

Fishermen's Union working to resolve high prices problem



Egypt doctors revolt against escalating police abuses



Rihanna puts the sexy into sweats in NY runway debut



Ronaldo double keeps pressure on Barca



TURKEY, SAUDIS MULLING GROUND ATTACK IN SYRIA

ANKARA STRIKES SYRIAN KURDS • RUSSIA DECRIES 'NEW COLD WAR'



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40 PAGES

conspiracy theories

AT LEAST WITH DECENCY



By Badrya Darwish

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What's with the sudden attack on expats in Kuwait? I don't want to beat around the bush. For many, many years, we always had some rules or issues about having too many expats in my country. And we have the right to regulate the population. But for the last 20 years, we didn't solve any problems, so the ministries come up with new rules and then change them the next day, or change them again or before they are on paper. But this year, I noticed a dramatic change in the attitude of the government - not the people - towards expats.

So what has changed in Kuwait? If we don't need them, let's ask them to leave, khalas - but politely and with dignity. We don't need to slam them, or blame all our problems on them. They have become the scapegoat for all our failures. We can just stop issuing their residency visas, give them notice and tell them to go home. But we don't need to take harsh, inhumane measures against them.

I don't see expats stopping advancement in my country. I don't think they are the reason that is preventing us from becoming an industrial country. Or an organized place like Dubai with infrastructure and rules and regulations. Expats are not the reason for the growing cases of bribery or the deterioration of state services. By the way, mentioning bribery, what is going on? Did we become so poor that we now have to opt for bribery? Bribery thrives in impoverished countries with no rule of law. Is that what Kuwait has become?

Sorry, I drifted off course. Back to expats. Did we in Kuwait educate and prepare a generation that can now take over the jobs of expats in the span of the last 20 years? Why don't we sit down and start educating our people? We don't need everyone to be a doctor or lawyer or professor in the university and brag because they have a title in front of their name. We don't want all of us to stay as civil servants too. There are tens of thousands of jobs that any country needs to build itself. Instead of hating expats, we should start training our people, our girls and boys, to start taking over all the jobs that expats do. Open technical colleges.

Just as an example, let's start with nursing. Leave alone other jobs. Do we have Kuwaiti nurses for our hospitals and clinics? There are lots technical jobs like mechanics, builders, painters, farmers, etc that will require training, and sorry, but are not paid manager salaries. So where are the young Kuwaitis being educated to take on these roles?

Before we start attacking expats left, right and center, let's prepare our nation for tomorrow. At the end of the day, this is our country and if we don't want expats, we can ask them to leave any time. But if we want them to stay, as we need them (the legal ones anyway), we should treat them fairly and with decency, as this suits our great Islamic religion.

Have a good day.



QAMISHLI, Syria: Syrian men take a selfie in front of a shop displaying Valentine's Day gifts in this northeastern city yesterday. — AFP

BEIRUT/MUNICH: Turkish artillery yesterday shelled areas of Aleppo province in northern Syria held by Kurdish forces, a monitor said, as Ankara said it could launch a ground assault alongside Saudi troops. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said Turkish artillery struck areas of Aleppo, including Minnigh airbase recently taken by the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) militia from Islamist rebels.

Ankara considers the Syrian Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) and its YPG militia to be branches of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) which has waged a decades-long insurgency against the Turkish state. The shelling came shortly after Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said Ankara would, if necessary, take military action against the PYD. "We can if necessary take the same measures in Syria as we took in Iraq and Qandil," he said in a televised speech.

The premier was referring to Turkey's bombing campaign last year against PKK targets in their Qandil mountain stronghold in northern Iraq. A YPG source told AFP that the Turkish shelling targeted the strategic Minnigh airbase, which Kurdish forces retook late on Wednesday. Turkey's Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu, quoted in Turkish newspapers, said Riyadh and Ankara were coordinating plans to intervene in Syria, where Russia has been backing a successful regime offensive against rebels.

"If there is a strategy (against the Islamic State jihadist group), then Turkey and Saudi Arabia could enter into a ground operation," he said. Cavusoglu said Saudi Arabia is also sending planes to the Turkish base of Incirlik, a key hub for US-led coalition operations against IS already used

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KPI: OIL PRICES COULD REACH \$50-60 BY 2017

ABU DHABI: Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI) said yesterday oil prices could reach a range of \$50 to \$60 a barrel by mid-2017, the official state news agency reported. The agency quoted the company's top executive Bakheet Al-Rashidi as saying prices could reach the range of \$60 to \$80 a barrel in three years' time. "The global oil market is going through a correction and we have reached the bottom," he was quoted as saying by the official Kuwait news agency, who added that Rashidi had made his comments at a company event in London.

Rashidi attributed the drop in oil prices to excess supply in the market and slow demand from Asia, particularly China. Asked whether oil prices would ever reach the \$100 per barrel level again, Rashidi said, "We can reach prices ranging between \$60 and \$80 but we need three years." On Vietnam's Nghi Son refinery, Rashidi said it would start operations by the end of 2016. — Reuters



CAIRO: Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi gives a speech during his visit to the parliament yesterday. — AFP

SISI: DEMOCRACY IS BACK

CAIRO: Egypt's president said yesterday that his country has established democratic and constitutional rule after years of turmoil following the 2011 uprising, but rights groups say he has presided over an unprecedented crackdown on dissent. President Abdel-Fattah Al-Sisi declared the completion of Egypt's transition to democratic rule in a 32-minute address to parliament, a 596-member chamber packed with his supporters.

In practices reminiscent of Egypt's past autocratic regimes, state television labeled the president's speech "historic" before it started, and some lawmakers, in a show of patriotism, placed Egypt's red, black and white flags before them in the chamber. Several others greeted Sisi's arrival in

the chamber with shouts of "We love you, Mr President!" When his speech was later interrupted by the same chant, he replied: "I love you too!"

Sisi acknowledged that the country is still struggling to rebuild its economy and combat Islamic extremists, but said it had succeeded in restoring representative government. "From this place, under parliament's dome, the Egyptian people declare to the entire world that they have laid the foundation of a democratic system and rebuilt constitutional institutions," he said in a speech that largely consisted of generalities and was repeatedly interrupted by applause.

The former general led the 2013 military overthrow of President Mohamed Morsi, Egypt's first freely

elected and first Islamist leader, amid mass protests against his divisive yearlong rule. Since then, the government has waged a massive crackdown on dissent, jailing thousands of Islamists as well as several prominent secular activists who led the 2011 revolt that toppled longtime autocrat Hosni Mubarak. A draconian law passed in Nov 2013 prohibits all unauthorized protests.

Over the past week, Egypt has faced allegations that security forces were behind the abduction, torture and killing of an Italian researcher who disappeared on Jan 25, the fifth anniversary of the 2011 uprising, when police were out in force to prevent any demonstrations.

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PARLIAMENT SPEAKER VISITS ANKARA TODAY

KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, accompanied by a parliamentary delegation, leaves for Ankara today on an official visit at the invitation of Turkish National Assembly Speaker Ismail Kahraman. A National Assembly statement said that Ghanem will hold a series of talks with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, in addition to Kahraman.

The Kuwaiti delegation will also hold a meeting with the head and members of the Kuwaiti-Turkish Friendship Committee in the Turkish parliament. The delegation also includes MPs Kamel Al-Awadhi, Ahmad Al-Qethibi and Saadoun Hammad Al-Oteibi.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's Ambassador to Turkey Abdullah Al-Thuwaiikh said that Ghanem's visit to Turkey is an indication that the two countries were willing to further bolster bilateral ties. Speaking to KUNA, Ambassador Al-Thuwaiikh said that the visit, at an invitation from Turkish National Assembly Speaker Ismail Kahraman, will focus on developing parliamentary relations on all possible spheres.

He added that the heads of the two parliaments were eager to explore means to improve and revitalize some 40 previously-signed agreements and deals. Coordinating efforts on regional and international issues as well as dis-



National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem

cussions on topics of mutual interest will also be highlighted during the visit, said the Ambassador.

The Ambassador indicated that some 219,000 Kuwaiti nationals have visited Turkey last year, noting that a considerable number of them own real-estate properties in Turkey. Hopefully the two top legislators would focus on measures to further facilitate procedures for Kuwaitis eager to visit and invest in Turkey, said the diplomat. — KUNA



MUNICH: Kuwait's Deputy Premier and Defense Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah meets with his Latvian counterpart Raymond Vejonis. — KUNA photos



Kuwait's Deputy Premier and Defense Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah meets France's Defense Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian on the sidelines of Munich Security Conference (MSC).

DEFENSE MINISTER MEETS COUNTERPARTS IN MUNICH

MUNICH: Kuwait's Deputy Premier and Defense Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah met separately with his Singaporean and Latvian counterparts Ng Eng Hen and Raymond Vejonis respectively in Munich, Germany yesterday. Speaking to KUNA following the meetings, Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah said that his meeting with his Singaporean counterpart had focused on bilateral cooperation and anti-terrorism efforts.

He added that he had discussed with his Latvian counterpart the necessity of reinforcing cooperation among European countries in the fight against the so-called Islamic State (IS). The Kuwaiti minister is currently in Munich to take part in the Munich Security Conference (MSC), which kicked off on Friday with the participation of over 30 leaders, and 70 foreign and defense ministers.

Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah also met

with Georgia's Defense Minister Tina Khidasheli on Friday. The two officials discussed bolstering cooperation between Kuwait and Georgia to serve their mutual interests, and building bridges of trust between the two countries, particularly on the military arena, Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah told KUNA.

The current international security situation requires bolstering cooperation between Kuwait and Georgia, and reinforcing their communication tools in order to provide better preparations for facing the international challenges, he said.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah met with France's Defense Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian. The meeting discussed Kuwaiti-French bilateral military and defense ties, ways to boost cooperation between the two countries in order to serve their mutual interests, and the war on terror, Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah told KUNA. Fighting the Islamic State (IS) requires bolstering

cooperation between Kuwait and France and reinforcing communication tools to provide better preparations for facing the terrorist group, he said. Earlier, Kuwait's Defense Minister said strengthening cooperation with friendly countries was key to confronting IS. Speaking to KUNA on sidelines of Munich Security Conference (MSC), Sheikh Khaled said the annual conference was one of the world's major security meetings.

The terrorist attacks against Paris last year and the IS targeting of Europe compel security officials from around the world to exchange views over ways of fighting terrorism, he said, "that is why our participation in the conference is important." Sheikh Khaled said he met with his French counterpart Jean-Yves Le Drian earlier. He said Kuwait was keen on promoting military cooperation with major European countries, including France. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Philippine Vice Consul to Kuwait Attorney Shienna Tesorero (center) receives the 'Media Transparency Award' given to her by Filipino journalists in Kuwait.

FILIPINO VC SHIENA TESORERO RECEIVES 'MEDIA TRANSPARENCY AWARD'

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: For her integrity, steadfast commitment to government transparency, openness to the media, upholding the tenets of good governance and above all, being a trustworthy partner of the media in the promotion of welfare of Overseas Filipino Workers in Kuwait, Philippine Vice Consul to Kuwait Attorney Shienna Tesorero received the 'Media Transparency Award' organized by the local Pinoy media and Filipino community in Kuwait. Tesorero is the second recipient of the media transparency award - David Des Dican, the former labor attache to Kuwait, was the first recipient.

The event held Wednesday evening at Radisson Blu Hotel saw various recognitions directed to Tesorero, mostly from various Filipino community organizations and members who were all witness to her admirable two-year stint as vice consul to Kuwait and head of the 'Assistance to Nationals Unit'.

"Her openness and her commitment and dedication to public service are really indisputable. Her heart is really into public service and she is a very straight-forward, no-nonsense person. She wants things done quickly and accurately and with her heart. I hope she had stayed longer, but she has an order to transfer to another post, so we respect this decision by the DFA," said Herry Gernale, General Manager of Pinoy Arabia FM and publisher of The Filipino Magazine.

Among the signatories of the media transparency awards are media personalities led by Michelle Fe 'Maxxy' Santiago, Senior Correspondent/Consultant ABS-CBN Middle East News Bureau, Reporter/Arab Times Program Director/Pinoy Arabia; Ricky Laxa, News Correspondent/GMA-7 The Times/Senior Reporter Producer/Director/The Morning Talk; Ben Garcia, Senior Reporter/Kuwait Times Editor/Filipino Panorama News & Current Affairs Director/Pinoy Arabia and Randy Mendoza, General Manager Pinoy Arabia FM.

Also, the Alliance of Filipino Organizations in Kuwait, comprising of more than 20 organizations, also handed a

plaque of recognition to Tesorero. Sandigan, led by Anne Abunda, Makulay Arts Group of Romano Roman, IWOK of Farida Al-Halimi and Aim Global-BCO Rose Ortiz also recognized Tesorero's contribution to the community with plaque of recognition.

Better services

In a short message at the event, Tesorero thanked all the organizations in Kuwait for being the partner of the embassy in delivering better services to Filipinos in Kuwait. "I really admire the community here in Kuwait - we can never be successful in our work if we do not have a vibrant community of Filipinos in this beautiful country, Kuwait. The spirit of 'bayanihan' (shoulder to shoulder) is really alive here. I salute all your tireless efforts to lending a helping hand to less fortunate and needy Filipinos. I do believe that even if there are no officials at the embassy, I know this community will always succeed, survive and thrive naturally," she mentioned.

Ana del Mundo, founder and chairperson of the Philippine Society of Marketing Specialists in Kuwait (Philsoc), also thanked Attorney Sheina for the job well done and for upholding truth and justice, especially over runaway housemaids. Abunda of Sandigan (an advocacy group helping abused OFWs) shed tears for the hard-working Tesorero, whom she described as a true leader filled with positivity and openness. "I will really miss her, not just as an embassy official, but as real friend and a person with big heart for OFWs," she mentioned. "We worked together as a team and we see in your eyes the burning desire to help and dispense necessary help to every Pinoy in Kuwait seeking your assistance; I thank you for the lessons learned and shared with us," she said.

Halimi, Ortiz, Roman and Nelson Fernandez, Philsoc President, echoed similar sentiments about Tesorero. "We were caught unawares when we heard you were leaving Kuwait. You are the best that could happen with our community here - a real public servant. We all wish you best and pray for your future endeavors," Fernandez noted.



KUWAIT: Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Kuwait Ali Reza Enayati hosted a reception recently to celebrate the Iranian Revolution's anniversary. Government officials, diplomats and other dignitaries attended the event. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat





KUWAIT: Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs Dr Ali Al-Omar tours cow farms and dairy factories in Sulaiybiya yesterday. —KUNA photos

FMD CONTROLLED, LIVESTOCK SAFE, DISEASE-FREE: MINISTER

KUWAIT: Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs Dr Ali Al-Omar said yesterday that the foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) has been controlled and that medical procedures have been taken to treat infected cows, confirming the safety and disease-free situation of livestock and its products in Kuwait.

Minister Omair made his remarks in a press statement during a field trip he conducted to Sulaiybiya, accompanied by Faisal Al-Hasawi, Director General of Fish Resources at the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) and Dr Abdulrahman Al-Kanderi, Director of Livestock Health at PAAAFRA, to check the health status in cow farms and dairy factories following recent infection of some cows with FMD.

This trip is part of following the workflow in the cow and cattle breeding field, checking the health status of all animal activity sectors, and making precautionary and preventive measures to combat the FMD spread, which threatens the lives of cows and livestock in general, he noted.

Minister Omair also listened to some explanations by cow and cattle breeding specialists on the difficulties they face that hinder their activities, proposals to remove these obstacles and develop potentials and sources to protect livestock from fatal diseases, and finding the best enhanced ways to increase production. He called for the formation of a joint committee to manage epidemic crisis that hit livestock in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act No. 42 of 2014, and Amended Act No. 99 of 2015. — KUNA



In my view

MEDICINAL PUZZLE



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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Medicine was the hot topic of the weekend on social media, after reports about drugs worth KD 306 million missing from ministry of health stores due to lack of control and database records. If the news is true, then an immediate investigation must be opened because this is a tragedy and whoever benefited from such acts must be held accountable and legally responsible. Even small baqalas retain records of items sold, and the public has every right to complain over such carelessness and waste. The subject of drugs in Kuwait deserves attention and should not be left to chance, because it touches everyone's lives, whether citizens or expatriates.

The demand for drugs in the GCC is increasing steadily because of population growth and rising standards of living, which leads to higher levels of obesity and increase in chronic diseases like blood pressure, heart illnesses and others, so talk about drugs and demand for it is not surprising, but a pressing need. Everything related to medicine is news. According to some studies, the GCC will be spending around \$10 billion by 2020 on drugs. This is a large amount indeed.

Everyone feels that Kuwait is the most expensive place for medicines compared to other Gulf countries. If we compare drug prices in Kuwait with Saudi Arabia, we will find that there is a vast difference in prices. Some people deliberately buy their medications from there, even if it's necessary to go to Khafji to buy medicine daily. Actually, it confirms that the high prices of drugs form a heavy burden on patients.

Although the government in Kuwait dominates the pharmaceutical sector with government hospitals, prices of medicines are high in Kuwait, which is undeniable. The ministry of health has repeatedly announced its intention to reduce prices of a number of essential drugs by 5 percent, with a review of medicine prices every six months.

It is known that about three-quarters of the drugs that are used in Kuwait are imported from overseas. I wonder why we are not taking setting up a medicine industry here into consideration. It is remarkable that the world is heading into generic medicine that is unbranded and not protected by property rights, and the focus on research, development and the attractiveness of the industry itself is important to investors. This is a business and a very successful and needed field too.

