years, he finally got his own team in 2011 and has gone 49-34-1, with three straight NFC South crowns.

PLAYERS WITH SUPER BOWL EXPERIENCE



FIELD GOALS



Blueprint for success

Team makeup

Current 53-man roster

Drafted	Free agents
19	29
Traded 5	

RED ZONE

Production inside the 20-yard line, includes postseason:

49	17	4
OFFENSE	Field goals	No score
Touchdowns	goals	score

DEFENSE

24	11	10
Touchdowns	Field goals	No score

Offensive weapon

Pass yds: 3,837 (reg.) • 496 (post.)

Touchdowns: 35 (reg.) • 3 (post.)

Win Loss

WEEK	TDS	YARDS
1	175	
2	195	
3	315	
4	124	
5	BYE	
6	269	
7	197	
8	248	
9	297	
10	217	
11	246	
12	183	
13	331	
14	265	
15	340	
16	142	
17	293	

WC —

DIV 161

CONF 335

Broncos, Panthers clash on the big stage

Can Peyton Manning write a storybook ending to his Hall of Fame-quality career? Manning isn't saying outright this is the end of his Hall of Fame-caliber career despite all the indications it will soon be over. Manning knows it was the Broncos' defense that has made the difference to this point and Denver's All-Pro linebacker, Von Miller, again keys the unit. All season, the best record in the NFL has belonged to the Panthers. And while much of the focus is on Manning, Cam Newton deserves at least equal billing. The NFL's most dynamic offensive weapon this season, threw for 35 touchdowns and ran for 10, setting an NFL record with that combination. Carolina is in its second Super Bowl, Denver in its record-tying eighth. But the Panthers are the favorites.

Levi's Stadium, Santa Clara, Calif. • Sun. • 6:30 p.m. EST (CBS)

Sparking the ground game

A godsend for the Broncos, Anderson came from nowhere to seize the starting job in 2014. Short but stocky and powerful, also has a nice burst. Knows how to find the end zone.

Regular season (RUSHING)	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
	152	720	4.7	48	5
Postseason					
	31	144	4.6	34	1

C.J. Anderson



Baby you were born to run

Stewart became the true No. 1 runner this season when DeAngelo Williams departed. Rushed for 989 yards and six TDs during season, and had 59-yard sprint on Panthers' first play of postseason. Strong runner with a burst to break big plays.

Regular season (RUSHING)	CAR	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
	242	989	4.1	44	6
Postseason					
	38	189	5.0	59	2

Jonathan Stewart



PROJECTED STARTERS

BRONCOS

OFFENSE

V. Green 85 • FB
P. Manning 18 • QB
D. Thomas 88 • WR
M. Schofield 79 • RT
L. Vasquez 65 • RG
M. Paradis 61 • C
E. Mathis 69 • LG
R. Harris 68 • LT
C. Johnson 95 • LDE
S. Lotulelei 98 • LDT
K. Short 99 • RDT
T. Davis 58 • WLB
R. McClain 27 • LCB
L. Kuechly 59 • MLB
S. Thompson 54 • SLB
K. Coleman 20 • FS

DEFENSE

B. Colquitt 4 • P
B. McManus 8 • K
J. Norwood 11 • PR
A. Caldwell 12 • KR
O. Daniels 81 • TE
E. Sanders 10 • WR
J. Norman 22 • RCB
R. Harper 41 • SS

WHEN BRONCOS HAVE THE BALL

The Broncos have not given Manning great protection all season, but it has been good enough in two postseason wins. Carolina will blitz to try to make Manning uncomfortable. One way to defeat that, of course, is getting RBs C.J. Anderson and Ronnie Hillman involved early. When Manning throws, the theory has been he can't get the ball deep with enough juice on it. Accurate or not, he's still tough on the shorter passes and play-action. WRs Emmanuel Sanders and Demaryius Thomas, TEs Owen Daniels, Virgil Green and Vernon Davis, plus Anderson supply plenty of targets.

SPECIAL TEAMS

PANTHERS

OFFENSE

M. Tolbert 35 • FB
C. Newton 1 • QB
J. Stewart 28 • RB
G. Olsen 88 • TE
P. Brown 10 • WR
M. Remmers 74 • RT
T. Turner 70 • RG
R. Kalil 67 • C
A. Norwell 68 • LG
M. Oher 73 • LT
D. Ware 94 • WLB
D. Wolfe 95 • DE
S. Williams 92 • NT
M. Jackson 97 • DE
A. Talib 21 • LCB
B. Marshall 54 • ILB
D. Trevathan 59 • ILB
D. Stewart 26 • FS
T.J. Ward 43 • SS

DEFENSE

B. Nortman 8 • P
G. Gano 9 • K
T. Ginn, Jr. 19 • PR
F. Whittaker 43 • KR

WHEN PANTHERS HAVE THE BALL

Newton has been the NFL's most dynamic offensive weapon this season, ultra-dangerous when on the run. Denver will try to slow him down with their NFL top-ranked defense. DeMarcus Ware, Danny Trevathan and Brandon Marshall will try to get in Newton's face and mind, whether in the pass rush or popping up in unexpected spots. Carolina will counter by getting RB Jonathan Stewart involved early.

SUPER BOWL 50

Denver Broncos vs. Carolina Panthers

Feb. 7 • 6:30 p.m. EST • CBS

OFFENSE

Total yards (avg.)

Regular season: 355.5

248.1	107.4
Passing	Rushing
Postseason: 284.0	
180.0	104.0

First downs

Regular season: 314

85	201	28
Rushing	Passing	Penalty
Postseason: 31		
21	2	8

DEFENSE

Yards allowed (avg.)

Regular season: 283.1

199.6	83.6
Passing	Rushing
Postseason: 366.0	
301.5	64.5

First downs

Regular season: 357

136	197	24
Rushing	Passing	Penalty
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15	2	23

DEFENSE

Yards allowed (avg.)

Regular season: 322.9

234.5	88.4
Passing	Rushing
Postseason: 345.0	
276.0	69.0

SCORING (PPG)

Regular season

22.2	Points for
18.5	Points allowed
Postseason	
21.5	Points for
17.0	Points allowed

PLAY SELECTION (PCT.)

Regular season

59.6	40.4	52.3	47.7
PASS	RUSH	PASS	RUSH

SOURCE: National Football League

SOURCES: National Football League; STATS LLC

AP

FROOME WINS STAGE 4, OVERALL AUSTRALIA TOUR

MELBOURNE: Two-time Tour de France champion Chris Froome won Australia's Herald Sun Tour yesterday ahead of fellow Briton Peter Kennaugh, as he took the fourth and final stage of the race.

Froome (Team Sky), who had not competed for five months, won the 121.8-kilometre (75.7-mile) stage four in the Mornington Peninsula in a solo push, 17 seconds ahead of Australian Damien Howson (Orica-GreenEDGE).

Olympic gold medalist and Sky teammate Kennaugh, who had maintained his lead in the general classification stand-

ings in stage three, finished the stage — which featured three ascents of Arthurs Seat in seventh place and second overall.

"It's an amazing feeling," Froome, 30, told broadcaster Nine Network of his strong start to the season. "(I've) put in a lot of hard yards this winter, which hasn't been easy with the new family starting and everything back home," he added, thanking his family and team.

Froome and New Zealand's Joe Cooper (Avanti IsoWhey Sport) built a lead as they took on the second climb, with the Briton attacking with some three

kilometres to go. "It was something that unfolded out on the road when I went for the King of the Mountain points," Froome said. "The second time up Arthurs Seat, the team behind said, 'Listen, Chris, just sit on the wheel, we're not going to ride behind, you are in a great position to go for the stage win and overall victory, and Pete (Kennaugh) would bring it up from behind.'" Froome first tackled Australia's oldest stage race in 2008, when he finished fourth. "It's quite a sentimental feeling looking back to 2008... obviously what's happened between then and now,

it's amazing to come back here and have won this final stage and the race overall," Froome, who won the Tour de France in 2013 and 2015, said.

Kennaugh said he was "a bit gutted not to win" but said teammate Froome deserved the victory. The 26-year-old British road champion, who won the Cadel Evans Great Ocean Road Race last week, said the stage was marred by a verbal spat with Australian Pat Shaw (Avanti IsoWhey Sport).

Avanti IsoWhey Sport's sports director Andrew Christie-Johnson brushed off the

fight, which he said had begun during the Cadel race, as nothing but a schoolyard argument. "There was nothing more than what Kennaugh had said to two or three of our riders over the other days," Christie-Johnson said.

"Froomey acknowledged that they've got someone who's a bit of a hothead and at the same time, so do we." In the overall standings, Howson was third, while compatriots Jack Bobridge (Trek-Segafredo) and Jack Haig (Orica-GreenEDGE) were fourth and fifth respectively. — AFP



NEWARK: Alex Ovechkin #8 of the Washington Capitals scores the game winner in an overtime shootout as Cory Schneider #35 of the New Jersey Devils is unable to stop the shot on February 6, 2016 at Prudential Center in Newark, New Jersey. The Washington Capitals defeated the New Jersey Devils 3-2 in an overtime shootout. — AFP

CAPITALS ROLL ON WITH SHOOTOUT WIN OVER DEVILS

NEWARK: T.J. Oshie and Alex Ovechkin scored in the shootout, and the Washington Capitals tied the game late and beat the New Jersey Devils 3-2 on Saturday. Paul Carey, called up from the minors Friday, had tied the score in the third period with his first NHL goal. Andre Burakovsky scored in his fifth straight game for Washington and Braden Holtby made 22 saves in winning his league-high 32nd game. He is 24-1-3 in his last 29 games. Joseph Blandisi and Adam Henrique scored for the Devils, who have lost two straight games in shootouts. Cory Schneider had 28 saves for the Devils, who are trying to get to the playoffs for the first time in four years.

BRUINS 2, SABRES 1, OT

Brad Marchand scored on a penalty shot midway through overtime to lift the Boston Bruins over the Buffalo Sabres. Marchand got the penalty shot after being grabbed by defenseman Rasmus Ristolainen while skating in alone 2:32 into overtime. The Bruins wing came in on goalie Robin Lehner, shifted to his backhand and slipped a shot inside the right post. Lou Eriksson also scored while the Bruins improved to 7-2-1 in their last 10 games. The Bruins beat Buffalo 3-2 in a shootout in the first of a home-and-home on Thursday night. Sam Reinhart scored for Buffalo, which has points in a club-record eight straight road games (6-0-2).

PENGUINS 3, PANTHERS 2, OT

Kris Letang scored two goals, including the winner on a power play in overtime, to lift the Pittsburgh Penguins over the Florida Panthers. Sidney Crosby had a goal and two assists for the Penguins, and Jeff Zatkoff made 40 saves. In overtime, Crosby passed across to Letang in the left circle and his one-timer beat Luongo on the stick side 1:27 in. The Penguins won for the fifth time in six games, snapping the Panthers five-game win streak. Jussi Jokinen and a goal and an assist and Aleksander Barkov also scored for the Panthers.

RANGERS 3, FLYERS 2, SO

Mats Zuccarello and Derek Stepan scored during a shootout to lift the New York Rangers to a comeback victory over the Philadelphia Flyers. Keith Yandle tied it with 12.9 seconds left in regulation and Chris Kreider also scored in regulation for the Rangers, who won consecutive games for just the second time since Nov. 15. Ryan White scored and Shayne Gostisbehere had a goal and an assist in regulation for the Flyers, who had won three straight.

RED WINGS 5, ISLANDERS 1

Dylan Larkin and Tomas Tatar each had a goal and an assist, and the Detroit Red Wings routed the New York Islanders for their first home win of 2016, a game delayed 36 minutes by a malfunctioning Zamboni that chopped up a section of the ice. The Red Wings, who were 0-4-1 at home since Dec. 20, also got goals from Tomas Jurco, Mike Green and Kyle Quincey. Petr Mrazek made 28 saves to improve to 8-2-1 in his last 11 starts. John Tavares had New York's only goal, and Jaroslav Halak was pulled after allowing four goals on 13 shots. The start of the third period was delayed after a Zamboni ripped up a line of ice stretching from in front of the Red Wings net past the blue line. As a result, the teams changed ends at the midway point of the third so that neither team would get an advantage from the affected ice.

CANADIENS 5, OILERS 1

Tomas Plekanec had a goal and three assists, helping the Montreal Canadiens end a four-game losing streak with a victory over the Edmonton Oilers. Brendan Gallagher and P.K. Subban each had a goal and an assist, while Lars Eller also scored as Montreal posted just its sixth win in 26 games since Dec. 3. The

Canadiens beat the Oilers for the first time in five meetings since the 2013-14 season. Benoit Pouliot had a short-handed goal for Edmonton, which was coming off two blowout wins in its first games following the All-Star break.

SENATORS 6, MAPLE LEAFS 1

Curtis Lazar had the first two-goal game of his career, Erik Karlsson had four assists and the Ottawa Senators routed the Toronto Maple Leafs to end a three-game skid. Zack Smith, Mika Zibanejad, Bobby Ryan and Mark Stone also scored for the Senators, and Craig Anderson made 26 saves. Pierre-Alexandre Parenteau scored 3:25 into the third for Toronto. Jonathan Bernier had 14 saves after replacing starter James Reimer, who was beaten three times on eight shots and was pulled 7:38 into the game.

BLUES 4, WILD 1

Jori Lehtera had a goal and an assist, and Brian Elliott made 38 saves as the St. Louis Blues beat the Minnesota Wild. Vladimir Tarasenko, Paul Stastny and Troy Brouwer also scored for the Blues, who got their first regulation win in four tries against the Wild and improved to 8-3-1 in their last 12 at home. Matt Dumba scored late in the second for the Wild, who lost their 10th game in their last 11. Minnesota's 24 shots in the second period set a franchise road record for any period and was St. Louis' season high for shots given up in a period.

PREDATORS 6, SHARKS 2

Recent call-up Viktor Arvidsson scored twice, Filip Forsberg had a goal and two assists and the Nashville Predators beat the San Jose Sharks. Pekka Rinne made 28 saves and James Neal, Calle Jankrok and Shea Weber also scored to help Nashville end a three-game home losing streak. Joe Thornton and Logan Couture scored for the Sharks. Their 17-8-2 road record is the best in the Western Conference, and the Sharks fell to 9-2-2 in their last 13 games.

BLACKHAWKS 5, STARS 1

Artem Anisimov had a short-handed goal and three assists, and the Western Conference-leading Chicago Blackhawks beat the Dallas Stars. Corey Crawford made 36 saves for Chicago, which moved five points ahead of second-place Dallas in the Central Division. The teams also have the two highest point totals in the Western Conference. Brent Seabrook, Trevor van Riemsdyk and Marian Hossa scored on Antti Niemi to give the Blackhawks a 3-1 lead after one period. Kari Lehtonen replaced Niemi in the second. The Blackhawks' Patrick Kane scored his league-leading 32nd goal in the second period. Tyler Seguin scored the Stars' goal at 17:46 of the first period.

FLAMES 4, CANUCKS 1

Jonas Hiller made 34 saves, helping the Calgary Flames past the Vancouver Canucks. Michael Frolik, Mikael Backlund and Sam Bennett each had a goal and an assist, and Sean Monahan also scored for Calgary, which rebounded from a 2-1 loss to Columbus on Friday night. T.J. Brodie added two assists. Emerson Etem had the lone goal for Vancouver, and Ryan Miller stopped 26 shots as the Canucks dropped their fourth straight.

JETS 4, AVALANCHE 2

Drew Stafford had two goals, including the go-ahead score, and the Winnipeg Jets beat the Colorado Avalanche. Andrew Ladd and Mathieu Perreault also scored for the Jets, who beat the Avalanche for the first time in four tries this season. Stafford also had an assist, and Michael Hutchinson made 32 saves for Winnipeg. Mikhail Grigorenko and Matt Duchene had goals for the Avalanche. — AP

WARRIORS WIN 41ST STRAIGHT HOME GAME OVER THUNDER

OAKLAND: Stephen Curry scored 26 points, Harrison Barnes added 19 and the Golden State Warriors won their 41st straight regular-season home game, beating the Oklahoma City Thunder 116-108 on Saturday night. Klay Thompson added 18 and the Warriors (46-4) won their ninth straight game to match the 1966-67 Philadelphia 76ers for the best record ever after 50 games. Golden State moved within three wins of tying the Chicago Bulls (1995-96) for the longest home winning streak in NBA history. Kevin Durant had 40 points and 14 rebounds and Russell Westbrook added 27 points and 12 assists for the Thunder, who had won five straight and 12 of 13. One day before he plans to watch good friend Cam Newton and the Carolina Panthers take on Denver in the Super Bowl at nearby Levi's Stadium, Curry helped the Warriors break out to a 20-point lead in the second quarter on their way to another win against a top-notch team.

TRAIL BLAZERS 96, ROCKETS 79

Damian Lillard had 21 points and 10 assists to lead a balanced scoring attack and the Trail Blazers built a big lead early and rolled to an easy win over the Rockets. The Trail Blazers were up by 19 at half-time and scored the first six points of the third quarter to make it 61-36 with about 10 minutes left in the quarter. James Harden made four quick points after that before the Trail Blazers used a 13-2 run - with 3s from Lillard, C.J. McCollum and Al-Farouq Aminu - to push the lead to 74-42. The Rockets scored the last 11 points of the quarter, with the first nine from Harden, to cut the lead to 74-53 entering the fourth. But Portland opened the fourth with an 8-2 spurt. Harden led the Rockets with 33 points.

PACERS 112, PISTONS 104

Paul George scored 30 points to help the Pacers hold on for a win over the Pistons. Indiana (27-24) nearly squandered a 20-point third quarter lead, but held on thanks to five missed free throws from Andre Drummond in the game's final 3:30. Leading 104-100 with just more than a minute to play, Monta Ellis and George Hill hit the two shots Indiana needed to seal the win. Reggie Jackson led Detroit (27-25) with 26 points. Anthony Tolliver scored a season-high 17 points. Drummond finished with 10 points and 13 rebounds for his 43rd double-double through 52 games. George Hill scored 17 points and Myles Turner added 16 for the Pacers.

HORNETS 108, WIZARDS 104

Nicolas Batum had 26 points and 11 rebounds, and the Hornets rallied in the second half to beat the Wizards. Kemba Walker added 23 points, Marvin Williams also had a double-double with 13 points and 10 rebounds, and Spencer Hawes scored 14 points for the Hornets, who trailed by as many as 19 points in the second quarter. John Wall scored 23 points, Bradley Beal had 22 and Otto Porter Jr. 20 for the Wizards, who led 58-48 at the half and were up by 12 points early in the third quarter. Washington led 64-52 with 8:44 left in the quarter, but Charlotte went on to outscore the Wizards 26-11 over the rest of the period for a 78-75 lead. The Wizards rallied in the fourth quarter, swapping the lead four times with the Hornets before Walker's layup with 2:13 remaining put the Hornets ahead to stay.

CAVALIERS 99, PELICANS 94

Kyrie Irving scored 29 points, LeBron James added 27 and the Cavaliers bounced back from two straight losses with a win over the Pelicans. Irving and James combined for 17 points in the fourth quarter as Cleveland improved to 6-3 since Tyrone Lue replaced David Blatt as head coach on Jan. 22. Kevin Love was out with a bruised left thigh, but the Cavaliers went ahead early in the game and never gave up the lead despite a strong rally by New Orleans in the second half. Norris Cole scored a career-high 26 points while Anthony Davis scored 24 points with 11 rebounds for New Orleans, which has lost four straight. Cleveland nearly blew a 15-point lead for the second straight night. The Cavaliers were ahead 54-39 late in the second quarter, but the Pelicans cut the lead to four on several occasions in the second half.

76ERS 103, NETS 98

Jahlil Okafor had 22 points and 17 rebounds and Nerlens Noel added 18 points, including a key dunk late in the fourth quarter, to lead the 76ers to a victory over the Nets. Rookie T.J. McConnell, filling in for injured point guard Ish Smith, tied his career-high with 17 points to go with six assists for the 76ers, who earned their eighth win of the season while snapping a four-game losing streak. Thaddeus Young scored all 22 of his points after halftime for Brooklyn, which was trying to win consecutive games for the first time since Dec. 10. Young added 10 rebounds and Brook Lopez had 17 points for the Nets. Markel Brown, who entered averaging just 2.5 per game, was perfect from the field while setting a season-high with 15 points for the Nets. Brown made all five of his shots, including three 3-pointers.

TIMBERWOLVES 112, BULLS 105

Andrew Wiggins scored six of his 21 points in the final 90 seconds to help the Timberwolves surge past the Bulls. Trailing by five with 2:30 to play, the Wolves closed the game with a 12-0 surge to win it. Wiggins scored the final six of the run, including a pullup jumper with 20 seconds to go that gave them a five-point lead. Karl-Anthony



OAKLAND: Golden State Warriors' Stephen Curry (30) goes up between Oklahoma City Thunder's Russell Westbrook, left, and Enes Kanter during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Saturday, in Oakland, Calif. The Warriors beat the Thunder 116-108. — AP

Towns had 26 points and 17 rebounds and Gorgui Dieng added a career-high 24 points, 13 rebounds and seven assists for the Wolves, who have won two in a row. Pau Gasol had 25 points and eight rebounds and Derrick Rose had 18 points, 10 assists and five rebounds for the Bulls in their first game without All-Star guard Jimmy Butler, who strained his left knee on Friday night against Denver. There is no timetable for Butler's return, but the team was encouraged when an MRI showed no structural damage to his knee.

SPURS 106, LAKERS 102

LaMarcus Aldridge scored 26 points and the Spurs beat the Lakers to remain unbeaten at home. Kawhi Leonard added 20 points and 13 rebounds to help the Spurs win their 28th straight home game to open the season. The Spurs' 37th straight home victory dating back to last season was surprisingly difficult. Kobe Bryant scored 25 points in his final appearance in San Antonio. The Lakers (11-42) are 5-24 on the road this season, but one last hurrah for Bryant in San Antonio was what they needed to nearly upset the Spurs. Bryant spent much of his career tormenting the Spurs and he did so again after a sluggish start. He finished 9 for 28 from the field, but was 7 for 18 in a dynamic second half that electrified a pro-Bryant crowd.

JAZZ 98, SUNS 89

Rodney Hood scored 25 points, Gordon

Hayward added 22 and the Jazz stretched their season-long winning streak to six games with a victory over the reeling Suns. The Suns lost their seventh straight and are 2-22 in their last 24 games. Devin Booker scored 10 of his 18 points in the fourth quarter for the Suns, who cut Utah's 23-point lead to six in the final minutes. Mirza Teletovic scored all 15 of his points in the second half for the Suns. Markieff Morris added 17. Utah, coming off a victory over Milwaukee on Friday night, scored the first 10 points and was up by as many as 20 in the first half and 23 in the third quarter.

MAVERICKS 114, GRIZZLIES 110, OT

Chandler Parsons scored 26 points, including a pair of 3-pointers in overtime, to lead the Mavericks to a victory over the Grizzlies. Dirk Nowitzki's 21-foot jumper with 16.6 seconds left pushed the Dallas lead to 112-109, and the Mavericks held on to snap a three-game losing streak. Deron Williams scored 22 points and Nowitzki finished with 18. Marc Gasol led Memphis with 22 points, while Zach Randolph had 20 points and 14 rebounds. The teams were tied at 102 at the end of regulation. The Mavericks had the last shot with less than a second left, but failed to convert a lob at the rim to Justin Anderson. In overtime, Parsons' 3-pointers countered any Memphis baskets inside by Gasol. Parsons' second long-range conversion gave Dallas a 110-106 lead with 2:24 left in overtime. — AP

NBA results/standings

San Antonio 106, LA Lakers 102; Cleveland 99, New Orleans 84; Philadelphia 103, Brooklyn 98; Phoenix 89, Utah 98; Memphis 110, Dallas 114 (OT); Minnesota 112, Chicago 105; Charlotte 108, Washington 104; Indiana 112, Detroit 104; Golden State 116, Oklahoma City 108; Houston 79, Portland 96.

Eastern Conference				Western Conference				
Atlantic Division				Northwest Division				
	W	L	PCT					
Toronto	34	16	.680	—	Oklahoma City	38	14	.731
Boston	30	22	.577	5	Utah	25	25	.500
New York	23	30	.434	12.5	Portland	25	27	.481
Brooklyn	13	39	.250	22	Denver	20	31	.392
Philadelphia	8	43	.157	26.5	Minnesota	16	36	.308
Central Division				Pacific Division				
Cleveland	36	14	.720	—	Golden State	46	4	.920
Chicago	27	23	.540	9	LA Clippers	33	17	.660
Indiana	27	24	.529	9.5	Sacramento	21	29	.420
Detroit	27	25	.519	10	Phoenix	14	38	.269
Milwaukee	20	32	.385	17	LA Lakers	11	42	.208
Southeast Division				Southwest Division				
Atlanta	30	22	.577	—	San Antonio	43	8	.843
Miami	29	22	.569	0.5	Memphis	30	21	.588
Charlotte	25	26	.490	4.5	Dallas	29	25	.537
Washington	22	27	.449	6.5	Houston	27	26	.509
Orlando	21	28	.429	7.5	New Orleans	18	32	.360

TITLE WOE FOR MANCINI AS VERONA HOLD INTER 3-3

MILAN: Roberto Mancini was left counting the cost of missed chances as Inter Milan slipped further out of Serie A title contention with a 3-3 draw away to basement side Verona yesterday.

The result left Inter in fourth place and in danger of trailing Napoli by 11 points if Maurizio Sarri's league leaders beat Carpi later yesterday.

Inter's bid for just their second win in their past six outings got off to the perfect start when Jeison Murillo rose above the hosts' defence to head past Pierluigi Gollini on eight minutes.

But even before then the visitors had missed two great chances to break the deadlock through Rodrigo Palacio, who fired straight at goalkeeper Pierluigi Gollini, and Marcelo Brozovic after he sent his shot over the bar.

And the game turned on its head in three first-half minutes when Filip Helander and Eros Pisano struck to give Verona a 2-1 lead just after the quarter hour. Helander pulled Verona level with a near carbon copy of Murillo's goal, the

Swedish centre-back rising above the Inter defence to glance a header past Samir Handanovic at the keeper's far post.

Pisano was given even more space by Inter's defence three minutes later when he rose to meet a free kick to see his header spin into the back of the net.

Inter could have levelled in spectacular style soon after when Brozovic met a cut-back cross from the byeline with a superb volley that spun just wide of Gollini's upright.

Gollini did well to come out and block Palacio's cross-shot into the area as Icardi ran in for the final touch, then had no problem collecting Geoffrey Kondogbia's soft effort from outside the area.

Those misses proved costly when Artur Ionita rose above the Inter defence to beat Handanovic with a third header to send Verona's fans, who had celebrated their side's opening win of the campaign against Atalanta last week, delirious just three minutes

before the hour. But Inter were far from finished and quickly capitalised on soft defending to pull level with 12 minutes on the clock.

Croatian international Ivan Perisic replaced Felipe Melo at half-time as Mancini tinkered with his formation, and just after the hour sent Icardi through between two defenders for the Argentine striker to poke the ball past the onrushing Gollini and into the net.

Inter began to pile the pressure on but Gollini was alert, the 'keeper notably stopping another point-blank effort from Palacio with his boot.

But Verona's defence let the 'keeper down 12 minutes before the end when Perisic ran at the far post to meet Palacio's pacy cross and beat Gollini first-time. Gollini did well to parry Eder's swerving effort, but Verona, too, spurned late chances with Gilberto's effort coming off the near post and late substitute Romulo lobbing Handanovic only to see the ball go wide of post and crossbar. —AFP



VERONA: Hellas Verona's midfielder from Moldova Artur Ionita heads the ball and scores during the Italian Serie A football match Verona vs Inter Milan at the Bentegodi Stadium in Verona yesterday. — AFP

10-MAN SOUTHAMPTON BEAT WEST HAM IN EPL



SOUTHAMPTON: Ten-man Southampton overcame a sending off early in the second half to beat West Ham 1-0 in the English Premier League on Saturday. Saints midfielder Victor Wanyama was dismissed in the 54th minute for a lunge on Dimitri Payet with his side having taken a first-half lead through defender Maya Yoshida.

That was Wanyama's third red card in 13 league appearances this season, but

despite the man disadvantage the home side held on for all three points.

Yoshida capitalized on some poor defending to poke home early, and at the other end, goalkeeper Fraser Forster produced an instinctive save shortly before the half-hour mark to deny West Ham defender Winston Reid's firm header.

Hammers substitute Emmanuel Emenike should have levelled in the second half shortly after his introduction, but he headed wide following Enner Valencia's right cross.

Another substitute, Charlie Austin, missed the chance to double the Saints' lead with three minutes remaining, shooting wide after being played through on goal. The victory moves Southampton up to seventh, two points adrift of West Ham, which remains in sixth. — AP



VALENCIA: Barcelona's Brazilian forward Neymar (L) vies with Levante's Mozambican midfielder Simao during the Spanish league football match Levante UD vs FC Barcelona at the Ciutat de Valencia stadium in Valencia yesterday. — AFP

GIACCHERINI DENTS FIORENTINA TITLE HOPES

MILAN: Former Sunderland striker Emanuele Giaccherini dented 10-man Fiorentina's Serie A title hopes in a 1-1 draw with Bologna, as Genoa's relegation fight was kept in check by a scoreless draw with Lazio.

Fiorentina, whose last 'scudetto' came in 1969, were firmly among the title contenders in Italy's top flight prior to the festive break following a spectacular start to the season.

But a series of patchy results since then have seen Paulo Sousa's men lose some of their early season punch.

Saturday's draw means La Viola have now won just three of their past seven games in 2016.

Although Fiorentina remain third they could be 10 points behind leaders Napoli, who host struggling Carpi, by Sunday afternoon and drop to fourth if Inter Milan win at Verona.

But Fiorentina 'keeper Ciprian Tatarusanu believes the Viola have what it takes to battle for a third-place finish to secure a qualifying spot for the Champions League.

"We have a great squad and we still have a lot of games to play so we have a good chance of finishing third," said Tatarusanu.

"When it becomes difficult for us that's when we start to show our true character, but today was difficult especially after we went down to 10 men."

Sousa, who was sitting out a one-game touchline ban, left his top scorers Nikola Kalinic and Josip Ilicic on the bench for the short visit north and it took the visitors

over half an hour to muster a shot on goal.

Former Barcelona winger Cristian Tello did well to break away on the left but Angelo Da Costa parried his angled shot from close range.

Soon after, Senegal striker Khouma Babacar ballooned over from eight yards with the goal at his mercy.

NEEDLESS SHOVE

Sousa replaced Babacar with Kalinic at the interval but Fiorentina's hopes of taking all three points suffered a blow when Matias Fernandez, who had been cautioned after just three minutes, saw red for a needless shove from behind on Domenico Maietta 12 minutes after the restart.

Fiorentina broke the deadlock only two minutes later, Federico Bernardeschi pouncing on Tello's low drive across the area to beat Da Costa first-time from 12 yards to claim his maiden goal in Serie A.

But Bologna struck back almost immediately with a similar effort, Giaccherini driving his first-timer from Godfred Donsah's superb delivery inside the area past Ciprian Tatarusanu in the visitors' net.

"We tried to snatch the win at the end... but it's still a precious point for us against a great team such as Fiorentina," said Giaccherini.

"We did really well to level just after they scored but couldn't capitalise when they went a man down." Genoa welcomed Lazio to the Luigi Ferraris stadium looking to end a three-game winless streak that has left them hovering dangerously above the relegation zone. — AFP

BARCELONA EQUAL UNBEATEN RECORD WITH LEVANTE WIN

MADRID: Barcelona did just enough to defeat last-place Levante 2-0 and tie its all-time record of 28 consecutive games without losing yesterday.

Barcelona took the lead with an own goal by Levante defender David Navarro in the 21st and sealed the victory with an injury-time score by Luis Suarez to match the unbeaten streak set by Pep Guardiola's team in the 2010-11 season.

The result also kept Barcelona atop the Spanish league with 54 points, three more than Atletico Madrid, which defeated Eibar 3-1 on Saturday. Third-place Real Madrid is seven points off the lead going into its game at Granada later yesterday. Barcelona will have a game in hand at the end of the 23rd round this weekend.

It was the 10th win in a row for Barcelona in all competitions. Luis Enrique's squad hasn't lost since a 2-1 defeat at Sevilla in the seventh round of the Spanish league in October.

"What matters to me are the team's objectives," said Enrique, who coached Barcelona for the 100th game on Sunday. "These are nice numbers, if they help us win titles at the end of the season, fantastic. We are in good position, but there is still a lot left."

Guardiola's team in 2011 went on to win the league by four points over Real Madrid. It also won the Champions League, beating Manchester United in the final a few weeks later. That unbeaten streak ended with a 3-1 loss at Real Betis in the Copa del Rey quarterfinals.

The Barcelona team coached by Rinus Michels in the 1973-74 season, which had Johan Cruyff in the squad, also hadn't lost in 27 straight games.

Barcelona faced difficulties against minnow Levante on Sunday in the coastal city of Valencia.

Although the Catalan club controlled possession, Levante was able to contain the attacking trio of Lionel Messi, Neymar and Suarez, whose goal came in the final seconds of the game.

EXTRAORDINARY PLAYERS

"We suffered a lot until the end," Barcelona midfielder Sergi Roberto said. "We were able to go ahead in the first half but Levante played well and pressured throughout the game. At the end we got that second goal and we have to be happy for winning the three points."