In Oct 2014, the Oxford Business Group released a report stating that the pharmaceutical industry in Jordan reached an important regional mark that has enabled it to export its products to the Gulf states. Jordan today is the biggest source of drugs in the Arab world, according to data from the World Trade Organization, and exported medicines worth \$308 million in the half the first of 2014. Although the industry is still relatively small in Jordan, it continues to expand at a rapid rate. This is impressive and the GCC must support its activities and collaborate with it.

The unification of prices in the Gulf states will reduce the prices of medicines for patients as well as minimize complaints, leading to better provision of medicines in all states. Unification of prices would contribute to eliminating the phenomenon of counterfeit or contraband medicines and will aid the recovery of the pharmaceutical market in the private sector. The decision to reduce the prices of drugs will certainly be in the patients' interest and will contribute to the improvement of pharmaceutical services in Kuwait.

There are several factors behind the differences in the prices of medicines in the GCC including the number of pharmaceutical distributors in each country associated with the rate of profitability, as well as the currency itself, which has a clear impact on selling prices. So we find that Saudi Arabia is a huge market compared to other markets in the GCC like Kuwait. However, unification of prices will be in the interest of the consumer, who is suffering from the price differences.

The ministry's plan to reduce the prices of medicines is a corrective step and media has an obligation to firmly support such moves. Medicine is a field that must not be taken for granted.

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JAMAL ABDULNASSER ROAD CONSTRUCTION WORKS ONGOING

By Meshal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Assistant Undersecretary of the Road Engineering Sector at the Ministry of Public Works Ahmad Al-Hassan said 34 percent of the project to construct and maintain roads and crossroads on the western part of Jamal Abdunnasser road has been completed. He said the project aims at increasing the capacity of the current road and reduce traffic jams and accidents. The project includes works including a 6.5-km-long and 32-m-wide road of three lanes in each direction, in addition to emergency lanes and bridges including three of 1.65 km over four main intersections.

Jeeb's negligence

Municipal Council member and head of Farwaniya governorate's committee Nayef Al-Soor asked the Kuwait Municipality to work on removing garbage and debris from residential areas of Jeeb Al-Shyukh, in addition to sweeping streets and roads. Soor said that a number of blocks in Jeeb are neglected as far as cleanliness is concerned, as some companies are indolent in carrying out their duties. He said officials should tour Jeeb to see the negligence the area is suffering from.

Shepherd injured

A shepherd sustained several injuries following an explosion of a landmine. The injuries included the head, face and an open fracture. He was taken to Jahra Hospital.

KPC STOPS SCHOLARSHIPS TO HELP REDUCE SPENDING

MP SLAMS BEDOON TEACHERS' RELEASE

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) circulated a decision to stop all foreign scholarships for the 2016/2017 fiscal year, as part of its measures to reduce spending, following the drop in oil prices. The corporation excluded long-term programs, which is a company commitment, provided they are specialized technical programs related to KPC strategy until 2030. Meanwhile, Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) issued a circular about organizational changes that are effective today. They include the appointment of Badr Nasser Al-Tulaishi as Director of Operations Group (east Kuwait), and Bader Abdullah Mahmoud as Director of Operations Support Group. In west Kuwait directorate, a new support services group for export and marine operations was created and Yousuf Al-Baker was appointed director of it. The health, safety and safety team was transferred from export operations group to export and marine opera-

tions support group, and Badr Zaid Al-Azmi remains head of the health, safety and environment team. Ali Sayyed Hashim was appointed director of export operations and reports to Deputy CEO for west Kuwait, while Obaid Qanel Al-Otaibi was appointed head of Rawdatain operations team. Badr Nashi Al-Qahtani becomes head of production operations (Sabriya / Bahra) and Awad Al-Barazi head of production operations (heavy oil).

Bedoons' rights

MP Abdulhameed Dashti found it strange that bedoons (stateless residents) continue to be targeted and deprived of their basic rights. "What we are seeing is very strange, because instead of them having priority in professional, technical and service jobs over expatriates, we were surprised by the education ministry's decision to terminate 23 bedoon teachers," he said. Dashti wondered about the human rights committee's action towards what is going on with the bedoons, which reaches extreme

action towards the simplest of civil rights, despite the hard living conditions they are going through.

Judiciary's independence

The parliament's legislative committee will hold a meeting today to discuss the judiciary and public prosecution's independence and create a judiciary contestation council, in the presence of Justice and Awqaf Minister Yaqoub Al-Sane. Sources said the government will attend the meeting, and wants to pass the law with major amendments, and may back from some simple proposals without major changes in its proposal.

They said the government will not oppose the judiciary contestation law, especially since it asked for it earlier, adding that the two proposed laws will be approved before the Assembly's session in March.

Meanwhile, committee chairman Faisal Al-Shaye said his committee will discuss proposed laws on public tenders and views of the Audit Bureau on it.

AL-NOWAIR INITIATIVE KICKS OFF NEW CAMPAIGN ON POSITIVE THINKING

KUWAIT: The non-profit Al-Nowair Initiative kicked off a new campaign yesterday on positive thinking and avoiding complaints due to their negative consequences. The initiative will last until February 20th. Chairperson of Al-Nowair Initiative Sheikhha Intisar Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah said that the initiative,

dubbed 'Look At The Bright Side' aims at shedding light on the importance of being happy and to raise awareness on the negative consequences of people's complaints and pessimism.

Sheikha Intisar added that the campaign will include various activities to deliver such message, includ-

ing handing over two-faced hand bracelets with two colors, one is yellow representing happiness, and the other black representing negative thoughts. Sheikha Intisar noted that "looking at the brighter side helps us appreciate every moment in life, and thus enables us to face all obstacles in a more constructive way." —KUNA



KUWAIT: Chairperson of Al-Nowair Initiative Sheikhha Intisar Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah is pictured with children during an event to kick off a campaign promoting positivity in the society yesterday. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Al-Nowair Initiative's team.

Crime

Report

TWO KILLED IN ACCIDENT NEAR BORDER CENTER

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Two citizens in their thirties were killed and a third was injured when their vehicle flipped over near the Radaifa border center. The bodies were recovered by the coroner, while the injured was rushed to hospital by medevac.

Motorcyclist hurt

A Kuwaiti youth was injured when his motorcycle flipped over in Bnaider near the naval base. He suffered a shoulder dislocation and was taken to Adan Hospital.

Suicide attempt

An Ethiopian woman attempted suicide by drowning in Mangaf. Abu Halifa police station was informed and arrested the woman unharmed. A case was filed for investigations.

Man injured in fall

An Egyptian man was rushed to Adan Hospital after falling from a high place in Sabah Al-Ahmad City. Meanwhile, an investigation was opened to determine the circumstances which led to the incident.

Fugitive in police's net

A Kuwaiti woman was arrested in Mangaf after police discovered that she is wanted over a KD 3,546 debt. She was sent to concerned authorities for further action. Separately, Capital police arrested a citizen trading in drugs, and a number of Egyptian nationals wanted for debts.

Fake policeman caught

A citizen was charged with posing as a detective and possession of drugs. The suspect was arrested in Bneid Al-Gar by a patrol with some herbs and a flasher, which he used to pass through traffic jams as an officer. He was sent to the Drugs Control General Department.

Fishermen's Union working to help solve high prices problem: Acting Chairman

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: A former prisoner of war and a man of many hats, Jalal Al-Shammari is currently the Acting Chairman of the Kuwait Fishermen's Union. He worked at the Ministry of Defense from 1984 to 1995, but was honorably discharged because of psychological factors resulting from his incarceration in an Iraqi prison during the invasion of Kuwait. Shammari then worked at the General Administration of Customs, followed by his current job at the Public Authority for Youth and Sports. A seaman at heart, Shammari was elected in 2014 as the head of the Kuwait Fishermen's Union. Kuwait Times spoke to Shammari to learn more about his work and life.



Acting Chairman of the Kuwait Fishermen's Union Jalal Al-Shammari

Kuwait Times: Tell us about yourself.

Shammari: I am the Acting Chairman of the Kuwait Fishermen's Union, Media Director of the Gulf Center for Information and Documents at UNESCO, and also work at the Public Authority for Youth and Sports. In 1991, I returned to Kuwait from Iraq where I was a prisoner during the Iraqi invasion, and got an honorary medal after the liberation of Kuwait. I also received a certificate of appreciation for my military service from the higher organization committee of the third GCC sports festival.

KT: You have been associated for several years with the fisheries sector in Kuwait. How do you see the evolution of the sector?

Shammari: There have been a lot of achievements during the past years, and I'm proud that we could extend the shrimping season.

Union gets fishing equipment at reasonable prices for its members

KT: How has the collaboration with other government organizations benefited the fisheries sector?

Shammari: The Kuwait Fishermen's Union is cooperating with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor by connecting our network with the General Authority for Manpower on the ministry's electronic portal, and we were the first union linked directly with the ministry to make procedures faster, easier and updated automatically.

Future developments

KT: Can you give us an insight on future developments in the sector?

Shammari: The union has been submitting work-

We were the first union linked directly with the (social affairs and labor) ministry to make procedures faster

ing papers to solve the problem of high fish prices. The union is suggesting to allow fishing off Boubyan Island, which has been banned since 2003 for security reasons during the war on Iraq, as there are large amounts of zubaidi, shoum, alhalouaiwa, sabour, baiah and other kinds of fish. We also asked them to allow the use of some fishing methods to increase the catch, such as to allow fishing nets and fishing clamps (long-line) like in other countries, and this can be controlled by the department of agriculture. We also made a proposal to allow fishing two miles away from the coast, and requested to increase fish stocks at marine reserves in Kuwait Bay. The union is proposing to allow Gargeer fishing boats during the shrimping season.

KT: What does the Kuwait Fishermen's Union offer to its members?

Shammari: The Kuwait Fishermen's Union gets fishing equipment at reasonable prices for its members and cheaper than other stores. We also got an increase in the monthly allocation of diesel and petrol for fishermen. We provide updates to members via social networks.

KT: Are you pleased with the achievements of the Kuwait Fishermen's Union?

Shammari: Of course - the union has achieved many, such as delaying the closure of Shamlan Harbor, starting the shrimp season on the first of August in international waters similar to neighboring countries, subsidizing diesel and gasoline prices, getting an exemption of the bank guarantee of KD 250 when hiring fishermen from outside

Kuwait, hiring a representative to serve members in Fahaheel, Fintas and Khairan, raising the irregularities violation to three instead of one over the maturity of the annual support provided, members of the general assembly can get loans and we stopped the exclusion of 78 violating fishing boats.

KT: In your opinion, what are the advantages and problems linked to identifying protected areas? What are the factors influencing the decline in fish stocks in the territorial waters of Kuwait?

Shammari: The advantages are that they allow the fish stocks to increase, but the problems that we are facing is that some fish will migrate to neighboring countries' waters and they are allowed to fish. We suggested to have joint laws between Kuwait and neighboring countries to make the fish stocks increase in our waters.

KT: What future projects you hope the Kuwait Fishermen's Union will implement?

Shammari: Fishermen are having a hard time travelling, finding parking places, and are wasting a lot of time to go to the sea from their homes and buy ice and fishing equipment. So we hope to build a small village for fishermen only, where we can provide an ice factory, fishing equipment store and homes with space for their fishing boats near the sea.

Union managed to delay Shamlan Harbor's closure, starting the shrimp season on the first of August, subsidizing diesel

We suggested to have joint laws between Kuwait and neighboring countries to make the fish stocks increase in our waters

Slow season

KT: What does the Kuwait Fishermen's Union do during the slow season?

Shammari: We always go fishing, but the difference is that during winter, fishermen face trouble with the weather and suffer in the middle of the sea.

KT: Does the Kuwait Fishermen's Union set prices?

Shammari: We cannot set prices, especially retail prices per kilogram. Prices of baskets of fishes go up or down depending on the supply and demand.

KT: What is the reason for high fish prices?

Shammari: The reason for high prices is that the Kuwaiti consumer focuses on one or two kinds of fish such as zubaidi (silver pomphret), hamour (brown spotted reef cod) or shaim (yellowfin seabream), which results in these fish being sold at high prices. The other reason is recommendations by doctors to some patients to eat more fish instead of meat for their health. We are also facing a huge increase in population, with instability in supply due to lack of fishing places. The final reason is the large number of restaurants, hotels and malls that buy and sell fish in Kuwait.

Photo

of the day



KUWAIT: A man teaches his son how to fish using a fishing net. — KUNA photo

“HEINZ MAKES ME TASTIER”

Burger



القباس

Al-Qabas

ARRIVAL OF THE TAX STORM

By Amin Maarafi

Petroleum is considered one of the main national sources of income for the Arab Gulf countries, and after the sudden and quick drop in its prices in world markets, Gulf countries suffered losses estimated in the billions, which negatively affected plans and programs of ambitious development and luxury of its people, because expenses are more than income including in Kuwait.

It has become imperative for the "wise" Kuwaiti government to take sound preventive measures to avoid the deficit catastrophe that will hit it because of its failures, and the lack of its accurate and minute look at things as well as bad estimation, through squandering of oil income with or without reason, which made it think about taking some steps including lifting subsidies on some necessary services and goods, hiking prices and implement taxes which will affect the citizen and reduce the standard of living, luxury and dignified life.

This is contrary to the government's plans that fought hard to raise them. This is considered akin to reducing salaries after increasing them during the years of luxury, and it has been said "take from his pocket and give him a gift". Kuwait is in dire need for diversifying national income sources by hastening to privatize projects, which will reduce its expenditure, provided that they are in the interest of the country and people and not the influential to become richer at the expense of the middle and lower class made up of state ministry employees.

Also, opening the door for diversifying sources of income through varying the economy and work on attracting foreign capital to invest and participate, not only attract it and have it escape after a while because of being not feasible because of some laws that do not encourage local investment. This has helped national capital escape to neighboring countries and others, because capital is a coward and seeks suitable opportunities in other countries to grow.

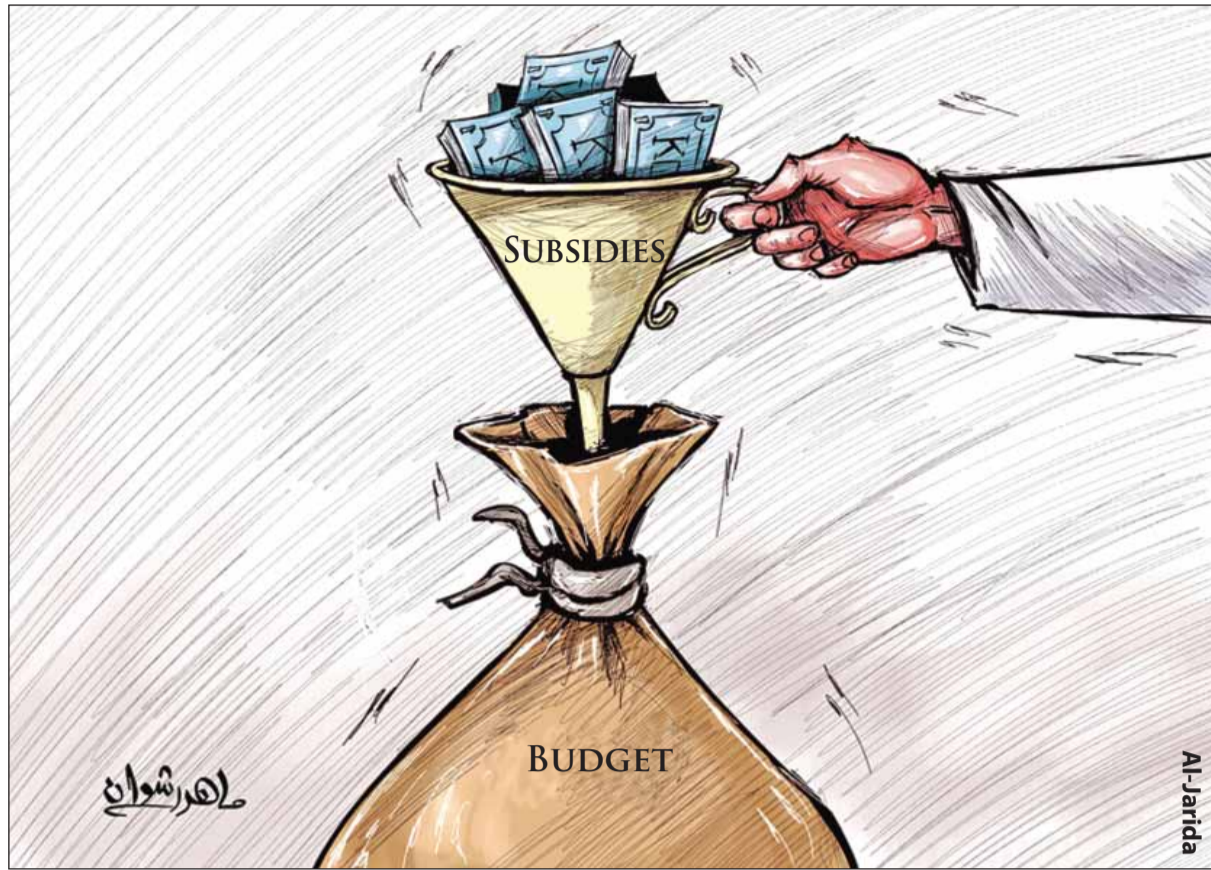
It is necessary to impose taxes to revitalize national income, and it should be first imposed on private sector establishments at realistic percentages, with controlling prices and keeping them at bay, so that the tax will not be at the expense of the simple citizen, and to avoid the deficit, go through hard years and a collapse of the national economy.