The hosts threatened on a few occasions and had some good chances to score, especially on

counterattacks. The local fans gave the team a standing ovation at the end of the game despite the loss at the Ciutat de Valencia Stadium.

"We played a very good match," said Levante striker Jose Morales, who struck the post with a first-half shot. "We put pressure on them and created good chances, but in the end it comes down to the quality of their players, who are extraordinary."

Barcelona's first goal came when Jordi Alba's cross from inside the area struck Navarro's back and bounced into his own net.

Suarez had few chances until finding the net with an easy goal following a breakaway just before the final whistle. It was Suarez's 10th goal in his last six matches. The Uruguayan striker is the league's leading scorer with 20 goals, one more than Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo.

Messi had a goal disallowed for offside after a great pass by Andres Iniesta less than five minutes into the game, though replays were at odds with the decision.

Barcelona was coming off a 7-0 rout of Valencia in the semifinals of the Copa del Rey. It has outscored opponents 34-5 in its last 10 games. — AP



MILAN: AC Milan's goalkeeper from Italy Gianluigi Donnarumma (L) and AC Milan's defender from Italy Ignazio Abate try to save the ball during the Italian Serie A football match AC Milan vs Udinese yesterday. — AFP

MOURINHO SAYS HE WILL BE BACK SOON

LONDON: Jose Mourinho, sacked as manager of Chelsea in December seven months after winning the Premier League title, has said he is not enjoying his time out of work and will soon be back in management.

He did not comment directly on media reports that have heavily linked him with Louis Van Gaal's job at Manchester United. But he did say that his family will remain in London and that he liked the competitiveness of English football.

"For sure, I will be back soon," the Portuguese told GQ magazine in an interview published on its website (www.gq-magazine.co.uk). It did not say when the interview took place.

"(London) is an amazing place to live and for the family to be together," said Mourinho.

"As a professional, I am ready to move," added the former Real Madrid coach.

"I need competition every week. In Spain I was at an amazing club but I had four matches a year - Barcelona v Real Madrid, Real Madrid v Barcelona."

Mourinho, who also won the league with Chelsea in his first two seasons

there from 2004 to 2006, suggested that he deliberately created "instability" among players once they won trophies, to avoid any complacency.

"If you are in a club that wins, if you want to win again you have to create instability in the winners," added the Portuguese, fired by Chelsea after a run of poor form by the champions.

"You have to make them doubt, you have to buy new players, you have to make them feel not in their comfort zone. "There is a normal tendency to go to your comfort zone. If you don't react, if you believe that just because you won in one year that you are going to win again, it's very difficult."

He said of his current unemployment, "I am not enjoying it. To be fully happy I need everything, so I go back to football. I think it's my natural habitat."

Meanwhile Van Gaal told reporters that stories linking Mourinho with his job were hurtful to him and his family.

"The last two months have been very difficult for my wife, my kids, my grandchildren and my friends," he said. "I do not believe there is already a relationship between Jose Mourinho and Manchester United." — Reuters

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LONDON: Chelsea's Cesar Azpilicueta, right, competes for the ball with Manchester United's captain Wayne Rooney during the English Premier League soccer match between Chelsea and Manchester United at Stamford Bridge stadium in London, yesterday. — AP

COSTA, CHELSEA KEEP HEAT ON VAN GAAL



LONDON: Diego Costa pounced in stoppage time as Chelsea nipped Manchester United's mini-revival in the bud with a 1-1 draw in the Premier League yesterday. Jesse Lingard's smartly taken 61st-minute strike at a rainy Stamford Bridge had set United on course for a third straight win, which would have lifted them to within four points of the Champions League places. But Costa equalised in the 91st minute, rounding United goalkeeper David de Gea to score and thereby extending interim manager

Guus Hiddink's unbeaten run to 10 matches since he succeeded the sacked Jose Mourinho. Mourinho's shadow continues to stalk United manager Louis van Gaal and reports that the Portuguese has been lined up to replace him are unlikely to go away after a result that left his side six points below the top four in fifth place. Costa's goal, his seventh in nine games, gave Chelsea something to show for their efforts after an awkward afternoon that saw Kurt Zouma stretchered off with a serious-looking knee injury. Hiddink's men remain 13th, 17 points below the top four. John Terry was making his first home appearance since revealing that he will leave at the season's end and while he did not mention the matter in his programme notes, Chelsea's fans made their displeasure at the club's failure to offer him a new deal by chanting his name from kick-off. Both teams were unchanged, but while

Chelsea made a cautious start, United picked up where they had left off in the midweek 3-0 win over Stoke City. Cameron Borthwick-Jackson and Michael Carrick both dispatched long-range sighters before Thibaut Courtois was called into serious action in the 18th minute, palming Anthony Martial's drive around the post. Chelsea were struggling to get out of their own half, but United could not maintain their initial rhythm and as the half wore on, the hosts took the upper hand. Costa and Nemanja Matic threatened with headers, the latter obliging De Gea to leap to his right and save, while Costa drilled a shot across goal and wide from Oscar's pass. Oscar planted a shot into the Shed End after a one-two with Cesar Azpilicueta and Willian flashed a cross across goal after leav-

ing Borthwick-Jackson on the deck with a sharp feint. United flickered-Marouane Fellaini heading wide, Matteo Darmian crossing menacingly-before Chelsea's hands flew into the air when a shot from Terry struck Daley Blind on the elbow inside the visitors' box. But as replays showed, the Dutchman's arm had been clamped to his chest and referee Michael Oliver waved away the penalty appeals. United reasserted themselves after the change of ends and Courtois was obliged to parry a low shot from Wayne Rooney before Martial breezed past Branislav Ivanovic and shot wide. Shortly after, a curling effort from Lingard drew a one-handed stop from Courtois, who sprang to his feet to shovel Rooney's drilled follow-up behind. Seeking to give his side an attacking foothold, Hiddink introduced Eden Hazard in place of Oscar in the 54th minute, and a minute later his hand was

forced again following Zouma's injury. The 21-year-old France international screamed in agony after landing awkwardly following an aerial challenge and following four minutes' treatment he was stretchered off, with Gary Cahill coming on. Two minutes later United added insult to injury by taking the lead, Rooney cushioning Borthwick-Jackson's cross into the path of Lingard, who took a touch before hooking home a right-foot shot on the turn. Hiddink added Pedro Rodriguez to the mix and after De Gea had saved brilliantly from Ivanovic and Cesc Fabregas, Costa equalised. United substitute Memphis Depay conceded possession, allowing Fabregas to slide a pass into the box, and with Borthwick-Jackson succeeding only in sliding the ball away from De Gea, Costa had the simple task of slotting into an empty net. The Spain international might even have won it, but after taking aim from Hazard's pass, he was denied by De Gea. — AFP

WILLETT SINKS 15-FOOT PUTT TO WIN IN DUBAI

DUBAI: Britain's Danny Willett kept his nerve to win the Dubai Desert Classic by a stroke from compatriot Andy Sullivan and Spain's Rafa Cabrera-Bello yesterday. Overnight leader Willett shot a final round 69 at the Emirates Golf Club to finish on 269, 19 under par, after needing to make a 15-foot putt on the last to clinch his fourth European Tour title. "When you win like that in that fashion, it does feel that little bit extra special when the pressure is on, being able to produce the goods," said the 28-year-old, runner-up in last season's Race to Dubai. Sullivan made up one shot on him and Cabrera-Bello to finish joint second. Spain's Alvaro Quiros and South Korea's An Byeong-Hun were joint fourth after carding final round 65s for a 16-under par total.

World number two Rory McIlroy, last year's winner, and Henrik Stenson finished joint sixth a further shot behind. Willett, 28, is hoping to win a place in Europe's Ryder Cup team later this year and was neck-and-neck with Sullivan throughout the final round. He fell a shot behind early on as his fellow Englishman birdied the second and fourth holes, but quickly recovered to lead by three. A bogey on the 14th gave hope to his pursuers and Cabrera-Bello was only one shot behind after a birdie at the 17th. Sullivan, playing a hole ahead, roared in delight and punched the air after sinking a long putt on the final hole for a share of the lead. He then watched on from the scorer's area as Willett strode the final fairway before his dramatic birdie putt averted a three-man playoff and secured prize money



DUBAI: Danny Willett of England poses with the trophy after he won the Dubai Desert Classic golf tournament in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, yesterday. — AP of more than 402,000 euros (\$448,591.80). "I struggled again with my driving. I'm not really hitting any fairways and that made it difficult to get lots of birdies from there. I put myself in a great position to win and just not got over the line." — Reuters

ARSENAL BACK IN TITLE RACE WITH WIN AT BOURNEMOUTH



LONDON: Arsenal re-established themselves as serious contenders for their first Premier League title since 2004 with a comfortable victory at lowly Bournemouth yesterday. A first win in four games took them level on points with second-placed Tottenham Hotspur, their bitter local rivals who have a superior goal difference. After more than five hours without a league goal, Arsenal scored two in little more than a minute midway through the first half by Mesut Ozil and Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain. Arsene Wenger's team are still five points behind leaders Leicester City but play at home to them next Sunday. It was their first league win since Jan 2, since when they had played two goalless draws and lost 1-0 to Chelsea. "It was a must-win game for us today," Wenger told BBC Sport. "Leicester have made a big impression

in the last week after their results. They suddenly become the favourite in the Premier League and it makes our game (next week) a big game." Welsh midfielder Aaron Ramsey was heavily involved in both goals. In the 23rd minute he crossed for Olivier Giroud to head down and give Ozil the opportunity to score. Bournemouth had not recovered before Ramsey sent Oxlade-Chamberlain through to score his first league goal since September 2014 — and first away from home-with an angled drive. Former Arsenal youth team striker Benik Afobe could make no impression against his old club and was substituted before two late saves from Petr Cech preserved the visitors' clean sheet. Bournemouth manager Eddie Howe felt Arsenal should have had midfielder Mathieu Flamini sent off early in the game for a tackle on Dan Gosling that brought only a yellow card. "I thought it was a red card," he told Sky Sports. "I haven't seen it again but it looked two-footed and potentially off the floor. It wasn't a difficult decision." Bournemouth, playing their first season in the Premier league, remain 15th, five points above the relegation places. — Reuters

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profit for 2015

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OSLO: Offshore construction vessels stay outside Aalesund at the west coast of Norway on Saturday. The oil industry in Norway is struggling, several shipping companies are forced to bring their offshore construction vessels out of circulation. —AFP

AS BIG OIL SHRINKS, FIRMS PLOT PATHS OUT OF CRISIS

US FIRMS ABANDON DEEPWATER PROJECTS • BP BETS ON EGYPTIAN GAS

LONDON/HOUSTON: As oil and gas companies cut ever-deeper into the bone to weather their worst downturn in decades, boards have adopted contrasting strategies to lead them out of the crisis.

Crude prices have tumbled around 70 percent over the past 18 months to around \$35 a barrel, leading to five of the world's top oil companies reporting sharp declines in profits in recent days.

Executives at energy firms face a tough balancing act: they must cut spending to stay financially afloat while preserving the production infrastructure and capacity that will allow them to compete and grow when the market recovers. Companies have opted for differing approaches to secure future growth, often choosing to narrow focus to their areas of expertise and the geographic location of their main assets.

American firms Chevron, ConocoPhillips and Hess Corp are withdrawing from more costly deepwater projects to focus on shale oil fields on their home turf, for example. Britain's BP is betting on offshore gas in Egypt, while Royal Dutch Shell has opted for an alternative route as it seeks to safeguard its

future: the \$50 billion takeover of BG Group.

In the five years before the downturn began in mid-2014, when crude prices held above \$100 a barrel, big energy firms had raced to expand production capacity, including buying stakes in vast, costly fields sometimes located thousands of metres under the sea, and miles from land.

Over the past year however, companies have slashed their overall capital expenditure, scrapping plans for mega projects that cost billions to develop and take up to a decade to bring online. "Companies want to strike a balance between long and short-cycle investments while maintaining a robust balance sheet to fund their way through the down cycle," said BMO Capital analyst Brendan Warn. Focusing on a specific set of expertise and geographies allowed them to offer investors a "unique value proposition," he added.

US SHALE, EGYPT GAS

Chevron, the second-largest US oil firm after Exxon Mobil by market value, last week outlined plans to target spending

on "short-cycle" investments - lower-cost projects that can take months, rather than several years, to come online.

In particular, it is focusing on its big presence in shale oil fields in the US Permian basin at the expense of high-cost, complex deepwater projects after cutting its 2016 capital expenditure, or capex, by 24 percent. "In terms of longer-cycle projects, we aren't initiating. We aren't initiating any... You are going to see us preferentially favour short-cycle investments, and if they don't meet our hurdles, we won't invest," Chevron Chief Executive Officer John Watson said in an analyst call.

Even though developing shale wells can be more costly than some deepwater projects on a per-barrel basis, a much shorter development cycle and lower execution risks mean that companies can reap benefits quicker. The short-term investment strategy is driven in part by the fact that, unlike for example BP, it already has a pipeline of longer-term projects - it is currently developing some of the world's largest liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects such as the Gorgon and Wheatstone plants in Australia.

Smaller firms ConocoPhillips and Hess

have also shifted away from deepwater projects to onshore shale production including in North Dakota's Bakken Shale. BP was one of very few companies that approved a major project last year, with its \$12 billion investment decision in the West Nile Delta gas project in Egypt. The strategy is partly based its plans to see a large part of its future production growth come from gas off the coast of the North African country.

But the company, which reported its biggest-ever loss last week, also does not have the line-up of long-term projects boasted by the likes of Chevron; the development is also driven by the fact it sold more than \$50 billion of assets after the deadly 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill, leading to a significant decline in output, according to analysts.

"BP aren't digging themselves through a hole. They are investing a little bit through the cycle," said Warn.

DEALMAKING

Shell, by contrast, opted at an early stage of the downturn to acquire Britain's BG Group in the sector's largest deal in a decade. It will make it a leader in LNG and offshore oil production in Brazil and increase its energy reserves by about a fifth. The Anglo-Dutch group, which posted its lowest annual income for 13 years last week, expects to complete the deal this month.

US giant Exxon may need to take a leaf out of Shell's book and seek a major M&A deal after it surprised many in the market last week by slashing its 2016 spending by a quarter to \$23 billion, said Anish Kapadia, analyst at Tudor, Pickering, Holt and Co. The capex cut signals the company - which reported its smallest quarterly profit in more than a decade - is not planning to invest in many new projects, he said.

"That is a signal that Exxon doesn't have an attractive enough project queue to invest in and is not willing to invest in upstream, so if it wants to grow it will have to make an acquisition," added Kapadia.

"In this environment with the potential for higher oil price, Chevron are doing the right thing. They can survive over the next few years and have the option to grow. Exxon is at the bottom of the pile. It looks the most expensive but it is hard to justify given the lack of growth outlook." — Reuters

Tudor, Pickering, Holt and Co. has a 'buy' recommendation on Chevron and Shell, a 'hold' on BP and 'sell' on Exxon. Norway's

MAJOR BOURSES DRAGGED LOWER BY WEAKER OIL

MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

DUBAI: Major stock markets in the Middle East fell yesterday after oil prices pulled back and global bourses sold off at the end of last week. The correlation between oil prices and Gulf equity markets has strengthened in recent months with many investors believing markets will continue to trade in almost lockstep with crude prices in the near term.

In Riyadh, the index dropped 1.3 percent to 5,896 points, erasing Thursday's 0.8 percent gain. The petrochemical sector was one of the main drags with Saudi Basic Industries and Saudi Arabia Fertilizers, the two largest petrochemical producers by market value, falling 1.1 and 0.7 percent respectively. The index has failed to close over the psychologically important level of 6,000 points since Jan. 14 as short-term traders sell to take profits on every bounce. Long-term investors are cautious about making large commitments to the market because of volatile oil prices.

Saudi Cement erased early gains and closed down 3.3 percent. The company recommended a dividend distribution of 3.00 riyals per share for the second half of 2015, versus a proposed dividend of 2.5 riyals a year earlier. But it also halted production at a clinker kiln and scrapped a plan to upgrade mills because of weak cement demand.

Egypt's index closed down 1.2 percent at 6,126 points, erasing some of the previous session's 2.2 percent gain. Foreign and non-Egyptian Arab investors were net sellers, bourse data showed.

Orascom Telecom tumbled 5.0 percent. National Bank of Egypt's investment arm expressed interest in buying CI Capital, potentially hindering Orascom's plan to form a major financial operation by acquiring CI Capital from Commercial International Bank.

Palm Hills last traded flat at 2.34 Egyptian pounds, off its session high of 2.39 pounds. Egypt's second-largest listed property developer reported a 128 percent jump in fourth-quarter net profit to 203.5 million Egyptian pounds (\$26 million). It also proposed its first cash dividend, 0.15 pound per share, and a bonus share issue of one for 20.

"Revenues stood at 957 million Egyptian pounds, beating our forecast of 664 million Egyptian pounds, on higher-than-expected deliveries of villas, apartments and chalets," a note by Cairo-based Naem Brokerage said. Palm Hills is expected to have a strong 2016 in both off-plan sales and deliveries, the note added. — Reuters

QATAR WILL ACT TO MAINTAIN LIQUIDITY IF NEEDED: CB CHIEF

DUBAI: Authorities in Qatar will use fiscal policy and money market operations if needed to prevent low oil and gas prices from causing a liquidity crunch in the banking system, the governor of the central bank (QCB) was quoted as saying. Money market rates have risen sharply as flows of new oil and gas revenue into the system have decreased over the past year, and as the Qatari government has borrowed to fund an emerging budget deficit.

The three-month Qatar interbank offered rate is at 1.37 percent, up from around 1.07 percent a year ago. In an interview published by international research firm The Business Year, Sheikh Abdullah bin Saud al-Thani said the central bank was still pursuing an "easy monetary policy stance" and that he did not think liquidity had become tight.

"Although the drop in oil prices has induced a fall in export earnings and

government revenues and consequently government deposits, banking systemic liquidity has been comfortable so far, partly reflecting QCB's active liquidity management operations," he said.

Sheikh Abdullah also told The Business Year that he expected oil prices to recover in the coming year. But he added that if they did not, the central bank was prepared to intervene to keep market interest rates stable. "On the monetary policy front, QCB will continue to actively manage liquidity in the system in order to ensure a stable interest rate environment and thereby facilitate adequate flow of credit to the productive sectors of the economy," he said.

"If low oil prices persist for long, policy space available in terms of both fiscal buffers and QCB's liquidity management operations could be used flexibly." The world's biggest exporter of liquefied natural gas, Qatar is one of the Gulf's richest

countries and is believed to have hundreds of billions of dollars worth of overseas assets, but the value of its energy exports almost halved last year.

Market sources told Reuters last week that Qatari commercial banks were discussing with the central bank the possibility of lowering its repo lending rate, now at 4.5 percent, to reduce pressure on their funding. Sheikh Abdullah did not comment on this in the interview.

Sheikh Abdullah welcomed the expansion of Qatar-based banks abroad as a sign of growing strength and confidence among the banks, but said the central bank was ensuring that the expansion was prudent by limiting foreign currency liabilities. "The ratio of foreign currency asset to foreign currency liability of each bank should be at a minimum of 100 percent. This means that short positions are not allowed, but long are allowed." — Reuters

CI CAPITAL GETS EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FROM EGYPT'S NBE

CAIRO: The National Bank of Egypt's investment arm has expressed an interest in CI Capital, a subsidiary of Commercial International Bank (CIB) which has accepted a 1 billion Egyptian pound (\$128 million) bid from Orascom Telecom and Technology (OTMT).

In a statement dated Feb 4 that appeared on the Cairo exchange yesterday, CIB said the written interest from state-owned National Bank

of Egypt's Al Ahly Capital did not include a non-binding offer, or an indicative price. "As we have already received a non-binding offer from a potential buyer which was disclosed on Dec 17, accordingly, we highlighted to the interested party that they are requested to sign a non-disclosure agreement and present a non-binding offer," CIB said.

OTMT plans to merge CI Capital with Beltone Financial, which it

bought in November for almost 650 million Egyptian pounds. OTMT is owned by Egyptian billionaire Naguib Sawiris, one of the country's most prominent businessmen and founder of the Free Egyptians political party, which had a strong performance in recent parliamentary elections.

NBE's expression of interest could threaten Sawiris's hopes of consolidating his new stake in Egypt's

financial services markets. NBE has 50 percent market share of Egypt's banking industry, estimated at between eight and 10 million clients.

Sawiris had previously tried to buy EFG Hermes, the largest investment bank in the Middle East, through his New Egypt Investment Fund, but the bid was unsuccessful.

OTMT began a due diligence process checking CI Capital's books

in January. That process is set to complete by Thursday, a CI Capital source told Reuters. OTMT has holdings in media, technology and cable businesses as well as energy, transport and logistics. CI Capital is working on four initial public offerings this year in the construction, consumption and tourism sectors. It also plans to open a brokerage firm in the United Arab Emirates in the second quarter of this year. — Reuters

SAUDI BOURSE UNCERTAIN ABOUT MSCI ENTRY IN 2017: ACTING CEO

FOREIGNERS REMAIN LUKEWARM TOWARDS BOURSE

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia's stock exchange (Tadawul) is not certain that it can join international index compiler MSCI's emerging markets index in 2017, the exchange's acting chief executive was quoted as saying. The kingdom opened its market to direct foreign investment in June last year. In November, the exchange's chief executive at the time, Adel al-Ghamdi, told Reuters that he aimed for MSCI entry by mid-2017.

But Khalid Al-Hussan, who took over on an acting basis in mid-November, told EconomicME magazine, a regional publication, that "there is still a level of uncertainty of when this could happen. There are multiple things to be considered, some of them within the control of the exchange, some of them outside.

"If you ask me, I wish for 2017. But whether this is going to happen or not, I don't know," he was quoted as saying. Fund managers believe MSCI inclusion would draw billions of dollars of fresh money to the Saudi market. So far, foreigners have been lukewarm towards the bourse; they owned 4.58 percent of total market capitalisation at the end of January.

Hussan said the exchange had been working closely with MSCI to assess obstacles to inclusion. One is that trades must be settled on the same day, a practice known as T+0; it means foreigners must have large amounts of money on hand before trading, which can be inconvenient given Riyadh's time zone and its Sunday-Thursday business week. Many big emerg-

ing markets have settlement after two days. "Clearly, it is the T+0 issue that MSCI clients are having with the Tadawul market. There might also be some issues with foreign investor ownership limits," Hussan was quoted as saying.

He added that he did not think the kingdom could move away from T+0 by 2017, and it was unclear whether MSCI would admit Saudi Arabia merely on the basis of a commitment to make the reform. "If you change the T+0 environment, this takes us beyond 2017. If the Saudi Capital Market Authority decides to change the settlement cycle, the change will take effect, let's say, in 2018," he said.

Production halted
Saudi Cement will halt production at

a clinker kiln that manufactures 3,500 tons daily and has scrapped plans to install two new cement mills, the company said yesterday. It cited a cement export ban and market conditions for its decisions. Saudi Cement's clinker inventory has risen to around 4 million tons so it does not expect the production halt at the clinker kiln to impact its financial results. The company said it expected the clinker kiln suspension to last until market conditions improved, and did not specify when that might occur. Saudi Cement has also postponed replacing three cement mills with two newer ones that would have been more productive and raised its annual cement milling capacity by 600,000 tons, it said. — Reuters

SELLING, PROFIT-BOOKING DOMINATE KSE TRADES

KUWAIT: Selling pressure and profit booking dominated trades at Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE) yesterday, contrary to forecast bullish trend related to last week's sale of Americana.

Price index held the 5,200-point level, weighted index posted gain of some KD 15 million due to selective purchase of blue-chips and stocks below 50 fils, signaling restoration of reasonable liquidity in the bourse. National Investment Company topped companies of bullish performance, particularly small ones; namely Kuwait Syrian Holding Company, Al-Maghribieh, Al-Sahel, Al-Mal-all of below 30 fils price. Most traded stocks were of Adnec, Boubyan, Al-Themar International Holding Co. and Albeit.

Stocks of Kuwait-15 index steadied, coin-

ciding with activity by some portfolios targeting some operational stocks, though on a limited scale.

Mohammad Al-Tarrah, head of the Traders Society, said speculations dominated the market, fueled by local technical and external factors. Financial analyst Hamad Al-Hajri said low-value stocks were traded heavily in yesterday's session, labelling the session "as not good," compared to the past week performance. The KSE ended trading on mixed boards yesterday. Price index was up 8.46 points to reach 5,206.83 points, weighted index went down 0.06 points to stand at 357.28 points, while the KSX-15 index increased 1.08 points, to read 841.63 points. Value of trade was KD 15.7 million while volume was at 180.4 million shares done through 4,100 deals. — KUNA

EGYPT'S PALM HILLS POSTS 2015 Q4 PROFIT OF \$26M

CAIRO: Palm Hills, Egypt's second-largest listed property developer, reported yesterday a 128 percent rise in fourth-quarter net profits to 203.5 million Egyptian pounds (\$25.99 million) from 89.2 million pounds in the same period last year.

The company posted a 192 percent rise in net profit of 1.03 billion pounds for the 2015 full year, up from 353.3 million pounds in 2014. Its board of directors proposed its first cash dividend, 0.15 pounds per share, and a bonus shares issuance of one bonus share for each 20 shares held, the company said in a statement.

"Our pre-sales for the year have for the first time ever broken the 6 billion Egyptian pounds mark, recording 6.3 billion with a growth of 61 percent," said Chairman Yasseen Mansour.

"Growth in pre-sales was fuelled by demand for primary housing as Egyptians continue to migrate from Cairo, heading west and east, as

well as demand for secondary homes in the North Coast," he added in the statement. Palm hills posted revenues of 957.2 million pounds in the fourth-quarter of 2015 versus 777.5 million pounds in 2014. Revenues for the full year in 2015 stood at 3.56 billion pounds compared to 2.1 billion in 2014. The company expects to spend 2 billion pounds on construction in 2016 and achieve gross sales of 6.5 billion pounds, delivering about 1,600 units.

"We expect to reach an agreement with the Egyptian government for the co-development of a mixed use 42 million square metres in West Cairo during the first half of 2016," said Mansour.

"Moving forward, we are planning to return excess cash to shareholders with plans to distribute almost 30 percent from annual free cash flows in the form of cash dividend to shareholders or share buyback, depending on market conditions." — Reuters

DUBAI'S EMAAR MALLS PROFIT UP 23% IN 2015

DUBAI: Emaar Malls, the shopping and retail arm mostly owned by Dubai's Emaar Properties giant, said yesterday its annual profit surged 23 percent to \$451 million in 2015, as rental income increased.

Net profit reached 1.66 billion dirhams (\$451 million) in 2015, compared with 1.35 billion dirhams the year before, said the company which owns Dubai Mall—one of the world's largest shopping centres. In the fourth quarter, Emaar Malls saw net profit rise 16 percent on year to 435 million dirhams.

The company said its rental income grew by 11 percent to 2.99 billion in 2015, with occupancy levels reaching 96 percent in the same year. "The retail sector is a key contributor to Dubai's

economy, said chairman Mohamed Alabbar. "Emaar Malls assets mark a significant contribution to defining our city as must-visit destination for retail and leisure." The company said Dubai Mall attracted 80 million visitors in 2015, claiming it has cemented its position as "the world's most-visited shopping and leisure destination."

In addition to Dubai Mall, the company's portfolio includes the adjacent Arabesque-style Souk Al-Bahar, Marina Mall and Gold & Diamond Park.

Emaar Properties, the parent group of Emaar Malls, is the largest listed company on the Dubai Financial Market. It was behind several landmark property developments, including the world's tallest tower, Burj Khalifa. — AFP



YANGON: A man working at an auto spare parts market in Yangon. Aung San Suu Kyi's pro-democracy party swept elections last year, boosting confidence in the former junta-run nation's reforms, which have also nudged open the door to a once exclusive economy. — AFP

News

in brief

US dollar stable against dinar at 0.300

KUWAIT: The exchange rate of the US dollar against the Kuwaiti dinar was stable at KD 0.300, while the euro was up to KD 0.335 compared to the exchange rates for Thursday, said a statement by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) yesterday. According to the CBK, the exchange rate of the Sterling pound was down to KD 0.435 and the Swiss franc rose to KD 0.302. Exchange rate of the Japanese Yen remained the same at KD 0.002.

Irish FM sets out income tax plan

DUBLIN: Ireland's senior coalition party will ensure high earners do not make "extravagant gains" from planned income tax cuts and also raise the minimum wage by 15 percent by 2021 if re-elected, Finance Minister Michael Noonan said yesterday. Ireland votes on Feb. 26 in what promises to be a tight contest dominated by debate over how the resources freed up by a strong economic recovery should be spent and how or whether an unpopular additional tax levied on income, the Universal Social Charge (USC), should be unwound. Noonan's Fine Gael, comfortably ahead in opinion polls that nevertheless suggest it may struggle to form a coalition, plans to abolish the tax brought in during the financial crisis. Yesterday Noonan outlined how the state would claw back some of the gains with a new 5 percent levy on incomes over 100,000 euros (\$112,000).

Egyptian pound slips further on black market

CAIRO: The Egyptian pound continued to weaken on the black market yesterday, piling more pressure on the central bank to devalue the currency even as the official rate against the dollar remained unchanged at an auction. Egypt, which heavily relies on imports for its food and energy needs, is facing a foreign currency crisis with the pound trading at substantially lower rates on the black market than the rate set by the central bank. The central bank surprised the market in November when it strengthened the pound by 20 piasters and has held it steady at 7.73 pounds to the dollar since then. At yesterday's auction, the bank sold \$39.1 million at a cut-off price of 7.7301 pounds to the dollar, unchanged from the previous auction on Thursday. The black market rate was 8.72 pounds per dollar, compared with a range of 8.63-8.68 traders quoted on Wednesday, even though some traders and bankers said then that no one was selling at such rates.

GASC negotiating for direct deal to buy wheat

CAIRO: Egypt's state grain buyer, the General Authority for Supply Commodities (GASC), said yesterday it was still negotiating a contract for the direct import of wheat outside of the regular tender process. "You saw the last tender the prices were \$10 above market and that will not work," Mamdouh Abdel Fattah, GASC's vice chairman, told Reuters on the sidelines of a press conference. Egypt, the world's largest wheat importer, cancelled a wheat purchase tender on Friday after receiving only four offers that were well above market prices. GASC had said last week it was negotiating a 3 million-ton direct contract but did not give further details. Abdel Fattah made that statement after global suppliers shunned a wheat import tender over confusion concerning regulations governing the permitted levels of ergot fungus in imported wheat.

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.575
Indian Rupees	4.466
Pakistani Rupees	2.889
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.093
Nepali Rupees	2.786
Singapore Dollar	215.470
Hongkong Dollar	38.651
Bangladesh Taka	3.830
Philippine Peso	6.310
Thai Baht	8.491

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	80.323
Qatari Riyal	82.740
Omani Riyal	782.354
Bahraini Dinar	799.920
UAE Dirham	82.008

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	36.950
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	38.513
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.406
Tunisian Dinar	149.630
Jordanian Dinar	424.160
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.010
Syrian Lira	2.147
Morocco Dirham	31.359

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	301.050
Euro	339.130
Sterling Pound	439.680
Canadian dollar	217.920
Turkish lira	103.080
Swiss Franc	307.040
Australian Dollar	215.700
US Dollar Buying	299.850

20 Gram	237.270
10 Gram	121.550
5 Gram	61.620

UAE EXCHANGE CENTRE WLL

CURRENCIES

Australian Dollar	201.21
Canadian Dollar	219.93
Swiss Franc	301.04
Euro	333.90
US Dollar	303.30
Sterling Pound	439.41
Japanese Yen	2.55
Bangladesh Taka	3.866
Indian Rupee	4.463
Sri Lankan Rupee	2.108
Nepali Rupee	2.782
Pakistani Rupee	2.887
UAE Dirhams	0.08253
Bahraini Dinar	0.8060
Egyptian Pound	0.03863
Jordanian Dinar	0.4314
Omani Riyal	0.7876
Qatari Riyal	0.08362
Saudi Riyal	0.08084

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	303.350
Canadian Dollar	217.070
Sterling Pound	438.140
Euro	332.320
Swiss Franc	309.775
Bahrain Dinar	802.525
UAE Dirhams	82.830
Qatari Riyals	84.045

Saudi Riyals	81.570
Jordanian Dinar	427.325
Egyptian Pound	38.629
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.110
Indian Rupees	4.447
Pakistani Rupees	2.889
Bangladesh Taka	3.859
Philippines Peso	6.337
Cyprus pound	577.785
Kenyan Shilling	3.530
Syrian Pound	2.375
Nepalese Rupees	3.770
Malaysian Ringgit	72.310
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	46.450
Thai Bhat	9.425
Turkish Lira	102.645

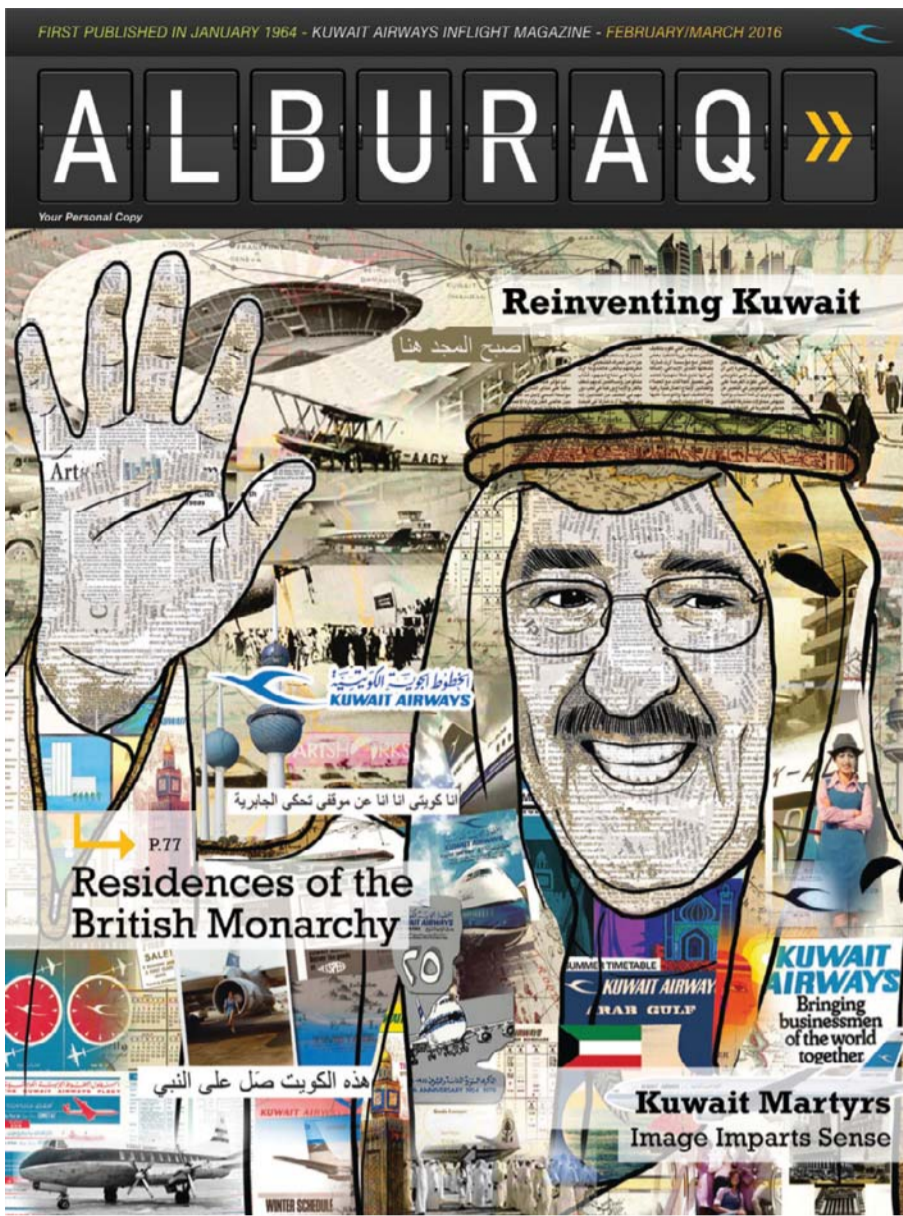
BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.431654	0.440654
Czech Korune	0.004506	0.016506
Danish Krone	0.041368	0.046368
Euro	0.331879	0.339879
Norwegian Krone	0.031502	0.036702
Romanian Leu	0.086544	0.086544
Slovakia	0.008974	0.018974
Swedish Krona	0.031912	0.036912
Swiss Franc	0.298040	0.308240
Turkish Lira	0.097993	0.108293
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.205560	0.217060
New Zealand Dollar	0.194165	0.203665
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.212015	0.220515
US Dollars	0.297600	0.302100

US Dollars Mint	0.298100	0.302100
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Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003488	0.004088
Chinese Yuan	0.044314	0.047814
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036826	0.039576
Indian Rupee	0.004155	0.004545
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002505	0.002685
Kenyan Shilling	0.003135	0.003135
Korean Won	0.000243	0.000258
Malaysian Ringgit	0.068970	0.074970
Nepalese Rupee	0.002860	0.003030
Pakistan Rupee	0.002569	0.002849
Philippine Peso	0.006226	0.006506
Sierra Leone	0.000067	0.000073
Singapore Dollar	0.213049	0.219049
South African Rand	0.013099	0.021599
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001746	0.002326
Taiwan	0.008966	0.009146
Thai Baht	0.008171	0.008721

Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.793379	0.801379
Egyptian Pound	0.034377	0.038713
Iranian Riyal	0.000083	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000198	0.000258
Jordanian Dinar	0.421517	0.429017
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000151	0.000251
Moroccan Dirhams	0.021260	0.045260
Nigerian Naira	0.001242	0.001877
Omani Riyal	0.777217	0.782897
Qatar Riyal	0.082158	0.083371
Saudi Riyal	0.079567	0.080517
Syrian Pound	0.001278	0.001498
Tunisian Dinar	0.146447	0.154447
Turkish Lira	0.097993	0.108293
UAE Dirhams	0.081161	0.082310
Yemeni Riyal	0.001363	0.001443



AL-BURAQ MAGAZINE FEATURES GUEST EDITORS FOR 2016

KUWAIT: In parallel to the progress and development of Kuwait Airways' fleet, Al-Buraq magazine, the inflight of Kuwait Airways will feature guest editors this year.

"It is our honor to feature Kuwait talents and celebrities as guest editors," says Dima Danawi, publisher of Al-Buraq inflight. "I am looking forward to reading and collecting such issues, signed by artist and activists and successful people that have thought of signing their issues as per their own visions of Kuwait and the world."

Kuwait Airways is the link of Kuwait to the rest of the world, its inflight magazine is the passport, and it will be in the pocket of your seat. So open it and check how this February/March issue, Alanoud Al-Sharekh reinvents her country through our pages.

Dr Alanoud Al-Sharekh conducts research on cultural and sociopolitical issues in the region, and has been a Senior Fellow on GCC demographic and soft power issues at the LMEI, SOAS, the IISS and the SCDP in Kuwait. She holds a BA from King's College, London and a Master's and PhD from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) and has been a gender politics consultant for UNIFEM, Freedom House, and the UNDP on academic and social outreach projects in Kuwait and the GCC. Her teaching posts include Kuwait University, Gulf University of Science and Technology, the Arab Open University, visiting lecturer at Uppsala University, Sweden, and Fulbright Scholar on Women and Islam at Whittier College, USA. She has published



Alanoud Al-Sharekh,
Guest Editor for Al-Buraq

several books and articles on gender and kinship policies in the Arabian Gulf, including The Gulf Family, and Popular and Political Cultures of the GCC, examining the persistent importance of family and tribe in modern Gulf politics and society. Her work won the Arab Prize for best publication in a foreign journal for 2013-2014, and the Voices of Success Kuwait Award in 2012.

She is the first guest editor of Al-Buraq 2016, and will be followed by Amira Behbehani for the April/May 2016 issue, and Jassim Al-Saddah for the June/July 2016 issue.

MARKETS ATTRACTIVE FOR LONG-TERM INVESTORS

By Hayder Tawfik

January 2016 was very bad for global equity investors. Can the bad performance be repeated again in the coming months? There are lots of reasons for this bad performance. The pessimists are long in reasons and the optimists are getting smaller in numbers. Economic slowdown in China the world's second biggest economy is seen as one big reason. But also other reasons such as continued sharp falls in oil, metals, commodities, emerging market stocks and finally weak corporate earnings in the US and elsewhere have been used as excuses to sell equities.

To be fair to the pessimists, some of the above reasons are quite valid. Stretched equity indices and overvaluation always revert to its historical means. The big rallies that started in 2008 on the back of collapses in interest rates and massive Quantitative Easing have caused some of the overvaluations in the markets. If we moved those two main factors then it might be clear to lots of investors that the bear market is still with us.

It is never easy to time the market. Actually it might be impossible. However for long term investors, timing is never been an issue. The question is are we entering a bear market? The negative equity performance since the start of the year does not mean we are entering a bear market regardless what the pessimists are saying.

A bear market starts when it corrects by 20 percent from the top. This is not the issue now. May be some indices in the emerging markets have already entered a bear market but my focus here is the developed equity markets. I am sure some investors already feel that the bear market has started already. The damage for some of them has been quite staggering. Bear markets never inflict much damage on investors' wealth, unless they are accompanied by a recession.

The talk of a global recession is a bit

early but there are some strong signs of some sort of slowdown in the global economy. This is something investors should watch very carefully. Indeed, the Federal Reserve may be thinking of delaying further rise in rates so to avoid a global economic slowdown. Just last week the bank of Japan lowered its rates further and now there are talks of the European Central bank doing the same. So the chances of further falls in equity markets may be getting less by the day and a rebound may be on the card.

History is on the side of long-term investors. Over the past 30 years every time stock markets went through a big correction they rebounded but over different time scale. So the case is quite simple. If a stock market correction does not cause a big damage and would not lead to a recession then this could be a good buying opportunity for long-term investors. At present most central banks around the world are loosening their monetary policies on a scale never seen before so recession quite avoidable. Even the Federal Reserve who just recently raised its rates is quite possible to do a U turn and cut rates if the US economy goes into a recession.

I believe there are enough reasons at present to make equity markets rebound. Sentiment is weak and negative that investors sell any company even if it has delivered good results and has good financial fundamentals. Most analysts have been writing down their earnings forecasts for the coming months. This creates an easier barrier for companies to clear, and positive earnings surprises have often in the past led to a rally. Unfortunately, if there is no assurance that revenues will stay robust for the rest of the year, investors want out.

The key for long-term investors relies heavily on the outlook for the US economy. If it keeps growing even at below trend then a recession can be avoided and strong market rebound can happen easily. — Rasameel

NEW BREED INVESTORS EMBRACE CHINA'S WHITE-KNUCKLE RIDE

YOUNGER INVESTORS LOOKING TO PROFIT FROM VOLATILITY

BEIJING: A new breed of small investor is riding China's rollercoaster stock markets, looking for a quick buck and thriving on the volatility that has sent others scurrying to the exit clutching their stomachs. Last summer's 40 percent crash and a 20 percent drop so far in 2016 have sent trading volumes tumbling on the Shanghai and Shenzhen bourses, where retail investors account for 85 percent of the business, unlike more developed markets, where institutions dominate.

Many investors have not just been put off by the falls, but by the wild intraday swings, with sharp morning gains frequently swallowed by sharper afternoon losses.

Not Zhao De. The 26-year-old Beijinger only has around 55,000 yuan (\$8,400) to play with, and he wants to make it work hard and fast. He's currently out of the stock market, not because it's too volatile, but because it stops him making the most of that volatility. He wants to take bigger positions for shorter periods, but the stock market makes him wait a day for trades to be settled, which prevents intraday trading.

He's in commodity futures for now. "If I buy futures, I can directly short sell," he said.

Liu Jingde, Cinda Securities analyst, said this growing new cohort of investors is more open to the opportunities to make money and has a

greater willingness to take risks, using futures and options products.

"It could make the fluctuations of the market more extreme if these investors take more frequent short-term positions," he said. China's securities regulator did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the implications for the market.

Rao Xianjun is another of this new breed, who typically have trading apps on their phones and bone up on opportunities through investor communities on media platforms such as QQ, WeChat and Weibo. He's looking at stocks in the new energy, technology and medical sectors, but he doesn't want to tie up his money for long, and says he will be looking to make money by short selling, cashing in on the over-exuberant response of investors to government policies.

"The nation's leaders will obviously focus on new initiatives, and after the buzz of it all quiets down ... that'll be my time to move in."

GUT INSTINCT

Rao is dismissive of traditional investors, the "aunties and uncles" who follow the buzz. People, perhaps, like the husband and wife team who turn up every morning at the China Securities brokerage in Dongzhimen on the east side of Beijing. The husband, who gave his sur-

name as Wu, said he had been investing since 2005, and had lost a lot of money on the start-up board in last summer's crash.

As a retiree in his 60s, he can ill afford to lose. Unlike the younger generation of investors, he said he relies on state media for his information. "I look at CCTV Finance, as they are the voice of the Communist Party. They don't dare talk nonsense," Wu said.

An octogenarian investor in the Founder Securities brokerage in western Beijing who gave his name as Zheng takes a similar approach. He was clutching a copy of Reference News, published by state news agency Xinhua. "I don't have any fixed plan for 2016," Zheng said. "I just look at the situation, and I look in the newspaper." He shares a view with Wu that the best stocks are the ones that have already soared, that banks are not worth buying, and that gut instinct is the best guide.

This year they will be up against nimble young guns hoping to punish them for that instinct and make money even in the worst of times. Rao thinks the vertiginous ride on Chinese stocks has been just the education he needed to achieve that goal.

"In a way, I feel lucky; I've experienced three bear markets that other investors take over a decade to experience," he said. — Reuters

EX-ANGLO IRISH CEO SAYS WILL WAIVE EXTRADITION TO IRELAND IF GRANTED BAIL

DUBLIN: The former head of Anglo Irish Bank will not fight being sent back to his native Ireland from the United States to face criminal charges related to the bank's collapse if he is granted bail upon his return, he was quoted as saying yesterday.

David Drumm has been in custody since he was arrested at his Massachusetts home on Oct. 10 after Irish officials asked that he be extradited to face a 33-count criminal indictment related to the collapse of the failed bank. Anglo Irish Bank was nationalised in early 2009 in a takeover that cost Ireland some 30 billion euros (\$33 billion). "I have instructed my US attorneys last week to explore all opportunities with the US and Irish authorities to expedite a return to Ireland," Drumm was quoted as saying in the Irish weekly Sunday Business Post, adding that he hoped to apply to a Boston court on Monday to achieve this. "I have given clear instructions that all rights to challenge the extradition in the US should be waived and no other options available to me should be pursued in order to facilitate an immediate return to Ireland."

Drumm faces charges in Ireland related to fraudulent loans the bank made in 2008 intended to help prop up its share prices, which was falling sharply during the global crisis, according to papers unsealed in Boston in October.

The charges include forgery, conspiracy and false accounting. Drumm, who moved to Boston after the bank was nationalized seven years ago, has denied any wrongdoing.

He is due to face the extradition charges on March 1. He unsuccessfully pleaded for his release on bail last year, saying he was not a flight risk.

Drumm told the newspaper he was asking Ireland's Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) not to oppose bail if he returned so he could work and participate fully in his defence.

"I understand that the DPP will not agree to our request, and will oppose bail. Although this is a disappointment and very perplexing, it does not diminish my desire to return to Ireland," Drumm said. The DPP could not immediately be reached for comment. — Reuters

CHINA FOREX RESERVES FALL ALMOST \$100BN IN JANUARY

BEIJING: China's foreign exchange reserves have fallen to their lowest level in more than three years, the central bank said yesterday, as Beijing sells dollars to stop the yuan from depreciating further.

The world's largest currency hoard shrank by \$99.5 billion in January to some \$3.2 trillion, the People's Bank of China said on its website, the lowest since May 2012.

Worries about China's economy have pushed the yuan to a five-year low. The country saw its first-ever annual decline in foreign exchange reserves last year as Beijing tried to prevent a more drastic devaluation. The PBoC is selling dollars to buy yuan amid a capital flight spurred by the slowing growth in the world's second largest economy.

But some analysts predict a more drastic weakening of the yuan this year and question China's ability to continue rapidly shedding the reserves.

"While the remaining reserves represent a substantial war chest, the rapid pace of depletion in recent months is simply unsustainable," IHS Global Insight economist Rajiv Biswas told Bloomberg News.

Outflows increased "as expectations mount that the PBoC will eventually be forced to capitulate once its reserves are sufficiently depleted," he added.

George Magnus, economic commentator and associate at Oxford University's China Centre, wrote on Twitter: "China's fx reserves fell another \$100bn... clearly this can't go on for long."

The pace of decline in the reserves in January was slower than December, which at some \$108 billion was the largest monthly drop on record.

China has also tightened some capital controls to try to curb outflows. "The smaller decline in the reserves suggests that some capital outflow restrictions imposed in January worked," Shen Jianguang, chief Asia economist at Mizuho Securities, wrote in a note.

The drop in February will be much smaller, he added. China has set its growth target for this year at between 6.5-7 percent, the top economic planner said Wednesday, an acknowledgement that expansion-already at its slowest pace in 25 years-will continue to weaken.

Global investors are closely watching the slowdown in the world's second largest economy, which has created turbulence in world markets. —AFP



AL-TIJARI ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF AL-NAJMA ACCOUNT

KUWAIT: Commercial Bank of Kuwait held the Al-Najma Account draw yesterday. The draw was held under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry represented by Saqer Al-Manaie.

The winners of the Al-Najma daily draw are:

Badriya Ali Bohamad — KD 7000, Amal Abdurhaheem Abdulkareem — KD 7000, Fadhel Mohammad Al-Sarraf — KD 7000, Bhotwawala Abbasbhai Saifuddin — KD 7000, Ahmad Al-Saeed Ahmad Abdurahman — KD 7000.

Al-Najma awards are now brighter and bigger than ever. With the revamped Al Najma account, all your dreams will be turned to reality. On top of offering the highest daily prize in Kuwait for KD 7,000, now our Mega prize draws got bigger to reach KD 250,000. The new prizes scheme for Al-Najma account

Daily draw to win KD 7000

Quarterly draws to win great prizes that would start from KD 100,000 to KD 250,000.

With Al-Najma you have more chance to win greater prizes

- Each KD 25 kept in your account gives you one chance to win

- Each KD 25 kept in your account for one week will give you a chance to enter the daily draw.

- Each KD 25 kept in your account for 3 months will give you chance to enter the quarterly draw.

Additional features

- ATM card
- Issue a credit card against your account

- Obtain all CBK banking services

You deserve to win! Open an account now with just KD 500 and you will enter all draws.

CASINO GROUP TO SELL BIG C STAKE TO THAI TCC GROUP

HONG KONG/BANGKOK: France's Casino Group has agreed to sell its majority stake in Thai hypermarket operator Big C Supercenter for about \$3.4 billion to Thailand's TCC Group, a person with direct knowledge of the matter said yesterday.

The deal is a part of the French food retailer's debt reduction plan. Casino announced a 4-billion-euro (\$4.46 billion) deleveraging plan in 2016, including the sale of its Vietnam unit and its stake in the Thai hypermarket. Casino's plan to sell the Thai unit came after a December report by short-seller Muddy Waters that said the French firm was "dangerously leveraged", prompting its worst stock slide in seven years. The Vietnam unit sale had been planned earlier.

A senior official from Central Group, which was also bidding for Casino's 58.6 percent stake in Big C, confirmed that the group had lost to TCC in the bid.

The first source, who did not want to be identified, said TCC - controlled by Thai tycoon Charoen Sirivadhanabhakdi - had offered 253 baht (\$7.12) a share for the controlling stake, or around 11 percent more than Big C shares' close on Friday. The Big C deal would make for Thailand's second-biggest inbound

acquisition after 2013's \$6.6-billion purchase by CP All PCL of cash-and-carry wholesaler Siam Makro Pcl.

The Wall Street Journal earlier reported the deal. It was not clear whether Central Group would sell its 25 percent stake in Big C, a retailer it originally founded in 1993 and then sold a majority stake to Casino in 1999.

Central declined to comment on the matter. Casino, TCC and Big C were not available for immediate comment. The first source said Casino and TCC had moved quickly to present binding bids and financing to preempt others coming in.

The deal should help Casino deleverage. Ratings agency Standard & Poor's last month put the firm's debt on "negative watch" for a possible downgrade to junk status, citing concerns over the retailer's high debt pile and weakness in Brazil. Big C is Thailand's second-largest hypermarket operator after Tesco's Thai unit, and has a market capitalisation of 163.25 billion baht (\$4.60 billion).

Charoen's acquisition of Big C would boost the tycoon's retail presence in Thailand. He owns Berli Jucker PCL, the listed retail arm of TCC. — Reuters

CHINA DATA MAY PUT CAT AMONG CB DOVES

GLOBAL ECONOMY WEEKAHEAD

LONDON: Global markets have been in turmoil since the start of the year, with stocks and commodities prices reeling, eroding inflation and making central banks increasingly dovish-a trend that could continue with more weak economic data.

China, a focus of much of the recent market concern, is due to release forex reserves data at the weekend. That will be closely watched after December's record drop, recorded as Beijing burned through its foreign cash holdings to shore up the yuan currency. US retail sales figures will meanwhile give clues to the state of consumer confidence in the world's

largest economy, as will US Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen's testimony to the House Financial Services Committee on Wednesday.

Oil prices have tumbled 70 percent since mid-2014, driving down inflation and adding to expectations that central banks will be forced to maintain or even ease further their already ultra-loose monetary policies. Late last month the Bank of Japan unexpectedly took the plunge into negative interest rates, following in the wake of the European Central Bank, which will more than likely shave another 10 basis points off its own sub-zero deposit rate in March.

For its part, the US Fed is looking increasingly unsure about when it will next raise rates, while economists in Reuters polls have pushed back expectations for the first Bank of England hike by six months in the space of three weeks.

"While we don't think that the world's economy is set to fall off a cliff, the problem is that there is a sizeable output gap, with significant structural excesses in the emerging economies, particularly China, and in commodity-producing countries," said Hiroshi Shiraiishi at BNP Paribas.

China's foreign currency reserves are

expected to have dropped to \$3.2 trillion in January from \$3.33 trillion the previous month, a Reuters poll of 13 economists found.

Beijing has been struggling to underpin the yuan as the growth rate in the world's second-largest economy grinds to its slowest levels in a quarter of a century.

EYES DOWN FOR FEEBLE EZ GROWTH

Euro zone economic growth was probably a paltry 0.3 percent in the final quarter of 2015, data are likely to show on Feb. 12, matching the third quarter's ECB's 2 percent target ceiling, expectations are high for more easing.

"The economy in the euro zone is not gathering momentum. For a long time we have been expecting the ECB to loosen its monetary policy again, presumably now in March," said Jorg Kramer at Commerzbank.

ECB President Mario Draghi signalled last month further policy easing could be coming within months, leading markets to price in a deposit rate cut in March.

While economists are pretty convinced the ECB will ease again next month they are less sure about how aggressive the US Fed will be after it hiked interest rates for the first time in nearly a decade at the end of last year.

US employment gains slowed more than expected in January as the boost to hiring from unseasonably mild weather faded, yet surging wages and an unemployment rate at an eight-year low suggested

the labour market recovery remains firm.

The mixed numbers make it hard to predict the tone Fed Chair Yellen will adopt at her semi-annual testimony to the House Financial Services Committee on Wednesday.

"This will be one of the more closely watched and scrutinized testimonies in some time as the market tries to gauge whether March is still in play for another Fed rate increase," wrote economists at RBC Capital Markets. "Given the lack of any real calming in the markets, we think the odds that Yellen heavily promotes a March move are slim."

Financial conditions have tightened considerably in the weeks since the Fed raised interest rates and monetary policy makers will have to take that into consideration should that phenomenon persist, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, said on Wednesday. Faltering emerging market growth has exacerbated global concerns and the Reserve Bank of Australia and the Bank of Canada have also highlighted risks, keeping the possibility of policy easing on the agenda. The Chilean, Peruvian and Philippine central banks all meet in the coming week but no change is expected from them.

Sweden's Riksbank may well cut its benchmark rate by 10 basis points to -0.45 percent on Thursday.

"The Riksbank has so much skin in the game that it is unlikely to back off now if it thinks inflation is about to head south again - and low oil prices mean this is very likely," said Colin Bermingham at BNP Paribas. — Reuters

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report										
Sunday 07 February 2016										
Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low					
Price Index	▲ 8.46	5,206.83	5,198.37	5,207.95	5,181.81					
Weighted Index	▼ -0.06	357.28	357.34	357.54	355.15					
KXS 15	▲ 1.08	841.63	840.55	842.79	833.02					
Trades										
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change			
MARIN	114	114	100	11	1	114	▲ 0.0			
IKARUS	79	79	100	8	1	79	▲ 1.0			
IPG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	320	▲ 0.0			
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	600	▲ 0.0			
ENERGYH	35.0	32.0	2,000	69	2	32.0	▼ -2.0			
GPI	42.5	41.0	2,086,941	87,318	48	42.5	▲ 0.5			
ABAR	106	106	2,373	252	2	106	▼ -10.0			
Oil & Gas	2,091,514	87,658	54	758.61	4	758.61	▼ -5.99			
KFOUC	224	218	600,000	131,660	22	218	▼ -2.0			
BPCC	460	455	260,000	119,550	3	460	▲ 5.0			
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	610	▲ 0.0			
ALQURAN	166	158	121,755	19,828	15	166	▲ 2.0			
Basic Materials	981,755	271,038	40	892.63	4	892.63	▲ 2.70			
KCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	380	▲ 0.0			
REFRI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	335	▲ 0.0			
CABLE	380	360	126,524	46,013	25	365	▲ 5.0			
SHIP	148	144	55,167	8,006	25	148	▼ -2.0			
PCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,020	▲ 0.0			
PAPER	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	380	▲ 0.0			
MRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	67	▲ 0.0			
ACICO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	270	▲ 0.0			
GGMC	450	450	7,497	3,374	2	450	▲ 0.0			
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	132	▲ 0.0			
KPAK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	340	▲ 0.0			
KBMMK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	250	▲ 0.0			
NICBM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	228	▲ 0.0			
EQUIPMENT	54	52	1,029,935	54,793	28	54	▲ 1.0			
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	99	▲ 0.0			
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	102	▲ 0.0			
SALBOOKH	70	68	1,130,870	78,047	11	69	▲ 1.0			
AGLTY	435	425	960,221	412,246	31	435	▲ 0.0			
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	210	▲ 0.0			
CLEANING	39.5	36.5	4,144,235	161,645	98	39.5	▲ 2.5			
CITYGROUP	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	410	▲ 0.0			
KGL	41.0	37.5	441,378	17,638	20	41.0	▲ 2.5			
KPCP	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	210	▲ 0.0			
HUMANSOFT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	880	▲ 0.0			
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	130	▲ 0.0			
SAFWAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	310	▲ 0.0			
GFC	29.5	27.0	7,276	199	6	29.5	▲ 0.0			
MAYADEEN	19.0	18.5	3,201,904	59,960	61	18.5	▼ -0.5			
CGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	790	▲ 0.0			
MTCC	73	71	514,000	36,719	19	72	▼ -1.0			
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	600	▲ 0.0			
ALAFCO	180	180	100,000	18,000	3	180	▼ -2.0			
MUBARRAD	68	65	1,674,529	109,134	39	65	▼ -5.0			
LOGISTICS	57	51	2,488,508	137,154	81	57	▲ 1.0			
SCEM	83	83	2,900	241	1	83	▼ -1.0			
QCEM	80	80	23,292	1,863	3	80	▼ -3.0			
QCEM	70	70	200,000	14,000	2	70	▲ 0.0			
FCEM	74	74	10	1	1	74	▲ 1.0			
RKWC	110	110	41,000	4,510	3	110	▲ 10.0			
SPEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	88	▲ 0.0			
Industrials	16,149,246	1,163,545	459	979.95	4	979.95	▲ 0.75			
KSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	206	▲ 0.0			
NSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	62	▲ 0.0			
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	102	▲ 0.0			
CATTL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	126	▲ 0.0			
DANAH	73	71	166,500	11,824	5	73	▲ 0.0			
POULT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	190	▲ 0.0			
FOOD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	2,000	▲ 0.0			
Consumer Goods	166,500	11,824	5	1039.72	4	1039.72	▲ 2.75			
MHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200	▲ 0.0			
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	920	▲ 0.0			
YIACO	148	148	765	113	1	148	▲ 0.0			
Health Care	765	113	1	952.05	1	952.05	▲ 0.00			
KCIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	980	▲ 0.0			
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	220	▲ 0.0			
SULTAN	64	58	165,425	9,822	12	64	▲ 1.0			
CABLETV	35.0	30.0	20,570	633	10	30.0	▼ -3.0			
EYAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	335	▲ 0.0			
IFAHF	186	186	5	1	1	186	▼ -8.0			
OLUFAUEL	108	108	22,615	2,442	8	108	▲ 0.0			
MUNTAZAHAT	90	90	100,000	9,000	4	90	▲ 0.0			
JAZEERA	850	840	1,477	1,251	4	850	▲ 20.0			
SOOR	108	108	29,477	3,170	15	108	▲ 0.0			
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	110	▲ 0.0			
ALNAWADI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	84	▲ 0.0			
ALRAI	140	136	221,671	30,715	18	138	▲ 0.0			
ZIMAH	106	100	3,277,265	339,735	204	102	▲ 0.0			
UFIG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	96	▲ 0.0			
KOUTFOOD	550	540	24,360	13,164	2	540	▼ -10.0			
Mezzan	1,080	1,060	63,250	67,095	11	1,080	▲ 20.0			
Consumer Services	3,926,115	477,027	289	952.70	2	952.70	▼ -1.93			
ZAIN	370	360	972,022	351,392	65	360	▼ -5.0			
OOREDOO	1,120	1,120	608	681	2	1,120	▼ -20.0			
HITSTELEC	27.5	26.5	155,700	4,129	10	27.0	▲ 0.0			
VIVA	940	910	101,919	94,229	99	920	▲ 0.0			
Telecommunications	1,230,249	450,431	176	576.59	2	576.59	▼ -3.28			
NBK	730	720	6,401,856	4,617,373	107	730	▲ 10.0			
GBK	210	208	535,485	111,394	20	210	▲ 0.0			
CBK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	500	▲ 0.0			
ABK	365	360	119,000	42,850	4	365	▲ 10.0			
ALMUTAHED	450	450	21	9	2	450	▲ 0.0			
KIB	198	196	146,200	28,901	7	198	▼ -2.0			
BURG	355	345	66,305	23,248	9	355	▲ 0.0			
KFIN	495	485	3,300,006	1,625,701	133	495	▼ -5.0			
BOUBYAN	395	390	872,533	344,608	28	395	▼ -5.0			
AUB	204	202	303,854	61,691	11	202	▼ -4.0			
ITHMR	32.5	30.0	9,230,044	285,169	142	31.5	▼ -1.0			
WARBABANK	192	184	4,925,785	930,332	204	192	▲ 4.0			
Banks	25,901,089	8,071,276	667	819.92	2	819.92	▼ -1.86			
KINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	320	▲ 0.0			
GINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	750	▲ 0.0			
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	445	▲ 0.0			
WINS	106	104	83,000	8,692	6	104	▲ 0.0			
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200	▲ 0.0			
FTI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	52	▲ 0.0			
WETHAQ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	31.0	▲ 0.0			
BKIKWT</										

BofA Merrill Lynch

DOES OPEC HAVE 2020 VISION?

The structural shift toward a lower price environment will have profound and long-lasting consequences for non-cartelized production. With prices recently trading below the \$30/bbl mark, our expected 10 percent cut in 2016 global capex is starting to look modest. Current production from mature fields is set to decline at higher rates as maintenance capex has been cut too. Net, we now expect total non-OPEC supply to decrease to 56.4 mn b/d in 2017 before rebounding to 57.5 mn b/d in 2020, near 2015 output levels.

No incremental projects

A recovery in non-cartelized production rests upon a medium term recovery in oil prices. True, several fields in the US Gulf of Mexico, Canada and Brazil initiated before the price crash will come online in the next three years. Yet, all of them have breakeven costs above current prices. Should spot prices remain in a \$30-40/bbl band or forward prices stay below \$50/bbl, no incremental conventional or unconventional projects will be sanctioned. Still, USD strength should provide some relief on operating cost structures.

US shale

The bottom line is that non-OPEC conventional production now looks set to drop across the board by 2020, regardless of spot or forward prices. Shale may offer a silver lining, as the investment cycle is shorter than for conventional production. Given our expected upward price trajectory from here, the US rig count should increase again by 2H2016. As such, we see US shale output falling by 470 thousand b/d in a \$40/bbl WTI environment, while growth returns at \$50/bbl. Above \$60/bbl, growth stands above 400 thousand b/d.

With the US the only country able to ramp up its production materially in non-OPEC by 2020, the cartel may have to provide the incremental barrels. We estimate that OPEC needs to increase production by 4.1 million b/d in the next five years to "balance the market". Can Saudi's self-reported 2.1 million b/d of spare capacity fill half of this gap? Could cash-strapped OPEC countries like Iran, Nigeria, or Venezuela expand their capacity? And what will happen to embattled Libyan and Iraqi production in this period? Our medium-term supply forecast has to uncomfortably assume OPEC has 2020 vision.

Macro outlook

Currency moves, in particular USD strength, have been a net negative for all commodities. Simply put, global GDP in USD terms at market exchange rates is stagnant. If the CNY drops to 6.9 against the USD, as our FX team forecasts, downward pressure on cyclical commodities would build further.

Continued USD strength could

force Saudi either to cut oil production modestly and push Brent back to \$50 or depeg the SAR, our black swan event, which could lead Brent to collapse to \$25/bbl.

China's GDP is changing, with services overtaking industrial activity and construction as a driver of growth. Negative for metals and mining, but a potential tailwind for oil.

WTI and Brent crude oil

Conditions for a floor on oil are coming together: spot prices are

months when sanctions are lifted, mostly intermediate and heavy grades.