May Allah protect Kuwait, its leader and people against all evil.

— Translated by Kuwait Times

MORE KUWAITI IMAMS HIRED

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs appointed more than 43 Kuwaiti imams and muezzins in the past six months, although it was suffering earlier from a lack of interest in these professions. Informed sources said the percentage of the increase in the number of Kuwaiti imams and muezzins reached more than 85 percent, as there were 52 of them, and now there are nearly 100. The sources said this number can increase as procedures of appointing more of them are ongoing. The sources said the reason behind the increase is the incentives approved by the ministry to 'Kuwaitize' the imam and muezzin profession and attracting the largest number of youth to it. — Al-Qabas



النبا

Al-Anbaa

WILL GCC STATES RETURN TO POVERTY?!

By Sami Al-Nisf

People living in or visiting GCC states are acquainted with many food and attire traditions and customs that have been passed down over decades and centuries of austere poverty. For instance, coffee and tea are served in small portions in little glasses and cups to avoid leaving wasteful sips in them. They mainly eat rice, a poor peoples' food, by putting it in large platters around which everybody gathers to eat from their own sides so that each can have enough without taking from others' portions, and eventually, nothing is left or wasted, which is unlike rich peoples who allocate separate dishes per person.

The same applies for using the dishdasha for clothing, which unlike suits, does not involve wasting any fabrics nor needs any additions like shirts and neckties. They can also wear something else, like another dishdasha, for instance, underneath to feel warmer. People have clung to such legacies despite abundance and wealth, which proves that wealth is an exception while poverty is the base.

The difference between richness and poverty of states and individuals is measured by the financial difference between income and needs. The more income exceeds needs, the richer people get; the less income gets compared to needs, the poorer they get. Thanks to good management of its oil resources, GCC states might be the only countries that managed to escape poverty that characterizes Middle East countries (despite their oil, water and other resources) because of several reasons such as mismanagement and corruption that charac-

terized regional revolutionary regimes, wasting many resources on wars and allocating huge budgets for armies in addition to the terrible population growth.

What might happen to some GCC states if oil prices remain low for long years without having real alternative sources of income is that they might suffer from accumulated deficits and have to liquidate many of their investments and cash reserves, which would eventually lead to reducing currency rates of countries that import everything. This will jeopardize GCC citizens' ability to get their basic needs, and these rich countries will return to poverty.

GCC funds have contributed to supporting Arab countries. So, any negative change in GCC's financial assets would have detrimental effects on the entire region. GCC funds might have a negative side in the form of getting large segments of Arabs who have got used to working in GCC states and benefited from their wealth. They are accustomed to luxury, maids, building palaces instead of houses and owning fancy vehicles instead of suitable moderate and small ones.

Some GCC states met a dead end over seven decades ago when the pearling business collapsed and the use of wooden ships in commerce was limited, before they miraculously struck oil. So, are we in the GCC states waiting for another miracle in coming years, or is the time of miracles over and has gone forever?!

— Translated by Kuwait Times

SUSPECTED FUNDS TO TERROR GROUPS INVESTIGATED

KUWAIT: Informed sources said intense investigations are being conducted by state security on information it received from concerned authorities over funds "suspected of being transferred to terrorist organizations abroad." Sources said investigations revealed that individuals and NGOs collect donations in mosques and diwanis illegally and some of it is transferred to suspicious organizations abroad. Intense questioning is going on with persons involved in the transfers and contacts with leaders of the Islamic State (IS) in Syria and Iraq. The sources printed to the security

record of the unlicensed donation collectors, in addition to monitoring sites to attract donors under the pretext of charity, and convincing individuals to donate to Syrians and other affected people. They said that coordination between Kuwaiti security authorities and their counterparts in neighboring countries revealed a strong link between collecting donations and financing terrorist cells, while more information is being collected.

The sources found it strange that in some mosques, some persons urge worshippers to donate through the microphone without permission. They

added the interior ministry is coordinating with the awqaf and social affairs ministries to restrict charity manipulators. Meanwhile, an official source at the social affairs and labor ministry said the ministry sent a letter to the Cabinet with regards to implementing the decision to close unlicensed charity societies, as a grace period had ended at the start of the year.

The source said that over 50 percent of charity societies closed their unlicensed committee premises, while those that are still open will be closed by the ministry. — Al-Qabas

Crime

Report

Niqab-wearing trio arrested for theft

KUWAIT: Ahmadi detectives sent a three-woman gang to the public prosecution charged with theft, taking advantage of the niqab. The three, two Egyptians and a Jordanian, said they committed crimes at various markets. The three were arrested red-handed, and they said they targeted luxury stores. The three were arrested while stealing clothes from a store at Gate Mall in Egaila.

Parental abuse

A citizen accused her husband of breaking the skull of their two-month-old daughter when he beat her. The woman went to Adan police station in a hysterical condition, and gave them a medical report stating her daughter's condition. She said she had differences with her husband, who hit the girl on the head. The deputy prosecutor general ordered the case to be registered as a felony.

Drug possession

A vehicle that did not have a rear license plate revealed two persons using drugs. A security source said police patrol officers in Mahboula noticed the car without a license plate, so they stopped it to issue its driver a ticket. When the driver handed his ID, it was found that he is a citizen and an ex-convict convicted on charges of using drugs, drunkenness and getting banned material into rehabs. When the second person was searched, suspected drugs were found with him. The two were sent to the Drugs Control General Department.

No injuries

Firemen dealt with fires in two camps on the Seventh Ring Road, but no injuries were reported. A fire department source said the camp was empty, and while fighting the fire, another blaze was seen in a nearby camp, so they went there and put that fire out. Investigations are underway to determine the causes.

Search for swindler

A swindler got KD 30,000 from three brothers after convincing them that he will get them into business, then disappeared and switched off his phone. A security source said three brothers went to Mubarak Al-Kabeer police station, and told officers that a person made them believe that he will make them rich within months and asked for KD 10,000 from each of them. When he got the KD 30,000, he left after asking them to be patient. The brothers attempted to call him but failed, so they resorted to the police.

Armed robbery

An Iranian man pressed attempted murder and robbery charges against three persons who attacked him inside a grocery store where he works in Hawally. The suspects reportedly stabbed the storekeeper and stole cash and phone recharge cards worth KD 920 from his store. The man handed police a medical report stating that he had a stab wound in the hand and bruises on the neck. Hawally detectives are looking for the suspects.

Murder threat

A citizen accused his Saudi friend of threatening to kill him and robbing KD 1,400 in a complaint he lodged at Maidan Hawally police station. A security source said a citizen went to Maidan Hawally police station and told them a dispute took place between him and his Saudi friend, and he agreed to meet in a cafe to discuss the matter. When the conversation got heated, the suspect threatened him with a knife and took KD 1,400 before escaping. The case is being handled by detectives.

Maid charged

An Asian woman escaped from her employer's house after stealing jewelry, according to the employer's complaint at Bayan police station. She said that her Asian maid got into her bedroom while she was at the co-op and stole jewelry and cash totaling KD 4,700, and disappeared. Detectives are looking for her. — Al-Anbaa and Al-Rai



VIVA ORGANIZES BLOOD DONATION DAY FOR STAFF

KUWAIT: In partnership with Kuwait Central Blood Bank, VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, organized Blood Donation Day at its offices in Olympia Tower. This initiative is part of VIVA's corporate commitment to support community initiatives to help save lives and endorse good health practices among its staff.

VIVA's employees gathered to donate blood and help save the lives of others. Blood donations during the day were added to the blood bank's reserves to support its blood drive initiatives. The medical team also communicated important messages to donors about the importance of regular blood donation and its safe

process.

VIVA is keen to continue its ongoing socially responsible role in the community by spreading the spirit of goodness amongst Kuwaiti society. We believe at VIVA in taking a holistic approach to our CSR activities, one that engages our employees, and creates goodwill in our communities with a focus on helping to grow and develop the State of Kuwait.

VIVA's Corporate Social Responsibility 'CSR' activities can be reviewed on the company's website at <https://www.viva.com.kw/csr>. This offers a description of each CSR initiative that VIVA has supported, or taken on since its inception.

MEW TO BUILD 6 'GREEN BUILDINGS'

KUWAIT: Assistant Undersecretary for Technical Services and Main Workshops at the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) Mohammad Al-Sharhan said the sector is preparing for establishing mini-departments in every governorate to ease matters for consumers. Sharhan said the plan will be implemented through the establishment of six green buildings to offer all services and be like a mini-ministry, spread over various governorates at a total cost of KD 30 million. He said the sector allocated KD 6 million to establish modern laboratories to analyze water in order to monitor the quality of drinking water and carry out studies and research related to it. The ministry also has another project to build an integrated building to train ministry workers, that will cost KD 5 million. — Al-Qabas



KUWAIT: Old Popular Coffee shops in Kuwait have a pivotal role in showcasing Kuwait's heritage and activities in society, including achievements made through engaging in national, religious and traditional ceremonies. — KUNA





Egypt doctors revolt against police abuses

AFTER 1,000-YEAR SPLIT, POPE, RUSSIA PATRIARCH EMBRACE IN CUBA

'AVOID' VALENTINE'S DAY, PRESIDENT TELLS PAKISTANIS

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan president Mamnoon Hussain has urged the nation to refrain from celebrating Valentine's Day, while other officials blasted it as "vulgar and indecent" as they moved to outlaw festivities. The president made the remarks to a crowd of students on Friday, saying the day—traditionally celebrated in the West by lovers—had no place in the Muslim-majority nation. "Valentine's Day has no connection with our culture and it should be avoided," the president told students at a gathering held to honor one of the country's heroes of independence. Hussain urged the young people to focus on their studies instead.

In Peshawar, the capital of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province, members of the district assembly on Friday unanimously passed a resolution to ban Valentine's Day celebrations. "A particular segment of our society wants to impose Western values and culture on our youth by celebrating Valentine's Day," said the resolution, which was presented by a member of Jamaat-e-Islami, one of the largest Islamist parties in Pakistan. "There is no place in our culture and in our civilization for such an unnecessary and rude day, which aims to spread vulgarity and indecency amongst the youth," it said.

Authorities in the conservative northwestern Kohat district also instructed police to halt any celebrations of Valentine's Day. Despite the ban, an AFP reporter in Peshawar witnessed shops openly selling red balloons, toys and chocolates. A conservative Urdu language newspaper ran an industry-funded advertisement which called the day "a festival of obscenity". "Just ponder...tomorrow our children will start celebrating Diwali of Hindus, Christmas of Christians and who knows what other un-Islamic festivals so let's kick out this festival of obscenity from our lives for the sake of Allah," the last lines of the advertisement said. —AFP



KARACHI: Pakistani demonstrators hold posters as they take part in a protest against Valentine's Day in Karachi yesterday. Pakistan president Mamnoon Hussain has urged the nation to refrain from celebrating Valentine's Day, while other officials blasted it as "vulgar and indecent" as they moved to outlaw festivities. —AFP



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ISRAELI EDUCATORS BATTLE GOVERNMENT OVER TEXTBOOK

JERUSALEM: Israel's main high school civics textbook has become a new battleground in a culture war embroiling the country - pitting politicians against educators in a debate over how much religion and Jewish history should be included in the country's national curriculum. Three of the book's authors have removed their names from chapters they wrote, claiming Education Ministry professionals altered their work beyond recognition to include a nationalist slant.

The book's editor has submitted a six-page protest letter, and the sole Arab member of the committee overseeing civics education has quit in protest. The book is scheduled to be published in March. "It's a book for all the students of Israel - for secular and religious, for Arabs and Druse," said copy editor Yehuda Yaari. "And this book does not represent an approach that matches all the students."

The uproar comes at a time when Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's nationalistic government has been pushing forward with a series of initiatives critics charge undermine the country's democratic values. The country's culture minister has threatened to pull funding for plays and art exhibits she deems hostile to Israel, the government is promoting

legislation that many believe will hurt dovish nonprofit groups, and the Education Ministry recently blocked a novel from the national curriculum because it described a romance between a Jew and an Arab. It all adds up to a climate where critics accuse the government of trying to impose its conservative values on the public.

Excellent and professional

At the center of the storm is Education Minister Naftali Bennett, leader of the Jewish Home party that is closely identified with the West Bank settlement movement. Bennett defended the changes to the civics book as "excellent and professional," and said there was no reason to apologize for instilling the country's youths with what he considers to be Jewish values. "The question is if Israel is a Jewish and democratic state or if it is a state like all other states," he said on Israel's Army Radio. "I, as the minister of education, definitely intend to strengthen the Jewish element."

All Israeli high school students learn civics from the textbook, usually for two years. There are two alternate civics books in Hebrew, but the text under revision will be the source for the mandatory high school

matriculation exam. There will be no alternate in Arabic. The previous edition, called "To be Citizens in Israel: A Jewish and democratic state," published in 2001, numbered 600 pages and offered lessons on the meaning of a Jewish state, democracy, the structure of Israeli government, Diaspora Judaism and Israel's Arab minority.

The civics textbook is an explosive issue in Israel. Previous education ministers have also come under fire for allegedly trying to insert ideology into the curriculum. For the current revision, political scientist Revital Amiran said she was commissioned to write chapters on political parties, constitutional principles, elections, communications and democratic culture four years ago, when the updating process began. Amiran said she asked to remove her name after she saw her chapters were heavily edited or entirely rewritten to sugarcoat discrimination against Arabs.

The eyes of the Arabs

In a section on Israel's legislative branch, Amiran said editors from the ministry added a quote from Amin-Salim Jarjora, an Arab lawmaker who said at the opening of what would become Israel's parliament in 1949 that "the eyes of the Arab citizens of Israel are

looking forward to this Knesset, which relies on justice and the interest of all." At the time, Israel's Arab minority lived under martial law in the aftermath of the war surrounding Israel's establishment in 1948. In addition, an estimated 700,000 Arabs fled or were expelled from their homes during the fighting. "There needs to be a side note that says this is not reflective of all Arab Israelis in society," Amiran said. Yaari, the copy editor, said he was surprised to see a heavy reliance on Jewish philosophers like Moses Maimonides, as well as the Talmud, for texts on universal secular values. "Is this a lesson in civics or in (Jewish) oral law?" he wrote. Bennett pointed to Yaari's sharing of a Facebook post by Breaking the Silence, a group of Israeli veterans critical of their government's policies toward Palestinians, to suggest that Yaari's beliefs clouded his professional judgment. Bennett has refused to release the text to the public ahead of printing.

Civics teacher Amro Igbaria, an Arab citizen of Israel, said he resigned from the professional committee overseeing civics education because Arabs "were excluded from participation and influence on the book." The Israeli parliament convened a discussion on the book in early February. At the hearing, Riki



JERUSALEM: Naftali Bennett, leader of the Jewish Home party, speaks during an interview to The Associated Press in Jerusalem. Israel's high school civics textbook, slated to be published in March, has become the latest in a string of national battles over what Israeli students learn in school. — AP

Tesler, head of the academic forum for civic education and a lecturer at the Open University, said the new textbook represented "a fundamental change in the goals and content" without public discussion. She is organizing protests against the book. — AP



TEHRAN: Iranians attend a rally commemorating the 37th anniversary of the Islamic revolution, in Tehran, Iran on Thursday, Feb 11, 2016. The nationwide rallies commemorate Feb 11, 1979, when followers of Ayatollah Khomeini ousted US-backed Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. — AP

IRANIAN WOMEN AND YOUTH FEEL 'FAILED' BY REFORMISTS

ACTIVISTS SAY WOMEN FACE LEGAL, CULTURAL DISCRIMINATION

ANKARA: Many Iranian women and young people are disillusioned about the upcoming elections, desperate for reform but losing hope in their pragmatic president and his promise of a freer society. The Feb 26 parliamentary poll will see pro-reform candidates, who broadly back President Hassan Rouhani, attempt to overturn the majority held by conservative hardliners in the 290-seat assembly. It will be a test of public support for Rouhani himself ahead of presidential elections next year.

While the vote might not have an influence on foreign policy, which is determined by Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the election of a reformist parliament could strengthen Rouhani's hand to push through economic reforms to open up the country to foreign trade and investment. Rouhani won the presidency in 2013, bolstered by the support of many women and young people who were encouraged by his comments that Iranians deserved to live in free country and have the rights enjoyed by other people around the world. "I am not going to make the same mistake twice. I have decided not to vote," said Setareh, a university graduate in the northern city of Rasht. "I voted for Rouhani - was he able to improve my situation? No."

Rouhani's supporters hoped that his election victory would lead to social change in country where women have lesser rights than men in areas including inheritance, divorce and child custody and are subject to travel and dress restrictions, and strict Islamic law is enforced by a "morality police." But rights campaigners say there has been little, if any, moves to bring about greater political and cultural

freedoms as the president has focused on striking the nuclear accord with world powers to end the international sanctions that have crippled Iran's economy.

Iran rejects any allegations it is discriminating against women, saying it follows Sharia law. Now Rouhani and his moderate allies are struggling to mobilize two of their main support bases - women and young people. The president's promises to loosen Internet restrictions have not been met. Access to social media remains officially blocked, though Rouhani and Khamenei have their own Twitter accounts. This has been a particular grievance among those under 30, who represent more than two-thirds of the 78 million population and were born after the 1979 Islamic revolution that toppled the US-backed Shah. "I am not going to vote. What is the use of voting? My hopes are shattered," said a 27-year-old engineer in Tehran, who refused to give his name.

Highly educated

The president's constitutional powers are limited, with ultimate authority in the hands of Khamenei, who has lambasted the West for using women as a tool to advertise products and satisfy "disorderly and unlawful sexual needs." The Feb 26 elections will also see the public vote for members of the Assembly of Experts, a clerical body that could play a pivotal part in determining Iran's future path in both domestic and foreign policies - as at some point it will have the job of selecting a successor to 76-year-old Khamenei.

Iranian women, who make up more than half of

the population, are among the most highly educated in the Middle East; they have a literacy rate of over 80 percent and account for over 50 percent of university entrants. But under Iranian law, men can divorce their spouses far more easily than women, while custody of children over seven automatically goes to the father. Women have to get permission from their husbands to travel abroad. They are obliged to cover their hair and the shape of their bodies, their testimony as a legal witness is worth half that of a man, and daughters inherit half of what sons do.

While they cannot run for president, they are however able to hold most jobs including other government positions, and can vote and drive. "What will change if I vote?" said Miriam, 26, who could not win custody of her eight-year-old son after getting divorced in the central city of Isfahan. "Can reformist candidates give me equal rights?" A report by the UN special rapporteur on Iran last year said human rights in the country "remained dire" under Rouhani, while separately a UN child rights watchdog said this month that girls faced discriminatory treatment "in family relations, criminal justice system, property rights."

Iran denies any infringement of human rights. Retired government employee Fariba Khamesi, from Tehran, said that even if there had been little evidence of social change, she would not give up her hopes for a freer Iran. "Of course I will vote in the elections. There are many problems like the economic pressure, discriminatory laws against women, but if we don't cast our vote, conservatives will gain more power," the 58-year-old said. — Reuters

SIX UN PEACEKEEPERS AMONG 9 TROOPS KILLED IN MALI ATTACKS

BAKAKO: Six UN peacekeepers were killed and some 30 wounded on Friday when suspected Islamists attacked their base in northern Mali, officials said, while three Malian soldiers died in an ambush as jihadists intensify attacks in the restive region. The six Guinean peacekeepers were killed in an early morning assault on a camp in the northeastern town of Kidal belonging to the United Nations' MINUSMA, according to a Guinean source in the mission and a military source in Conakry. Malian Islamist group Ansar Dine, responsible for several previous assaults, claimed the attack by a "Mauritanian jihadist" as "a message to the crusader aggressors and all those who support them" in a statement carried by a Mauritanian news agency.

The latest attacks highlighted the vulnerability of Mali's sprawling, arid north, where UN troops and Malian soldiers are struggling in their fight against jihadists who seized vast swathes of territory in 2012. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon condemned the "massive and complex" attack on the MINUSMA base, warning that targeting peacekeepers constituted a war crime and pledging to support the Malian government. Suicide bombers drove a vehicle into the base between two rocket launches, then blew it up, the Guinean source in the UN mission said.

The raid coincided with a visit to northern Mali by the new chief of MINUSMA, Mahamat Saleh Annadif, who said the raid was an "odious and irresponsible act" that highlighted the "confusion in the ranks of the enemies of peace". Annadif was in Kidal a week after a peace pact eased tensions in the town, where the arrival of members of a pro-government group early in

February had upset the former rebels in the Coordination of Movements of the Azawad. Azawad is the name of the traditionally nomadic Tuareg people of the desert use for territory they regard as their homeland, straddling the southern Sahara and the Sahel.

Timbuktu attack

In a separate attack, three Malian soldiers were killed and two others were wounded near the fabled city of Timbuktu, a Malian military source said. "Three of our men died today between Timbuktu and Goundam when they were ambushed by jihadists," a Malian officer said. "Two others were wounded but their lives are not in danger." The defense ministry confirmed what it said was a "cowardly" strike.

Malian President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita said there was a pressing need to secure the north. "We have to find a solution to this," he said. "Kidal cannot remain like this... where attacks occur on a daily basis and the international community and we ourselves look on." On Thursday, a customs officer and two civilians were killed in another Islamist strike in the northern town of Hombori, two days after three Malian soldiers died in an explosion while they were patrolling the frontier near Burkina Faso. The latest attack came a week after at least four suspected jihadists and a Malian soldier were killed in clashes at a UN camp for police officers from Nigeria in Timbuktu. It was also a day after the fabled city had celebrated the restoration of its greatest treasure-earthed mausoleums dating to medieval times that were destroyed during an Islamist takeover in 2012. — AFP

EGYPT'S DOCTORS REVOLT AGAINST POLICE ABUSES

CAIRO: When a doctor at a Cairo hospital told a police officer that his cut didn't require stitches, the response was startling and brutal. Police beat up the doctor and a colleague and dragged them off into custody. The incident spiraled into protests by thousands of doctors in the Egyptian capital on Friday, a rare show of public outrage over police abuses that rights groups say have escalated in the country. Such public demonstrations have become unusual in Egypt, where tens of thousands of political dissidents have been arrested and street protests without prior police permits have been banned since 2013.

While protesters gathered outside the building of the doctors' union, known as the Egyptian Medical Syndicate, inside members called for the resignation of the health minister - in part because of his lack of support - and threatened to go on partial strike. The standoff between policemen and doctors suggested that Egypt's powerful security forces may have overstepped their limits by clashing with one of the country's most respected professions. On Friday, the Arabic hashtag "support the doctors' syndicate" was trending on Twitter in Egypt. The Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights, a prominent local rights group, said the doctors' assault was "a reflection of the level of police abuse of authority these days."

The protests were sparked by an assault on Jan 28 in Cairo's Matariya hospital, one of the largest in the city, which serves around 2,000

patients a day drawn from one of Cairo's poorest neighborhoods. The hospital entrance is surrounded by piles of garbage, and the surrounding streets are crowded with hawkers selling everything from used clothes to chickens freshly slaughtered on the pavement. A police office is attached to the hospital building so that officers are on hand to intervene in the regular scuffles.

'Slaughterhouse'

Around 10 minutes' walk away is Matariya's main police station, described by EIPR as a "slaughterhouse" because 14 people have died while in police custody there over the past two years. The deputy head of the hospital, Mamoun Hassan el-Deeb, told The Associated Press that two young doctors named Ahmed Abdullah and Moamen Abdel-Azzem were attacked by two policemen - the officer with a scratch on his forehead, and his colleague. According to the online and televised testimonies of Abdullah and Abdel-Azzem, they were beaten up by the policemen and one officer pulled out his gun and threatened other hospital staff. A vehicle carrying around seven more policemen then rushed from station to arrest the doctors, according to a nurse who witnessed the assault. When one of the doctors tried to resist, he fell to the ground and a policeman stomped on his head with his boots. She spoke on condition of anonymity because of fear of reprisal. — AP

WEST BANK VILLAGE DEFIANT AFTER ISRAELI CRACKDOWN

QABATIYA: With a four-day lockdown and economic sanctions, Israel cracked down hard on the West Bank village of Qabatiya after three of its sons killed a policewoman in a Jerusalem attack. But residents of the hilltop village of 25,000 pledge to keep up their long history of struggle against foreign

masters, come what may. "Here we have resisted every occupation," mayor Mahmoud Kamel said, citing centuries of Ottoman imperial rule, followed by nearly 30 years of British control and Israel's capture of the territory from Jordan in the 1967 Six-Day War.

He was speaking during condo-

lence visits by Palestinian officials to the families of nine young villagers killed since October during a wave of attacks on Israelis. Among the latest to die were three young men from some of Qabatiya's largest families. They were killed by police in Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem on February 3 after shooting dead 19-year policewoman Hadar Cohen and stabbing and wounding another female officer outside the Old City's Damascus Gate. Among the dead Palestinian attackers was Ahmed Zakarneh, also 19.

To his tearful big sister Nisrine he had "a beloved (girlfriend), a job and a family he adored, and he left them to defend the Palestinian cause". In the family home, his mother, surrounded by her 10 surviving children and asking to be identified as "the mother of the martyr", spoke of his "dignity". Hours after the Jerusalem attack Israeli soldiers clamped a blockade on Qabatiya during a security sweep of the area.

Everyone 'in solidarity'
The next day they came to take measurements of the family home in

preparation for demolishing it in reprisal. During the four-day closure of the village, troops arrested 10 relatives and acquaintances of the three attackers, but villagers say they remain undaunted. "Our homes are no more precious than our children," Zakarneh's mother said. "The more they destroy, the more we shall rebuild." In the streets of Qabatiya posters praising the attack in which Ahmed Zakarneh died have joined others, some now faded, of past "martyrs" going back to the first intifada, or uprising, which erupted in 1987. "All the neighbors and all the villagers are in solidarity with us," his mother said. Several of the attacks carried out by the young men of Qabatiya have taken place at the nearest point of contact with Israeli troops, the Jalameh checkpoint between the northern West Bank and the Jewish state. That is where Mohammed Nazzal, 37, crossed into Israel every morning to work, holding an Israeli entry permit. Since the Damascus Gate attack he and other villagers have been cut off from their livelihoods. — AFP



QABATIYA: An Israeli soldier aims a rifle towards Palestinian protesters throwing stones during clashes in the village of Qabatiya, near the West Bank town of Jenin. — AFP



CAIRO: Egyptian doctors shout anti-police slogans as one holds a banner showing a police boot stepping on a medical stethoscope with Arabic slogan reading, "police are thugs," during a protest against rampant police abuses, after two doctors were beaten up by policemen in a Cairo hospital, in front of their headquarters of the Egyptian Medical Syndicate in Cairo on Friday, Feb 12, 2016. — AP

FLORIDA MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO HATE CRIME

SCHNITZLER THREATENS MASSACRE AT MOSQUES

MIAMI: A Florida man has admitted he threatened to firebomb two mosques and shoot worshippers in the wake of the November Paris attacks. Martin Alan Schnitzler pleaded guilty in the state of Florida to obstructing persons in the free exercise of religious beliefs, a hate crime, the US Justice Department said Friday. Hours after the November 13 attacks in Paris left 130 people dead and hundreds wounded, Schnitzler called and left messages threatening a massacre at two mosques in Florida's Pinellas County. Schnitzler later said his messages were prompted by the Paris attacks. In one message, he said that he would have a militia go to the mosque and "firebomb you, shoot whoever is there on sight in the head." "I don't care if they're fucking two years old or a hundred," he added.

Schnitzler left his name in the messages and police had no trouble tracing the cell phone from which he made the call. "Yes, I'm a red-blooded American watching the news in France. I'm over this shit. I'm calling all mosques in Pinellas County. I'm bringing it to you, baby," he said in a voicemail message left for the Islamic Society of Pinellas County. "Guard your children. I don't care if you're extremists or not. I'm tired of your shit. Get out of my fucking country. And I'm gonna bomb your fucking location."

In another voicemail, to the Islamic Society of St Petersburg, Schnitzler vowed to "personally have a militia that's going to come down to your Islamic Society of Pinellas County, firebomb you, shoot whoever is there on sight in the head." Schnitzler faces up to 20 years in prison. "The right to worship as one chooses, free from threats and intimidation, is one of the core principles upon which our great nation was founded," said US Attorney Lee Bentley. A wave of attacks and threats against Muslims took place across the United States after the tragedy in Paris and a shooting in San Bernardino, California that killed 14 people.—AFP

TRUMP: THE ART OF THE POLITICAL RALLY

MANCHESTER: Agence France-Presse has launched a weekly series of reporters' blogs taking readers behind the scenes of the 2016 US election for a look at the events and attitudes shaping the White House race. The third post in the series comes from New Hampshire, the Granite State, which held its presidential primaries on February 9, won by Democratic White House hopeful Bernie Sanders and Republican frontrunner Donald Trump:

'I came for some entertainment'

To most people overseas it defies logic. How can a former reality TV star-best known for making money, a spectacularly ugly divorce in the 1990s and wanting to ban Muslims from entering the United States-ever win the New Hampshire primary? But go to a Donald Trump rally and it starts to become clear. The snow was falling thick and fast when I joined the mass of journalists queuing up outside the venue. It was dark, well below freezing and the wind was perishing. Out front, members of the public started arriving more than an hour before the doors opened. By the time we got inside, I could no longer feel my toes and wrenched my boots off in agony to knead them back to life.

By the time Trump finally walked out on stage-half an hour late because of a snowstorm-several thousand people had braved hazardous driving conditions to see their man. It was an extraordinary turnout. Jeb Bush welcomed a tenth of that number in a school canteen two days earlier. Marco Rubio pulled in around 1,000 - lured with promises of a pancake breakfast, which was later downgraded to coffee and muffins. "I came for some entertainment I guess," explained one 19-year-old student as he waited for Trump. "It'll be phenomenal," said Brian Carey, who runs a construction company and has installed a custom-made "Make America Great Again!" sign on his barn. "It's not coming down," he said.

Opera, Beatles, Elton John?

The intimate locales favored by his rivals are not for Trump. Never mind that in New Hampshire's homespun brand of retail politics, the practice is to shake hands and take selfies in diners. Trump simply booked the biggest venue in the state, the 10,000-seat Verizon Wireless Arena. And as the MC pointed out, Mr Trump was paying out of his own pocket. While Bush and Rubio begin their town halls with the oath of allegiance, Trump supporters shopped for snacks and sodas from concession carts, as if they were going to a basketball game or a rock concert.

As they took their seats, the loudspeakers blasted out the famous Puccini aria "Nessun Dorma," the Beatles and Elton John-an off choice in the eyes of some hardcore American conservatives. As one member of the audience put it: "Why do we have to listen to this queer liberal?" Then the MC advised people not to resort to violence in the event of protests. He appealed for calm and said law enforcement would step in if need be. We were clearly in for a different kind of night. In Europe, politicians often go to great lengths to pretend they are ordinary Joes. Trump loves nothing more than telling everyone how rich and successful he is. He's a larger-than-life billionaire who makes people feel that a little bit of his success can rub off on them. It's all about image. And power. The stage was dressed in a red, white and blue neon "Make America Great Again!" sign and a presidential looking row of US flags.

Making an entrance

The main man's arrival was heralded by a campaign video that included a picture of his family in a gold-leaf sitting room, his youngest son astride a stuffed lion. The minute he strode out, the crowd went crazy. The moment he started speaking, they were captivated. The more he insulted the countries and people he blames for the ills of modern America, the more they loved him. Would any other politician call a rival a pussy? Trump did of Ted Cruz, taking his lead from a woman in the audience. "She said he's a pussy. That's terrible," he said, shaking his head in faux outrage as the crowd erupted into wolf whistles and applause.

So well known are his policies, that they have become catchphrases. "Who's going to pay for the wall?" he shouted. "Mexico," the arena screamed back. "U-S-A! U-S-A! U-S-A!" Of course it is easy to sneer at the candidate and his supporters. At every step he has broken the rules of electioneering. Yet somehow he is standing at the head of the field through sheer charisma and force of personality.

Why Trump?

While analysts in Washington and New York see America as a patchwork of Democrat states and Republican states, of black voters and blue collar cities, many people are tired of being viewed as vote banks, whose problems are promptly forgotten. Disenfranchised Americans turn to him because they are turned off politics and in its place he offers celebrity. They are angry: with career politicians, with the mainstream media and with the system. Several members of the audience I approached refused to talk to a journalist. He's a showman who takes the stage like a rock star, sending fans dizzy with excitement. It's not really politics, it's entertainment.—AFP

SHOOTING AT PHOENIX-AREA SCHOOL 'A MURDER-SUICIDE'

GLENDALE: A shooting at a suburban Phoenix high school that killed two 15-year old girls and caused panic among parents was a murder-suicide, police said. Police announced that a suicide note was found at the scene of the shooting Friday morning near the cafeteria area of Independence High School in Glendale. They said the girls each were shot once, were declared dead at the scene and a weapon was found near the bodies. "Information gathered by detectives reveal the two girls were very close friends, appeared to also be in a relationship," Glendale police spokeswoman Tracey Breeden said in a statement Friday afternoon.

It is believed nobody witnessed the shooting, Breeden said. Both teens have been identified, but Breeden said "their names will not be confirmed or released at this time by the police department due to their juvenile status." Hours before the lockdown of the school was lifted, hundreds of worried parents crowded the parking lots of nearby discount and convenience stores. One woman gnawed on her fingernails as she spoke on a cellphone, while another had tears streaming down her face. Other parents chain-smoked as they waited for news.

Cheryl Rice said she went to a store after a friend called about the shooting and asked about Rice's 15-year-old daughter. But the girl called to say she was safe as Rice arrived at the store. She said it was horrible waiting for word about her child. "You don't know if it's your daughter or not. You don't know who's being bullied. You don't know who is being picked on. You don't know anything. It could be anybody," Rice said. Lanie Walter, who is a senior at the school, heard ambulances on her way to campus but didn't think much of it until her first class was locked down.

When she called her parents to tell them she was safe, "my mom was actually really relieved because she was watching it on the news," she said. Parents were bused to the school to be reunited with their children. Some cut through a nearby field as they rushed toward their kids in emotional reunions. Other students who got permission from their parents left campus on their own. The Glendale Union High

School District alerted parents to the shooting through emails and automatic phone calls and released information on social media, Superintendent Brian Capistran said.