We project non-OPEC supply to contract by 750 thousand b/d in 2016, compared with an average 20-year expansion of 660 thousand b/d. Light-heavy oil spreads may widen on a forward basis as light crude output declines relative to heavy over the next 18 months. The change in the crude oil slate comes from a contraction in light non-OPEC supply against an expansion

right annual decline this quarter.

After all, global oil and gas capital expenditures dropped by 26 percent in 2015, and we expect another round of cuts this year to the tune of 10 percent globally. Capex is a function of prices, and with prices recently below the \$30/bbl mark, the actual 2016 cut is likely to end up larger than these expectations. In that respect, some companies have started to announce their 2016 plans and it seems that US producers are keen to cut as much or even

as full investment cycle in conventional production is 3 to 5 years. Lack of current capex also leads to higher decline rates from mature fields. Not only has the list of upcoming new projects already slimmed down, but current production from mature fields is also set to decline at higher rates as maintenance capex has been cut too. Our analysis shows that decline rates increased significantly last year compared with 2013-14 levels. For example, UK decline rates accelerat-

b/d in 2020, close to 2015 production levels.

UK, Vietnam, Australia, Norway, Mexico, India

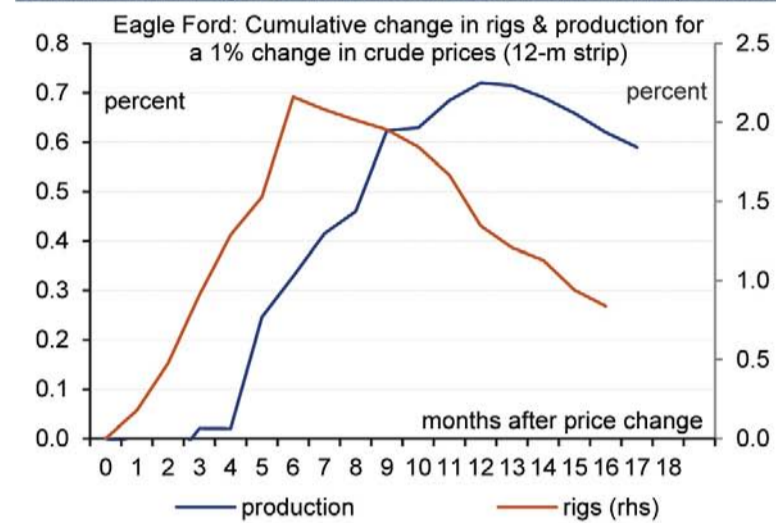
The bottom line is that non-OPEC conventional production looks set to decline across the board in the next five years, regardless of spot or forward prices. Shale may offer a silver lining for non-OPEC supply growth in the medium term, as the full investment cycle is much shorter than in conventional production. With our price forecasts for WTI at \$45/bbl this year and \$59/bbl in 2017, the US rig count should increase again by 2H2016, albeit the expected pace of investment is likely to be much gentler than during the shale revolution. After all, breakeven costs on a basin level range from \$37/bbl to \$81/bbl, with most of the large basins standing at sub-\$60/bbl. Shale output will return to growth in 2017, in our view.

Will shale production grow again at the same level as in the 2011-14 period? We are doubtful, even with a long-term WTI price estimate of \$75/bbl (our base case). Rather, we believe that the damage done in the past 18 months to the shale investment cycle is sticky. As the shale industry is de facto highly levered, we believe future lenders will limit credit lines in a meaningful way, even when prices recover. We conducted a price sensitivity analysis on US shale production growth, based on current breakevens. We estimate that US shale production declines by 470 thousand b/d in a \$40/bbl WTI environment, while growth returns at \$50/bbl. Beyond \$60/bbl, growth stands above 400 thousand b/d. Linking this analysis with our price assumptions in the next five years suggests that US shale production grows by 80 thousand b/d in 2017 and growth accelerates throughout the end of the decade.

Output conundrum

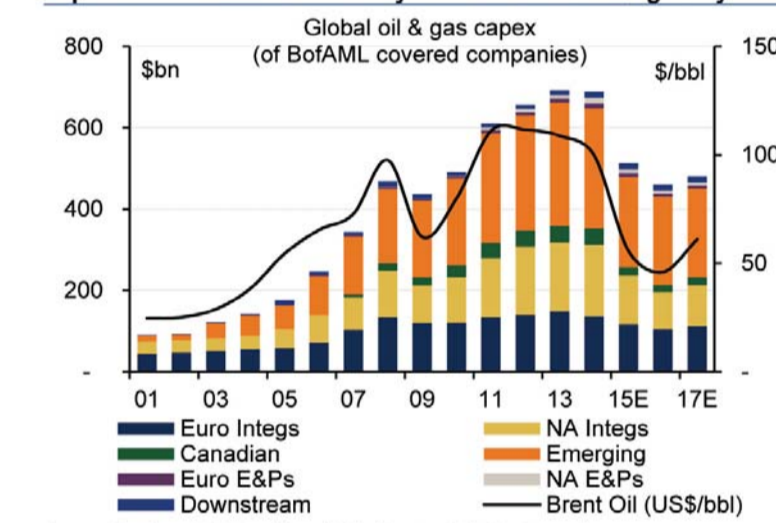
4.1 million b/d needs to be added by OPEC by 2020, namely Saudi, Iran and Iraq. In sum, the US is the only country which is able to ramp up production among non-cartelized players by 2020, so OPEC has to come to the rescue to provide the required incremental supplies. In last week's report, we estimated that demand will grow by 5.9 million b/d in 2015-20 (Chart 23). With the market oversupply of 1.8 million b/d in 2015, OPEC needs to increase production by 4.1 million b/d in the next five years to "balance the market". Of course, Saudi can make up for half of this given its 2.1 million b/d of spare capacity, and we believe it intends to at least increase its market share. Other OPEC countries will expand their capacity in the next five years, namely Iran, UAE and Nigeria (Chart 24). As for Libya, the current turmoil needs to come to an end, while the scale of any Iraqi long-term output increase remains the biggest uncertainty.

Chart 19: Salvation of non-OPEC supply growth will come from the US, as full investment cycle is much shorter than in conventional production



Source: EIA, BofA Merrill Lynch Commodities Research

Chart 3: Global oil and gas capex dropped by 26% in 2015, and we expect another round of cuts this year to the tune of 10% globally



Source: Bloomberg, BofA Merrill Lynch Global Equities Oil & Gas Research

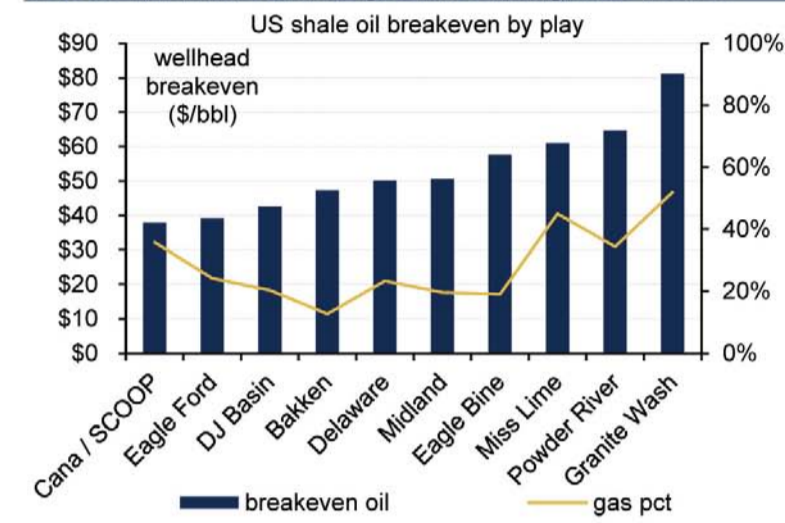
near cash costs, CNY is depreciating, WTI matched Brent, and a bumper US driving season is approaching. Yet it is early to call a bottom on the risk of further CNY weakness and a continued oil price war within OPEC. We recently revised down our average 2016 forecast for Brent to \$46/bbl (from \$50) and WTI to \$45/bbl (from \$48).

After an 800 million barrel surge in global petroleum stocks since 1Q14, we project much healthier S&D balances in 2H16 and beyond. The latest OPEC meeting resulted in a rollover of the existing policy, but was acrimonious. We believe that Iranian output could go up by 600 thousand b/d over a period of six

of OPEC medium-heavy barrels.

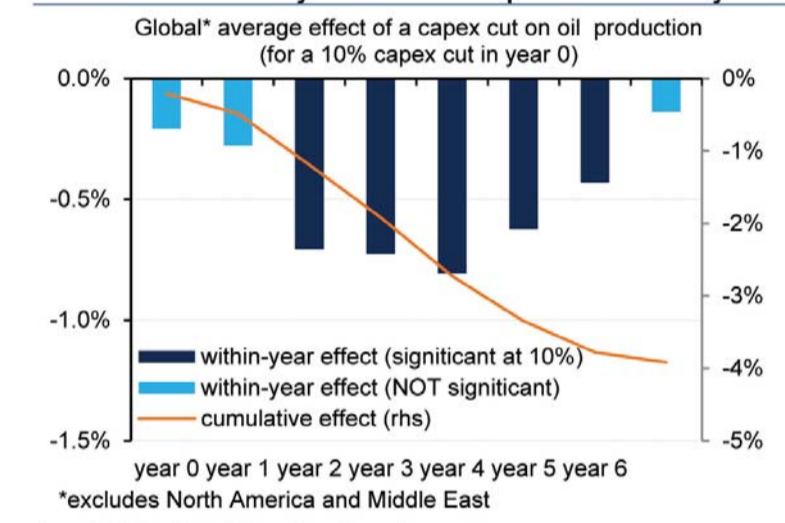
It all started 14 months ago when Saudi announced a change in strategy... The structural shift towards a lower price environment will have profound and long-lasting consequences for non-cartelized production. OPEC's decision in November 2014 to let prices collapse in order to regain market share from non-OPEC suppliers, namely US shale, is now starting to pay off. Non-OPEC production growth peaked in 4Q14 at 2.7 million b/d year-on-year, or 4.9 percent, the highest rate ever recorded, driven largely by the US. Since then, growth has faded and reached only 0.2 million b/d in 4Q15, and production is poised for an out-

Chart 20: After all, breakeven costs on a basin level range from \$37/bbl to \$81/bbl, with most of the large basins standing at sub-\$60/bbl



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Equities Oil & Gas Research

Chart 4: Non-OPEC non-shale output should start to feel the pain in 2017 as full investment cycle in conventional production is 3 to 5 years



*excludes North America and Middle East

Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Commodities Research

more than last year. Continental Resources, Noble Energy and Hess just announced spending cuts of 63 percent, 49 percent and 41 percent, respectively, for this year compared with 2015. With largely reduced activity, many producers now see their 2016 production declining. Meanwhile, non-OPEC non-shale output should start to feel the pain in 2017, as the full investment cycle is around three to five years.

Global oil and gas capex dropped by 26 percent in 2015, and we expect another round of cuts this year to the tune of 10 percent globally.

Non-OPEC non-shale output should start to feel the pain in 2017

ed from 9 percent in 2013 to 11 percent in 2015. The same story applies to other non-OPEC countries such as Vietnam, Australia, Norway, Mexico and India. In contrast, decline rates in countries like Russia are holding up much better at this point, a trend that is likely to reverse, in our view, unless spending resumes. In aggregate, our weighted non-OPEC production decline rate analysis suggests an average jump of nearly 0.6ppt, from 4.2 percent in 2014 to 4.8 percent in 2015, a level consistent with decline rates observed in 2008 and 2009. Net, total non-OPEC supply is set to decrease to 56.4 million b/d in 2017 before rebounding to 57.5 million

EXTREME VOLATILITY GRIPS FOREX MARKETS

NBK MONEY MARKETS REPORT

Last week, the dollar Index dropped sharply reaching a low of 96.25 on the view that weak domestic economic data and worries over the global economy could prevent the Fed from hiking rates this year. Comments from New York Fed president William Dudley were viewed as dovish and had also hurt the dollar. By the end of the week, the US dollar rebounded against a basket of major currencies after data showed a pickup in US wages in January, suggesting greater inflation and denting the view that the Federal Reserve would not hike rates at all this year. The US Labor department data showed that average hourly earnings increased 12 cents, or 0.5 percent, last month, leaving the year-on-year gain in earnings at 2.5 percent. The wage data was enough to drive the Dollar higher even as non-farm payrolls increased by just 151,000 jobs last month, below the 190,000 that economists had expected. The unemployment rate was at 4.9 percent, the lowest since February 2008.

The euro opened the week at 1.0830 and rallied strongly reaching a three and a half month high of 1.1243 where it found lots of resistance. The euro later dropped to 1.1140 after positive US jobs data lent support to the greenback. The currency closed for the week at 1.1156.

The Sterling started the week on a strong note, reaching a one month high of 1.4672 after Bank of England chief Mark Carney limited the expectation of an interest rate cut in the coming months. By the end of the week the pound retreated, hurt by a poll that showed that those campaigning for Britain to leave the European Union had taken a 9-point lead, triggering renewed anxiety among investors. The poll showed 45 per-

cent of Britons would vote to leave the bloc compared with the 36 percent who want to remain. 19 percent said they did not know or would not vote. Sterling closed at 1.4500.

The Australian currency opened the week at 0.7081 and managed to reach a short lived high at 0.7243 after the Reserve Bank of Australia left interest rates at a record low 2 percent as expected. According to the statement, "recent information suggests the global economy is continuing to grow, though at a slightly slower pace than earlier expected. In Australia, the available information suggests that the expansion in the non-mining parts of the economy strengthened during 2015 even as the contraction in spending in mining investment continued". The Bank continues to see inflation to remain quite low, with the CPI rising by 1.7 percent over 2015. Lastly, with growth in labor costs continuing to be quite subdued as well, and inflation restrained elsewhere in the world, the Bank predicts consumer price inflation is likely to remain low over the next year or two. Given these conditions, the Bank found it appropriate for monetary policy to be accommodative. The currency closed the week at 0.7162.

Manufacturing PMI contract

The US economy's manufacturing sector contracted for a fourth straight month in January but at a slower pace than the previous month, while employment in the sector slumped to a six-and-a-half year low, according to an industry report released last week. The Institute for Supply Management said its index of national factory activity rose to 48.2 from 48.0 the month before. The reading was just above economist expectations of 48.1.

ISM non-manufacturing sector

US service sector activity slowed in January, suggesting economic growth weakened at the start of the first quarter even though the labor market remained resilient. The US economy's service sector expanded in January but at a slower pace than the previous month, according to an industry report released last week. The Institute for Supply Management said its index of non-manufacturing activity fell to 53.5 from 55.8 the month before. The reading was below economists' expectations of 55.1.

The number of Americans filing for unemployment benefits rose more than expected last week, suggesting some loss of momentum in the labor market amid a sharp economic slowdown and stock market selloff. Initial claims for state unemployment benefits increased 8,000 to a seasonally adjusted 285,000 for the week ended Jan. 30, the Labor Department said. Claims remained below 300,000, a level associated with strong labor market conditions, for a 48th straight week, that is the longest run since the early 1970s. The four-week moving average of claims, considered a better measure of labor market trends as it irons out week-to-week volatility, rose 2,000 to 284,750 last week. Economists had forecast claims rising to 280,000 in the latest week.

Eurozone unemployment rate

The eurozone's unemployment rate fell to the lowest level in more than four years in December, fueling optimism over the health of the region's economy. In a report, Eurostat said that the euro zone's unemployment rate fell to a seasonally adjusted 10.4 percent from 10.5 percent in November. This is the lowest rate recorded in the euro area since

September 2011. Analysts had expected the jobless rate to hold steady at 10.5 percent in December.

Germany's private sector

Growth in Germany's private sector was slower but still robust in January, suggesting Europe's largest economy remained on a solid footing at the start of 2016 despite global growth fears. Germany's final composite Purchasing Managers' Index, which tracks activity in the manufacturing and services sectors that together account for more than two-thirds of the German economy, stood at 54.5 in January, down from 55.5 the previous month. That well above the 50 line that separates expansion from contraction for the 33rd month running but marked the slowest rate of growth since October.

BoE votes 9-0 to keep rates on hold

The possibility of a UK interest rate hike has receded further after the Bank of England voted unanimously to keep borrowing costs at their record low and cut its forecasts for growth, wages and inflation. The Bank highlighted the recent sharp sell-off in global stock markets and investors' jitters about a slowdown in China as it revealed that policymaker Ian McCafferty dropped his recent call for a rate rise. He had voted against the eight other members of the Monetary Policy Committee since last August but this month agreed with his colleagues that it was too early to raise interest rates from 0.5 percent.

The start of 2016 saw a slight improvement in the rate of growth in the UK manufacturing sector. This was highlighted by the Purchasing Manager's Index rising to a three-month high of 52.9, up slightly from 52.1 in December. The

PMI has remained above the neutral 50.0 mark for thirty four consecutive months. Manufacturing production increased again during January, reflecting improved inflows of new work from the domestic market. The domestic market remains the key growth driver. In contrast, the trend in new export orders continues to disappoint, falling back into reverse gear in January. Even after recent easing in the exchange rate, a number of manufacturers are still finding that the strength of the sterling against the euro is impacting order inflows.

January data pointed to a renewed slowdown in output growth across the UK construction sector. At 55.0, down from 57.8 in December, the UK Construction Purchasing Managers' Index remained well above the 50.0 no-change value, but signaled the slowest rate of expansion since April 2015. The latest survey indicated that construction companies are less upbeat about their prospects for growth than at any time since December 2014.

Japan's services activity expands

Activity in Japan's services sector expanded in January at the fastest pace in five months in a sign that consumers and companies are shrugging off concerns about a global stock market sell-off and China's slowing economy. The Japanese Services Purchasing Managers Index rose to 52.4 in January on a seasonally adjusted basis from 51.5 in December. The index for new business rose to 52.2 from 52.0 the previous month, also indicating the fastest growth in five months.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti dinar at 0.30020. The USDKWID opened at 0.30020 yesterday morning.

AL-DAWLI REALIZES 17% GROWTH IN NET PROFIT FOR 2015 KIB'S FINANCIAL INCOME GREW TO KD63.2 MILLION: AL-JARRAH AL-SABAH

KUWAIT: Sheikh Mohammed Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, Chairman of Kuwait International Bank (Al-Dawli) announced that during 2015, the Bank's profits have grown by 17 percent to reach KD16.1 million compared to KD13.7 million in 2014. This growth is attributable to an increase in revenues accompanied by an improved control over expenditures whereby the financing income rose by 17 percent i.e. KD9.2 million to KD63.2 million compared to KD54 million for the previous year. The investment revenues increased by KD1.1 million, amounting to KD5.4 million compared to KD4.3 million for the previous year, thus realizing a remarkable growth of 26 percent. On the other hand, total expenditures reached KD26.8 million compared to KD25.4 million, i.e. an increase of 6 percent compared to the previous year.

This good performance reflected positively on earnings per share (EPS) for 2015 which increased by 17 percent reaching 17.14 fils compared to 14.65 fils for the previous year. In this context, Al-Jarrah stated that Al Dawli has booked reserve provision as a precautionary

measure to avoid of any adverse impacts which might be instigated by the foreseen economic uncertainty for the year 2016. As for dividends, Al-Jarrah stated, Al Dawli's Board of Directors has recommended to the General Assembly, cash dividends of 9 percent of the share nominal value (9 fils per share) for the shareholders registered at the Bank's records on the General Assembly meeting date. This recommendation is subject to the approval of Bank's General Assembly and the regulatory authorities.

Furthermore, Al-Jarrah also indicated that Al-Dawli's assets increased by KD127.5 million, ie by 8 percent reaching KD1.79 billion compared to KD1.66 billion by the end of the previous year. This increase is attributable to a growth in the financing portfolio size by around KD100 million reaching KD1.17 billion compared to KD1.07 billion last year i.e. by 9.3 percent compared to the previous year. The depositors' accounts rose to approximately KD1.02 billion compared to KD989 million by the end of the previous year, that is an increase by KD31 million representing 3 percent.



Sheikh Mohammed Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah

As an indication of assets quality, Al-Dawli's outstanding performance by end of 2015 has positively reflected on NPLs which has remarkably decreased by 71 percent to reach 1.43 percent in total compared to 4.97 percent for the previous year. Total provision coverage ratio has also increased to 199 percent compared to 67 percent for the previous year.

Moreover, total provisions and collaterals coverage ratio increased to 327 percent compared to 227 percent for the previous year. In this context, Al-Jarrah praised Al-Dawli's performance and achievements pertinent to these significant indicators.

In full conformity with CBK regulations on Basel III, Al Dawli continued to maintain an excellent capital adequacy ratio (CAR) of 21.7 percent while the financial leverage ratio reached 10.8 percent. Indeed, the aforesaid positive results fostered rise of return on equity to reach 6.5 percent in comparison with 5.9 percent for the previous year. This indicates an increase in the distributions to depositors' accounts in Kuwaiti Dinar currency since the beginning of 2015 whereby the annualised return on Arzaaq deposit in Kuwaiti Dinar currency to 1.2 percent in Q1, 1.5 percent in Q2, 1.8 percent in Q3 and ended up with 2.02 percent in Q4 with an average of 1.63 percent for 2015. Profits were credited into the depositors' accounts once the financial results were declared.

Further, Al Jarrah stated that in con-

tinuation of Al Dawli's new strategic plan, the Bank has been able to apply certain initiatives pertinent to the first phase of this strategy. This includes recruitment of qualified professionals for the executive management positions and offering improvements to enhance the Bank's flexibility. This has certainly led to improvement in all financial ratios and indicators. The new strategy aims at realization of a number of ambitious targets related to the Bank's performance, profits, assets, products and services. It aims at turning KIB to the Islamic Retail Bank of choice renowned for leading innovation and the one-stop-shop Real Estate powerhouse bank in Kuwait. All these can be attained by improvement of the Bank's assets and focusing on sustainability of both depositors' and investors' returns.

In the second phase of strategy implementation, extending throughout 2016, the Bank will focus on improvement of the products and services offered to its customers and will ensure efficiency and effectiveness of its internal operations.

KUWAIT'S FIRST AND ARAB WORLD'S ONLY ANNUAL CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX SETS OFF TO UAE SERVICE HERO REINFORCES PRESENCE IN REGION, LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

KUWAIT: Service Hero, Kuwait's and the Arab World's only 100 percent consumer-powered satisfaction index, today announced the expansion of its operations into the UAE, reinforcing the company's commitment to improving service quality in the region. The expansion coincides with another significant development for Service Hero: the complete revamp of its website, bringing for customers an open, information-rich platform for rating the service quality of brands, and for brands a closer interaction with consumer sentiment.

Service Hero is a Kuwaiti company which has operated in the Kuwait market since 2010. At its core, Service Hero empowers consumers to be heard and help improve service standards. It does so by offering companies direct and credible feedback as voiced by consumers, highlighting their performance in different areas of operations while comparing them to competing brands.

Commenting on these developments, Service Hero President Faten Abu-Ghazaleh, said: "This is a very exciting year for us and a milestone for our company. We are taking Service Hero to a whole new level with the launch in a market as diverse as the UAE. Also in terms of our new website, we are reinforcing the element of transparency, neutrality and the relevance of the data to consumers and companies".

The revamped website is a product of extensive



Service Hero President Faten Abu-Ghazaleh.

research conducted by Service Hero on how to maximize the benefits of its platform to consumers. This was achieved by a series of focus groups with consumers who have participated in the assessment over the past five years. This feedback was instrumental in shaping the more open, community focused features of the new site.

Abu-Ghazaleh added: "The aim was to identify the customer's experience with the assessment platform and the website from start to end when placing a vote. Our aim was to understand where the pain points are in order to address them and to increase the elements that add value to a respondent, while also making it equally beneficial for companies.

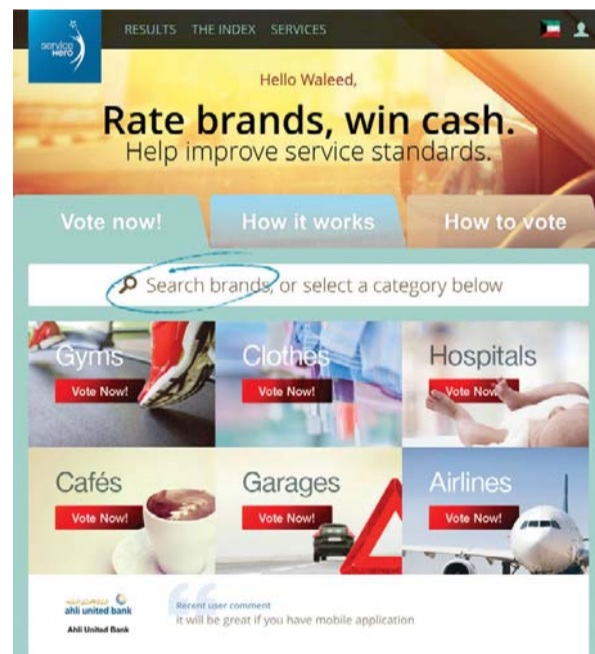
This exercise not only allows us to better service the Kuwait market, but also sets up our website to grow to the UAE and other markets".

Features now available on the new version of the Service Hero website are: the '3 Star' rating system, where brands are rated based on consumer feedback over the past 24 months, a Scoreboard which allows consumers and companies to view brands based on their rank, and the Brand Info page that enables visitors to view customer comments plus agree, disagree and share. Companies also have the option to respond to consumer comments using a unique Engagement Dashboard, facilitating a direct one-to-one interaction between companies and consumers.

To ensure that consumers can easily navigate the new website, Service Hero has made a short introductory

video which summarizes the platform's new features, in addition to a tutorial on how to vote for first time users. Both videos are available on www.servicehero.com.

Service Hero adheres to ESOMAR principles (the European Society of Opinion & Market Research). It aims to collect a robust and rigorous sample exceeding 10,000 validated assessments that reflect key demographic groups. Assessments are predominantly collected online asking 20 questions using a 10 point scale, and it deploys key processes before reporting validated and authenticated data to ensure its integrity. All scores are vetted by the well-respected American Customer Satisfaction Index, who is Service Hero's partner in the Arab world. Results are also overseen by an independent Advisory Council comprising the American University of Kuwait, Gulf University of Science & Technology, the Australian College of Kuwait, and the Kuwait Community College as well as neutral professionals from leading organizations, including the American Customer Satisfaction Index, the Boston Consulting Group, and Noor Investment Co.



BURGAN BANK ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF YAWMI ACCOUNT DRAW

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank announced yesterday the names of the lucky winners of its Yawmi account draw, each taking home a prize of KD 5,000.

The lucky winners for the daily draws took home a cash-prize of KD 5,000 each, and they are:

1. Dawood Mohammad Ahmed Ali, 2. Saadaa Meteib Talal Al-Shammari, 3. Yaser Ayoub Fahmi Mena, 4. Jaseem Rashim Mansour Al Abboudi, 5. Bader Abdullah Boutaiban.

To further add to the anticipation of Yawmi account customers, Borgan Bank now offers a Quarterly Draw with more chances to win higher rewards, entitling one lucky customer to win KD 125,000 every three months. The Yawmi Account now offers Daily and quarterly Draws, the Quarterly Draw requires customers to maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 in their account for 2 months prior to draw date. Additionally, every KD 10 in the account, will entitle customers to one chance of winning. If the account balance is KD 500 and above, the account holder will be qualified for both the quarterly and daily draws.

Burgan Bank encourages everyone to open a Yawmi account and/or increase their deposit to maximize their chances to becoming a winner. The more customers deposit, the higher the chances they receive of winning. For more information on opening a Yawmi account or about the new quarterly draw, customers are urged to visit their nearest Borgan Bank branch and receive all the details, or simply call the bank's Call Center at 1804080 where customer service representatives will be delighted to assist with any questions on the Yawmi account or any of the bank's products and services. Customers can also log on to Borgan Bank's www.borgan.com for further information. Established in 1977, Borgan Bank is the youngest commercial bank and second largest by assets in Kuwait, with a significant focus on the corporate and financial institutions sectors, as well as having a growing retail, and private bank customer base. Borgan Bank has majority owned subsidiaries in the MENAT region supported by one of the largest regional branch networks.

The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Borgan Bank's brand has been created on a foundation of real values - of trust, commitment, excellence and progression, to remind us of the high standards to which we aspire. 'People come first' is the foundation on which its products and services are developed.

The bank was re-certified with the prestigious ISO 9001:2008, making it the first bank in the GCC, and the only bank in Kuwait to receive such accreditation for the third consecutive year. The Bank also has to its credit the distinction of being the only Bank in Kuwait to have won the JP Morgan Chase Quality Recognition Award for twelve consecutive years.

RENAULT-NISSAN ALLIANCE SELLS 8.5 MILLION VEHICLES IN 2015

DUBAI: The Renault-Nissan Alliance sold 8,528,887 vehicles in 2015, up almost 1 percent from the previous year, thanks to record sales in the United States, China and Europe.

Combined sales for the world's fourth largest car group, which includes Renault Group, Nissan Motor Co, Ltd, and Russia's AVTOVAZ, held steady from calendar-year 2014 — despite sharp declines in the overall Russian and Brazilian markets.

Renault, Nissan and AVTOVAZ, Russia's largest automaker, account for about one in ten cars sold worldwide. Renault Group, Europe's third-largest automaker, sold a record 2,801,592 vehicles worldwide in 2015, up 3.3 percent from 2014, in a market that grew by 1.6 percent. This marked the third consecutive year of sales growth for Renault. Dacia sales accounted for a record 550,920 vehicles, up 7.7%.

Renault, the fastest-growing major brand in Europe, reached a market share of 10.1 percent in a market that rose 9.4 percent. Renault retained its light commercial vehicle leadership in Europe for the 18th consecutive year.

Nissan Motor Co, Ltd, sold a record 5,421,804 cars and trucks worldwide, up 2.1 percent. In each of its two biggest markets, the United States and China, Nissan sold at least 1.25 million vehicles. Infiniti accounted for a record 215,250 vehicles, up 16 percent from the previous year, thanks to all-time high sales in all key regions, including the Americas and China.

AVTOVAZ, which sells cars under the LADA brand, sold 305,491 vehicles, down 31.5 percent due to the slump in the Russian market. The Renault-Nissan Alliance has a majority stake in AVTOVAZ through a joint venture with state corporation Rostec. Together, the Renault-Nissan Alliance and AVTOVAZ sell about one in three cars in Russia.

The overall Russian car market plunged by more than 35 percent. The Alliance increased its market share from 30.7 percent in 2014 to 32.3 percent in 2015.

Renault-Nissan market highlights

The Alliance's top 10 markets in 2015 were the US, China, France, Japan, Mexico, UK, Germany, Russia, Brazil and Spain. In the United States, Nissan set an all-time record with 1,484,918 vehicles, up 7.1 percent, resulting in a record market share of 8.5 percent. Nissan also set annual sales records for Rogue, Versa, NV and NV200. In the light truck segment, sales rose 20 percent compared with 2014.

In China, Nissan sold 1.25 million vehicles, up 6.3 percent. Nissan remains the leading Japanese automaker in China with a market share of more than 5 percent.

Earlier this month, Renault began production of the Kadjar SUV at its joint venture plant in Wuhan with Dongfeng Motor Corp. This is the first model to



be produced by Renault in China. The new plant will have an initial production capacity of 150,000 vehicles a year, with the potential to expand to 300,000 vehicles as demand increases.

In France, Renault's home market, Renault sold 607,173 vehicles, up 5.1 percent. Its market share totaled 26.4 percent. The Clio compact car remained the top-selling passenger vehicle for the sixth consecutive year. Renault ZOE was the leading electric passenger vehicle with at 60 percent market share. In Japan, Nissan's home market, Nissan sold 589,046 vehicles, down 12.1 percent. Nissan's market share stood at 11.7 percent.

In Mexico, Nissan posted record sales of 348,941 vehicles, up 19 percent. With a market share of 25.8 percent for 2015, Nissan has held the top sales spot in Mexico for the last six consecutive years.

In Brazil, Renault's second-largest market, its market share increased by 0.2 points to 7.3 percent in a market that contracted by 25.5 percent.

In India, which is expected to be an important pillar of Alliance sales and industrial growth in the future, Renault remained the leading European automotive brand with sales up more than 20 percent to 53,848 vehicles.

More than 80,000 people in India placed orders for the Renault Kwid compact hatchback since its launch in September. The Kwid is the first Alliance vehicle built on Common Module Family-A architecture, the smallest and most affordable category of cars in the Alliance CMF family. The Datsun brand will launch a model using CMF-A architecture later this year.

Zero-emission highlights

The Alliance sells about one in two pure electric vehicles worldwide. Through the end of December, the Alliance has sold a cumulative 302,000 EVs worldwide.

The first mainstream, mass-marketed EV, the Nissan LEAF, went on sale in December 2010. Nissan LEAF remains the world's best-selling EV with more than 201,000 vehicles sold since its launch.

Since Renault began selling EVs in October 2011, Renault has sold a cumulative 83,000 electric vehicles worldwide, including the Twizy two-seater urban commuter. The Renault Kangoo Z.E. remains the top light commercial EV in Europe.

In calendar-year 2015, the Renault-Nissan Alliance sold 85,000 electric vehicles, up more than 2.5 percent compared with previous year. Nissan's global EV sales fell 9.8 percent, while Renault's sales increased 45 percent. The 2016 Nissan LEAF has an all-new 30 kWh battery, which delivers 20 percent more driving range between charges than the previous 24 kWh version. In addition to LEAF, Nissan also sells the e-NV200 van.