Students typically are not allowed to use their cellphones during lockdowns, but as calls from parents flooded the district, officials asked teachers to have students call family, Capistran said. Social workers and counselors will be available to students and staff when school resumes Tuesday, the

superintendent said. Minnie Kramer, mother of a 15-year-old student, said she rushed out of work when she got a text from her son right after the shooting, telling her that he was OK. As she waited to be reunited with her son, Kramer said she worried about whether any of his friends were harmed. "I know that my son is OK, but, emotionally, you don't know what it does, especially at 15, especially if it's someone he knew," Kramer said.—AP



ARIZONA: Parents wait to reunite with their children in Glendale, Ariz after two students were shot and killed at Independence High School in the Phoenix suburb. — AP

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HAVANA: Pope Francis (left) and the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Kirill kiss during a historic meeting in Havana. — AFP

AFTER 1,000-YEAR SPLIT, PONTIFF AND RUSSIA PATRIARCH EMBRACE IN CUBA

POPE FRANCIS, PATRIARCH KIRILL IN HISTORIC MEETING

HAVANA: Pope Francis and Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill embraced and kissed on Friday in a historic meeting, uniting to issue a global appeal for the protection of Christians under assault in the Middle East. Nearly 1,000 years after the Eastern and Western branches of Christianity split apart, the meeting at an airport terminal in Cuba was the first ever between a Roman Catholic pope and a Russian Orthodox patriarch. "In many countries of the Middle East and North Africa whole families, villages and cities of our brothers and sisters in Christ are being completely exterminated," they said in a joint declaration in apparent reference to violence by militant groups such as Islamic State.

"Their churches are being barbarously ravaged and looted, their sacred objects profaned, their monuments destroyed." They also said large-scale humanitarian aid was required to tend to refugees fleeing Syria and Iraq, lamenting the "massive exodus of Christians." Cuban President Raul Castro stood to the side during the ceremony, enjoying another moment in the international limelight after receiving Francis last year and restoring diplomatic relations with the United States recently, meeting President Barack Obama in Panama in April.

Cuba is also sponsoring peace talks between the Colombian government and leftist rebels seeking to end a 50-year war. "If it continues this way, Cuba will be the capital of unity," Francis said. "Now what's left is Colombia," Castro told reporters after the pope boarded his plane for Mexico, where Francis arrived on Friday evening for a five-day visit to some of the poorest and most violent corners of the country. Dissidents in Cuba's one-party political system have remarked on the government's willingness to promote dialogue for foreigners while dismissing political opponents as mercenaries doing the bidding of the United States.

'Finally'

The two religious leaders, guests of a Communist government, came together only a week after the encounter was announced. Such a meeting had eluded their predecessor, but Francis had issued a standing invitation to meet anytime, anywhere. The moment came while Kirill was visiting the Caribbean island and Francis added a brief stop on his way from Rome to a long-scheduled visit to Mexico. "Finally," Francis said as he and Kirill entered through doors on opposite sides of a room at Havana airport.

"We are brothers." Francis, dressed in white with a skullcap, and Kirill, wearing a tall, domed hat that dangled a white stole over black robes, joined arms and kissed on both cheeks. "It is very clear that this is the will of God," Francis said. Their meeting carried political overtones, coming at a time of Russian disagreements with the West over Syria and Ukraine. The Russian Orthodox Church is closely aligned with the Kremlin, which is in turn an ally of Cuba. The Argentine pontiff helped the rapprochement between the United States and Cuba after more than five decades of estrangement.

The pope, leader of the world's 1.2 billion Catholics, is seeking to repair a much longer rupture. Eastern Orthodoxy split with Rome in 1054. The declaration called for Europe to remain faithful to its Christian roots and restated several traditional Christian teachings such as opposition to abortion and marriage being reserved for a man and a woman. The Russian Orthodox Church takes a stronger stand on these issues in public than Pope Francis, who supports these teachings but often speaks of other issues such as poverty and protecting the environment, which were also mentioned in the text. — Reuters

HISTORIC POPE-PATRIARCH DECLARATION: KEY POINTS

HAVANA: Pope Francis and Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill on Friday held the first meeting in nearly a millennium between heads of their two branches of the Christian church. Here are key points from their joint declaration:

Church unity

"For nearly one thousand years... we have been divided by wounds caused by old and recent conflicts, by differences inherited from our ancestors. We are pained by the loss of unity." It is our hope that our meeting may contribute to the re-establishment of this unity willed by God. "We urge Catholics and Orthodox in all countries to learn to live together in peace and love."

Christians suffering

"In many countries of the Middle East and North Africa whole families, villages and cities of our brothers and sisters in Christ are being completely exterminated... We call upon the international community to act urgently in order to prevent the further expulsion of Christians from the Middle East." "We wish to express our compassion for the suffering experienced by the faithful of other religious traditions who have also become victims of civil war, chaos and terrorist violence."

Terrorism

"The international community must undertake every possible effort to end terrorism through common, joint and coordinated action." "Attempts to justify criminal acts with religious slogans are altogether unacceptable. No crime may be committed in God's name."

Ukraine

"We invite all the parts involved in the conflict to prudence, to social solidarity and to action aimed at constructing peace. We invite our churches in Ukraine to work towards social harmony, to refrain from taking part in the confrontation, and to not support any further development of the conflict."

European values

"We give thanks to God for the current unprecedented renewal of the Christian faith in Russia, as well as in many other countries of Eastern Europe." "At the same time, we are concerned about the situation in many countries in which... political forces, guided by an often very aggressive secularist ideology, seek to relegate them to the margins of public life." "While remaining open to the contribution of other religions to our civilization, it is our conviction that Europe must remain faithful to its Christian roots."

Poverty, refugees

"We cannot remain indifferent to the destinies of millions of migrants and refugees knocking on the doors of wealthy nations... The growing inequality in the distribution of material goods increases the feeling of the injustice of the international order that has emerged."

Marriage

"We are concerned about the crisis in the family in many countries... The family is based on marriage, an act of freely given and faithful love between a man and a woman... We regret that other forms of cohabitation have been placed on the same level as this union."

Abortion

"We call on all to respect the inalienable right to life. Millions are denied the very right to be born into the world. The blood of the unborn cries out to God."

Euthanasia, Eugenics

"The emergence of so-called euthanasia leads elderly people and the disabled to begin to feel that they are a burden on their families and on society in general. We are also concerned about the development of biomedical reproduction technology, as the manipulation of human life represents an attack on the foundations of human existence, created in the image of God." — AFP

GEORGIANS HAIL RUSSIA WAR PROBE AS 'SPARK OF HOPE'

GORI: On August 9 2008, Tsitsino Vazagashvili's daughter and grandson were outside her block of flats when a Russian bomb exploded. Her daughter, shielding her son with her body, was killed. The boy survived but, now 21, walks with a permanent limp. More than seven years later, 76-year-old Vazagashvili and other Georgians hope an international probe into the brief Russia-Georgia war of 2008 will finally bring those responsible to justice. On January, 27, the International Criminal Court (ICC) opened an investigation into crimes committed in the conflict, which was sparked by the Moscow-backed breakaway region of South Ossetia.

The ICC said it will probe allegations of murder and forcible transfer of population as well as war crimes such as attacks against civilians. International watchdogs such as Human Rights Watch have hailed the decision as long overdue. During the war, the Russian military bombed and occupied Vazagashvili's home city of Gori, about 25 kilometers south of South Ossetia's capital, Tskhinvali. "Now there is a spark of hope that those who killed innocent civilians will be punished," said Vazagashvili. "The Russian military killed my daughter and left my grandson disabled. The years have passed and I am still waiting for them to be prosecuted."

For Vazagashvili, who still wears black to mourn her daughter, a history lecturer, the horrors of the war remain vivid. "Russians dropped three bombs outside our block of flats. Fifteen people were killed. Their body parts were scattered all around the courtyard,"

she recalled. Her neighbor, 60-year-old Zoya Muradova, lost her leg in the bombing and is bed-bound. "I was in the courtyard when the Russians dropped bombs. A pregnant woman was killed in front of my eyes. Our building was in flames," she said. "My life ended that day. I will spend the rest of my days bedridden," Muradova said, bursting into tears. "But today, I feel new faith that those responsible will be convicted."

'No one is immune'

In Tserovani, a windswept settlement built in eastern Georgia for people displaced from South Ossetia, many said they felt optimistic that the ICC would bring war criminals to justice. "Let's hope all those who orchestrated the ethnic cleansing get jailed by the international tribunal," said Mariam Javakhishvili, 19, a grocery store assistant.

But others, such as 66-year-old Robinzon Tskhomelidze, said they were sceptical. "What happened in South Ossetia was ethnic cleansing orchestrated by the powers-that-be. I doubt they will ever be prosecuted," he said. "Can you imagine a president of a nuclear superpower in the dock?" he asked, apparently referring to Russian President Vladimir Putin, who was prime minister during the war. But Ana Natsvlshvili, head of the Young Lawyers Association, a Tbilisi-based rights group that documented evidence of war crimes, insisted there is "more than enough evidence of war crimes." "No one is immune from prosecution, whether they are a head of state or government," she said. — AFP



BRUSSELS: Georgian Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili (left) is welcomed by European Council President Donald Tusk prior to a bilateral meeting at the European Council headquarters in Brussels. — AFP

FRENCH 104-YEAR-OLD TWINS SAY CLOSENESS IS THE SECRET

ONZAIN: When they were born premature in 1912, doctors gave Paulette and Simone the slimmest chance of survival. But 104 years later, the French twins say there's a simple secret to their longevity: sticking together. With their long white hair tied back in ponytails and gold spectacles perched on their noses, Paulette Olivier and Simone Thiot are happy to

pose for the camera at their retirement home in Onzain, central France.

"This will be fun!" they say in chorus. There is no official confirmation that Paulette and Simone are the oldest twins in France, but they appear to be the likely holders of the title. "We're being very spoiled," one of them says as they show off the flowers given by the

local council and fellow retirement home residents to mark their 104th birthday. Paulette and Simone were born in the central village of Limeray at 11:00 am on January 30, 1912 to Marie Lamolie, a dressmaker, and her husband Joseph, a carpenter.

Their entry to the world did not bode well. "We were premature," says Simone, who can still get around these days without the help of a Zimmer frame. "We were due in March but we were born in January. They gave us a very small chance of surviving. I didn't even weigh a kilo. And you, just three pounds," she says to her sister. "They had to keep us wrapped up for four months." Paulette, widowed at 36, worked as a hairdresser for 15 years in Algeria, then in Paris. Simone, a dressmaker like her mother, lost her husband when she was 64.

Neither had any children.

The twins, whose only brother died in accident at the age of 99, insist it's their lasting friendship that has kept them going all this time. "We are still alive because we have always stayed close," says one. "We keep our independence—each of us has her own room—but we only need to cross the corridor to see and talk to each other. "We pity old people who are alone with no one to visit them." Paulette and Simone spend their time keeping up with current affairs, reading, watching television and listening to music. Simone also regularly writes poems which she keeps in a notebook. Any other tips for a long life? "A simple life—no excess. No alcohol. And lots of sport. "We did gymnastics for a long time, and a huge amount of cycling—almost every day." — AFP



ONZAIN, France: Centenary twins, Simone Thiot (left) and Paulette Olivier, smile inside the Ephad 'Les Bois Blancs' in Onzain, central France. — AFP

FOR REFUGEES, FINDING WORK IN EUROPE AN UPHILL BATTLE

VIENNA: Antonio Piani appears to have beaten the odds stacked against refugees finding work in Europe, but the hotel where he works was set up specifically to employ people like him. The 40-year-old says the janitor's job is his first permanent position since leaving Iran more than 11 years ago - a disheartening message for the hundreds of thousands of new arrivals seeking work in Austria, Germany, Sweden and the few other prosperous EU countries willing to take them. "It's bound to get more difficult," said Piani, an Iranian Christian who changed his name to Antonio when he was baptized. "Refugee numbers are increasing and so is the sentiment that they are taking jobs from the locals."

Nearly 40 percent of those unemployed in Austria were classified as migrants or of a migrant background, according to statistics cited in April by Volkshilfe, Austria's largest NGO dedicated to helping the underprivileged. In Sweden, official figures released Thursday found that 38 percent of the 386,000 registered as unemployed were non-European migrants. And German Labor Office figures from last month show a more

than 60-percent rise in the number of non-European migrants without a job over the year.

Lack of documents

And numbers are only half the story. Biases in hiring, lack of documents from passports to diplomas, and legal status needed to obtain a job, provide significant hurdles to refugees looking for employment. In Austria, fears are being magnified by rising unemployment, and the more than 30,000 new arrivals looking for jobs this year have helped hoist the xenophobic Freedom Party to topping popularity polls. But the job-stealing refugee is only one of the perceptions that make finding a job difficult.

Type-casting refugees as qualified for only the most menial jobs also works against them, even if it could be true for at least some. Thirty percent of Afghans questioned by the Austrian Employment Office in a recent informal survey of 898 refugees granted asylum never attended school. Near the other end of the scale, 68 percent of Syrians - the largest group - either held a university degree, a high-school diploma or a trade



VIENNA: Hajar Al Jashame, a migrant from Iraq who was granted asylum in Austria, speaks during an interview with The Associated Press at an integrate, NGO facility working to integrate refugees, in Vienna, Austria. — AP

qualification, as did 90 percent of Iranians.

Depressing results

Complicating matters, many arrivals not only lack passports but also paperwork reflecting their education. Johannes Kopf,

who heads the Austrian employment office, sees "optimistic results" for job seekers from Iran, Syria and Iraq and "depressing results" for Afghans. Even the better-qualified candidates face substantial hurdles. In most cases, only migrants who have been granted asylum can work legally, but that process can take up to two years. Then comes the ability to speak German - crucial for employment.

Yet the challenge of learning the language is made even more daunting by a shortage of courses. Even as refugee numbers continued to climb last year, the national employment office announced that it had cut its classes to 15,000 from 23,000 in 2014. As opportunities tighten, some may decide it's all not worth it. As of November, the status of all of those who qualified for asylum since then is subject to review in three years to see whether it is safe for them to return to their home countries. That is bound to crimp the motivation to assimilate. Hajar Al Jashame doesn't fall into that category. But as the 20-year-old Iraqi opens up about her job search in halting but serviceable German, it quickly becomes evident that even those who are here to stay don't have it easy.

'A girl without a headscarf'

Four years after arrival she has managed to complete grade 9 in an Austrian school. Not enough, she says. "They all want a woman with at least grade 10," she says of responses to her job applications as a dental assistant. And when she asked her own dentist, she was told he wants "a girl without a headscarf." "I asked, 'how come?' I was told 'that's how it is,'" she says. Austrian social workers relate similar cases of super-market cashiers told to take off their headscarves while working.

Her one Austrian girlfriend is no help. Al Jashame says she turned to her once for motivation, only to be told "you foreigners are taking our jobs." Bahram Zai Mohammad Shafak also remains unemployed - but it's not for lack of trying. Social workers say the 22-year old from Afghanistan finished high school at home but had no diploma to prove it when he arrived. Three years later, he too has an Austrian grade 9 education and has sent out more than 50 applications since April for an apprenticeship as a plumber or mechanic. — AP

NEPAL MAOISTS MARK 20 YEARS SINCE START OF CIVIL WAR

KATHMANDU: Nepal's former Maoist rebels paid tribute to fallen comrades yesterday in a ceremony marking 20 years since the start of an insurgency that transformed the Himalayan nation from a Hindu monarchy to a secular republic. On 13 February, 1996, Maoist guerrillas attacked a police post in western Nepal's Rolpa district, launching a decade-long civil war that eventually claimed some 16,000 lives and left hundreds of people missing.

Hundreds of Maoist cadres gathered at the party's office in Kathmandu, waving red flags as senior leaders placed garlands on the "martyr's pillar"—a monument built to honor fallen and missing combatants. The rebels laid down arms in 2006 before entering politics and eventually helping to draft the country's new national constitution.

Introduced in September, the charter established Nepal as a secular federal republic, reflecting Maoist ideology.

"The constitution is the product of our war and we... take ownership of the new constitution," Maoist chief Pushpa Kamal Dahal, better known by his nom-de-guerre Prachanda, told cheering cadres in Kathmandu. But for many ordinary Nepalis, who voted for the party in Nepal's first constituent assembly elections held in 2008, the Maoists failed to deliver on their pledge of bringing equality and progress to the deeply feudal country.

"Many people lost their lives, many went missing or became disabled so things would change in this country," Rina Tamang, a shopkeeper in Kathmandu said. "Now we have a new constitution but we are still waiting for the change the Maoists promised us. Personally, I have no hope left anymore," the 39-year-old said. After sweeping to victory in the 2008 polls, the former rebels soon came under fire for abandoning revolutionary ideals

and developing a taste for luxury. They alienated their voter base and crashed out in Nepal's second constituent assembly elections in 2013, finishing in third place. "A few leaders compromised on their promises, a few betrayed the revolution for lucrative positions in government... all this needs to be rectified to bring real change," said former guerrilla, Laxmi Prasad Chaulagain. The constitution, the first drawn up by elected representatives, was meant to bolster Nepal's transformation into a peaceful democratic republic after decades of political instability. But it has instead sparked violence, with more than 50 people killed in clashes between police and demonstrators from Nepal's Madhesi ethnic minority, who say it leaves them politically marginalized. Ongoing discussions between the government and protesting parties have failed to yield an agreement.—AFP



KATHMANDU: Members of the All Nepal Free Student Union Revolutionary movement, a sister wing of the Unified Maoist party, take part in a rally to mark the 21st People's War Day in Kathmandu yesterday.—AFP



ISLAMABAD: Attendees listen to Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Muhammad Ahmed Hussain addressing the Paigham-e-Islam conference in Islamabad. Over five thousand Ulema, Mashaikh and scholars attended the Paigham-e-Islam conference, voicing concern over the rise of terrorism.—AFP

VENEZUELAN LEADER UNDER FIRE AS RIVALS VOW OUSTER

CARACAS: Venezuela's opposition on Friday vowed to speed up efforts to oust President Nicolas Maduro after he defied lawmakers by securing emergency powers to intervene in the crisis-hit oil state's economy. The maneuvers intensified a political standoff that has raised fears of unrest and deepening economic suffering in the oil-rich, violence-plagued South American state. The Supreme Court on Thursday overruled opposition from lawmakers by approving Maduro's decree to place the country in a 60-day state of economic emergency.