In Europe, Nissan's EV sales rose 14.3 percent in 2015 to nearly 20,000 vehicles. Renault's EV sales in Europe increased 49 percent to nearly 23,100 vehicles, excluding Twizy. Renault ZOE was the best-selling EV in Europe in 2015, accounting for nearly 19 percent of the market.

GOLD IS BOTTOMING OUT

BofA Merrill Lynch Report

The gold bear market unfolding in recent years was driven by a confluence of factors. Most notably, none of the usual market drivers - USD, real rates, volatility and oil - have been supportive. Moving into 2016, we believe the macro environment has become less bearish, with the relentless dollar appreciation slowing, volatility picking up and oil in the process of bottoming out. These dynamics have been visible in assets under management at physically backed ETFs, which have picked up YTD. We also note that through 2H15, demand from traditional buyers in India and China has stabilised.

Global growth

Looking into the remainder of 2016, we reinforce our view that gold is in the process of bottoming out. Digging a bit deeper, the less bearish backdrop is in our view driven by the continued structural and cyclical growth challenges in the global economy, important for anti-cyclical asset like gold.

The gold prices have shown a close inverse correlation with potential GDP growth in the US. Many of the growth impediments the global economy faces are related to deep-rooted structural inertia and, linked to that, often a lack of reforms. To highlight a few issues, US labour productivity has declined and the middle class has been hollowed out, while China's demographic dividend is declining at the same time as the government is struggling to shift growth drivers from investment towards consumption. All of this and central banks not being as effective in backstopping markets suggests volatility may be higher going forward than it used to be.

The world has changed

Many of these structural issues have longer-term implications, but there also is a cyclical angle to them. We believe the Fed is not an island. Diverging monetary policies have contributed to a sharp drop in USD, one of the reasons the country's manufacturing sector is hurting in an environment of generally subdued growth. While Fed

hikes continue to hang over the market, we believe that an accelerated rate hiking cycle is unlikely from here onwards. Also, we believe oil prices are in the process of bottoming out. This would support gold on its own, but it would also reduce the drag on deflation.

None of the usual macro drivers relevant to gold was supportive to prices in the past few years. Yet, the fundamental backdrop has become much less bearish, reinforcing our view that gold will bottom this year and trade around \$1,250/oz by the fourth quarter. Having said that, the next Fed hike continues to hang over the market. There is also a chance that some of the immediate concerns over the global economy/ markets may subside, suggesting gold may give back some of the recent gains, so we keep the cautious 1H16 price forecasts unchanged for now.

Gold has outperformed

Heavily influenced by a liquidation of positions from investors, gold has faced significant headwinds in recent years, as Chart 2 shows. Yet, gold quotations have started stabilising of late, outperforming other raw materials in the mining complex. The stabilisation in prices was driven by a confluence of factors. Chart 4 zooms into the dynamics at physically backed exchange traded funds and the data shows a slight pickup in assets under management in recent weeks. In addition, central banks have also continued to increase their exposure to the yellow metal, as Chart 5 highlights.

Mirroring these dynamics, demand on the traditional physical markets has also stabilised. Chart 6 picks up on this, suggesting that Chinese offtake has improved into 2H15. In our view, this was influenced by various developments. Most notably perhaps, jewellery demand has stopped falling, partially because the impact of demand being pulled forward after the price collapse in 2011/12/13 subsided. Having said that, it is worth noting that local gold premia do not suggest that purchases have caused tightness on the domestic market as yet.

THE STREET SMART HONOR 5X ARRIVES IN MIDDLE EAST

SUPERIOR COMBINATION OF METALLIC BODY AND MULTI-FINGERPRINT SENSOR

KUWAIT: honor, the number 1 smartphone e-brand has officially launched its critically acclaimed 5X 'street smart'



Chris Sunbaigong, VP Honor.

device in the Middle East, available from 8th February on www.HonorArabia.com. With a superior combination of full metal body that screams 'premium', multi-fingerprint sensor and innovative yet solid specs, this 5X device far outweighs competitors in the same price range and is already referred to as a 'budget beast'.

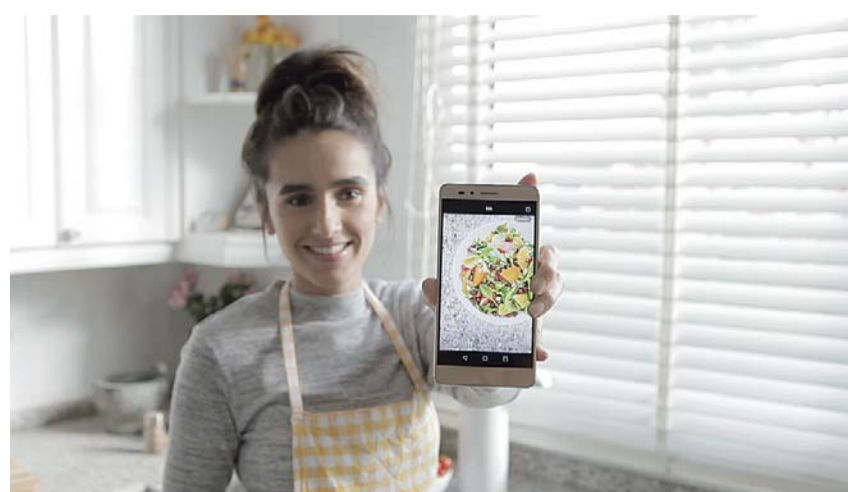
The honor 5X will be the first smartphone to be launched by the brand via the newly launched dedicated e-commerce platform and will be available in three colours - Gold, Grey and Silver - at the RKR (Recommended 'Killer' Retail Price) of AED 899. A middle-weight champion in the making, the honor 5X has been designed with all the high spec technology and design consumers actually want, but without the expected price tag.

Chris Sunbaigong, Vice President of

honor from Huawei commented, "Globally, the reception to our honor 5X device has been phenomenal so we are delighted to finally launch it to our customers here in the Middle East. The honor 5X is set to change consumers mind when it comes to price versus quality as it is packed with premium features that have never been seen before in its price category. This underlines our ongoing commitment to the end smartphone users here - we are genuinely offering unmatched experience to digital natives who are value conscious. We challenge you to look at the specs, look at the price, then look back at the specs and not be impressed."

The honor 5X second generation fingerprint sensor offers the end user the chance to personalise their smartphone experience in a single touch. The adaptive sensor allows the user to easily set up all ten fingerprints to access personalised elements of their device, call specific contacts or activate apps and tools. The feature offers speed and accuracy, as well as a 0.5-second unlocking time. Using advanced technology, it boasts a self-learning capability that also prevents failed recognition caused by wet hands or partial fingerprints.

The design of the full metal device was inspired by the shape and design of the famous Guggenheim Museum Bilbao in Spain, blending a distinctive curved design with ergonomic principles to feel perfectly at home in users' hands. The device features a 5.5-inch 10-point multi-touch Full-HD IPS display and houses cutting-edge 13MP back facing and 5MP front facing cameras



ital natives in the Middle East.

Chris Sunbaigong predicts that the Middle East market is ripe to project honor's growth ahead of the curve this year, boosted further with the launch of the brand's e-commerce site and the 5X, "We are positive about honor's future in the Middle East this year which is set to grow and develop even further now that we have launched our dedicated e-commerce platform. The www.HonorArabia.com site is a place where consumers can browse and shop honor products directly for the first time including the new honor 5X."

that capture high-quality images with high clarity and dynamic colour reproduction in a variety of different shooting scenarios. Happy snappers will revel in the number of camera feature modes available including Good Food, Perfect Selfie, Time-lapse, Slow Motion as well as an array of in-built filters.

Powered by a Qualcomm 64-bit Octa-core processor with a 2GB of RAM and

16GB of onboard memory, the honor 5X is a powerful device with a robust 3,000mAh battery, integrated SmartPower 3.0 technology and an eight-point power saving plan that reduces power consumption by 30 per cent. This is the first metallic honor phone to feature three different card slots - nano-SIM, micro-SIM, and microSD - perfect device for the multi-tasking dig-



BEIJING: Smog-choked cities are fuelling a boom in electric vehicles in China, driving hopes for the industry's global future, with the world's biggest car market offering economies of scale that could make the technology mainstream.

CHINESE MARKET ELECTRIFYING FOR 'GREEN' CARS

BEIJING: Government subsidies are fuelling a boom in electric vehicles in China, driving hopes for the industry's global future as the world's biggest car market offers economies of scale that could make the technology mainstream. Sales of electric cars, though still modest, have rocketed four-fold in a year-thanks in part to lavish government handouts-as Beijing looks to cut down on dangerous air pollution that shrouds urban areas.

The sector has been a contrast with the rest of the market for cars in China, where growth has slowed markedly alongside the wider economy. And observers say if car-makers can crack China, with its vast population and burgeoning middle class, the rest of the planet could follow.

"If China gets moving on electric cars then that would automatically lower prices and have a favourable ripple effect across the whole world," said Ernst and Young auto expert Jean-Francois Belorgey.

"Pollution levels mean the government has no other choice" than to encourage the development of new energy vehicles, he added. Chinese cities are regularly smothered in a haze of particulates, often far exceeding global health guidelines. While much of the pollution comes from coal burning for industry, vehicle exhausts exacerbate the problem.

Only 331,000 of the 24 million new cars sold in China last year were electric or plug-in hybrids. Growing public anger has propelled Beijing to act, with central government subsidies of up to 55,000 yuan (\$8,400) for buyers of zero- or low-emission vehicles, which are often matched by local authorities.

The government says it wants five million "green" vehicles on the road by 2020 in the country of more than one billion people.

Drivers of such cars can also avoid restrictions imposed on heavy smog days, when some cities limit vehicles according to their licence plate. They are also exempt from lotteries for plates several cities have

set up in an attempt to cap on the total number of cars.

Domestic firms have benefited, with Warren Buffett-backed Chinese firm BYD claiming to be the biggest electric vehicle maker in the world.

China's Geely, which owns Volvo, is another major player, and says it wants to shift 90 percent of its sales to hybrid and electric vehicles by 2020 with the government's blessing.

Electric dreams

The subsidy incentives only apply to domestic brands, not foreign manufactured cars, and the government says it will gradually phase them out by 2020 to ensure the sector does not become dependent on handouts.

Despite the handicap, foreign firms have also tried to cash in on the potential gold rush.

France's Renault is one of a growing number of foreign manufacturers that see China as an ideal test ground for low-cost electric vehicles that can attract buyers in other markets. The company opened its first Chinese factory last Monday in the central industrial hub of Wuhan and will start to produce electric cars there as early as next year, in cooperation with local company Dongfeng.

"If we can succeed in China we can succeed elsewhere," says Renault CEO Carlos Ghosn, whose firm has already produced several models in Europe. US giant General Motors is making and selling its hybrid Cadillac CT6 in China, and exporting it to the United States, according to reports.

Its American rival Ford has announced it will invest \$4.5 billion in electric cars between now and 2020, adding 13 models to its range, with a particular focus on China.

Mercedes-Benz also sells several hybrid models in China, and Nissan has a version of its electric Leaf on the Chinese market, and has found favour with domestic consumers. —AFP

ADBLOCK PLUS, SCOURGE OF WEBSITES, SEEKS DEAL

GERMAN FIRM TAKING A MORE CONCILIATORY TACK

BERLIN: For its users, Adblock Plus stands as a bulwark against intrusive advertising. But websites dependent on advertising revenue to remain free-of-charge see the open source software as a scourge.

Now the German firm behind Adblock Plus is taking a more conciliatory tack, reaching out to its adversaries to find an "acceptable" level and form of advertising on the net.

Adblock Plus' owners, Eyeo, have dubbed the discussions surrounding its plans to set up an independent committee for acceptable advertising as "Camp David", alluding to a 1978 peace agreement between Israel and Egypt.

And that gives an idea of the scope of the difficulties in getting Internet publishers, advertisers and ad-blockers to sit around the same table and talk.

The first such "summit" was held in New York in November and the second earlier this week in London. It brought together "the biggest European names in publishing, ad-tech, advertising, digital non-profits and content creation," said Eyeo spokesman Ben Williams, without revealing any names. Developed 10 years ago and downloaded hundreds of millions of times, the open-source software Adblock Plus is one of the most popular ad-blocking programs, aimed at preventing intrusive adverts from popping up on the screen and tracking a user's search history for commercial ends.

Its rising popularity is a red rag to a bull for Internet websites that can only remain free thanks to revenues from advertisers. Adobe and Pagefair, which help Internet sites circumvent the blockers, have estimated that nearly \$22 billion in revenues were lost globally last year as a result of ad-blocking software.

'White-listing'

Adblock Plus' users can themselves partly decide which advertisers to block or not using tailor-made filters. But ultimately, only those who appear on Eyeo's own "white-list" of acceptable ads can be displayed. To get on that "white-list", advertisers must meet certain criteria laid down by Eyeo itself which stipulate how "non-intrusive" ads should be in terms of size, placement and labelling, explained Williams.

Big websites can pay a fee not to be blocked. And it is these proceeds that finance the Cologne-based company and its 49-strong workforce. While Google and Amazon have paid up, others refuse.

Axel Springer, which publishes Germany's

best-selling daily Bild, accuses Eyeo of racketeering.

"We believe Eyeo's business model is against the law," a spokesman for Springer told AFP. "Clearly, Eyeo's primary aim is to get its hands on a share of the advertising revenues."

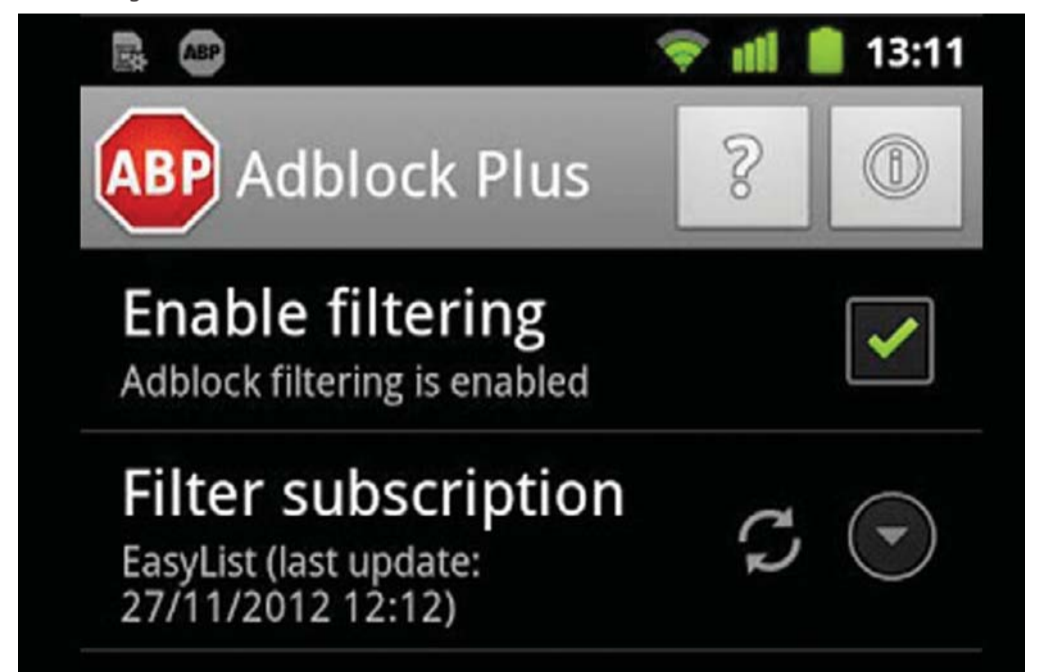
Ultimately, such practices posed a threat to the professional journalism on the web, he suggested, an argument Eyeo rejects.

"The 'Acceptable Ads' initiative is rather a chance to provide innovation in the ads industry, a chance to get away from blunt, complete ad-blocking and the result of user demand for

best practices, Shaw said.

Axel Springer has taken Adblock Plus to court. And Juergen Seitz, a professor for marketing, media and digital industries at the Stuttgart Media University, was sceptical whether the two sides would be prepared to bury the hatchet any time soon.

"Both sides are digging their heels in and their standpoints are still very far apart. I currently see no way of resolving the conflict, particularly as neither the publishers nor the ad-blockers make up a homogeneous group," Seitz said. "The smaller, lesser-known ad-blockers have no inter-



something better," said Williams.

The World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers, WAN-IFRA, acknowledges the need for "guiding principles" on the matter. Publishers "have a unique opportunity to re-define how advertising works online and save the mechanism of advertising that supports content on the open web. Publishers, not platforms, must take the lead," said WAN-IFRA director Ben Shaw.

No quick solution

WAN-IFRA, which is organising an "Ad Blocking Action Day" soon in the German business capital Frankfurt, has set up its own "International Task Force" to review and share

est in starting up a conversation." But he insisted that Adblock Plus should be given credit for "actively seeking dialogue out of the courts, even though it's the publishers' enemy number one and styles itself as such in its PR."

In October, Bild went on the offensive, denying access to its website to anyone who uses ad-blocking software. To be able to access the site, users must de-activate the software or pay for an ad-free version. The German site of Geo magazine has adopted a similar strategy.

And what would become of Eyeo in an ideal world where all Internet advertising is acceptable? "Then we'll either have developed new products or we'll be history," said spokesman Williams. —AFP

NORWAY'S SOVEREIGN FUND HITS OUT AT VW LEADERSHIP

FRANKFURT: The head of Norway's sovereign wealth fund - one of the biggest capital pools in the world - yesterday lashed Volkswagen's ownership structure as giving too much power to family shareholders and disadvantaging minority shareholders.

As VW battles a global emissions-cheating scandal, the fund's chief executive, Yngve Slyngstad, slammed the carmaker's shareholder structure. "This cannot be a role model for Germany," Slyngstad told the Sunday newspaper, Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung.

The Porsche and Piech families own 50.73 percent of VW's voting shares via the holding company Porsche Automobil Holding SE, but they own only 31.5 per cent of

the company equity. "I don't think that anyone genuinely believes that the family wants to change anything about the structure," Slyngstad told the newspaper. "We as co-owners don't get the impression that the family wants to listen to us."

Norway's 734-billion-euro (\$819-billion) fund holds a stake of 1.2 percent in Volkswagen. It previously criticized the German group's shareholder structure in 2009 following the VW-Porsche takeover battle.

The embattled auto giant is currently embroiled in its deepest crisis after it was forced to admit that it had fitted 11 million diesel cars worldwide with software which intentionally skews the results of emissions tests.

On Friday, the company took the unusual step of delaying the publication of its annual results and pushed back its annual shareholder meeting as it grapples with assessing the full financial fallout from the scandal. Separately, the star lawyer VW has hired to handle compensation claims in the United States told another Sunday newspaper that it might take some time yet before a deal is hammered out for owners of the affected vehicles in the US.

"My hands are tied as long as VW and the authorities don't overcome their differences. The original timeframe could be delayed," lawyer Kenneth Feinberg told Die Welt am Sonntag.

Feinberg is renowned as the go-to lawyer for high-profile legal

cases. He managed the compensation claims fund for General Motors related to the deadly ignition switches used in some of its cars. Feinberg also managed similar funds for the victims of the September 11, 2001, terror attacks and the massive oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010.

Feinberg, who originally suggested when he was hired in December that it could take between 60 and 90 days to draw up a claims resolution program, said all options were still on the table with regard to what form the compensation could take.

"It has not yet been decided. All options are still up for debate: cash payments, car buy-backs, repairs, or the provision of replacement cars," he said. —AFP

ZIKA VIRUS DISCOURAGES MANY AMERICANS FROM LATIN AMERICA TRAVEL

NEW YORK: The rapidly spreading Zika virus is discouraging many Americans from traveling to Latin America and the Caribbean, with 41 percent of those aware of the disease saying they are less likely to take such a trip, a Reuters/Ipsos poll shows. The poll is the latest sign the virus, suspected to be linked to thousands of birth defects in Brazil, could depress travel to popular cold-weather getaways in the coming months. Airlines and cruise ship operators have yet to report drops in bookings because of Zika, and analysts have downplayed the impact that newly sedentary parents-to-be could have on their revenue.

Still, awareness of the mosquito-borne virus has surged to nearly two-thirds of Americans, according to the poll of 1,595 adults in the United States conducted Feb 1-5. That compares with 45 percent who had heard of Zika in a Reuters/Ipsos poll from late January. "I am actively trying to get pregnant with my husband, so I am a little bit concerned," said Erica, a respondent who said she was bitten by a mosquito during a January trip to the U Virgin Islands, where Zika has been reported.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has advised pregnant women to avoid travel to areas

with an active outbreak of Zika, and the World Health Organization has declared an international emergency over the disease. Erica, who asked only to be identified by her first name for personal reasons, said she no longer plans to visit Jamaica this summer to celebrate her wedding anniversary. "We've definitely gone back to the drawing board on that," she said, referring to the island, which is on the CDC warning list.

Of those aware of the virus, 41 percent said they were less likely to travel to Puerto Rico, Mexico or South America in the next 12 months because of Zika, the poll found. Some 48 percent said

Zika had not changed the likelihood of their visiting those destinations, while others did not know. Six out of 10 Americans aware of Zika said the virus concerned them, including 18 percent who said they were very concerned, according to the poll.

"It's contagious, and it's new," said respondent Toni Brockington, 42, who lives near Fort Bragg, California, and had considered visiting Mexico before learning about the outbreak. "The virus, along with the reports of violence and drugs and tourist ransoms, is making it less and less attractive." Much remains unknown about Zika, including whether

the virus actually causes the birth defect microcephaly. Brazil is investigating the potential link between Zika infections and more than 4,000 suspected cases of microcephaly, a condition marked by abnormally small head size that can result in developmental problems.

Researchers have identified evidence of Zika infection in 17 of these cases, either in the baby or in the mother, but have not confirmed that Zika can cause microcephaly. The poll of Americans' concerns and travel plans has a credibility interval - a measure of accuracy - of 3.8 percentage points. — Reuters



SARAJEVO, Bosnia: Bosnian boy Zejd Coralic, center, learns sign language from teacher Anisa Setkic-Sendic, not shown, with other children in a class at an elementary school. — AP photos

BOSNIAN FIRST-GRADERS REACH OUT TO DEAF SCHOOLMATE

'WE ARE FINDING WAYS'

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina:

When Mirzana Coralic asked the primary school in her Sarajevo neighborhood whether they would enroll her deaf son, teacher Sanela Ljumanovic volunteered without thinking much about it. Then September came and 6-year-old Zejd was there, silently sitting on one of the school's benches, his eyes wide open. At the time, no one at the school, not even Zejd, knew sign language. "We have to come up with something here," Ljumanovic remembers thinking. She tried to develop her own tricks and signs to communicate with Zejd but a parent had another idea, proposing that the whole class learn sign language with him.

Three months later, the first-graders of class 1-2 at Osman Nakas primary school in Sarajevo have mastered the basics of sign language to communicate with their classmate. "Zejd," said Uma Nadarevic, 6, crossing her arms to sign his name. "Please," she then put her palms together as if she would be praying. "Can ... you ... show ... me ... our ... homework ... in ... math?" Uma waved the signs with her little arms as she slowly pronounced each word. Zejd grabbed his notebook out of a bag and showed her the circles and squares he drew at home. Uma signed "Thank you" and Zejd bowed a "you are welcome."



SARAJEVO, Bosnia: Bosnian boy Zejd Coralic, right, learns sign language from teacher Anisa Setkic-Sendic in a class at an elementary school.

Care and imagination

In 2003, Bosnia adopted laws that allow children with disabilities to be fully integrated into society, including schools. Children with special needs are supposed to have professional assistants who sit with them in class, translating or otherwise helping them participate. But in practice, impoverished Bosnia barely has enough money to keep normal schools functioning and children with disabilities are left to the care and imagination of their parents and the good will of school staff. Zejd was lucky - and his teachers

say the effort being put in by all is boosting his self-esteem. "He looks forward to going to school," said his mother, who tried to learn the sign language with him before school started but says he was not very interested in it. "Now he is happy and motivated."

Still, Zejd is an exception in Bosnian society, said Anisa Setkic-Sendic, the sign language teacher who teaches the class. "When he sees how much others insist on communicating with him, it is motivating," she added. "This should be normal." His classmates

are embracing the challenge of a new language. "I like to learn Zejd's language so I can talk to him and to other deaf people," said Tarik Sijaric, one of Zejd's best friends. "It is fun." "I like this language and I also think it will be useful when I grow up," added student Anesa Susic.

New language

Zejd is fitting in now and the new language is spreading beyond the classroom, said Ljumanovic. Children are teaching their parents at home. "We are all happy as we are learning a new language," she said. "The goal, however, is also to teach Zejd to read lips ... he is a good kid, a smart kid." Ljumanovic said she would introduce sign language into the curriculum not only to enable communication but because it helps children become more sensitive toward those with disabilities. Setkic-Sendic said she should be paid for her work by the Ministry of Education but there are no funds right now. Instead, she is being paid by contributions from the parents of children in the class. Not all can financially participate. Only Ljumanovic knows who can't pay, who does and how much. And she won't tell anyone - that's the deal. "We are finding ways," said Setkic-Sendic. "The children are growing, we can't wait for better times to come." — AP

DOCTORS PUZZLE OVER SEVERITY OF DEFECTS IN SOME BRAZILIAN BABIES

NEW YORK/BRASILIA: Experts on microcephaly, the birth defect that has sparked alarm in the current Zika virus outbreak, say they are struck by the severity of a small number of cases they have reviewed from Brazil. Consultations among doctors in Brazil and the United States have increased in the last two weeks, and some of the leading authorities on the condition are finding patterns of unusual devastation in scans of the newborns' malformed brains. While it's not known how representative the scans are, the early observations of these doctors point to a tough road ahead for the babies, their families and their communities and heighten the concern surrounding Zika, which is suspected of causing microcephaly.

"We are in the process of very rapid information gathering on what has been seen," said Dr. William Dobyns, a geneticist at Seattle Children's Hospital. "The condition that I've been able to review, very preliminarily, is more severe than simple microcephaly." The Zika virus is transmitted by mosquito, causing mild symptoms in about 20 percent of cases, and most people experience no illness at all. But a spike in reported microcephaly cases among babies in areas of Brazil with Zika outbreaks has triggered an international effort to determine whether the virus causes the condition. The suspected association moved the World Health Organization (WHO) today to declare an international health emergency.

Dobyns has spent 30 years researching and treating microcephaly, a condition defined by abnormally small heads in newborns that can lead to developmental disabilities, from mild to severe. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has sought out his expertise in understanding the unfolding epidemic. With a small group of geneticists and other microcephaly specialists, he recently reviewed scans of a handful of babies sent by a colleague in Brazil. All the experts were struck by the scale of malformations, he said.

"These children have a very severe form of microcephaly," Dobyns said. "The brain is not just small, it's small with malformations of the cerebral cortex and calcifications. It has the appearance of a very severe, destructive injury to the brain." Particularly alarming, Dobyns said, is the presence in the Brazilian cases of excess spinal fluid between the brain and skull of the

babies.

"If the brain is growing and then suddenly shrinks, then you'll see fluid between the brain and skull," he said. "It has a pattern that suggests that the brain has actually decreased in size." Dr Leonardo Vedolin, a neuroradiologist and researcher at the Moinhos de Vento hospital in Porto Alegre, Brazil, shared with Dobyns scans of two more microcephalic babies this week. The doctors belong to a brain defects study group that convenes via videoconference each month. The group is now focused on Zika.

Neither Vedolin nor Brazil's Health Ministry were able to provide a breakdown on the severity of confirmed microcephaly cases. In general, Vedolin said, 5 percent of microcephaly cases are severe. But the proportion appears greater among the cases in Brazil, he said.

The caseload

Public health officials in Brazil are investigating more than 4,000 cases of suspected microcephaly, and have confirmed more than 400. Prior to the Zika outbreak, Brazil saw on average 163 cases annually of microcephaly over the past five years, according to WHO. In 17 of the new cases, the presence of Zika was identified in the mother or the baby. A study of 35 Brazilian babies born with microcephaly during the Zika outbreak reported by the CDC Jan. 29 added strength to the suspected connection.

The mothers of all 35 infants had lived in or visited Zika virus-affected areas during pregnancy, the report said. Twenty-five infants had severe microcephaly, and 17 had at least one neurologic abnormality. Dr Frank Esper, an infectious disease expert from Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital in Cleveland, said he expects a steady wave of studies on Zika and microcephaly that will provide a much clearer picture over the first half of 2016. By the broadest definition, about 2.3 percent of all babies are microcephalic, Dobyns said. Some cases are so mild they involve no complications at all.

About one tenth of one percent of the cases are so severe that lifelong care is required, he said. There are many known causes, including a wide range of genetic disorders such as Down syndrome, as well as oxygen deprivation to the fetus, cytomegalovirus and severe fetal alcohol syndrome. Lifespan in severe cases can be months or as long as 10 years, depending on proximity to good medical care, Dobyns said. — Reuters



BRAZIL: Angelica Pereira feeds her daughter Luiza, who was born with microcephaly, at her mother's house in Santa Cruz do Capibaribe, Pernambuco state, Brazil. — AFP

RIO CARNIVAL DANCES TOWARD WILD FINALE, SWATTING ZIKA ASIDE



BRAZIL: A municipal employee gives pamphlets out to revelers containing information about the Zika virus, along Copacabana beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. — AFP

RIO DE JANEIRO: Swatting aside fears over the Zika virus, the glittering dancers of the Rio Carnival samba championship and their adoring fans were primed yesterday for their first all-night parade. After a fortnight of street parties, thousands of gallons of beer, and the day and night sound of drumming and singing throughout Brazil's most iconic city, the really serious Carnival fun was set to begin at 23:30 GMT. Kicking off after sunset and going all through the night to dawn on Monday, the 12 best samba ensembles, known as schools, were to strut their stuff in front of some 70,000 people in Rio's specially built stadium, the Sambadrome.

The contest, which goes through a second and final night on Monday, is the climax of the annual Rio Carnival, possibly the world's biggest party, with some five million people, including one million tourists, estimated to take part. This year, Rio's fiesta is overshadowed by the Zika virus, painful recession, battles over the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff and a corruption scandal reaching into the heart of the political and business elite. The gloomy backdrop extends to a fall in funding for the hugely expensive samba school extravaganzas, whose floats and costumes for thousands of dancers and musicians take a year to prepare. The productions in Rio are expected to be less over the top this year, while in 48 Brazilian cities, the Carnival was cancelled altogether.

Hot competition

Brazilians might be better known as passionate football supporters, but there's no less excitement at the Sambadrome where fans are vehement in their allegiance to a particular school. For all their perfect choreography and literally dazzling costumes, the samba schools rely on the enthusiasm of amateur performers. Each school is rooted in a specific neighborhood, many of them deeply impoverished favelas, where there may not be proper sanitation but music is king. Schools like Beija-Flor, Salgueiro or Mangueira that make it to parades are the cream of more than 100 ensembles across the city. Each gets about an hour to parade through the Sambadrome, with a themed set of costumes and floats that are not only lavishly decorated but often have moving parts, so that they, too, seem alive. The event is so important in the life of Rio that the mayor even symbolically hands over the city keys to King Momo, the elected leader of the Carnival. "With great happiness, brotherly love and peace, I declare the best Carnival on Earth open - our Carnival in the Marvelous City," the dancing king said at his investiture Friday.

Swatting Zika fears aside

Given its economic and political woes, Brazil hardly needed another crisis. But the Aedes aegypti mosquito, which carries the Zika virus, gatecrashed the party. Zika is

suspected of causing a rash of serious birth defects in babies whose mothers were infected while pregnant. There are also indications that Zika may cause a serious neurological disorder.

Adding to the fear are unconfirmed reports that the virus may also be spread through contact with human saliva, blood or semen. To fight back, Brazilian authorities have sent out the army and municipal health workers across the country to tackle potential mosquito breeding sites and to educate the public. The Sambadrome was subjected to fumigation ahead of the Carnival and similar fumigating teams will be deployed throughout the city before the Olympics start in exactly six months. With Brazil in the epicenter of a regional surge in Zika infections, many especially expectant mothers are spooked. Sales of repellent are up sharply, manufacturers say, with one, Osler, reporting an 800 percent increase in the December 2015-January 2016 period, year on year. However, Rio's Carnival goes on. "It's not about having too much fun to care much. At a huge street party in the center of the city on Saturday, dancers in skimpy costumes said they did not expect to be bitten by mosquitoes and hadn't bothered with repellent. "I'm not afraid," said Cristiane Ruiz, 30, whose jean shorts and bright orange bikini top left very little covered. "I don't think an area of the city like this is bad for mosquitoes, because there isn't much vegetation." — AFP

SEA TURTLES WITH TUMORS FILL FLORIDA HOSPITAL

MARATHON, United States: The young patient writhes on the operating table, kicking its flippers. A team of medical attendants turns it over, revealing an underbelly cluttered with tumors, some as big as golf balls. This endangered green sea turtle, about two years old and too young for the staff to know yet whether it is male or female, is infected with fibropapillomatosis, a potentially deadly disease caused by a type of herpes virus. Experts still don't understand quite how the virus spreads, or what causes it, though some research has pointed to agricultural runoff, pollution and global warming.

As the population of green sea turtles rebounds in and around the Florida Keys, cases of fibropapillomatosis have exploded too, filling the corridors of the United States' oldest rescue and rehab facility, known simply as the Turtle Hospital. "When I first started here 20 years ago, I would do six to eight of these a month," says veterinarian Doug Mader, as he injects a local anesthetic, then cuts off the cauliflower-like growths with a carbon dioxide laser. "Now we are doing six to eight a week," he says as the air fills with the smell of saltwater, alcohol wipes and burning flesh. Each turtle can require several operations to remove all the tumors, which cover their necks, underbellies, and eyes, blinding them and making it hard for them to find food.

Green sea turtles were first listed as endangered species in 1976, but are now nesting in record numbers — 28,000 nests counted last year in Florida, up from fewer than 500 decades ago. Their status may be changed from "endangered" to merely "threatened" as early as March. While conservationists celebrate these successes, they also lament that the animals' environment is increasingly polluted and hot, as the oceans absorb most of the warmth from human-dri-



MARATHON, FLORIDA, United States : This January 14, 2016 photo shows veterinarian operating on a critically endangered Kemp's Ridley sea turtle with a tumor, which turned out to be an abscess, at the Turtle Hospital. — AFP photos



MARATHON, FLORIDA, United States : A green sea turtle afflicted by a kind of herpes virus that causes fibropapillomatosis, at the Turtle Hospital in Marathon, Florida in the Florida Keys.

ven climate change. The evidence lays before Mader every day in the clinic. "I have this horrible feeling that as the oceans warm we are going to see more and more disease," he says.

Eyes covered in tumors

Nestled in a bright green motel complex connected by pebble strewn pathways, the Turtle Hospital opened its doors in 1986, taking in 12 patients in its inaugural year. Last year, it treated 173 sea turtles — 119 of them with fibropapillomatosis according to manager Bette Zirkelbach. These days, the hospital has never been busier. Its staff of 18 and fleet of orange-and-white ambulances can be dispatched around the clock to fetch injured

turtles.

Fibropapillomatosis was first documented in sea turtles in the 1930s, and is pervasive in warm waters around the world. Zirkelbach says about half the green sea turtles in the area are infected, and the cases are getting worse. "In 2012 it was rare to have a turtle coming in with tumors on both eyes. By fall of 2013 almost every turtle that came in with this virus had both eyes covered with tumors." After spending a year in the hospital's pools, tumor-free, the turtles may be released.

But if the lesions get into the kidneys and lungs, there is no way to save them. These days, just one in five green sea turtles with fibropapillomatosis will make it back out to

the wild, says Zirkelbach. "They are just too sick."

Tourist-funded treatments

On a typical Tuesday in January, Mader sees patient after patient, most of them rescued after boat strikes, swallowed hooks, entanglements with fishing gear, and disease. It's a spectacle that tourists pay to see. A visit to the Turtle Hospital costs as much as an afternoon at the movie theatre, but offers a glimpse of real veterinary teams as they operate on sick turtles behind a plate glass window. And while the US Fish and Wildlife Service Conservation Commission issues the hospital's permit and is supportive of the

work they do, visitor cash is what pays for all the services, according to owner Richie Moretti.

He says 75,000 people visited last year alone, fully funding a hospital which currently hosts more than 60 turtles and costs about \$1.5 million a year to operate. Some tumors are mysterious, like the one Mader sees on a female 80-pound (36 kilogram) adult Kemp's Ridley, who has a bulbous growth the size of an avocado seed near her back right flipper. She is not an eager patient. A young male attendant leans over the operating table, presses his belly against her shell and hugs her still. "Sshhh," he whispers, as he waits for the anesthetic to kick in. — AFP

WE SHOULD TAKE CARE OF OUR SKIN IN EARLY TWENTIES

KUWAIT: Helen Ghazar Azaryan was born in 20 of March 1965 in Tehran, Iran, in Armenian family. She graduated in high school in 1975 in Yerevan, Armenia. In 1983-1988 years she studied in State Engineering University of Armenia and graduated as Engineer-Programmer. She studied professional medical higher education in "Haybusak" Medical University of Yerevan, Armenia. In 1998 she was qualified as a General Doctor. In 2006 she continued her study in National Health Institute of Armenia after A Avdalbekyan and qualified as Dermatologist-Venerologist.

In 2007 she has got a qualification as Dermatologist -Cosmetologist from National Health Institute of Armenia. Her work experience started at Al-Ansari Medical Clinic in Kuwait, where she worked as aesthetician since 1998 then as General Manager, Doctor-Dermatologist since 2010. In 2010 she was qualified as a Doctor Dermatologist in Kuwait. In 2007 she established "Helios" Medical Center in Yerevan, Armenia where she's working as General Manager, Doctor-Dermatologist until now. In an interview with Kuwait Times Doctor Helen Ghazar Azaryan have shared with us some of the tips on how to maintain our skin.

KT: At what age ladies are to start taking care of their skin?

Helen Ghazar Azaryan: Ladies are requested to start taking care of their skin in their early twenties. It's highly recommended to constantly refresh the skin with convenient creams and treatment for each type of skin. In this part of the world so many factors affect the skin therefore and to avoid early skin aging, we do incite ladies to start the skin treatment the earlier possible.

KT: Do creams and other cosmetics make a major change in the skin treatment?

Azaryan: No they don't, cream can only help in resolving minor skin problems and they



help in moisturizing the skin, but other problem like extensive dehydration for example won't be solved with creams only as they don't reach the deep layer of skin and need professional help to overcome.

KT: How do you see the Arab ladies taking care of their skins?

Azaryan: I believe that women lately, especially in Kuwait, have been more aware of the importance of taking care of their skin. They are now turning more to professionals to help them maintain a younger, fresher look and flawless skin.

KT: What are the most treatments demanded by women?

Azaryan: In general, everything related to skin is highly demanded, but recently, the demand is increasing on non-surgical nose reshaping, Fillers and Botox.

KT: What about men?

Azaryan: Men as well started to turn into

the medical clinics; they are highly interested in hair laser, pigmentation, contouring "Texas Look" and double chin.

KT: What is your opinion about plastic surgeries?

Azaryan: Unless there is a major issue that won't be solved unless we turn into surgeries, I don't recommend them. From my own point of view, permanent solution is a permanent problem, and they are not reversible once the damage is done.

KT: Would early skin care really prevent plastic surgery?

Azaryan: Yes, I do believe that, if you start at the proper time and age this will be sufficient and won't force any one to do plastic surgery.

KT: What are the new revolutionary solutions to maintain the younger look?

Azaryan: Lately the Plasma injections in very demanded by our customers and is currently used as a filler that could help in remov-

ing dark circles, improve the skin and many more benefits.

KT: How does the Plasma technic work? What are the advantages of it?

Azaryan: Plasma is extracted from the customers' own blood where we take a small sample of it, put it in the specialized machine where it splits the hemoglobin from the Plasma. Then, we inject the pure Plasma in the places we want to cure.

In regards to its advantages, Plasma is one of the revolutionary technics as it helps to increase the metabolism and forces our bodies to work better, all of that is achieved by using a 100% natural product that won't have any side effects.

KT: What tips can you give for ladies to maintain their beauty?

Azaryan: First and most important thing is to clean the skin and not sleep with makeup on. Second, is to use a good moisturizer to maintain a healthy skin specially in the hot and dry weather of Kuwait. Sunblock is essential as well to prevent pigmentation. One last thing is to remove dead skin 3 times a week by using the suitable scrub for your skin.

KT: What about hair laser?

Azaryan: The efficiency of hair removal is dependent d how professional is the machine used for this goal. I would like to draw the reader attention to one point, people very fair and thin hair or white hair won't be able to feel nor measure the advancement of laser in comparison to people with dark strong hair. Therefore, we recommend people with fair hair to use the electrical needle as it would give them much better results.

KT: Does the skin tightening machines have proven to be very effective in resolving this problem?

Azaryan: No, it can only improve the skin but it doesn't resolve the problem totally.

SUPERNUS BEATS ALLERGAN OVER EPILEPSY DRUG PATENTS

A federal judge on Friday said Allergan Plc's planned generic version of a drug meant to treat epilepsy infringed patents belonging to Supernus Pharmaceuticals Inc Shares of Supernus soared as much as 44 percent after the decision was issued. They closed up \$2.00, or 19.7 percent, at \$12.13 on the Nasdaq.

Supernus sells Oxtellar XR, a once-a-day tablet used to treat partial epilepsy seizures in adults and children over the age of six, and sued the former Actavis Inc to stop it from selling a generic version. Actavis, now known as Allergan, had filed with US regulators to sell its generic in March 2013, less than two months after Oxtellar XR was launched. It maintained at the time that Supernus' patents were invalid, court papers show.

But in a 136-page decision, US District Judge RenEe Marie Bumb in Camden, New Jersey said Allergan's proposed generic infringed two of the three Supernus patents in question. She also said all of the patents were valid. The judge ruled after a seven-day non-jury trial that ended in early December. A US-based spokesman for Allergan did not immediately respond to requests for comment. The company is based in Dublin, Ireland.

Oxtellar XR is one of two epilepsy products that Supernus sells, and which together account for most of the Rockville, Maryland-based company's revenue, regulatory filings show. Epilepsy cannot be cured but can be managed with treatment. — Reuters

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248 33 199





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SHERATON KUWAIT CELEBRATES NATIONAL & LIBERATION DAYS



On the occasion of the 55th anniversary of the National Day, 25th anniversary of the Liberation Day and marking 10 years since his highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmed Al Jaber Al Sabah stood before the parliament to take his oath as the 15th ruler of Kuwait, coinciding with the 50th anniversary of Sheraton Kuwait since its inauguration in the 1966 being the first "Sheraton" exceeding the borders of the United States of America and the first 5 stars hotel in the region, along with Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait unleashed the biggest banner carrying the highest sense of love and appreciation to Kuwait and his highness the Amir of the State and the "Humanitarian Leader" overlooking Al Jahra historical roundabout decorated with the flag of Kuwait.

Sheraton Kuwait aims to show its sincere appreciation to all those who have been loyal and trusting Sheraton Kuwait during the past 50 years and till date along with the Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait, an icon in the world of hospitality which together they form the most sophisticated hotel complex.

It has been fifty years of success and excellence, in addition to offering the highest standards of extraordinary service to its business men and VIP's as well as hosting international, regional and local conferences showcasing the pompous image of Kuwait and its people who have been known for their kind sense of hospitality. In addition to that, since its opening in 1966 Sheraton Kuwait was the first international hotel to host most of Kuwait's luxurious and elegant wedding celebrations where many families and generations celebrated their once in a lifetime occasion at this prestigious hotel.

And here it is today witnessing the development and renaissance of the state, which is moving forward and strengthening the prestigious status of Kuwait on the economic, political and humanitarian map.

On this renowned occasion, Mr Fahed Abushaar-General Manager of Sheraton Kuwait expressed his pride in the role played by Sheraton Kuwait and Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait throughout the years, offering his most heartfelt congratulations to the beloved state of Kuwait and its people as well as assuring the absolute commitment of both hotels to proceed further with anything that would serve the country and its honored people.



MARRIOTT HOTELS IN KUWAIT WIN SEVEN MEDALS AT HORECA KUWAIT 2016

Marriott Hotels in Kuwait have participated in HORECA Kuwait 2016 for food and hospitality industries for the fifth year in a row. The exhibition took place on January 18-20, 2016 under the patronage of the Minister of Information and the Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Homoud Al-Sabah.

A huge number of chefs from different hotels and restaurants in Kuwait competed in a series of live culinary shows which were judged by a panel of international chefs from the Middle East and Europe.

JW Marriott Kuwait City and Courtyard by Marriott Kuwait participated in the bread display, ice carving, chocolate showpieces, food presentation art shows and pastry productions, and were awarded a collection of recognitions, including three gold medals in the Live Ice Carving and Live Fruit & Vegetables Carving categories, one silver in the Meat Dish Competition, two bronze in the Cold Canapés and Chocolate Showpiece competitions, and five Merit Certificates in the bread creation, Single Tier Novelty Cake, Three Tier Decorated Wedding Cake and Three Plated Dessert presentations. The Marriott Kuwait Team was led by Pradeep Kurup, the Pastry Chef at JW Marriott Kuwait City and Chef Chaminda Anura from Courtyard by Marriott Kuwait.

Commenting about their participation in the exhibition, Mr George Aoun, Cluster General Manager of Marriott Hotels in Kuwait said: "HORECA Exhibition is considered one of the most important food and hospitality events in the region that is why we participate every year." "We are very proud of our chefs and their amazing achievements. HORECA Exhibition 2016 proved once again Marriott's continued passion and excellence in dishing up world-class cuisine through its talented chefs." Aoun added.



CELEBRATE VALENTINE'S DAY AT HILTON KUWAIT RESORT

With Valentine's Day around the corner, it's time to book a special treat for your loved one, and with a whole array of romantic experiences on offer at Hilton Kuwait Resort, you're guaranteed to impress that special person in your life.

This 14 February, forget the chocolates and indulge your loved one to a memorable night instead at the Hilton Kuwait Resort. After a day soaking up the sun and sea, couples can head straight to The Spa to relax and luxuriate with a massage, before taking a refreshing dip in the aqua-medic pool. Round off this perfect day with a candlelit dinner at the popular restaurant, Teatro or choose a more memorable, intimate setting in one of the resort's beachside private tents.

Ziad Tantawi, general manager of Hilton Kuwait Resort said: "Hilton Kuwait Resort is offering couples one of the most romantic settings on the Arabian Gulf. In addition to numerous dining options, the resort enjoys direct access to a private 1.75km white sandy beach, where couples can lay in the sun and unwind; all while enjoying the impeccable serv-

ice standards of our resort.

Our experienced team members are on hand to ensure this Valentine's Day is one to remember, so we encourage people to book fast, as

time is running out!" Hilton Kuwait Resort's stunning shoreline location, spacious rooms and array of revitalizing spa treatments, make it the perfect spot for this Valentine's Day.



WHAT'S ON - SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

All photos submitted for What's On should be minimum 200dpi. Articles must be in plain text and should include name and phone numbers. Articles and photos that fail to meet these requirements will not be published.

Please send them to news@kuwaittimes.net

FORUM HOSTS EGYPTIAN JOURNALISTS



The Najla Al-Naqi Cultural Forum hosts a press conference tomorrow for a visiting Egyptian media delegation, led by veteran Egyptian journalist Tahani Al-Bortuqali. The forum is located in Salwa, Block 2, Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa Street, House number 388. The press conference starts at 8:00 pm.



ST STEPHENS INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH HOLDS HARVEST FESTIVAL

The third Harvest Festival of St Stephen's Indian Orthodox Church Kuwait was held in a grand gala manner at the Pakistan English School, Abbasiya, Jleeb Al-Shuyokh premises on Friday, February 5, 2016. The celebration commenced at 10 am with variety of entertainment programs by Sunday School children and various spiritual organizations of the parish.

The public meeting related to the same was inaugurated by H G Dr Joseph Mar Dionysius, the diocesan metropolitan of the Diocese of Calcutta by lighting the traditional lamp. The ceremony was graced by the presence of the Vicar of the parish Rev Fr Sanju John, K P Koshy on behalf of the National Evangelical Church of Kuwait (NECK), Shaji Abraham, Jaison P Varghese Managing Committee members of the Malankara Orthodox Church, Vicar of ST



Gregorios Mahaedavaka Rev Fr Raju Thomas, Vicar of St Thomas Pazaya Palli, Ahmadi Rev Fr Kurien John, Kuwait Episcopal Churches Fellowship President Rev Fr Samji K Sam, Fr Shaji P Joshua, Parish trustee K Raju, Secretary Binu

Thomas, Harvest Fest Convenor Mathews Oommen and Jt Convenor V Y Thomas spoke on the occasion. H G Dionysius exhorted in his speech that the zenith of thanksgiving to God's love is what we practice by living good as advocated by God



Almighty, and also by complete dedication before God Almighty in Holy Liturgy. His Grace also wished the Harvest Festival all blessings as a metropolitan representing the Malankara Orthodox Church. A souvenir on the occasion was released

by His Grace by handing over a copy of the same to Rev Fr Raju Thomas. The public function was followed by a variety of programs including dances, skits and plays by the members of the parish. The programs included the traditional art forms of

Kerala and ancient Christians. Those was followed by the major attraction of the day, the devotional gamanella by the distinguished play back singers Wilswaraj, K J Binoy, Rebeka and Julia. The singers with their melodious selections mesmerized the audience by the mellifluous rendering of the songs that not only voiced the benevolence of God but also by the melodious feel that was demonstrated throughout the songs to all present. The musical session was added colour by songs the chorus by the church members.

The harvest festival also provided a day of enjoyment to the palates, as food was served for all gathered evoking the nostalgic feel and enjoyment we could avail from our homeland. The nostalgic feel evoking Thattukada which served traditional and mouthwatering dishes also added glitter to the event. The programs ended at 7.30pm.



IWG CONDUCTS TRADITIONAL KUWAITI WEDDING CEREMONY

By Faten Omar

The International Women's Group (IWG) held a meeting yesterday at Radisson SAS Hotel. This meeting was a precursor to the occasions of the Independence and National day of Kuwait as well as the Valentine's day. Narjes Al-Shatti, Board Member of the International Women's Group, said to

Kuwait Times that "Every February we conduct programs to celebrate Independence and National day as well as the Valentine's Day by giving our guests a flower. We gathered here wearing our traditional dress 'Thoub' with the Ambassadors' wives. This year the British school of Kuwait (BSK) is joining us with Dr Ahmed Al-Shatti. Finally we are praying to God to protect Kuwait." The British school of Kuwait (BSK) was

invited by the International Women's Group to give a presentation at the February meeting to celebrate Kuwait's National Day. The presentation was led by BSK's Deputy Director of Finance, Sanaa Kamelia Al-Mutawa, an IWG member and ably supported by Anwaha Al-Hasan. The theme of the presentation was a traditional Kuwaiti wedding performed by 25 students from 9th grade. The performance

covered the various features of the wedding rituals from the initial engagement, the Dezza, the singing of the marriage contract, the arrival of the bride on the wedding day, the Jelwa and finally to the arrival of the groom. As the students divided into the supporters of the bride and the supporters of the groom and moved through the ceremony with their fine clothes and wedding gifts the audience was transport-

ed into another era and marveled at the magnificence of the performance and how many aspects of the rituals differed or compared with their own traditions and customs. The presentation closed with a National anthem and the audience were invited to join the performers in celebrating Kuwait's National Day with flag waving and some traditional wedding cake gers ogaily.



ANIMAL PLANET HD

- 00:50 Gator Boys
01:45 Gator Boys
02:40 Bahama Blue
03:35 Wildest Latin America
04:25 North America
05:15 Wildest Middle East
06:02 Wildest Islands
06:49 Wild Mexico
07:36 Call Of The Wildman
08:00 Call Of The Wildman
08:25 Too Cute!
09:15 Big Fish Man
10:10 Treehouse Masters
11:05 Tanked
12:00 Too Cute!
12:55 Bondi Vet
13:50 Big Fish Man
14:45 Gator Boys
15:40 Treehouse Masters
16:35 Tanked
17:30 Gangland Killers
18:25 River Monsters
19:20 Treelop Cat Rescue
19:50 Treelop Cat Rescue
20:15 Tanked
21:10 Gangland Killers
22:05 Treehouse Masters
23:00 Treelop Cat Rescue
23:30 Treelop Cat Rescue

Discovery Channel HD

- 00:20 Fast N' Loud
01:10 X-Ray Mega Airport
02:00 Extreme Engineering
02:50 Wheeler Dealers: Trading Up
03:40 Storage Hunters
04:05 The Liquidator
04:30 Auction Hunters: Pawn Shop Edition
05:00 How It's Made: Dream Cars
05:30 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Siberian Cut
06:50 Cuban Chrome
07:40 Fast N' Loud
08:30 Storage Hunters
08:55 The Liquidator
09:20 Auction Hunters: Pawn Shop Edition
09:45 How It's Made: Dream Cars
10:10 How Do They Do It?
10:35 Fast N' Loud
11:25 Street Outlaws
13:05 Storage Hunters
13:30 The Liquidator
13:55 Auction Hunters: Pawn Shop Edition
14:20 Siberian Cut
15:10 Cuban Chrome
16:00 Fast N' Loud
16:50 How It's Made: Dream Cars
17:15 How Do They Do It?
17:40 Gold Rush
19:20 The Pop Illusionist
20:10 The Liquidator
20:35 Auction Hunters: Pawn Shop Edition
21:00 Gold Rush
22:40 Pacific Warriors
23:30 Cuban Chrome

Discovery Science

- 00:35 How The Universe Works
03:42 Food Factory
07:37 How Do They Do It?
08:23 Weird Or What?
09:08 Mythbusters
09:53 Prototype This
10:38 How It's Made
11:25 Alien Mysteries
12:08 How The Universe Works
12:53 Prototype This
13:38 Weird Or What?
14:23 How It's Made
15:10 Mythbusters
15:57 Alien Mysteries
16:44 How The Universe Works
17:31 Prototype This
18:18 Mythbusters
19:05 Weird Or What?
19:50 Strangest Weather On Earth
20:40 How The Universe Works
21:25 How It's Made
22:15 Mythbusters
23:00 Strangest Weather On Earth
23:45 How The Universe Works

ID. Investigation Discovery

- 00:40 Deadly Affairs
01:30 Deadly Devotion
02:20 Serial Killers
03:10 House Of Horrors: Kidnapped
03:35 House Of Horrors: Kidnapped
04:00 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
04:45 Deadly Affairs
05:30 Deadly Devotion
06:20 The Will
07:10 The Will
08:00 Dr. G. Medical Examiner
08:50 On The Case With Paula Zahn
09:40 Fatal Encounters
10:30 Murder Shift
11:20 Deadly Affairs
12:10 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
13:00 The Will
13:50 I Almost Got Away With It
14:40 California Investigator
15:05 Dr. G. Medical Examiner
15:55 Fatal Encounters
16:45 On The Case With Paula Zahn
17:35 Murder Shift
18:25 I Almost Got Away With It
19:15 The Will
20:05 Deadly Affairs
20:55 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
21:45 California Investigator
22:10 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
22:35 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
23:00 House Of Horrors: Kidnapped
23:25 House Of Horrors: Kidnapped
23:50 California Investigator

Disney Channel

- 00:00 Violetta
00:45 The Hive
00:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:40 Hank Zipzer
02:05 Binny And The Ghost
02:30 Violetta
03:15 The Hive
03:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
03:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
04:10 Hank Zipzer
04:35 Binny And The Ghost
05:00 Violetta
05:45 The Hive
05:50 Mouk
06:00 Lofirock
06:25 Sofia The First
06:50 That's So Raven
07:15 Gravity Falls

- 07:40 Jessie
08:05 Shake It Up
08:55 That's So Raven
09:45 Austin & Ally
10:35 A.N.T. Farm
11:25 Jessie
12:20 Sofia The First
12:45 Fish Hooks
13:10 Good Luck Charlie
13:35 I Didn't Do It
14:00 Dog With A Blog
14:30 H2O: Just Add Water
14:55 Girl Meets World
15:20 Jessie
15:45 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
16:10 Violetta
17:00 The Next Step
17:25 Liv And Maddie
17:50 Jessie
18:15 Austin & Ally
18:40 I Didn't Do It
19:05 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
19:30 Violetta
20:20 The Next Step
20:45 Good Luck Charlie
21:10 Good Luck Charlie
21:35 H2O: Just Add Water
22:00 Binny And The Ghost
22:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
22:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:10 Hank Zipzer
23:35 Binny And The Ghost

EHD

- 00:00 The Grace Helbig Show
00:30 WAGs
01:25 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
02:20 E! News
03:15 Stewarts And Hamiltons
04:10 The E! True Hollywood Story
06:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
06:55 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
07:50 Style Star
08:20 E! News
09:15 Giuliana & Bill
11:10 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
12:05 E! News
13:05 Dash Dolls
14:05 Hollywood Cycle
15:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
16:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
17:00 Stewarts And Hamiltons
18:00 E! News
19:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
20:00 Botched
21:00 WAGs
23:00 Sex With Brody
23:30 Fashion Bloggers

food network

- 00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
01:00 Rev Run's Sunday Suppers
02:00 All Star Academy
03:00 China's Amazing Asia
04:00 The Freshman Class
05:00 Chopped
06:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
07:00 Man Fire Food
08:00 Chopped
09:00 Grandma's Secret Cookbook
10:00 The Kitchen
11:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
12:00 Chopped
13:00 Guy's Big Bite
13:30 Guy's Big Bite
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
15:00 Man Fire Food
16:00 Chopped
17:00 The Kitchen
18:00 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts
18:30 Grandma's Secret Cookbook
19:00 Chopped
20:00 Iron Chef America
21:00 Staten Island Cakes
22:00 Mystery Diners
22:30 Mystery Diners
23:00 BBQ Crawl

itv CHOICE

- 00:10 The Chase
01:05 Emmerdale
02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 Murdoch Mysteries
03:25 Blue Go Mad In Ibiza
04:20 The Jonathan Ross Show
05:15 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
06:10 Who's Doing The Dishes?
07:05 Coach Trip
07:30 The Jonathan Ross Show
08:25 Code Of A Killer
09:20 Murdoch Mysteries
10:15 The Chase

- 11:10 The Royal Variety Performance 2015
13:25 Emmerdale
13:50 Tales From Northumberland With Robson Green
14:20 Coronation Street
14:45 Murdoch Mysteries
15:35 Pick Me!
16:30 Vera
18:20 Who's Doing The Dishes?
19:10 Coronation Street
19:35 Pick Me!
20:30 Vera
22:20 Coronation Street
22:50 Emmerdale
23:15 Who's Doing The Dishes?

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD

- 00:10 Big Fish, Texas
01:00 Drain The Titanic
02:00 Planes That Changed The World
02:55 Lawless Island
03:50 Big Fish, Texas
04:45 World's Toughest Fixes
05:40 Prospectors
06:05 Prospectors
06:35 Planes That Changed The World
07:30 Science Of Stupid
07:55 Hacking The System
08:25 80s: The Decade That Made Us
09:20 World's Toughest Fixes
10:15 Lawless Island
11:10 Taiwan: Island Of Fish
12:05 Taiwan: Island Of Fish
13:00 80s: The Decade That Made Us
14:00 How To Win At Everything
14:30 How To Win At Everything
15:00 Drain The Titanic
16:00 Lawless Island
17:00 Survive The Tribe
18:00 Taiwan: Island Of Fish
19:00 Planes That Changed The World
20:00 Lawless Island
20:50 Survive The Tribe
21:40 Taiwan: Island Of Fish
22:30 Planes That Changed The World
23:25 Prospectors
23:45 Prospectors

OSN FIRST HD COMEDY

- 04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
06:00 Tii Death
06:30 Community
07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:30 Community
10:30 Community
11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
12:00 Tii Death
13:00 Cristela
13:30 Community
16:30 Tii Death
17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
18:00 New Girl
18:30 The Goldbergs
19:00 The Grinder
20:00 Bad Judge
20:30 Marry Me
22:00 South Park
22:30 Man Seeking Woman
23:00 The Big C
23:30 Bad Judge

OSN FIRST HD

- 00:00 Chicago Fire
01:00 Scandal
02:00 How To Get Away With Murder
03:00 The Last Kingdom
04:00 Bones
05:00 Good Morning America
06:00 Suits
07:00 Backstrom
08:00 American Crime
09:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
10:00 Bones
11:00 Backstrom
12:00 Coronation Street
13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
14:00 Suits
15:00 Live Good Morning America
17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
18:00 American Crime
19:00 Scandal
20:00 How To Get Away With Murder
21:00 Quantico
22:00 Rosewood
23:00 Allegiance

OSN FIRST HD

- 00:00 Chicago Fire
01:00 Scandal
02:00 How To Get Away With Murder
03:00 The Last Kingdom
04:00 Bones
05:00 Good Morning America
06:00 Suits
07:00 Backstrom
08:00 American Crime
09:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
10:00 Bones
11:00 Backstrom
12:00 Coronation Street
13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
14:00 Suits
15:00 Live Good Morning America
17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
18:00 American Crime
19:00 Scandal
20:00 How To Get Away With Murder
21:00 Quantico
22:00 Rosewood
23:00 Allegiance

OSN MOVIES ACTION

- 00:00 Get Lucky
02:00 Hit And Run
04:00 The Assault
06:00 Assassin's Bullet

- 08:00 Gone In Sixty Seconds
10:15 Christmas Twister
12:00 Transit
14:00 Jack The Giant Killer
15:45 Gone In Sixty Seconds
18:00 Betrayed
20:00 Wrath
22:00 R.I.P.D.

OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

- 00:00 Hit And Run-18
02:00 The Assault-PG15
04:00 Assassin's Bullet-PG15
06:00 Gone In Sixty Seconds
08:15 Christmas Twister-PG15
10:00 Transit-PG15
12:00 Jack The Giant Killer-PG15
13:45 Gone In Sixty Seconds
16:00 Betrayed-PG15
18:00 Wrath-PG15
20:00 R.I.P.D.-PG15
22:00 300-18

OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

- 00:15 Pretty Woman
02:30 High Road
04:15 The Love Guide
06:00 UHF
08:00 Big Fat Liar
10:00 The Love Guide
12:00 All About Christmas Eve
14:00 Serial (Bad) Weddings
16:00 Big Fat Liar
18:00 Walk Of Shame
20:00 Malavita
22:00 The Hooligan Factory

OSN MOVIES HD DRAMA

- 01:00 Jack Strong-PG15
03:15 As Cool As I Am-PG15
05:00 Mr. Pip-PG15
07:00 Late Bloomers-PG15
09:00 Breathless-PG15
11:00 Mr. Pip-PG15
13:00 InSight-PG15
15:00 United Passions-PG15
17:00 Breathless-PG15
19:00 Decoding Annie Parker
21:00 Blood Ties-PG15
23:15 Horns-18

OSN MOVIES HD FESTIVAL

- 01:15 Medicine Man
03:00 We Gotta Get Out Of This Place
05:00 Odeio O Dia Dos Namorados
07:00 Secret Window
09:00 Tea With Mussolini
11:00 Secret Window
13:00 The Way We Were
15:00 Memories
17:00 Tea With Mussolini
19:00 Gattaca
21:00 Out Of The Furnace
23:00 Eden

OSN MOVIES HD

- 00:00 Dark Skies-PG15
03:00 Horizon-PG15
05:00 JLAAdventures: Trapped In Time-PG
06:00 Billy Elliot The Musical-PG15
09:00 Some Girls-PG15
10:45 The Expendables 3-PG15
13:00 Lizzie Borden Took An Ax
15:00 Life Of A King-PG15
17:00 Cuban Fury-PG15
19:00 What If-PG15
21:00 The Reluctant Fundamentalist-PG15
23:15 A Single Shot-18

OSN MOVIES HD KIDS

- 01:00 Daddy I'm A Zombie
02:45 Blackie And Kanuto
04:30 Goat Story 2
06:00 Snow Queen
08:00 Bolts And Blip
09:15 Minuscule: Valley Of The Lost Ants
11:30 True Story Of Puss'n Boots
13:00 Blackie And Kanuto
14:30 Miffy The Movie
16:00 Columbus In The Last Journey
18:00 Minuscule: Valley Of The Lost Ants
20:00 Memory Loss
22:00 Miffy The Movie
23:30 Columbus In The Last Journey

OSN MOVIES HD PREMIERE

- 00:00 Mordcaai-PG15
02:00 A Promise-PG15
04:00 Stolen Child-PG15



HIT AND RUN ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

- 06:00 Trigger Point-PG15
08:00 I, Frankenstein-PG15
10:00 The Mistle-Tones-PG15
12:00 Seventh Son-PG15
14:00 The Remaining-PG15
16:00 I, Frankenstein-PG15
18:00 Taken 3-PG15
20:00 Mandela: Long Walk To Freedom-PG15
22:30 Donnie Brasco-18
18:05 Say Yes To The Dress
18:30 Secret Eaters
19:20 The Autistic Gardener
20:10 Catwalk 30+
21:00 No Limbs, No Limits
22:15 Curvy Brides
22:40 Long Island Medium
23:05 90 Days To Wed
23:55 No Limbs, No Limits



- 00:45 Big Screen
01:00 The Birdcage
03:05 Big Screen
03:20 Dead Men Can't Dance
05:00 Robinson Crusoe
06:30 Nobody's Fool
08:15 The Indian Fighter
09:45 Agent Cody Banks
11:25 Agent Cody Banks 2: Destination London
13:05 Big Screen
13:20 One Summer Love
15:00 Grayeagle
16:45 Alexander The Great
19:00 American Rhapsody
20:45 Big Screen
21:00 Fear The Walking Dead
22:00 Valley Girl
23:40 Reservoir Dogs



- 00:00 Killer Kids
01:00 The Haunting Of...
02:00 Crises That Shook Britain
04:00 Killers
05:00 Killer Kids



- 00:05 Henry Hugglemonster
00:20 Calimero
00:35 Zou
00:50 Loopydoo
01:05 Art Attack
01:30 Henry Hugglemonster
01:45 Calimero
02:00 Zou
02:15 Loopydoo
02:30 Art Attack
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster
03:05 Calimero
03:20 Zou
03:30 Loopydoo
03:45 Art Attack
04:10 Henry Hugglemonster



JACK THE GIANT KILLER ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

- 04:20 Calimero
04:35 Zou
04:45 Loopydoo
05:00 Art Attack
05:25 Henry Hugglemonster
05:35 Calimero
05:50 Zou
06:00 Loopydoo
06:15 Art Attack
06:35 Henry Hugglemonster
06:50 Calimero
07:00 Zou
07:20 Loopydoo
07:35 Art Attack
07:50 Calimero
08:10 Zou
08:25 Loopydoo
08:40 Miles From Tomorrow
09:05 Sofia The First
09:30 Doc McStuffins
09:45 Jake & The Never Land Pirates
10:10 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
10:35 Doc McStuffins
11:00 Sofia The First
11:30 Jake & The Never Land Pirates
12:00 Miles From Tomorrow
12:25 Special Agent Oso
12:40 Handy Manny
12:50 Jungle Junction
13:15 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
13:30 Sofia The First
14:00 Jake & The Never Land Pirates
14:25 Doc McStuffins
14:50 Zou
15:15 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
15:30 Loopydoo
15:55 Miles From Tomorrow
16:10 Jake & The Never Land Pirates
16:35 Aladdin
17:00 Sofia The First
17:25 Jungle Cubs
17:50 Aladdin
18:15 Gummi Bears
18:40 Jake & The Never Land Pirates
19:05 Miles From Tomorrow
19:30 Sofia The First
19:55 Doc McStuffins
20:10 Jake & The Never Land Pirates
20:35 Miles From Tomorrow
21:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
21:30 Sofia The First
22:00 Jungle Cubs
22:25 Aladdin
22:50 Gummi Bears
23:20 Lilo And Stitch
23:45 Cars Toons
23:50 Zou



- 00:00 Programmes Start At 7:00am KSA
07:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
07:25 K. C. Undercover
07:50 Supa Strikas
08:15 Annedroids
08:40 Lab Rats
09:10 Kirby Buckets
09:35 Wander Over Yonder
10:00 Rocket Monkeys
10:25 Ultimate Spider-Man
10:50 Boyster
11:20 Boyster
11:45 Pair Of Kings
12:10 Pair Of Kings
12:35 Lab Rats
13:00 Lab Rats
13:30 Phineas And Ferb
13:55 Phineas And Ferb
14:20 Kickin' It
14:45 Kickin' It
15:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
15:15 Rocket Monkeys
15:40 Wander Over Yonder
16:05 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
16:30 Kirby Buckets
16:55 Gamers Guide To Pretty Much Everything
17:25 K. C. Undercover
17:50 Supa Strikas
18:15 Lab Rats
18:40 Mighty Med

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KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (04/02/2016 TO 10/02/2016)

SHARQIA-1	Time
FLIPPED	11:45 AM
FLIPPED	2:00 PM
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	2:00 PM
FRI+SAT	
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	4:00 PM
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	6:00 PM
AMERICAN HERO	8:00 PM
FLIPPED	10:15 PM
FLIPPED	12:15 AM

SHARQIA-2	Time
THE FINEST HOURS	12:00 PM
THE FINEST HOURS	2:30 PM
THE FINEST HOURS	5:00 PM
THE FINEST HOURS	7:30 PM
THE FINEST HOURS	10:00 PM
THE FINEST HOURS	12:30 AM

SHARQIA-3	Time
JANE GOT A GUN	12:45 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	2:45 PM
CAPTURE THE FLAG	4:45 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	6:45 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	8:45 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	10:45 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	12:45 AM

MUHALAB-1	Time
JANE GOT A GUN	11:45 AM
JANE GOT A GUN	1:45 PM
NO FRI+SAT	
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	1:45 PM
FRI+SAT	
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	3:45 PM
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	5:45 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	7:45 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	9:45 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	11:45 PM

MUHALAB-2	Time
FLIPPED	1:00 PM
CAPTURE THE FLAG	3:00 PM
CAPTURE THE FLAG	5:00 PM
FLIPPED	7:00 PM
FLIPPED	9:00 PM
FLIPPED	11:00 PM
FLIPPED	1:00 AM

MUHALAB-3	Time
THE FINEST HOURS	11:30 AM
THE FINEST HOURS	2:00 PM
THE FINEST HOURS	4:30 PM
THE FINEST HOURS	7:00 PM
THE FINEST HOURS	9:30 PM
THE FINEST HOURS	12:05 AM

FANAR-1	Time
AMERICAN HERO	1:00 PM
CAPTURE THE FLAG	2:45 PM
CAPTURE THE FLAG	4:45 PM
CAPTURE THE FLAG	6:45 PM
AMERICAN HERO	8:45 PM
AMERICAN HERO	10:30 PM
AMERICAN HERO	12:15 AM

FANAR-2	Time
FLIPPED	11:30 AM
FLIPPED	1:30 PM

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	1:30 PM
FLIPPED	3:30 PM
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	5:30 PM
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	7:30 PM
FLIPPED	9:45 PM
FLIPPED	11:45 PM

FANAR-3	Time
STANDOFF	1:00 PM
STANDOFF	3:00 PM
STANDOFF	5:00 PM
EVERYTHING ABOUT HER - Filipino	7:00 PM
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic	9:30 PM
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic	12:30 AM

MARINA-1	Time
FLIPPED	1:00 PM
FLIPPED	3:00 PM
NO FRI+SAT	
CAPTURE THE FLAG	3:00 PM
FRI+SAT	
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	5:00 PM
CAPTURE THE FLAG	7:00 PM
FLIPPED	9:00 PM
FLIPPED	11:00 PM
FLIPPED	1:00 AM

MARINA-2	Time
THE FINEST HOURS	11:45 AM
THE FINEST HOURS	2:15 PM
THE FINEST HOURS	4:45 PM
THE FINEST HOURS	7:15 PM
THE FINEST HOURS	9:45 PM
THE FINEST HOURS	12:15 AM

MARINA-3	Time
JANE GOT A GUN	12:00 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	2:00 PM
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	4:00 PM
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	6:00 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	8:00 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	10:00 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	12:05 AM

AVENUES-1	Time
CAPTURE THE FLAG	1:00 PM
CAPTURE THE FLAG	3:15 PM
CAPTURE THE FLAG	5:30 PM
CAPTURE THE FLAG	7:45 PM
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic	10:00 PM
STANDOFF	1:00 AM

AVENUES-2	Time
AMERICAN HERO	12:15 PM
STANDOFF	2:15 PM
AMERICAN HERO	4:15 PM
AMERICAN HERO	6:15 PM
STANDOFF	8:15 PM
AMERICAN HERO	10:15 PM
AMERICAN HERO	12:15 AM

AVENUES-3	Time
FLIPPED	12:45 PM
FLIPPED	3:00 PM
FLIPPED	5:15 PM
FLIPPED	7:30 PM
FLIPPED	9:45 PM

FLIPPED	12:05 AM
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360-1	Time
JANE GOT A GUN	11:30 AM
JANE GOT A GUN	1:30 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	3:45 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	6:00 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	8:15 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	10:30 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	12:45 AM

360-2	Time
AMERICAN HERO	1:15 PM
AMERICAN HERO	3:15 PM
AMERICAN HERO	5:15 PM
STANDOFF	7:15 PM
AMERICAN HERO	9:15 PM
AMERICAN HERO	11:15 PM
AMERICAN HERO	1:15 AM

360-3	Time
CAPTURE THE FLAG	11:45 AM
CAPTURE THE FLAG -3D	2:00 PM
CAPTURE THE FLAG	4:15 PM
CAPTURE THE FLAG -3D	6:30 PM
CAPTURE THE FLAG	8:45 PM
STANDOFF	11:00 PM
STANDOFF	1:00 AM

AL-KOUT.1	Time
THE FINEST HOURS	11:45 AM
THE FINEST HOURS	2:30 PM
THE FINEST HOURS	5:00 PM
THE FINEST HOURS	7:30 PM
THE FINEST HOURS	10:00 PM
THE FINEST HOURS	12:30 AM

AL-KOUT.2	Time
JANE GOT A GUN	12:00 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	2:00 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	4:00 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	6:00 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	8:00 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	10:00 PM
JANE GOT A GUN	12:05 AM

AL-KOUT.3	Time
CAPTURE THE FLAG	11:30 AM
CAPTURE THE FLAG	1:45 PM
CAPTURE THE FLAG	3:45 PM
CAPTURE THE FLAG	5:45 PM
AMERICAN HERO	7:45 PM
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic	9:45 PM
AMERICAN HERO	12:45 AM

AL-KOUT.4	Time
FLIPPED	1:00 PM
FLIPPED	3:00 PM
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP	5:00 PM
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP	7:00 PM
FLIPPED	9:00 PM
FLIPPED	11:00 PM
FLIPPED	1:00 AM

BAIRAQ-1	Time
THE FINEST HOURS -3D	1:00 PM
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP	1:30 PM
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP	3:30 PM

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CHANGE OF NAME

I Amir Karim Makandar holder of Indian Passport No. F7734039, A/P - 173 Aggani Tal-khed Dist. Ratnagiri, hereby changed my name to Amir Karim Nevarekar. (C 5129) 6-2-2019

I, Kerodawala Rajani holder of Indian Passport No. M6422448, resident at D.No. 7-79 (B) Kadali village,

REQUIRED

Experienced Sales Executive required for a GCC based Advertising Material Supply Co. for their Kuwait operations. Send CV to: ssugtc@gmail.com

SITUATION VACANT

Razole Mandal, hereby changed my name to Kerodawala Zainab. (C 5125)

Part-time housekeeper needed for Western family. Please call 98877192. (C 5128) 4-2-2016

Flight Schedule

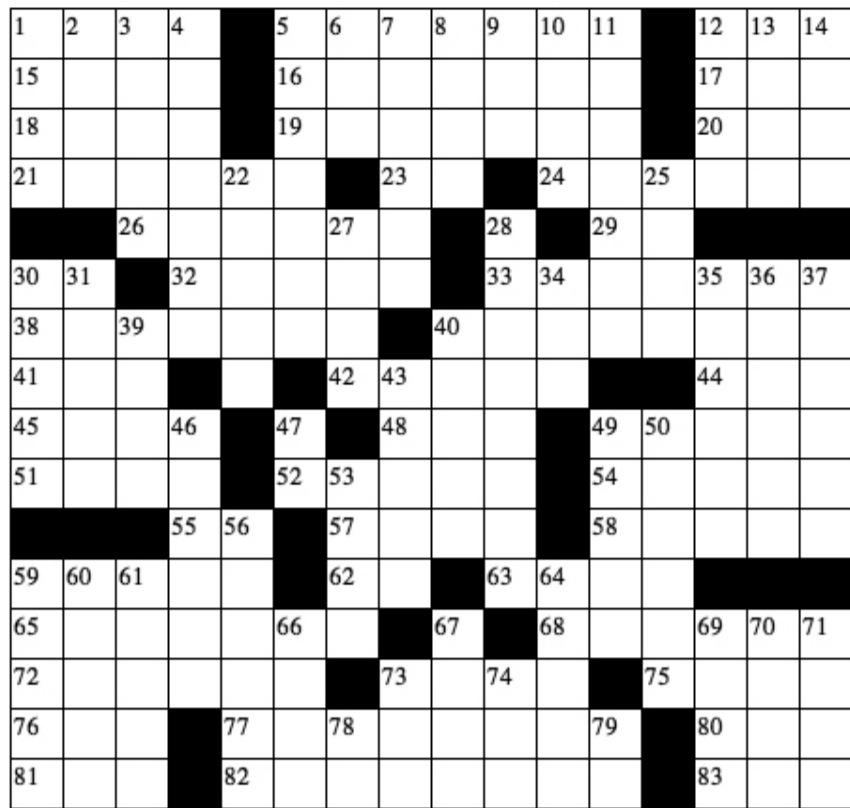
Arrival Flights on Monday 8/2/2016				Departure Flights on Monday 8/2/2016			
Airlines	Fit	Route	Time	Airlines	Fit	Route	Time
MSC	415	Sohag	00:05	AIC	982	Ahmedabad/Chennai	00:05
BBC	044	Dhaka/Dammam	00:05	MSC	502	Alexandria	00:05
MSC	403	Asyut	00:15	JZR	528	Asyut	00:05
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	PIA	206	Lahore	00:40
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40	FDB	072	Dubai	00:40
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:55
RJA	642	Amman	01:05	MSC	416	Sohag	01:00
THY	772	Istanbul	01:05	MSC	404	Asyut	01:15
DLH	635	Doha	01:35	BBC	044	Dhaka	01:35
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45	THY	773	Istanbul	02:30
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00	DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:35
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	02:45
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	KAC	381	Delhi	03:30
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	UAE	854	Dubai	03:45
FDB	067	Dubai	03:05	PGT	859	Istanbul	03:55
MSR	612	Cairo	03:10	OMA	644	Muscat	03:55
CEB	7694	Manila	03:15	FDB	068	Dubai	04:00
QTR	1076	Doha	03:15	MSR	613	Cairo	04:10
KKK	6507	Istanbul	03:20	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:15
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:25	KKK	6508	Istanbul	04:20
JZR	503	Luxor	05:15	QTR	1077	Doha	05:00
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:40	THY	765	Istanbul	05:15
THY	770	Istanbul	05:55	CEB	7695	Manila	05:20
FDB	5061	Dubai	06:30	JZR	560	Sohag	06:10
BAW	157	London	06:40	FDB	070	Dubai	06:30
JZR	529	Asyut	06:50	JZR	164	Dubai	06:55
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	06:55	RJA	643	Amman	07:05
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	07:20	THY	771	Istanbul	07:05
QTR	1086	Doha	07:40	FDB	5062	Dubai	07:10
FDB	053	Dubai	07:45	GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50	KAC	537	Sohag	08:20
SVA	512	Riyadh	07:50	FDB	054	Dubai	08:30
KAC	206	Islamabad	08:25	QTR	1087	Doha	08:40
KAC	352	Kochi	08:30	BAW	156	London	08:45
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40	SVA	513	Riyadh	08:50
KAC	362	Colombo	08:50	KAC	671	Dubai	09:15
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:25
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:10	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:20	KAC	541	Cairo	09:55
QTR	1070	Doha	09:25	UAE	856	Dubai	09:55
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	561	Amman	10:00
IRA	667	Esfahan	10:00	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:25
OMA	641	Muscat	10:05	KAC	501	Beirut	10:30
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	FDB	056	Dubai	10:35
UAE	873	Dubai	11:05	KAC	153	Istanbul	10:40
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	11:15	KAC	165	Rome/Paris	11:00
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	QTR	1071	Doha	11:00
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	IRA	666	Esfahan	11:00
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25	OMA	642	Muscat	11:05
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:25
JZR	561	Sohag	12:45	AXB	890	Mangalore	12:15
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	JZR	776	Jeddah	12:20
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	KAC	103	London	12:25
KAC	382	Delhi	13:50	UAE	874	Dubai	12:30
KNE	460	Riyadh	13:50	MEA	405	Beirut	12:55
KAC	672	Dubai	14:00	KAC	785	Jeddah	13:00
QTR	1078	Doha	14:10	FDB	076	Dubai	13:10

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ACROSS

- Deciduous or evergreen shrubs and shrubby trees of temperate and subtropical North America, South Africa, eastern Asia and northeastern Australia.
- Tropical American insectivorous bird having a long sharp bill and iridescent green or bronze plumage.
- Aircraft landing in bad weather in which the pilot is talked down by ground control using precision approach radar.
- A native American tent.
- A crystalline amino acid that occurs in many proteins.
- An awkward stupid person.
- (Welsh) A warrior god.
- The convergence of two parallel railroad tracks in a narrow place.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- The capital of the state of Kansas.
- A Mid-Atlantic state.
- A seaman who works on a ship that hunts whales.
- Any organic compound formed by adding alcohol molecules to aldehyde molecules.
- Being nine more than ninety.
- A bachelor's degree in religion.
- Lower in esteem.
- An industrial city in southern China.
- Of or relating to the language of the Hebrews.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
- German chemist noted for the synthetic production of ammonia (1868-1934).
- A sudden loss of consciousness resulting when the rupture or occlusion of a blood vessel leads to oxygen lack in the brain.
- An amino acid that is found in the central nervous system.
- A long projecting or anterior elongation of an animal's head.
- An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
- The seventh month of the Moslem calendar.
- Concerning or dwelling or situated in a wood.
- A radioactive element of the actinide series.
- Move toward, travel toward something or somebody or approach something or somebody.
- Indian religious leader who founded Sikhism (1469-1538).
- A public dance hall for dancing to recorded popular music.
- The 12th letter of the Greek alphabet.
- A notable achievement.
- An instinctive motive.
- Deciduous round-headed Asiatic tree widely grown in mild climates as an ornamental for its heart-shaped leaves and fragrant yellow-green flowers followed by hanging clusters of fleshy orange-red berries.
- Of or relating to abasia (inability to walk).
- A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
- An acute inflammatory disease occurring in the intestines of premature infants.
- The site of three famous battles among Greek city-states.
- Nonresinous wood of a fir tree.
- A sweetened beverage of diluted fruit juice.
- An officer who acts as military assistant to a more senior officer.
- The compass point midway between east and southeast.

DOWN

- The elapsed time it takes for a signal to travel from Earth to a spacecraft (or other body) and back to the starting point.
- A town in Hawaii on the island of Hawaii.
- Type genus of the Upupidae.
- Orange liqueur with lemon juice and brandy.
- A literary language of Chinese Turkestan (named for one of the sons of Genghis Khan).
- A flat wing-shaped process or winglelike part of an organism.
- Stick of wax with a wick in the middle.
- (prefix) In front of or before in space.
- A unit of length equal to one thousandth of an inch.
- Again but in a new or different way.
- Thinking again about a choice previously made.
- The state of affairs that a plan is intended to achieve and that (when achieved) terminates behavior intended to achieve it.
- An enclosure made of wire or metal bars in which birds or animals are kept.
- (old-fashioned) At or from or to a great distance.
- Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
- An inflammatory disease involving the sebaceous glands of the skin.
- United States writer (born in Poland) who wrote in Yiddish (1880-1957).
- (of the feet of some animals) Not webbed.
- Bar temporarily.
- A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- A port city in western South Korea on the Yellow Sea.
- A state in the western United States.
- A city of northern Poland near the mouth of the Vistula River on a gulf of the Baltic Sea.
- A small cake leavened with yeast.
- At right angles to the length of a ship or airplane.
- A former province of western France in the Loire valley.
- A tablet placed horizontally on top of the capital of a column as an aid in supporting the architrave.
- A hard brittle blue-white multivalent metallic element.
- Having awns i.e. bristle- or hair-like appendages on the flowering parts of some cereals and grasses.
- Compelled forcibly by an outside agency.
- The highest level or degree attainable.
- An active volcano in southwestern Mexico.
- To fix or set securely or deeply.
- The unlimited 3-dimensional expanse in which everything is located.
- German chemist who did research on high-speed chemical reactions (born in 1927).
- Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.
- A hard coarse-grained siliceous sandstone.
- Free from risk or danger.
- Wading birds of warm regions having long slender down-curved bills.
- A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- A unit of heat equal to the amount of heat required to raise one pound of water one degree Fahrenheit at one atmosphere pressure.
- (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
- A Mid-Atlantic state on the Atlantic.
- A highly unstable radioactive element (the heaviest of the halogen series).

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Indulge your inquisitiveness because today your imagination and your ability to decipher problems are at their best. The more involvement with these sorts of exercises, the more you are able to grasp ideas from out of thin air that will be helpful in difficult situations. It is nice to know that you can be helpful when people are worried about an outcome or puzzled about an answer. You could be an emergency medical professional or perhaps a stock broker that can help people make decisions about financial investments. You are present and helpful where mental, emotional and physical count. This afternoon you may purchase items for several salads for next week. Don't forget that nuts are a great way to increase your protein and give you energy.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You are prolific when it comes to getting a job done and people gather to watch the process you employ in order to complete difficult tasks. You could be an artist of some sort and have an order for several blown glass items. Clay is fun to work with and you may not want to rule this out for part of your work this day. You enjoy talking about your work and may agree to teach or have students under your tutelage. This is your time to dig in and nurture the ideas of your mind. If you want to change careers, it would be to change locations and not your work. This afternoon is the perfect time to look at a real-estate development. You may even be able to find a place that is up to your requirements now. Opening a shop of your own is just perfect.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Swimming, flying and enjoying your day off is where your mind is focused. You may be fortunate enough to live near a lake or the ocean and with the proper gear you can explore to your heart's desire. A friend you enjoy exploring with may point out something new this day. A special way to take pictures of underwater activity may fill many hours. Some very new high-tech equipment may give you ideas about many different ways to take photographs in difficult places, such as under water. Communicating with family this evening is almost like communicating in an office meeting. In your family you want to make sure everybody gets a chance to speak. After a short debate, your family team will be more helpful for each other.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Cleaning and rearranging items around your house or apartment, you may find something you thought someone either took from you or you had given it away or you just simply lost it. It is nice to find this item, but it is very important to think about the person that might have been accused for the cause of the missing item. You will be able to take care of the situation quickly and properly. Some of your day may be to gather used items or items you no longer use and take them to a thrift store. You may enjoy this visit and then be reminded of the old saying of one man's trash is another man's treasure.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

A cooking experience is ahead of you this morning. You could be challenged because of someone's allergies or because of a lack of supplies. Creatively you can find the substitutes you will need. Have patience. You might use the internet to guide you regarding substitute items. This is a good time to order a horoscope reading in order to gain some perspective. You enjoy an occasional stay-at-home evening and this evening you want to spend time with loved ones. Popping popcorn to share while watching a movie this evening brings about times of laughter and chatter about old times.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

People want to know your secret as you work among so many people in a spiritual setting. You may be the teacher in a youth group that has learned to be open, ask questions and be creative. Someone may suggest that the group perform a play or create a movie and fill the script with several different scenes that teach about compassion and respect. Many suggestions could come up so make sure everyone signs and dates their suggestions. This may take a while but it will be a fun, long-term, teaching as well as learning goal. This is perhaps a class that could be about, what if my friend was my enemy the conversations never seem to get old but you can create a cliff-hanger by stopping the chatter until the next class.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Coming home after a trip this weekend may get you home early enough to get a round of exercise in before the sun goes down. A massage makes for a perfect afternoon. You may run errands for your parents today in order to prepare for the week ahead. Your plans and goals are important to you and something you may want to share with your family, particularly if any plans need changing. Family members have plans of their own and talking with each other will gain some answers on just how each of you will want future plans to succeed. Joyous times are ahead and you have fun listening to where others want to be in so many months or years.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You may attend a lecture or seminar today that will give you some useful tools for putting ideas into action. You may be so impressed by the speaker that you head for the bookstore and skim through a few books that give you more answers. This could be all about a hobby or just how to accept your abilities and make improvements. The events of the day put you in the student's seat. Again... There are stirrings to learn and discover and conquer. Travel may be a consideration this evening and a family member may bring up the idea before you give any thought to the subject of travel. You can see some benefit of merging what you want to know with travel and for a few weeks this subject will run hot and cold.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Financial techniques have you interested in learning better ways to invest. You may find a book that shows you how to make money from your hobby and may find that your energies move toward your hobby. At home this afternoon other members of your family seem to have caught the clean-up bug. You could join in and add a little spit and polish, so to speak, to your surroundings. A little music through your ear phones while you clean will keep you going until everyone is ready to stop. You may be looking through a catalog and decide to sign up for some classes at the nearby junior college. You have lots to look forward to for all of this year and your enthusiasm is contagious.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

It is possible that you are working today in a retail business or service business, such as a hospital, or perhaps animal rescue, or a tour guide, etc. One customer wants all your time and you must decide how best to handle the situation when others are waiting. You may decide to joke and let the customers know you will request a number system, unless a line is created. One or two of these characters have a way of making you laugh and you write funny scenarios that you may or may not send in to a studio. After work you have a dance partner to help you learn a new routine.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

There may be an opportunity to please a superior, above and beyond the usual work routine. This could mean that you head off an angry customer. You have a good sense about the new styles and trends and may be chosen to go along on a buying expedition. You enjoy working and there are plenty of people wanting to buy lovely things for their mate or lover. Creative or artistic interests are stimulated after work. Your attention may move to an activity that involves a large group - perhaps a party! Fun times with old friends this afternoon afford you time to enjoy talking about old times. This brings about those warm feelings that come with living in your own little world and enjoying your own group of friends.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Listening and putting forth all the energy you can muster to lend a helping hand, guide a client, work with high esteem becomes easier and easier as people get used to how you work and what you expect. Today is the day you dive into dreams but someone may pull you out of your reverie to go fishing, hiking, rowing, etc. If you live near water, you will be near it today. If you do not live near water, you may decide on that camping trip for a future fun weekend. The friend that interrupts your reverie today will help you form ideas for that next trip and may add a little competition in the mix for fun.

WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

Movie Actresses 1

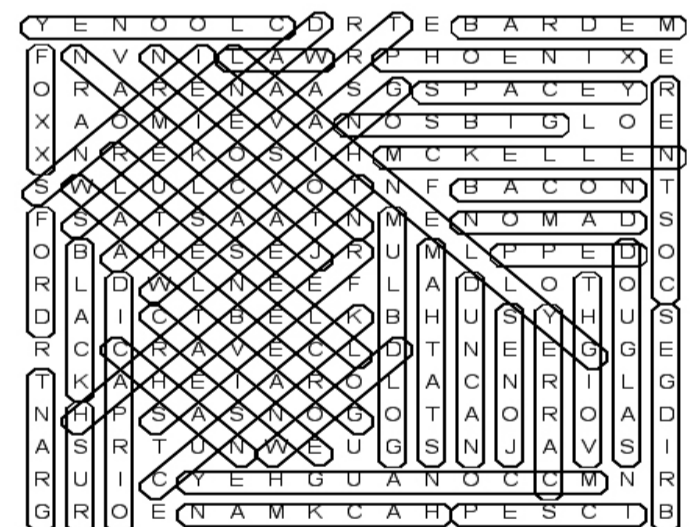
Find and circle all of the Movie Actresses that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the name of a movie for which Jodie Foster won an Oscar.



- | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| ADAMS, Amy | CUTHBERT, Elisha | LANE, Diane |
| ALBA, Jessica | DAVIS, Hope | LANGE, Jessica |
| ALLEN, Joan | DENCH, Judi | MCDORMAND, Frances |
| BARRYMORE, Drew | DIAZ, Cameron | MIRREN, Helen |
| BENING, Annette | FANNING, Dakota | MOORE, Demi |
| BERRY, Halle | FOSTER, Jodie | PALTROW, Gwyneth |
| BIEL, Jessica | GUGINO, Carla | RAQUIN, Anna |
| BLANCHETT, Cate | HATHAWAY, Anne | RICCI, Christina |
| BLETHYN, Brenda | HUNTER, Holly | SWANK, Hilary |
| BLUNT, Emily | HUSTON, Anjelica | THERON, Charlize |
| CLOSE, Glenn | JOLIE, Angelina | THOMPSON, Emma |
| CONNELLY, Jennifer | KEENER, Catherine | WATSON, Emily |
| CUSACK, Joan | | |

Yesterday's Solution

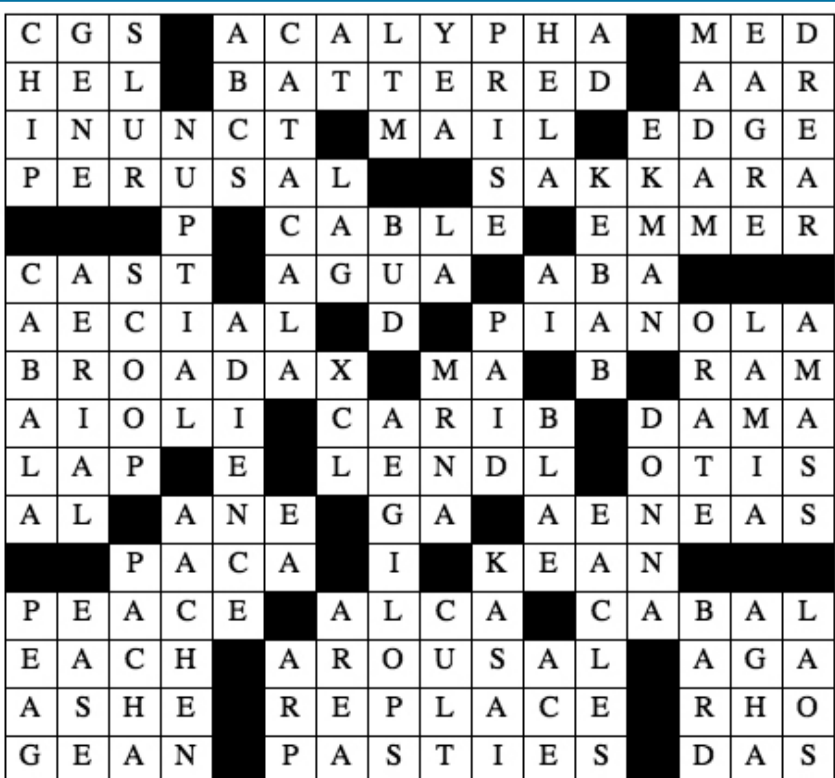
Movie Actors 1



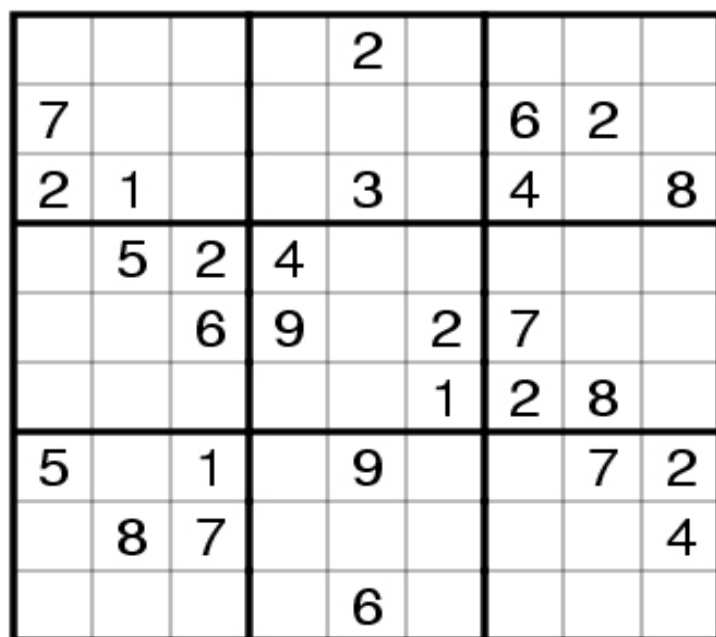
- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| BACON, Kevin | DUNCAN, Michael Clarke | MCKELLEN, Ian |
| BARDEM, Javier | FORD, Harrison | NEESON, Liam |
| BLACK, Jack | FOX, Jamie | PESCI, Joe |
| BRIDGES, Jeff | GIBSON, Mel | PHOENIX, Joaquin |
| CAINE, Michael | GOLDBLUM, Jeff | REEVES, Keanu |
| CARREY, Jim | GRANT, Hugh | RUSH, Geoffrey |
| CHAN, Jackie | GYLLENHAAL, Jake | RUSSELL, Kurt |
| CLOONEY, George | HACKMAN, Gene | SPACEY, Kevin |
| COSTNER, Kevin | HARTNETT, Josh | STATHAM, Jason |
| CUSACK, John | IRONS, Jeremy | TRAVOLTA, John |
| DAMON, Matt | JACKMAN, Hugh | VOIGHT, Jon |
| DANIELS, Jeff | JONES, James Earl | WAHLBERG, Mark |
| DEPP, Johnny | LAW, Jude | WEAVING, Hugo |
| DICAPRIO, Leonardo | MCCONAUGHEY, Matthew | WOOD, Elijah |
| DOUGLAS, Michael | | |

The hidden movie title is: REVERSAL OF FORTUNE

Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



very hard

Yesterday's Solution



hard

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
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322



PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaee Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboub Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	Luxembourg	00352
Albania	00355	Macau	00853
Algeria	00213	Macedonia	00389
Andorra	00376	Madagascar	00261
Angola	00244	Majorca	0034
Anguilla	001264	Malawi	00265
Antigua	001268	Malaysia	00660
Argentina	0054	Maldives	00960
Armenia	00374	Mali	00223
Australia	0061	Malta	00356
Austria	0043	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	Sao Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tone	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	Toga	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
Lithuania	00370		

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630 Fax: (+965) 24348714 www.met.gov.kw

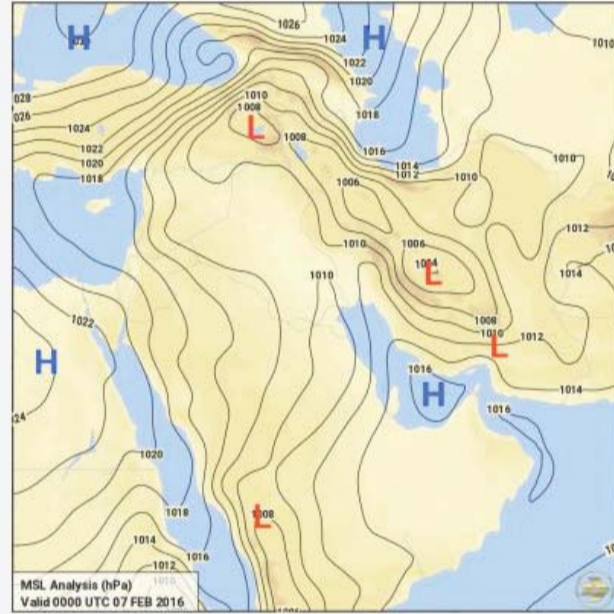
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 07/02/2016-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 24 °C

By Day : Partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening gradually at times south easterly changing to north westerly later on wind, with speed of 15 - 45 km/h with a chance for blowing dust especially over open areas and a chance for scattered rain
By Night : Cold with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 38 km/h

SFC. CHART



Four-Day Forecast

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Expected Weather	Sunny	sunny	sunny	partly cloudy
Min Temp °C	08	07	06	09
Max Temp °C	23	21	22	20
Wind Direction	north westerly	north westerly	north westerly	South easterly changing to north westerly
Wind Speed km/h	10 - 32	15 - 40	08 - 30	12 - 38

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	17		22	
KUWAIT AIRPORT	16		24	
ABDLY	14		23	
BUBYAN	15		16	
JAHRA	14		25	
FAILAKA ISLAND	15		20	
SALMIYAH	16		16	
AHMADI	17		18	
JAL ALIYAH	14		24	
QAROH ISLAND	19		21	
UMM AL-MARADEM	18		21	
NUWAISIB	15		25	
WAFRA	12		24	
MANAGISH	13		24	
SALMY	13		25	
MUTRIBA	13		24	

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	24
Min Temp (°C)	03
Max Rel Hum (%)	91
Min Rel Hum (%)	17
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	53 SE
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm

Sunrise	06:34
Sunset	17:31

Prayer Times

Fajr	05:13
Sunrise	06:34
Zuhr	12:02
Asr	15:08
Sunset	17:31
Isha	18:49



PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists	Plastic Surgeons
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)	Family Doctor
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	Psychiatrists
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaezem	22639920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abdallah Al-Rafea	25333501
Urologists	Internists, Chest & Heart
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

Paediatricians	Endocrinologist
Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maarouf	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gupare	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282
Dermatology	Physiotherapists & VD
Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University	23845955
Dr. Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abdallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abdallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111
Neurologists	Rheumatologists:
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875
Gastrologists	Internist, Chest & Heart
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foaid Abdallah Al-Ali	22633135
Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees	22666288
Dr. Adel Al-Awadi	25330060
Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290
DR.Mohammes Akkad	24555050 Ext 210
Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC	
Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	25339667
Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC	2611555-2622555
Inaya German Medical Center	
Te: 2575077	
Fax: 25723123	

Psychologists /Psychotherapists	Soor Center	Kaizen center	Noor Clinic	William Schuilenberg, RPC
info@soorcenter.com	Tel: 2290-1677	25716707	23845955	2290-1677
www.soorcenter.com	Fax: 2290 1688			Zaina Al Zabin, M.Sc. 2290-1677

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info@soorcenter.com	Tel: 2290-1677	25716707	23845955	2290-1677
www.soorcenter.com	Fax: 2290 1688			Zaina Al Zabin, M.Sc. 2290-1677



Family photo of the winners after the 30th Goya film awards ceremony in Madrid.—AFP

Jolie's film 'Unbroken' finally opens in Japan

Angelina Jolie's "Unbroken" opened Saturday more than a year after the rest of the world in Japan, where the main character endures as a prisoner of war and where some have called for a boycott of the movie. There were concerns that right-wing extremists may try to disrupt the opening. But the crowd at Theatre Image Forum in Tokyo, a small theater that specializes in independent films and documentaries, was peaceful, appearing engrossed in the film, flinching at the torture scenes and sympathizing with the hero, Louis Zamperini.