The opposition reacted with outrage, accusing Maduro of expanding economic policies that they say are ruining the country. "In the next few days we will have to present a concrete proposal for the departure of that national disgrace that is the government," the opposition leader of the National Assembly legislature, Henry Ramos, told a news conference Friday. In response Maduro told sympathizers in Caracas "not to underestimate the threats Henry Ramos made today against peace and stability of the Republic."

Maduro's decree gives his administration special temporary powers to take over private companies' resources and impose currency controls among other measures. "The Supreme Court of Justice has spoken, its word is holy and must be respected by all parts of society and all institutions," Maduro said. Ramos and other leaders in the opposition MUD coalition had promised to devise a way within six months to oust Maduro, possibly through a new constitution or a referendum, before his current mandate expires in 2019.

"Nobody doubts now that that six-month timeframe is too long," Ramos said Friday. It was not clear however how the opposition might overcome resistance from the court, which critics say is packed with Maduro's supporters. Another senior opposition leader, Henrique Capriles, said he expected the court would overrule a constitutional amendment against Maduro and that a referendum would be better. "The moment has come," Capriles said Friday. "This government does not want to change anything and every day the situation gets worse."

He acknowledged obstacles to a referendum too, however, alleging that the electoral authorities in charge of such a vote are under Maduro's influence. The United States, which Maduro has accused of interfering in Venezuela's affairs, expressed "dismay" at the court ruling. "I am dismayed Venezuela Supreme Court is interfering with National Assembly," US Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Roberta Jacobson wrote on Twitter. "Separation of powers and democratic process must be respected."

Economic 'catastrophe'

Venezuela has the world's largest known oil reserves but has suffered as crude prices have fallen sharply. Citizens are suffering shortages of basics such as toilet paper and cooking oil. Inflation is higher than 140 percent, according to the government's latest estimate. "We are not going to get our breakfast, lunch and dinner through laws," said Orien Amundarain, a teacher in the street in Caracas. "This argument about who is right or wrong will not get us anywhere."—AFP

US APPROVES F-16 SALE TO PAKISTAN

INDIA SUMMONS US ENVOY IN PROTEST

WASHINGTON: The United States said Friday it had approved selling up to eight Lockheed Martin F-16 fighter jets to Pakistan, along with training, radar and other equipment, worth a total of \$699 million. The Defense Security Cooperation Agency, which coordinates such foreign arms sales, said it had informed Congress of the plans on Thursday. "This proposed sale contributes to US foreign policy objectives and national security goals by helping to improve the security of a strategic partner in South Asia," it said in a statement. "The proposed sale improves Pakistan's capability to meet current and future security threats."

The F-16 aircraft would allow Pakistan's Air Force to operate in all kinds of weather, at night, as well as "enhance Pakistan's ability to conduct counter-insurgency and counterterrorism operations." Pakistan's arch-rival India said it was "disappointed" by the possible sale. "We are disappointed at the decision of the Obama administration to notify the sale of F-16 aircraft to Pakistan," Indian Foreign Ministry spokesman Vikas Swarup said on Twitter. "We disagree with their rationale that such arms transfers help to combat terrorism."

Meanwhile, Indian External Affairs Ministry summoned American Ambassador Richard Verma yesterday to convey New Delhi's displeasure over Obama administration's decision to sell F-16 fighter aircraft to Pakistan. The External Affairs Ministry Spokesman, Vikas Swarup, said yesterday: "India - we are disappointed at the decision of Obama administration to notify the sale of F-16 aircraft to Pakistan. We disagree with their rationale that such arms transfers help to combat terrorism. The record of the last many years in this regard speaks for itself. The US Ambassador will be summoned by the Ministry of External Affairs to convey our displeasure." Later, Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar conveyed New Delhi's displeasure and disappointment over the decision after summoning Verma into the External Affairs Ministry office at the South Block, situated next to Parliament. Jaishankar expressed to the US envoy India's concerns that US military aid to Pakistan may be used for anti-India activities.—Agencies

THAI STUDENTS MOCK MILITARY AT MATCH IN RARE SHOW OF DISSENT

BANGKOK: Thai university students lampooned the military at a football game yesterday in a rare act of open defiance against the junta, which has strangled political expression since seizing power two years ago. In a colorful parade around the Bangkok stadium where crowds gathered to watch a match between two of kingdom's top universities, students brought out elaborate hand-made floats and banners mourning prolonged military rule.

The parade is a long-running tradition at the annual game between rival universities Thammasat and Chulalongkorn and is often provocative and political. But the show has taken on new significance in the past two years as a rare chance to speak out under the military junta that outlawed all political activities in Thailand after toppling an elected government in May 2014. "What is the reason we have soldiers [in power]? No one dares to ask," read one banner marched around the arena by students before the game.

Coup leader turned Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-cha says he was forced to take power to restore order after months of mass street protests. But critics have questioned his intentions in response to his sliding timeline for fresh elections. Police allowed yesterday's parade to go forward despite a ban on political gatherings, but officers did detain a student activist leader who attended the game and had a standing arrest warrant for a previous protest against military corruption. Police also ordered students to adjust one parade float by sawing off part of a paper mache gun to make it look "less real," students said.

The float took a shot at the military-appointed drafters who are penning a new constitution to replace the charter torn up after the coup. It featured a larger-than-life effigy of the drafting committee chairman alongside a gun pointed at a bloody puppet. "It represents that a constitution that comes from the army will destroy the rights of the people," said a student who helped make the float and requested anonymity. The proposed charter is scheduled to go up for a public referendum in July, but has already been slammed by critics as anti-democratic.

Thailand has seen 19 constitutions come and go since absolute monarchy was abolished in 1932, with a string of military coups putting the pin in attempts at full-fledged democracy. The host of this year's football match, Thammasat University, was founded in 1934 by Thailand's foremost democracy figure Pridi Banomyong and holds a hallowed place in the hearts of the kingdom's pro-democracy movement. For decades it incubated student activism and debate against the military and elite stranglehold on the country. It was also the site of bloody crackdowns on student protesters by arch-royalists and security forces in the 1970s. Since the 2014 military power grab, Thammasat students have been at the forefront of the small but creative anti-coup protests that have taken place.—AFP

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PAJU: The vehicles of South Korean businessmen returning from the Kaesong joint industrial area sit on a roadside after passing through a checkpoint near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) separating North and South Korea, in Paju. North Korea expelled all South Koreans from the jointly-run Kaesong industrial zone and seized their factory assets. — AFP

US DEPLOYS MORE PATRIOT MISSILES IN SOUTH KOREA

N KOREA DEPORTS S KOREAN CITIZENS, SEIZING ASSETS

SEOUL: The United States temporarily deployed an additional Patriot missile battery in South Korea in response to North Korea's nuclear test and a long-range rocket launch, ahead of talks next week to set up an even more sophisticated US missile defense in a move that has worried China and Russia. The new tough stance follows South Korea's decision to shut down an inter-Korean factory park that had been the rival Koreas' last major symbol of cooperation, but that Seoul said had been used by North Korea to fund its nuclear and missile programs.

North Korea responded by deporting South Korean citizens, seizing South Korean assets and vowing to militarize the park. South Korea on Friday cut off power and water supplies to the industrial park and announced that its planned talks with the United States on deploying the Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD, one of the most advanced missile defense systems in the world,

could start next week. Officials say they have yet to set a specific starting date for the talks.

In the meantime, the US military command in South Korea said Saturday that an air defense battery unit from Ft Bliss, Texas, has been conducting ballistic missile training using the Patriot system at Osan Air Base near Seoul. Lt Gen Thomas Vandal, commander of the US Eighth Army, said "exercises like this ensure we are always ready to defend against an attack from North Korea." "North Korea's continued development of ballistic missiles against the expressed will of the international community requires the alliance to maintain effective and ready ballistic missile defenses," he said in a statement.

A spokeswoman for US Forces Korea couldn't confirm how long the Patriot missile battery from Texas would be deployed in South Korea. The US military already has an operating Patriot missile defense system in South Korea to counter the threat of North Korea's

shorter-range arsenal and medium-range missiles. South Korean media have long speculated that the two countries are working on a THAAD deployment in South Korea, but it took the North's rocket launch last Sunday, which outsiders see as a test of banned ballistic missile technology, for the allies to formally announce they will begin the missile defense talks.

Beijing and Moscow are sensitive to the possibility of THAAD in South Korea; critics say the system could help US radar spot missiles in other countries. China's state media quickly made the country's displeasure known, while Russia also expressed worries about the deployment. North Korea has previously warned of a nuclear war in the region and threatened to bolster its armed forces if the THAAD deployment occurs.

In Munich, US Secretary of State John Kerry met with his Chinese and South Korean counterparts to discuss the response to North Korea's actions, including the missile system. In talks

with South Korean Foreign Minister Yun Byung-se, Kerry expressed support for Seoul's decision to shut down the factory park in the North Korean border town of Kaesong and discussed a broad range of potential sanctions against the North, South Korea's Foreign Ministry said.

Seoul and Washington want to deploy the system at an early date and the upcoming talks will discuss where and exactly when the deployment can be made, a South Korean defense official said, requesting anonymity because of department rules. The official said the THAAD deployment is designed to protect South Korea from North Korean threats and isn't targeting China or anyone else. The current standoff flared after North Korea carried out a nuclear test last month, its fourth, followed by the long-range rocket launch on Sunday. Pyongyang said the launch, which put an Earth observation satellite into orbit, is part of a peaceful space program. — AP

News

in brief

Former Afghan governor kidnapped in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: A former governor of Afghanistan's Herat province has been kidnapped from a market in an upscale district of Islamabad, Pakistani police said yesterday. Pakistan is in the grip of a homegrown Taleban insurgency but the tightly-guarded capital has a very low crime rate in general and the F-7/2 sector where Sayed Fazlullah Wahidi was seized is a high security area that houses politicians, bureaucrats and expats. Wahidi was going to a restaurant in the market with his grandson Friday evening when he was abducted by unidentified men, a police official, who requested anonymity said. The boy reported the kidnapping to the local police station and said Wahidi was in Islamabad to apply for a British visa, police said. "We have registered a case against kidnapping of the former Afghan governor and the case is being investigated," Zia-ul-Qamar, a spokesman for the Islamabad police said.

2 ruling party loyalists 'executed' in Burundi

NAIROBI: Two people loyal to the ruling party in troubled Burundi were "executed" overnight in the centre of the country, a local official and witnesses said yesterday. Burundi has been in crisis since April when President Pierre Nkurunziza ran for and won a controversial third term, sparking street protests, a failed coup, regular killings and a nascent rebellion. More than 400 people have died in the violence and at least 230,000 have fled the country. "Armed criminals arrived on a hill straddling Gacimbrirongongo and ordered the locals to come out of their houses," said Celestin Singirankabo, the head of the commune of Gisozi where the town is located. "They called out two people by name and asked them to step forward and then shot them dead," he said, adding that a probe had been launched. One was a local elected member from the ruling CNDD-FDD party and the other a member of a youth league, the Imbonerakure, according to two witnesses who spoke to AFP by phone. The Imbonerakure is linked to the party in power and has been branded a militia by the United Nations.

Gun battle in Indian Kashmir kills seven

SRINAGAR: A fierce gun battle killed two soldiers and five suspected militants yesterday in Indian-administered Kashmir near the de facto border with Pakistan, army officials said. The seven died during a heavy exchange of fire in the border village of Marsari, 130 kilometers northwest of the main city of Srinagar, defense spokesman N N Joshi said. The 16-hour gun battle began on Friday when government forces zeroed in on an abandoned house after receiving information about the presence of suspected rebels. "One more militant was killed in the operations, bringing their number up to five," Joshi said. Another defense spokesman, S D Goswami, earlier said that two soldiers had been killed. Two other soldiers were injured and have been taken to a military hospital, according to police. Kashmir has been divided between India and Pakistan by a heavily militarized Line of Control since the end of British colonial rule in 1947. Both countries administer parts of the restive Himalayan territory separately but claim it in full. Since 1989 several rebel groups have been fighting an estimated half a million Indian forces deployed in the region, for independence or a merger of the territory with Pakistan.

Goa peacock-culling plan ruffles feathers

MUMBAI: The chief minister of India's popular tourist state of Goa moved to smooth ruffled feathers yesterday after a proposal to reclassify the national bird, the peacock, as vermin sparked an outcry. Laxmikant Parsekar appeared to rule out including peacocks in a list of "nuisance animals" being drawn up by the state to make them easier to cull, according to the Press Trust of India. After complaints the colorful birds were becoming a widespread menace in rural areas, the agriculture minister suggested including them in a list of vermin along with wild boar, bison and monkeys. "I don't think it is included. It cannot be included in the list. It is a national bird," Parsekar, a member of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, was quoted by the news agency as saying. "It does not damage the crop. Even if there are complaints, we can have measures to handle it," the chief minister said. The peacock is India's national bird and is protected under the country's Wildlife Protection Act of 1972. Animal rights activists and opposition politicians had reacted with fury to the proposal.

114 BODIES PULLED OUT FROM TOPPLED BUILDING IN TAIWAN

TAIPEI: Workers have pulled out 114 bodies from the rubble of a high-rise apartment building that collapsed in an earthquake in Taiwan's oldest city, leaving only one missing, authorities said yesterday, a week after the disaster. All but two of the 116 bodies recovered in Tainan after the magnitude-6.4 quake struck the city on Feb. 6 were found in the ruins of the Weiguan Golden Dragon building. A total of 327 people in the 17-story building survived.

According to Taiwan's Interior Ministry, workers extracted more than 60 more bodies on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. One person is still unaccount-

ed for, local authorities said Saturday. Authorities have detained the building's developer, Lin Ming-hui, and two architects on suspicion of negligent homicide amid accusations that Lin's company cut corners in the building's construction. Tainan city officials said they will inspect several dozen other developments built by Lin, as well as other buildings in the Weiguan compound that did not collapse. Earthquakes frequently strike Taiwan, but usually cause little or no damage, particularly since more stringent building regulations were introduced following a magnitude-7.6 quake in 1999 that killed more than 2,300 people. — AP

KOREAN PENINSULA LOOKS MORE DIVIDED THAN EVER

SEOUL: North and South Korea's perennially volatile relations seem headed for a new and potentially dangerous low, with all official lines of communication cut off and a host of tension-raising issues on the near horizon. The two rivals, who have remained technically at war over the past six decades, have faced and weathered numerous crises in the past, but the current situation feels particularly grim in the wake of the North's recent nuclear test and long-range rocket launch.

Any hope of compromise or dialogue seems to have been indefinitely shelved, with a leader in Pyongyang confirming an unwavering commitment to nuclear weapons development, and a counterpart in Seoul determined to react firmly and proactively to any North Korean provocation. And the standoff is taking on wider Cold War-like dimensions, with the divisions between the main parties to the North Korean nuclear issue—China and Russia on one side, the US, South Korea and Japan on the other—increasingly stark and antagonistic. The new mood on the divided peninsula played out this week in the effective termination of the sole remaining North-South cooperation project—the Kaesong joint industrial zone lying 10 kilometers over the border in North Korea.

A talisman for ties

Despite its obvious vulnerabilities, Kaesong had taken on a talismanic image by riding out pretty much every inter-Korean crisis thrown up since it opened for business in 2004. "In a way, it's a miracle it lasted that long," said Leonid Petrov, an expert on North Korea at the Australian National



PYEONGTAEK: Objects believed to be debris from a North Korean rocket are displayed on a South Korean navy ship at the Second Fleet Command of Navy in Pyeongtaek, south of Seoul, on February 11, 2016. — AFP

University. But on Wednesday, Seoul announced it was suspending all operations of the 124 South Korean companies in Kaesong, and yesterday Pyongyang responded by expelling all the firms' managers and freezing their factories' assets.

The North placed the complex under military control, while the South cut off all power and water supplies. "I don't see any way back for Kaesong now," Petrov said. "It's gone too far and there's no real will in the North or South to work it out." Kaesong was born out of the "sunshine" reconcilia-

tion policy of the late 1990s. One of the roles initially envisaged by Seoul was of Kaesong as a beachhead for market reforms in North Korea that would spread from the complex and expose tens of thousands to the outside world's way of doing business. Although that vision never materialized, some analysts still mourned its demise for closing a small but crucial open door on the world's most heavily-militarized border.

'Great leap backwards'
"With no Kaesong, South and North

Koreans will no longer be in contact anywhere on a regular basis. That is a great leap backwards," Aidan Foster-Carter, a Korea expert based in Britain, wrote for the NK News website. Chang Yong-Seok, a senior researcher at the Institute for Peace and Unification Studies at Seoul National University, said one of Kaesong's most important contributions had been to help keep inter-Korean rivalries in check. "The Koreans both had a stake in Kaesong so they were able to restrain each other in some ways, but now that has all gone out the window," Chang said. — AFP

INDONESIA TO START INITIATIVE USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO COMBAT RADICALISM

KUALA LUMPUR: An Indonesian foreign ministry official said that President Joko Widodo will start an initiative on how to use social media to contain radicalism and terrorism during the upcoming two-day ASEAN conference, scheduled to be hosted by the US state of California. The initiative by the president will showcase Indonesia's experience with terrorism at the conference and will highlight ways to combat terrorism and radicalism, Indonesia's Foreign Ministry Director of Regional Partnership and Cooperation Dari Aman said yesterday.