The distributor said in a statement that it decided to go ahead with the showing because various views on war should be expressed, and because it was unnatural for a movie about Japan not to be shown in the country. A publicity official said the company had received some angry calls when it first announced the film's showing in October. Other than that, nothing unusual happened, and the film is scheduled to be shown in other theaters throughout Japan. "Unbroken" is based on the true story of Zamperini, an Olympic athlete who gets shot down in a US bomber and survives by floating in the ocean on an inflatable boat, but gets captured by the Japanese. He survives horrible torture in World War II camps until Japan's defeat in 1945.



Moviegoers wait before Angelina Jolie's "Unbroken" opens in front of a movie theater in Tokyo, Saturday.—AP

Much of the negative chatter on social media in Japan about "Unbroken," which still continues to some extent, alleges that the movie is "anti-Japanese." Many taking offense at the film are outraged that the book on which the movie is based mentions that Japanese soldiers engaged in cannibalism, although the film does not

touch on the subject at all. Some historians say some Japanese soldiers did engage in cannibalism. The anger over "Unbroken" has brewed despite Japan boasting a long list of directors who made distinguished anti-war movies, including Akira Kurosawa and Kihachi Okamoto. Nagisa Oshima's "Merry Christmas, Mr. Lawrence," starring

David Bowie, has a plot similar to "Unbroken," taking place in a POW camp.

But some in Japan have also had a hard time coming to terms with the country's brutal past of colonizing Asian neighbors and the barbaric acts carried out by the Imperial Army, such as the Rape of Nanjing, which began in 1937 and left 300,000 Chinese dead. Similarly, they reject historical studies that show women from several Asian countries, especially Korea, were forced into prostitution by the Japanese military. Some oppose the term "sex slave," which the UN uses, preferring the euphemistic "comfort women."

In "Unbroken," Japanese characters do little but grunt, scream, punch and kick. Still, the film ends on a reconciliatory note, showing an elderly Zamperini proudly carrying the torch for the 1998 Nagano Olympics, and Japanese on the streets cheering. As a young man, Zamperini had competed in the 1936 Berlin Olympics as a runner, and had hopes to go to the next games, set to be held in Tokyo. But by then the war had started. After seeing "Unbroken," Katsuyuki Miyata, a member of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces, said that the closing scene was the best part of the film. "I'd heard it was an anti-Japanese movie," Miyata said. "But it was a good movie."—AP

Beyonce, in surprise new track, takes on police abuse

Beyonce is back with her first new music in more than two years, a hip-hop-heavy track with nods to the Black Lives Matter movement and police brutality. The pop superstar released a single and accompanying video, "Formation," on Saturday in a surprise one day before she is set to perform before tens of millions of television viewers during halftime of the Super Bowl alongside British rockers Coldplay.

Set in New Orleans, the video offers fleeting but poignant references to Black Lives Matter, the movement against police brutality that has gained steam across the United States in recent years. A row of police officers in riot gear appears throughout the video. At the end, they raise their hands up in the gesture of people under arrest; the camera then turns to graffiti on the wall that says, "Stop shooting us." In a likely allusion to Hurricane Katrina and the widely criticized government response, Beyonce sings throughout the video on a New Orleans police car that is sinking into water.

Set to a bouncy beat, Beyonce largely sets aside her sweeping vocal range for a hip-hop delivery as she declares herself true to her roots and boasts of her extraordinary success. "I might just be like a black Bill Gates in the making, 'cause I slay," sings Beyonce, whose combined worth with rapper husband Jay Z is estimated at some \$1 billion, as she name-checks the Microsoft tycoon turned philanthropist. As the camera turns to a cameo appearance by her four-year-old daughter Blue Ivy, Beyonce voices pride in the African appearance of her hair.

"Earned all this money but they never take the country out of me / I got hot sauce in my bag, swag," says Beyonce, who was born in Texas to parents from Alabama and Louisiana. While rumors had spread in recent days of a surprise release by Beyonce, it is unclear when or whether she plans a full album. She put out "Formation" as an exclusive on the Tidal streaming service, which is led by Jay Z. Beyonce, who came to fame with Destiny's Child before becoming a superstar solo artist, has not released an album since late 2013 and had a relatively quiet 2015.

Her last album, simply entitled "Beyonce," was also a surprise release and featured accompanying videos for the songs, which often delved into Beyonce's emotions as a new mother and her marital bliss with Jay Z. Her last new music came in 2014 on an extended reissue of "Beyonce."—AFP



This file photo shows Beyonce in the press room during the MTV Video Music Awards (VMA) at the Forum in Inglewood, California.—AFP

Directors Guild gives top award to Mexican director Inarritu



Director Kenny Ortega, winner of the Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Children's Programs Award for 'Descendants'.—AP photos

Mexican director Alejandro Inarritu won the top prize Saturday from the Directors Guild of America for his work on "The Revenant." Inarritu won the same award last year for "Birdman," which went on to win him the best director Oscar and the best picture prize. "The Revenant" is up for best picture this year among its 12 Academy Awards bids, and Inarritu is again nominated for best director. The annual Directors Guild of America Awards often herald eventual Oscar winners.

Inarritu was teary-eyed as he accepted the Directors Guild prize, which he characterized as "a hug from my peers." "This hug, this embrace you are giving me today goes to a small country, to a whole Latin American community in this country," he said. "Your embrace makes me feel proud." He competed against Tom McCarthy ("Spotlight"), Adam McKay ("The Big Short"), George Miller ("Mad Max: Fury Road") and Ridley Scott ("The Martian").

All but Scott are up for Academy Awards for directing. "Room" director Lenny Abrahamson replaced Scott in the Oscar race.

Saturday's ceremony at the Hyatt Regency Century Plaza hotel also offered a telling look at who's working behind the camera in Hollywood amid the industry's ongoing discussion about diversity. While more women were nominated this year than ever before - 14 of the 47 nominees - only one took home an award. Dee Rees accepted the DGA prize in the television movie or miniseries category for HBO's "Bessie," beating out Angela Bassett ("Whitney"), Laurie Collyer ("The Secret Life of Marilyn Monroe"), Kenny Leon and Matthew Diamond ("The Wiz Live!") and Paul Haggis ("Show Me a Hero").

Jane Lynch hosted the four-hour dinner program, where such stars as Lily Tomlin, Bryan Cranston, Leonardo DiCaprio, Matt Damon, Regina King, James Corden, Nate Parker and Kathy Griffin served as presenters.

Eleven awards were presented to recognize outstanding directing in various formats, from commercials and live TV shows to drama series and feature films. Nine were claimed by white men. Filmmaker Marielle Heller, who was nominated for achievement by a first-time feature filmmaker for "The Diary of a Teenage Girl," noted that she was the only woman among the guild's feature-film nominees. "That feels like a lot of responsibility," she said. "I'm hoping that next year we'll be at least half of that list, and then by the next year, there shouldn't be any men on that list, right?"

Heller lost to "Ex-Machina" director Alex Garland. Other winners Saturday included Kenny Ortega for Disney's "Descendants," Don Roy King for the "Saturday Night Live 40th Anniversary Special," David Nutter for "Game of Thrones" and Matthew Heineman for his documentary "Cartel Land."—AP



Frank Capra Achievement Award Recipient Mary Rae Thewlis.



(From left) Actor Christian Bale, actor Ryan Gosling, director Adam McKay, recipient of the Feature Film Nomination Plaque for 'The Big Short' and actor Steve Carell pose in the press room.



Director George Miller, recipient of the Feature Film Nomination Plaque for 'Mad Max: Fury Road' (left), and actor Jon Favreau.



Leonardo DiCaprio, left, star of "The Revenant," poses backstage with the film's director Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu at the 68th Directors Guild of America Awards.



(From left) Actor Jules Le Blanc, director Thomas McDermott (recipient of the Franklin J Schaffner Achievement Award), and actress Michelle Stafford pose in the press room.



Director Alex Garland (left), winner of the award for Outstanding Directorial Achievement of a First-Time Feature Film Director for 'Ex Machina,' and director Steven Spielberg.



Jewelry designs at Joyalukkas for Valentine's Day celebration

The world's favorite jeweler has specially created a wide range of exquisite designs for Valentine's Day celebration. The collection by master craftsmen to make the day of love special for women will be sold under Joyalukkas BeMine Collection. Each exquisite piece is a choice of pendants and bracelets, crafted in 18K yellow and white gold and encrusted with the finest diamonds. Essentially inspired by the symbol of love, the BeMine Valentine Collection offers an interesting variation in every design.

This stunning collection has already started creating a buzz among the lovebirds. "I've pre-booked a pendant set for my sweetheart and plan to gift her on Valentine's Day," says Sam. With attractive prices starting from KD 45, the collection also features fantastic designs in pearls.

"At Joyalukkas, we believe in creating designs that appeal to every taste and with Valentine's Day being such a special occasion for everyone, the BeMine Valentine Collection has a wide selection of designs to suit every taste and budget," says Mr. John Paul Joy Alukkas, Executive Director, Joyalukkas Group.



A monkey gesturing with bowing motions during a rehearsal at a monkey training school in a zoo in Dongying, eastern China's Shandong province.—AFP photos

China school sees monkey business in New Year

Macaques in frilly dresses turn backflips and answer maths questions for crowds of screaming children at a Chinese monkey school, where trainers teach them to waltz and play rock drums. Shows featuring performing simians, popular in China and throughout Asia, are expecting a boost in the Lunar New Year of the monkey, which begins today. But they are facing a growing backlash from Chinese people concerned about animal welfare.

"It's like a human school, but using monkeys," said Takeshi Soma, the Japanese "headmaster" of the facility, at a zoo in Dongying in the eastern province of Shandong. His charges are about a dozen macaques from snow-capped mountains near Tokyo, who receive one-on-one tuition from a team of live-in instructors. "This kind of training is the first in China," tracksuited Soma said. He watched as staff in sequined waistcoats clothed the monkeys in multicolored gowns, leading them on stage in a mock Viennese ball.

"I think this is the only place that does that," he said. Four of the animals are training as a mock rock band, led by a monkey with a red bow tie and pink toy microphone. But a recent rehearsal ended with one macaque walking on his hands away from a miniature drum kit after a few tender taps, and another slamming down her plastic guitar before running to stage left. "Our monkeys don't listen to us very well. But that's what is funny about it all. Monkeys being natural and being themselves," added Soma.

Year of promotion

Such performances have a centuries-old history in China, and today monkeys are often seen at country fairs catching knives and riding bicycles. As China's economy has boomed, the scale of the shows has increased. More than a dozen zoos in the country now offer monkey performances. China has no laws protecting non-endangered species, but a growing animal protection movement has condemned the displays as cruel. Their cause was aided when video of a bear biting and clawing a monkey after the two fell off their bicycles in an "Animal Olympics" in the eastern city of Shanghai, went viral in 2013.

One staff member at the Yangjiaping zoo in Chongqing told AFP that monkey shows had been cancelled this year "because of a complaint about animal cruelty". Monkeys at the Dongying school sleep in bare concrete-walled enclosures, and sometimes receive light slaps from their trainers. Headmaster Soma admitted: "How should I put this? They are tough things. I don't think monkeys like the school." But the backlash has not deterred investors, with nearly 19 million yuan (\$2.9 million) spent on the school, said Xiao Jingxia, president of the local government backed China-Japan Friendship Association.

It is a partnership with Japanese monkey troupe Nikko Saru Gundan, whose animals regularly star on TV shows in their native country. "We hope to attract audiences from all over China," Xiao told AFP, as monkeys were led around in front of her on leashes. "We would like to take advantage of the monkey year for publicity... this will be a year of promotion."

'Like people'

A crowd of several dozen children and parents gathered outside the theatre building over an hour before the show started, mixing with the animals who wore nappies with holes cut for their tails. "Mum, I've seen monkeys! I've seen Sun Wukong," said three-year-old Zhao Yizi, referring to a hero of the classic Chinese novel Journey To The West, and cajoling his mother into buying a 30 yuan (\$5) ticket. Sun has cemented the image of monkeys in China as mischievous but essentially loveable. The centrepiece of the school's afternoon show was a mock mathematics class, with animals in tunics and denim shorts sitting behind miniature desks. They raised their hands and showed their fingers to apparently answer basic arithmetic questions, as the young audience giggled and clapped.

Later the monkeys rode atop large plastic balls and jumped over obstacles. And, of course, waltzed. I like the dancing best. They are like people," said four-year-old Ai Jiuqiu. "Happy monkey year!" an announcer boomed, before the animals were undressed and led back to their cages.—AFP



A monkey sitting on a bench during rehearsal.



A monkey running off the stage during a rehearsal at a monkey training school.



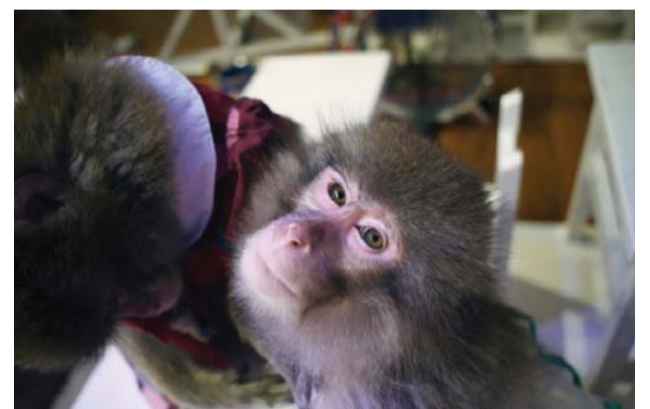
A monkey looking on from behind a curtain.



A monkey following a trainer during a rehearsal.



Monkeys resting as their trainers (background) have a meeting at a monkey training school.



A monkey looking on while backstage before a performance.



A monkey sitting on a trainer's shoulder.



A monkey interacting with Souma Takeshi, a trainer from Japan, ahead of a performance.



Souma Takeshi, a trainer from Japan, sitting with his monkeys during a rehearsal.



Souma Takeshi, a trainer from Japan, working with his monkeys before a performance.

Japan: A great nation PART - 2

Tenri and Nara: Cities of history and religion



Famous Shinto Shrine in Nara



Temple Tenri religion in Tenri



Todaiji Buddhist temple



One of Sankuran Musium chambers in Tenri



President of Satu oyster farming factory



Ogaki neighborhood



Isonokami shrine



Ise-Shima Island

By Mohammed Bassam Al-Husseini

Japan is a maritime country made up of more than 6,800 islands. It is deep-rooted in history and enjoys a beautiful climate with four seasons, with something in each that calls for celebration, so festivals and events are on all year long, from celebrating springtime and the appearance of cherry blossoms to the rice planting and harvesting seasons.

It is the country of art, culture, theater, haiku poems and Zen stories.

Judo city

We traveled from Tokyo south to Tenri through Kyoto station. This city has many landmarks, and is most notable for being the capital of judo, which was introduced to the Olympics when Tokyo hosted it in 1964, with the support of Shozen Nakayama, the guide of the Tenrikyo religion and a descendant of its founder. It is a recent religion that appeared in the city in 1863, and calls for forgiveness, cooperation and happiness. Tenri hosts the largest temple of this religion, which has nearly two million followers around the world today. It also has one of the most important shrines of the Shinto religion which is widespread in the country - the Isonokami shrine - which

is on the national heritage list of the most important sites in Japan.

The city is home to a prestigious university with a very rich museum attached to it that has more than 280,000 pieces including 30,000 ethnographic pieces from abroad, especially neighboring countries, and 250,000 from Japan. It also has 26,000 archaeological pieces. The museum is visited by nearly 55,000 people each year, and portrays the histories of Japan, China, Korea and Taiwan in an enjoyable manner. The museum is characterized by prestige and good organization, distribution of displays and identifying them clearly and easily.

We left Tenri for neighboring Nara to visit the Todaiji Buddhist temple, which has one of the largest statues of the Buddha in the world, in a magnificent hall and beautiful building. Visitors will come across herds of deer on their way to the temple, that come close to the fence to be fed. We stayed at Nikko Nara hotel, which is the most famous hotel in the city.

The G7 summit

We traveled from Nara to Ise-Shima and more precisely to Shima Kanko hotel and resort which will host the G7 Summit of the major seven economies in the world on May 26 and 27, 2016.

The hotel has two buildings - one historical that goes back to

1951 and witnessed many Japanese-American meetings after World War II. The more modern building contains 49 prestigious suites of 100 sq m and a French restaurant. The hotel overlooks a beautiful panoramic scene of the island, surrounded by forests and the ocean, making it one of the most beautiful hotels in the world with its location, which made the Japanese government approve it for the G7 Summit.

A visitor to Ise-Shima must visit neighboring Toba, a region considered important for its level of food quality and distinguished dishes served in Japan, making it an attractive stop by visitors from various countries, and Asian ones in particular, even Muslims, as a large number of this city's hotels and restaurants pay attention to halal food standards and provide all necessary services to facilitate wudu and prayers, besides providing an integrated tourist program for them in the city, which is a center to farm oysters and pearls, besides algae and seaweed used in Japanese dishes.

We went through rich experiences during the visit to both Toba and Ise-Shima. We began our tour with the Satu Company's oyster farming factory, where we met its president. Oysters are called milk of the sea due to their rich benefits. The Satu factory produces one million oysters per

year, considered of the highest quality in the local market. Mr Satu inherited this profession from his grandfather, the founder of the factory, which we toured and followed the water sterilization process using light in its purification. We also toured oyster farming sites by boat, which remain for one year in the sea before collecting and cleaning them.

Diving ladies

The next exciting experience was at Amokaya seafood restaurant, which as soon as it learned that a Kuwaiti newspaper will visit it, welcomed us with Kuwaiti flags held by women who are professional divers and collect seashells of various types, even rare and expensive ones, as well as lobster, and personally preserve hundreds of years of heritage in Japan.

The diving ladies display their way of fishing to visitors in their traditional uniforms, then grill the shells and fish on a large charcoal grill, to serve it fresh to the visitors. Restaurant owner Kazuhiro Nimora and his wife Kaworo personally serve guests, especially if they are from a Muslim country, and provide wudu and prayer necessities for them.

There is a fertile piece of land near Toba that is huge and has forests and freshwater and cradles the Ise-Jingu shrine, which belongs to the Shinto religion,

which goes back to the eighth century. The shrine attracts around five million visitors each year, and the shrine is relocated every 20 years in a tradition that aims at providing generations with experience to continue building shrines. At the entrance of Ise-Jingu is a bridge that is the longest wooden bridge in Japan, spanning more than 100 m.

The museum is visited by nearly 55,000 people each year, and portrays the histories of Japan, China, Korea and Taiwan in an enjoyable manner.

The municipality has established a neighborhood with a heritage style called Ogaki, in which tens of shops sell the most famous local dishes and best handicrafts. We enjoyed eating sweets made from rice and sugar from the prestigious Akavo Kumutshi sweetshop.



Head of Amokaya seafood restaurant Kazuhiro Nimora and his wife Kaworo



Diving ladies holding Kuwaiti Flags

Japan: A great nation

PART - 2

Rise in the number of tourists visiting Japan from 10 to 20 million in three years

The number of visitors to Japan between 2013 and 2015 increased from 10 to 20 million, 5 million from China alone, followed by 4 million from South Korea, 3.6 million from Taiwan, 1.5 million from Hong Kong, one million from the US, 800,000 from Thailand and 380,000 from Australia. This is what the head of International Tourism Division at the Japanese Tourism Authority Yazowaki Shimida told us, and gave a detailed explanation with numbers.

Japan recorded increasing numbers of visitors from all directions including Europe, as Russians topped the list in 2015 with 500,000 visitors, then the British with 260,000 followed by the French with 210,000, Germans with 160,000 and Italians with 100,000.

As for the Middle East region's countries, the numbers are still minimal, though they are on the increase, as in 2014, the number of visitors from Kuwait increased to 1,963, 6,403 from Saudi Arabia, 3,973 from UAE and 14,766 from Turkey.

Many reasons, besides business and investment, are considered attractions to visit Japan, headed by shopping in a country whose industries are considered among the best in the world, and food, as Japanese food is the best according to many in the world. Also, visiting tourist attractions and enjoying natural hot water springs during the four seasons, particularly in volcanic areas, besides having a look at the customs and traditions of the Japanese people and joining them in some of them, including hot water baths.



Head of International Tourism at the Japanese Tourism Organization Yazowaki Shimida

This increasing growth in tourist visits to Japan brings it major income that was over +2 trillion in 2014. In 2014, according to Leisure magazine, Kyoto came in first place in the world among the most important touristic cities in a list that includes the US' Charleston, Bangkok, Rome and

Barcelona.

Japanese officials are focusing on attracting larger numbers of tourists from the Muslim world and encouraging them through paying attention to several important needs of the Muslim tourist, especially with regards to providing halal food, cleanliness (taharah), facilitating prayers and guiding signs.

This is confirmed by increasing interest of the government in educating citizens and workers in hotels on how to deal with Muslim tourists, and pictures of veiled ladies and Muslim families have begun to appear in tourism posters in the country. Also, the principle of halal food is widespread and there are explanations on it and how to benefit from Muslim residents in this field.

Youngest mayor and largest ambition

In his mid-thirties, Kin Namikawa was elected mayor of Tenri, which is adjacent to Nara, with its important religious and scientific characteristics, to become the youngest elected mayor. He combines the enthusiasm of youth and diplomacy which he learned from his experience as a diplomat in Egypt, where he studied, as well as the well-known Japanese ingenuity.

He welcomed us warmly in his office at the city's municipality, as he affirmed his determination to strengthen its presence on the international map due to its historical and touristic assets, and for being home to an important university. Namikawa said the first of his goal is to implement the strategy of the government to develop areas and limit migration from surrounding areas to the capital and major cities through providing residents with job opportunities.

He said that some major goals must be characterized by ambition, change and being away from routine, so he started a new experiment for remotely working through the Internet, so that youth can participate in a certain project wherever they are geographically.

Most companies in the city are small and midsize, and find it difficult to find suitable workers due to migration, as well as the



Mayor of the Tenri City receives Managing Editor Mohammad Al-Hussaini

presence of graduate students who do not get suitable opportunities. It is good to establish a job center that harmonizes the needs of all and have its goals aim at the city's interests, besides other projects such as greening an empty yard near the

station in agreement with residents and owners, said Namikawa.

Namikawa, who follows the Tenrikyo religion which started in the city about 179 years ago, used the saying "God only helps those who help themselves", so the human

being must work hard, and God likes those who help others. Namikawa finds multiculturalism as an opportunity to strengthen dialogue and not divide. He said the city and Japan in general are an example to be taken in the field.

Road to recovery: Japan's victory over the largest earthquake in its history



In March 11, 2011, Japan was rocked by the largest earthquake in its history, and was followed by tsunami waves that caused extensive destruction in Tohoku. The catastrophe became worse with the meltdown of the Fukushima nuclear reactor. The quake and tsunami resulted in 15,893 killed, 2,565 missing and 6,512 injured. Around 1.126 million homes were damaged, including around 122,000 homes totally destroyed. The total losses were estimated at +22 trillion (around \$280 billion).

In order to deal with the incident and ensure aid to a large number of residents of areas hit by the quake and tsunami, the Japanese government established a special body called the Reconstruction Authority to

carry out this mission and restore things to their normal situation amidst domestic and international fears.

Al-Anbaa visited the authority's premises, and was received by media and international affairs advisor Shinia Fujita, who spoke about its achievements, the most important of which is the removal of apprehensions of many countries that stopped importing Japanese products, particularly food, out of fear of radiation.

Studies confirmed that the percentage of radiation in Tokyo and Fukushima is less than in cities like New York and Seoul, and this prompted 16 countries including Canada, Australia and Malaysia to lift all restrictions on Japanese

imports, while some countries, including the US and Kuwait, continue to ask for certificates before importing, which Fujita said is no longer necessary. The nuclear accident has been contained, vast surrounding areas around it were cleaned, and work is still going on in this field. He said most houses, fishing docks, gardens and schools were built within 4.5 years along with other facilities that were destroyed by the quake, and this led to the reduction of the number of those seeking shelter from 470,000 to 180,000.

Fujita explained that the role of the authority is not only to reconstruct, but also in creating a healthy environment and providing the infrastructure and fields of life and work for those

returning. The problem that faced the government was in that investors and citizens were exchanging roles with regards to who takes the first step to return - the investor to create opportunities that encourage the citizen to return to his region, or return of the citizens to attract investors. So the government, through the authority, plugged this hole and pushed things positively forward.

Fujita thanked Kuwait as it was among the first to help through its oil grant, which is still in the memory of the Japanese today. The Japan experience with reconstruction proves the tremendous ability of the Japanese people to rise and march stronger, to always be the example that should be followed in the world.

Major role for research institutes

As part of the tour schedule in Tokyo, we visited two of the most important research and study institutes in Japan that contribute to formulating the country's strategies and influencing decisions. The first was the Japan Research Institute, where we met its director Fahumira Nishizaki, who is a specialized economist, and we discussed with him what is known as the "Abenomics" strategy, pointing to the project of the current Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to get the country out of depression, which is a strategy based on three approaches:

1- Aggressive financial policies that aim at qualitative and quantitative change in the currency mass and facilities that lead to targeted inflation of 2 percent that ends deflation that restricts the economy.

2- Adopt a flexible tax policy, with incentives



Fahumira Nishizaki

when necessary and friendly tax programs for investment.

3- Adopt a growth strategy that encourages the private sector.

The Japanese society faces in addition to the challenges in the near and intermediate terms, a larger challenge in the long term, which is a decline in population growth, which means a lack of new markets for investment growth.

The drop is explained by the number of facto-



Takishi Kagami

ries in the country facing two things to meet the shortage in the balance of payments - either to boost Japanese investments abroad, which brings foreign currency, or encourage people to produce more babies. There are calls to expand the marketplace to encourage women to join, create new job opportunities and buy shares in companies, while encouraging increasing wages and investments.

We also visited the



Takoya Murakami

Japan Institute for Middle Eastern Studies, where we met the vice president of the institute and CEO, Ambassador Takishi Kagami, who was the Japanese ambassador to Syria, and associate researcher Takoya Murakami, where we spoke about the role of the institute and its view on the region's developments and importance of research in directing and guiding government policies and orientate foreign investors.

Explore the Japanese experiment



Walking on a tatami carpet, sleeping on futon beds and eating traditional Japanese cuisine in Japanese halls and getting a Japanese bath are all possible at the Kaigetsu Inn, which is a small hotel in Toba, which is famous for its islands, and has four floors and 13 rooms. It is run by Kuki Izaki, assisted by her mother in running it and receiving guests, and her partner Aiwa Saki Ori and their assistant Duwainda from Indonesia, who worked hard until she transformed the hotel to a friendly place for Muslim visitors, according to cleanliness and food.

The inn, besides residence, provides a tourist program with 30 activities



Kuki Izaki, Aiwa Saki Ori and their assistant Duwainda

such as sea trips, discovery of islands, fishing, diving, trekking in forests and kayaking. Izaki has received awards for "the most active woman" and

"best development of the society in 2008 and 2010" for her efforts to combine preserving heritage and caring for the environment at the same time.

Kaigetsu Inn is among the hotels equipped to receive Muslim tourists by paying attention to halal food and wudu and prayer areas.



Lifestyle

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2016

China school sees monkey business in New Year

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(From left) Photo shows Kuwaiti singers Basshar Al-Shatti, Nabil Shueil and Sulaiman Al-Qasar perform on stage.



Photo shows Ismael Mubarak perform on stage.

Hala Feb concerts end

By Nawara Fattahova

The musical concerts of Hala February festival concluded successfully with the highest attendance figures. Both the fourth and fifth concerts finished very late, yet the theatre was fully booked and the organizers had to place some attendees and the media in the balcony. The fourth concert was held on Thursday night at the Ice Skating Rink and started at 11:00 pm with young Kuwaiti singer Ismael Mubarak. As he is not very popular, he performed for less than an hour.

The second star of this night was popular Kuwaiti singer Nabeel Shueil, who came onstage at 12:40 am. After presenting few songs, popular



(From left) Photo shows actor Mohmoud bo Shihri, Ahlam and Youmna Shirri on stage.



(From left) Photo shows Kuwaiti singers Basshar Al-Shatti, Nabil Shueil and Sulaiman Al-Qasar perform on stage.

singer Bashar Al-Shatti joined him in singing the national song 'Hatha Uhu Likweiti' that they released last year. Folk singer Sulaiman Al-Qasar also joined them on the stage and sang a song. Shueil also sang two songs with Emirati singer Ahlam, who concluded the events of the night.



Photo shows singer Hind Al-Bahriniya perform on stage.



Photo shows Mahmoud Bo-Shihri on stage.



A group photo shows Ahlam on stage.

Before Ahlam came onstage, she arranged the distribution of hundreds of colored neon lights for the audience to use when she comes on stage. The organizers also brought her a cake on the occasion of her birthday, then the head of the media committee of the festival Waleed Al-Suqoubi awarded her. She sang for almost two hours, and concluded at 4:25 am. The fifth and last musical concert was held on Friday night and started with Bahraini singer Hind, who came onstage at 10:00 pm. She performed till 11:15 pm. The second performance was by Egyptian singer Shireen, who was warmly welcomed by the huge audience. She commented that in front of the Kuwaiti audience, a singer really feels precious. She sang a song sitting on the stage and the audience sang with her.

This concert concluded with the very popular Emirati singer Hussein Al-Jasmi, who came onstage at 2:45 am and said that he is proud to be concluding the concerts of the Hala February festival. He also mentioned that Kuwait was the first country where he performed outside the UAE. He presented many of his songs including songs in the Egyptian dialect and of legendary Lebanese singer Fayrouz. This was the longest concert, as it concluded at 4:40 am.



Photo shows Hussien Al-Jasmi perform on stage.



Photo shows Shireen perform on stage.



Photo shows Kuwaiti singer Nabil Shueil perform on stage.