Aman added that his country has vast experience and capabilities in combating terrorism, including security forces that dealt with the terrorist attack which occurred last month in capital Jakarta. Police General Anton Charliyan, a spokesperson for Indonesia's national

police, said the perpetrators were "imitating" the Paris attacks but it was unclear whether the so-called IS was directly involved.

Last month, police said five of the attackers and two other people were killed near the Sarinah shopping mall, which is surrounded by international shops and restaurants, a cinema, UN and government offices. The Indonesian President, Joko Widodo, called on people not to give in to fear. "This act is clearly aimed at disturbing public order and spreading terror among people," he said. It came after several security crackdowns following terror threats in recent weeks and was the first major violence in Indonesia's capital since explosions targeting two hotels killed seven people and injured more than 50 in 2009. — KUNA



Palestinian children play on the beach in Deir al-Balah in central Gaza yesterday. — AFP

TURKEY, SAUDIS MULLING GROUND ATTACK...

Continued from Page 1

by Britain, France and the United States for cross-border air raids. "They (Saudi officials) came, did a reconnaissance of the base. At the moment it is not clear how many planes will come," Cavusoglu said.

Turkish media later quoted military sources as saying between eight and 10 Saudi jets would be deployed in Incirlik within the coming weeks, with 4 F-16 fighters to arrive in a first wave. Asked if Saudi Arabia could send troops to the Turkish border to enter Syria, Cavusoglu said: "This is something that could be desired but there is no plan. Saudi Arabia is sending planes and they said 'if the necessary time comes for a ground operation then we could send soldiers'."

Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir, for his part, said in a German newspaper interview: "There is discussion on whether ground troops are needed against IS. If a decision is taken to send in special units against IS, Saudi Arabia is ready to take part." In an interview with AFP released on Friday, Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad said he "doesn't rule out" that Turkey and Saudi Arabia would intervene militarily in Syria but said that his armed forces "will certainly confront it".

Saudi Arabia had already said earlier this month that it was ready to join any ground operation against IS. Turkey's relations with fellow mainly Sunni Muslim power Saudi Arabia have warmed considerably in recent months. Ties had been damaged by Saudi's role in the 2013 ouster of Egyptian president Mohamed Morsi, a close ally of Ankara. Saudi Arabia and Turkey are both staunch supporters of rebels seeking to oust Assad and see his overthrow as essential for ending Syria's five-year civil war that has cost more than 260,000 lives. They fear the West is losing its appetite to overthrow him on the assumption he is "the lesser of two evils" compared to the IS jihadists.

Both are outraged by the Russian military intervention in Syria, which analysts believe has given Assad a new lease of life and has also deeply alarmed the West. Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said yesterday that strains between Russia and the West over the Syrian and Ukraine conflicts had plunged the world into a "new Cold War". "Almost every day we are accused of making new horrible

threats either against NATO as a whole, against Europe or against the US or other countries," Medvedev said at the Munich Security Conference.

US Secretary of State John Kerry complained that the vast majority of Russia's attacks in Syria were against "legitimate opposition groups" rather than IS jihadists. "We think it is critical that Russia's targeting change," he said. Russia also dispatched a new patrol ship armed with cruise missiles to the Mediterranean, with reports saying it was bound for Syria. An ambush by rebels on pro-regime forces near Damascus this week killed 76 fighters, the Syrian Observatory said yesterday.

World powers on Friday announced an ambitious plan to stop fighting in Syria within a week, but doubts have emerged over its viability, especially because it did not include IS or Al-Qaeda's local branch, which is fighting alongside other rebel groups in several areas. Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov hit back at Kerry's comments, saying the new deal on Syria could not only focus on Russia's role. "The fact that the discussions on the truce are beginning to go towards prioritizing putting a stop to the actions of the Russian air force creates in me suspicions, gives reasons for sad thoughts, about how our Munich adventure will end," said Lavrov.

Meanwhile, a panel of eastern European leaders lined up to add their own accusations of Russian aggression. "Every single day, Russian troops, Russian weapons, Russian ammunition penetrate into my country," said Ukraine President Petro Poroshenko. He addressed Russian President Vladimir Putin, who was not present, saying: "Mr Putin, this is not a civil war in Ukraine, this is your aggression. This is not a civil war in Crimea, this is your soldiers who occupied my country."

NATO secretary general Jens Stoltenberg also addressed the forum, vowing to combine a firm stance against Russia with more dialogue. "We have seen a more assertive Russia, a Russia which is destabilizing the European security order," he said. "NATO does not seek confrontation and we don't want a new Cold War. At the same time our response has to be firm." NATO is "undertaking the biggest reinforcement to our collective defense in decades, to send a powerful signal to deter any aggression or intimidation," Stoltenberg added. "Not to wage war, but to prevent war." — Agencies

STUDENTS SAY US BOARDING SCHOOL KEPT THEM IN BOXES

IOWA CITY: Students were routinely kept in small concrete "isolation boxes" for days and weeks at a time as punishment at a private boarding school for troubled teenagers that is now under FBI investigation, former students told AP. Six former attendees at Midwest Academy in Keokuk, Iowa, described the cell-like rooms, where they had to sit quietly on the floor in a specific posture for 24 hours in order to get out. The harshly lit rooms with small windows were often filled with the sounds of students screaming and motivational recordings piped in through speakers, they said. Surveillance cameras and staff members kept watch.

"You spend your time pounding your head against the wall. You can't sleep because there is a lot of noise. A lot of girls like to scream in there. You basically look forward to bathroom breaks and those moments when you can get out of your box," said Emily Beaman, 17, of Wheaton, Illinois. After weeks of isolation, Beaman

said, she got out in July only after cutting herself with a bottle cap and begging emergency responders to place her elsewhere. She said an earlier escape attempt failed. The students, who attended the academy between 2008 and last September, said they and their classmates mutilated themselves, hated the lack of activity and natural light and lost weight due to small meals. Some said they were scared by the experience months or years later. Officers raided the academy Jan 28 to investigate allegations that a staff member sexually assaulted a student. The investigation has since expanded to other possible criminal activity and abuse.

Academy owner Ben Trane declined to comment on abuse claims at a news conference this month and didn't respond to AP interview requests. The academy's 90 students were removed and it's temporarily closed. Three students interviewed by the AP said they have spoken with the FBI. Lauren Snyder, 17, of Springfield, Missouri,

recalled begging to get out of isolation last year, after an employee turned up the audio recordings so loud that the speakers blew out and were making a screeching noise. "It was complete hell," she said. Snyder said she eventually attempted suicide by tying a sock around her neck, and was sent to a psychiatric hospital the next day.

After being placed in isolation her first day for refusing to take out a belly button ring, Sarah Wilson said she made a point not to return. "I knew I would lose my mind in there," said Wilson, 20, of Rock Island, Illinois. The academy says it provides "struggling teens with a safe, structured and disciplined environment." Many middle- and upper- class families from Midwest states and beyond sent misbehaving teenagers to the academy, which costs roughly \$5,000 per month. Trane has said the students were fortunate to have its staff in their lives. Other supporters include parents who say the program saved teens' lives. — AP

SISI: DEMOCRACY IS BACK

Continued from Page 1

Egypt's Interior Ministry has denied the police had any involvement in the killing and insists it was a criminal act, but the incident has strained ties with Rome. Egypt has also seen protests this week against police brutality held by the doctors' syndicate, after two doctors were allegedly beaten up by police in a Cairo hospital. Anger at police brutality was one of the main grievances behind the 2011 uprising.

Sisi did not mention either incident, and commended the police on "their care for the security and stability of the nation and the protection of its people." "We must be

aware that there are those waiting in the wings who don't want this nation to be an exception to the fate of some nations in our turbulent region and to hinder our national project for development and stability," he said.

Egypt has been battling an insurgency led by a local affiliate of the extremist Islamic State group based in the northern part of the Sinai Peninsula. Militant attacks, mainly targeting security forces, have spiked since Morsi's ouster. A military officer and a soldier were killed yesterday while dismantling an explosive device in northern Sinai, military spokesman Brig Gen. Mohammed Samir said on his official Facebook page. He said another soldier was wounded in the incident. — AP

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Focus

CLIMATE DEAL
WILL LIVE ON,
DESPITE BLOW

By Sebastien Blanc

In freezing President Barack Obama's plan to tackle carbon emissions, the US Supreme Court delivered a blow to a global climate deal - but experts say that US commitments to the deal will survive. Obama's "Clean Power Plan" would require the power sector to cut carbon dioxide emissions by at least 32 percent compared to 2005 levels by the year 2030. The high court's surprise decision unleashed a wave of concern around the world.

"For a vulnerable country like India, it is important that the Paris Agreement leads to ever more ambitious actions by all countries," said Navroz Dubash of the New Delhi-based Centre for Policy Research, referring to the global climate deal. "From that perspective, this early indication from the US Supreme Court risks taking us in the wrong direction."

The court "threw an unexpected monkey wrench into the Obama administration's plan to cut carbon pollution from power plants," said Union of Concerned Scientists president Ken Kimmell. However, Kimmell told AFP, "it would be quite premature to conclude that is a blow to the Paris Agreement."

The freeze will only last about 18 months - until a legal challenge by a coalition of 27 mostly Republican states is heard - and Obama himself has said he is confident the White House is on "strong legal footing". The Environmental Protection Agency gave US states individual greenhouse gas emission targets, but they have until 2022 to comply, which Kimmell noted was a "very long" timeline. "The immediate effect of the ruling is to push back the deadline for our states to submit implementation plans, but this delay does not necessarily imperil the United States' meeting its 2030 target," said Scott Fulton, president of the Environmental Law Institute.

'Historic' Freeze...

West Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrisey echoed fellow Republicans when he hailed the "historic and unprecedented victory against (the) EPA," backed by the five conservative justices of the nine-seat court. But climate experts note that the Supreme Court did not rule on the substance of the Clean Power Act, sending the matter back to an appeals court that will probably rule in June. Other lower courts will also make related decisions. "This is merely a temporary pause on the Clean Power Plan, and we are confident that it will prevail in the court hearings to come," said Sierra Club executive director Michael Brune.

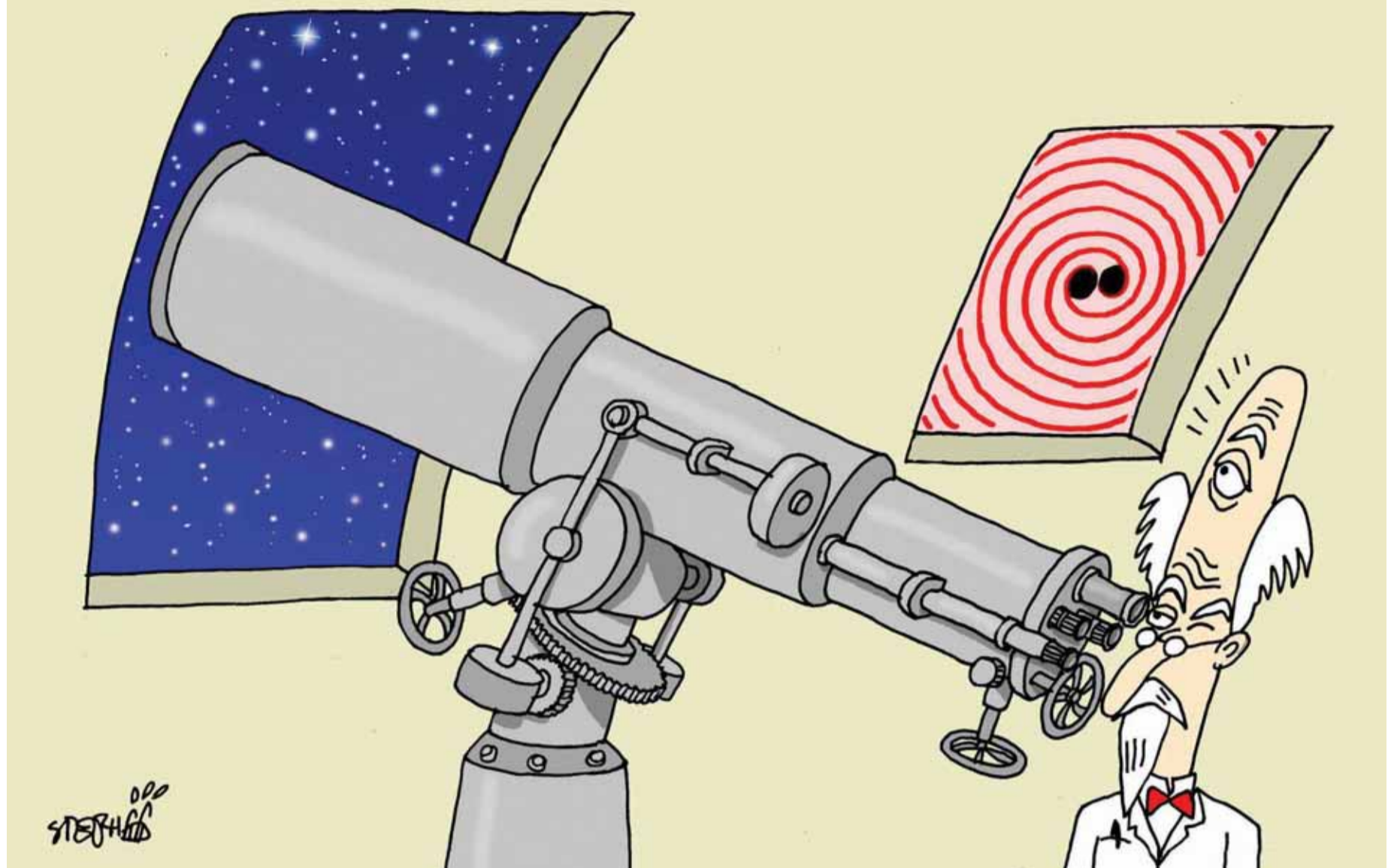
Bill Hare, founder and CEO of Berlin-based Climate Analytics, also gave a positive forecast. "The Paris Agreement will ride through this," he said. "There are many challenges ahead and I am more concerned about countries like Japan pressing ahead with coal than this action by the US Supreme Court."

...or 'Procedural' Delay?

In his first public reaction to the justices' "unusual" decision, Obama rejected a potential end to a project he has held so dear. "Don't despair," Obama told donors in California on Thursday. The Clean Power Plan is at the heart of Washington's commitments under a global climate deal agreed by 195 governments in Paris in December. Could the freeze encourage other major polluters, like China and India, to halt their efforts to transition toward more clean energy? "Countries like China, India and others are moving forward with their Paris commitments because moving to a clean energy future is in their national interest for a whole host of reasons, including clean air and public health, energy security and international competitiveness," said Rhodium Group's Kate Larsen. "I don't imagine this speed bump on the path to a single policy in the US will keep them from pursuing those national priorities."

That said, Larsen acknowledged that some countries may be concerned since the Clean Power Plan is the "most international visible climate policy" that Washington has presented thus far. And the plan is but one element of many in US climate policy. "This temporary setback to one piece of the US climate strategy will not deter the tremendous momentum globally coming out of Paris," said Center for Climate and Energy Solutions executive vice president Elliot Diringer. "Many US states and power companies have already said they will continue working to reduce emissions despite the court's ruling." —AFP

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DISCOVERY OF GRAVITATIONAL WAVES OPENS
A NEW WINDOW ON THE UNIVERSE

Washington Watch

SANDERS IS RIGHT: IRAQ IS IMPORTANT

By Dr James J Zogby

Bernie Sanders has been unfairly criticized for being a "Johnny One Note" on foreign policy because he continually reminds voters of his early opposition to the Iraq War. To explain why he continues to emphasize the importance of his decision to oppose that war, Sanders has pointed to the speech he gave back in Oct 2002 in which he laid out five important reasons why he feared the Bush Administration's march to war.

Critics and cynics have flippantly dismissed his understanding in foreign affairs and have, therefore, ignored that important speech. Because it was so prescient, it deserves attention, not scorn. Here, in short, were the five reasons he gave in 2002 for opposing the Iraq war:

- 1) The Bush Administration provided no "estimates of how many young American men and women might die...or how many tens of thousands of women and children in Iraq might also be killed".
- 2) Then there was the concern "about the precedent that a unilateral invasion of Iraq could establish in terms of international law and the role of the United Nations".
- 3) Because the United States was "involved in a very difficult war against international terrorism", Sanders echoed Brent Scowcroft's concern that "an attack on Iraq...would seriously jeopardize, if not destroy, the global counter-terrorist campaign".
- 4) With the US "facing a \$6 trillion national debt and a growing deficit...a war and long-term American occupation of Iraq could be extremely expensive".
- 5) Finally, Sanders expressed his concern with the "unintended consequences" of the war. "Who would govern Iraq [after] Saddam and what role will the US play in the ensuing civil war that could develop?" In reaction to the war, would extremists destabilize oth-

er governments in the region and would the "bloody conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Authority be exacerbated?"

False Narrative

To understand the significance of these five points, it is important to recall the false narrative the Bush Administration was pitching in advance of the invasion, and what actually happened as a result of their disastrous decision to go to war.

In the lead up to hostilities, the Bush crowd created an elaborate web of deceit to sell their plans. The biggest lies they told were not those about Saddam's nuclear program. More disturbing was the rosy picture they painted about how easy it would be and the positive outcomes that would follow.

Defense Department officials assured Congress that the effort would only require a commitment of 60,000 to 90,000 troops. They predicted that the regime could be toppled in six weeks and the war would be won in six months, costing the US a mere one to two billion dollars, with the rest being covered by Iraqi oil revenues. American troops would be greeted by Iraqis as liberators, and "the beacon on freedom would shine bright, lighting up the Middle East".

What happened, of course, was closer to what Sanders had predicted. After eight bloody years of war and occupation, over 4,600 Americans died, with the lives of tens of thousands more shattered by debilitating injuries and PTSD. One of the more troubling consequences of this war are the 22 veterans who commit suicide every single day-meaning that we lose more young men and women every year to PTSD-induced suicide than we lost during the entire war. The cost of the war, the occupation, and the long-term care of wounded veterans is approaching three trillion dollars.

Compounding this tragedy are the hundreds of

thousands of Iraqis who were killed in the war and the civil conflict that followed. By dismantling Iraqi institutions and attempting to create from whole cloth a sect-based Iraqi government, the Bush Administration stoked latent sectarian tensions that resulted in campaigns of ethnic cleansing and a dysfunctional political order.

Instead of defeating terrorism, the war served to aggravate it, with Al-Qaeda and its successor ISIS spreading to at least 16 countries. At the same time, the war and our behaviors exhibited in the war (Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo) led to a precipitous decline in respect of and support for America across the globe - putting our country at even greater risk.

One final "unintended consequence" of the war was not only the growth of extremist currents in the Arab world but the unleashing of an emboldened Iran on the region. With Saddam and the Taliban defeated, Iran was able to expand its influence in Iraq and project its claim to be the leader of the "resistance against the West".

As Bernie Sanders correctly notes, it wasn't just the Bush Administration that supported this disastrous war. The Democratic-led Senate passed the resolution that was used to justify the invasion. And so, dear critics and cynics, before suggesting that Sanders lacks the wisdom to conduct foreign policy, pay attention to the judgment and foresight he demonstrated in what he has rightly termed the most critical decision Senators were called on to make in this century.

In bringing up his opposition to the war, he is not only distinguishing himself from Hillary Clinton, who supported the invasion, he is also correctly laying the predicate for a more thoughtful realist-based foreign policy grounded in respect for international law and institutions, cooperation with partners, and diplomatic engagement.

NOTE: Dr James J Zogby is the President of the Arab American Institute

KOREAN PENINSULA MORE DIVIDED THAN EVER

By Giles Hewitt

North and South Korea's perennially volatile relations seem headed for a new and potentially dangerous low, with all official lines of communication cut off and a host of tension-raising issues on the near horizon. The two rivals, who have remained technically at war over the past six decades, have faced and weathered numerous crises in the past, but the current situation feels particularly grim in the wake of the North's recent nuclear test and long-range rocket launch.

Any hope of compromise or dialogue seems to have been indefinitely shelved, with a leader in Pyongyang confirming an unwavering commitment to nuclear weapons development, and a counterpart in Seoul determined to react firmly - and proactively - to any North Korean provocation. And the standoff is taking on wider Cold War-like dimensions, with the divisions between the main parties to the North Korean nuclear issue - China and Russia on one side, the US, South Korea and Japan on the other - increasingly stark and antagonistic.

The new mood on the divided peninsula played out this week in the effective termination of the sole remaining North-South cooperation project - the Kaesong joint industrial zone lying 10 km over the border in North Korea.

A Talisman for Ties

Despite its obvious vulnerabilities, Kaesong had taken on a talismanic image by riding out pretty much every inter-Korean crisis thrown up since it opened for business in 2004. "In a way, it's a miracle it lasted that long," said Leonid Petrov, an expert on North Korea at the Australian National University. But on Wednesday, Seoul announced it was suspending all operations of

the 124 South Korean companies in Kaesong, and yesterday Pyongyang responded by expelling all the firms' managers and freezing their factories' assets.

The North placed the complex under military control, while the South cut off all power and water supplies. "I don't see any way back for Kaesong now," Petrov said. "It's gone too far and there's no real will in the North or South to work it out." Kaesong was born out of the "sunshine" reconciliation policy of the late 1990s. One of the roles initially envisaged by Seoul was of Kaesong

as a beachhead for market reforms in North Korea that would spread from the complex and expose tens of thousands to the outside world's way of doing business. Although that vision never materialized, some analysts still mourned its demise for closing a small but crucial open door on the world's most heavily-militarised border.

'Great Leap Backwards'

"With no Kaesong, South and North Koreans will no longer be in contact anywhere on a regular basis. That is a great leap backwards," Aidan

Foster-Carter, a Korea expert based in Britain, wrote for the NK News website. Chang Yong-Seok, a senior researcher at the Institute for Peace and Unification Studies at Seoul National University, said one of Kaesong's most important contributions had been to help keep inter-Korean rivalries in check. "The Koreans both had a stake in Kaesong so they were able to restrain each other in some ways, but now that has all gone out the window," Chang said.

The space for communication between Seoul and Pyongyang shrank further on Thursday, when the North announced it was cutting the last two remaining communication hotlines with the South. The hotlines themselves have never been used for conversational diplomacy, but they were key to setting up meetings where such discussions could take place. The severing of all contacts comes ahead of a period when crisis-control talks could be most needed.

Tensions Ahead

North Korea will likely react strongly to whatever sanctions the UN Security Council eventually agrees to impose over its nuclear test and rocket launch. Then in March, South Korea and the United States will kick off a series of annual military drills that the North views as rehearsals for invasion and which always see a spike in tensions. Pyongyang's claims of provocation over the exercises should be especially shrill this time, as Seoul and Washington also begin talks on deploying an advanced US missile shield in South Korea.

"South Korea and the US have said the drills will be on an even larger scale than usual which is sure to meet a big backlash from North Korea," said Chang. "So, with all this, I think we're going to see tensions running at a level incomparable to previous years," he added. —AFP



Cargo on an overloaded vehicle slumps off to the side after arriving from the Kaesong joint industrial zone, outside a military checkpoint in Paju on Feb 11, 2016. North Korea on Feb 11 ordered the immediate expulsion of all South Koreans from the jointly-run Kaesong industrial zone and the seizure of their factory assets in response to Seoul's decision to shut down the complex. —AFP

'WOLFMAN' IVANOV DIES AGED 50

SOFIA: Bulgaria's legendary international defender Trifon Ivanov, nicknamed 'The Wolfman', has died aged 50 years after suffering a massive heart attack, the Bulgarian Football Union (BFU) said yesterday. "Sad news! Trifon Ivanov has passed away," the BFU said in a statement. "He will go down in Bulgarian football history as one of the greatest defenders." Ivanov's rugged looks and dogged perseverance on the pitch earned him the nickname 'The Wolfman' during his years with national team from 1988 to 1998, during which he made 77 appearances and scored six goals. Along with legendary striker Hristo Stoichkov and midfielder Yordan Lechkov, Ivanov was part of the Bulgaria team that reached the semi-finals in the 1994 World Cup in the United States. He was voted Bulgaria's best football player in 1996 and was three times Bulgarian champion with CSKA Sofia. In 1996, he also won the Austrian league title with Rapid Vienna. — AFP



CRUYFF POSITIVE HE WILL BEAT CANCER

BARCELONA: Dutch footballing legend Johan Cruyff said yesterday he has received "very positive" results which have boosted his conviction he will win his battle against lung cancer. "After several medical treatments I can say that the results have been very positive, thanks to the excellent work of the doctors, the affection of the people and my positive mentality," Cruyff said in a statement released by his company Cruyff Management. "Right now, I have the feeling that I am 2-0 up in the first half of a match that has not finished yet. But I am sure that I will end up winning." Cruyff was a heavy smoker until undergoing heart surgery in 1991, at the age of 44 years. The 68-year-old, who captained the Netherlands to the World Cup final in 1974 and was one of the proponents of the "total football" philosophy, announced he was suffering from cancer last October. The three-time Ballon d'Or winner played for Barcelona from 1973 to 1978, winning La Liga in his first season at the Camp Nou which featured a superb performance in a legendary 5-0 win away to Real Madrid. He later coached the club from 1988 to 1996, leading them to their first European Cup in 1992. — AFP

I'D ONLY RETURN TO LIVERPOOL: SUAREZ

LONDON: Barcelona striker Luis Suarez would only return to the English Premier League if it was to rejoin former club Liverpool, he revealed in a British newspaper interview published yesterday. "I'd prefer to stay here (Barcelona) for many more years," he told the Daily Mail. "I know it doesn't always turn out that way. But if I had to return to the Premier League, I would only go to Liverpool. I wouldn't go to another team. It wouldn't be a move for money. I'd also love to play again for Ajax as they allowed me to develop as a player in Europe." Suarez, 29, scored 82 goals for Liverpool in a three-and-a-half-year spell and almost inspired the team to Premier League glory in 2014 before leaving for Barcelona. The Uruguayan quickly struck up an understanding with Lionel Messi and Neymar at the Camp Nou and their goals fired Barca to a treble of La Liga, Copa del Rey and Champions League titles in his first season. — AFP



Group photo of the Sharjah Ladies Club team during the coronation after the final basketball game with the Jordanian Orthodox Club



A group photo of the Algerian Youth Club, tournament trophy winner

AWST 2016 CONCLUDES WITH SHARJAH LADIES CLUB WINNING 25 MEDALS

SHARJAH: The third 3rd Arab Women Sports Tournament (AWST 2016) concluded on Friday with another gold medal for the Sharjah Ladies Club (SLC) who won gold after defeating the Jordanian Orthodox Club in the final basketball match 66-42, while the Egyptian Sporting Club finished third and clinched the bronze medal for basketball after beating the Algerian Olympic team 67-43.

The tournament saw the participation of 58 clubs from 18 countries competing in eight sports, including basketball and volleyball in group competitions and table tennis, fencing, archery, shooting, athletics in individual games, as well as show jumping, which was added to the tournament this year. It was held under the generous patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher bint Mohammed Al Qasimi, Wife of His Highness the Ruler of Sharjah and Chairperson of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, from February 2nd - 12th.

The Algerian Youth Club scored the highest number of medals, 17 in total, including nine gold, five silver and three bronze, while the Bahraini Al Hala Club came second with 15 medals, including nine gold and three silver and three bronze.

Sharjah Ladies Club came third after it increased its portfolio of medals to 25, including three gold, 11 silver and 11 bronze, while Al Bahrain Club finished fourth with 13 medals, including three gold, four silver and six bronze.

Sheikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Sultan Al Qasimi, Head of AWST's Supreme Organising Committee, praised the performances of clubs and congratulated Sharjah Ladies Club on an excellent overall performance. He said, "The tournament was wonderfully well organised and a huge success thanks to the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher Al Qasimi and the hard work of the organising committee. All the participating Arab delegations have lauded the exceptional organization of the tournament."

Sheikha Hayat bint Abdulaziz Al Khalifa, Board Member of the Bahrain Olympic Committee Management, Chairperson of the Bahrain Women and Sport Committee and Head of AWST's Supervisory and follow-up Committee, said, "The tournament is designed to contribute to the development of Arab women's sport and we also seek to encourage every girl, woman and mother to exercise and make physical activities part of their lifestyle. We look forward to seeing more Arab female athletes compete globally as a result of AWST particularly because this is the only exclusively Arab women's sports tournament held on this scale."

Nada Al Naqbi, Deputy Head of AWST's Supreme Organising Committee, Head of the Executive Committee and Tournament Manager, congratulated HH Sheikha Jawaher Al Qasimi on the major success of the 3rd Arab Women Sports Tournament. Al Naqbi revealed

that the Supreme Organising Committee will start planning for AWST 2018 immediately and said there will be major developments. Al Naqbi thanked the Arab media and sponsors for their support saying they have been instrumental to its success and highlighted the role played by the companies and sponsors which contributed greatly to the tournament's success.

"I also thank the UAE's wise leadership, especially the care and support extended by the Mother of the UAE, Her Highness Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak, Supreme Chairwoman of the Family Development Foundation, Chairperson of the General Women's Union and Chairwoman of Motherhood and Childhood Supreme Council," said Al Naqbi.

The first ever Female Sports Journalist Forum was held alongside AWST under the slogan, "It's Your Turn", which aimed to highlight challenges facing female sports journalists and to advance the status of female sports

journalists across the Arab world.

The forum concluded with five recommendations, which included helping more women in to sports media which includes finding solutions for support and more sponsors. Secondly there is a need to work on increasing the role of women in sports journalism and have more workshops that relate to sports journalism. Cooperation between media organisations needs to increase to enable women's sports more broadcasting time. Another recommendation is to prepare and plan a strategy to develop the skills of players and administrators in the various sports federations. The final recommendation is to give more attention to award-winners promoting them as models for next generations.

The third Arab Women Sports Tournament is being held under the patronage of H.H. Sheikha Jawaher bint Mohammed Al Qasimi, Wife of the Ruler of Sharjah and Chairperson of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs.



Side of the equestrian events during the tournament



During the final rounds of the archery competitions



Side of the table tennis competitions during the tournament

SPARKLING 60 LIFTS KANG TO SHARE OF PEBBLE BEACH LEAD



Sung Kang

LOS ANGELES: South Korea's Kang Sung fired a scintillating 60 to seize a share of the second-round lead in the Pebble Beach Pro-Am on Friday, never realizing how close he was to golf's magic number of 59. Kang had nine birdies and an eagle in his 11-under effort on the Monterey Peninsula course, one of three in use over the first three rounds of the PGA Tour event.

He shared the lead with Japan's Hiroshi Iwata, who carded a 66 at Pebble Beach Golf Links to reach 11 under. They were one stroke clear of American Phil Mickelson, Sweden's Freddie Jacobson and overnight leader Chez Reavie.

Kang, who notched two victories in Asia in 2013 — in the C.J. Invitational and Kolon Korea Open — said he didn't realize Monterey Peninsula played to par-71, unlike the par-72 layouts of Pebble Beach and Spyglass Hill.

"I still thought par was 72," said Kang, who therefore didn't realize a birdie at his last hole, the par-three ninth, would have given him a 59.

He missed the green with what he called his "worst shot of the day" but confidently rattled in a par putt to claim his share of the lead.

"I made almost every putt inside 15 feet today," said Kang, who said his prior career best round was a 61. He hit 15 of 18 greens in regulation and needed just 24 putts. Iwata's round also included an eagle, at the par-five sixth, along with six birdies and two bogeys.

The leading duo have plenty of big names chasing them, starting with five-time major winner Mickelson — a four-time winner at Pebble Beach. Mickelson carded a six-under 65 at Monterey Peninsula, highlighted by his eagle at the 10th. He had burned up the front nine with five birdies before the turn, but was slowed by two bogeys on the back nine — including the 18th.

MICKELSON IN THE MIX

"It was a good day, I really got off to a great start it was a lot of fun," said Mickelson, who went back to his old driver after putting a new one in his bag on Thursday.

"I drove it great, the only fairways I missed was with my three-wood," said

Mickelson, who unlike some tour pros says he enjoys the pro-am format that features amateurs and celebrities playing alongside the title contenders.

"I appreciate and enjoy this tournament for what it is," he said of his success in the event. "I have great amateur partners ... we just try to enjoy the day. It's a chance to get to know people and then also to play some of the best golf courses in the world."

Reigning major champions Jordan Spieth and Jason Day were having a bit more fun on Friday.

Australia's PGA Champion Day fired a five-under 66 at Monterey Peninsula to move into a tie for 13th at six-under, while world number one Spieth, the Masters and US Open champion, followed up his one-under first-round with a two-under 69 at Monterey Peninsula.

"I drove the ball spectacular," said Spieth, adding he'd made adjustments after Thursday's erratic round. "I feel very, very comfortable ball-striking. I just couldn't get it in the hole," added Spieth, who said he hoped for better success on firmer greens at Pebble Beach. — AFP

FINAL TEAMS JOIN INTERNATIONAL, GCC STARS FOR EFG SAILING ARABIA

MUSCAT: EFG Sailing Arabia - The Tour completes its 2016 line-up with regional strength as two GCC teams are announced to hit the waves for the sixth edition of the race, which will take place from 14-29 February 2016. Showcasing the talent and legacy of sailing from the Sultanate of Oman, SATT welcomes the return of Team Renaissance, featuring sailing stars Fahad Al Hasni and Nasser Al Mashari, and newcomers Al Mouj, led by the seasoned hands of co-skippers Nico Lunven and Gilles Favennec.

Drawing on their knowledge of local waters, Team Renaissance is eager to combine their offshore and inshore talent for a string of podium places. Fahad Al Hasni, a key member of Oman Sail's record breaking Musandam-Oman Sail MOD70 crew, returns to skipper Team Renaissance for the second consecutive year, and will be joined by Nasser Al Mashari who in December received worldwide acclaim when Extreme 40 crew The Wave, Muscat were crowned 2015 champions of the Extreme Sailing Series.

According to Al Hasni, hopes are high that their fifth place last year can be improved to at least third in this edition.

"I think it is going to be hard because it is a new route with a lot of different challenges which will test us all. The leg from Doha to Khasab in particular will be a test because it is a very long one but Sami and I have done a lot of offshore racing and spent many days and nights at sea so this should not pose too many problems. We aren't strangers to the race and we know you need to be consistent to be in with a chance of winning. Preferably we want to come first every time whether it is inshore or offshore but if not, to try and make it onto the podium each time if we can."

SURPRISE

Hoping to give Team Renaissance a challenge in the water and eager to join the now nine-strong competition is debutant team Al Mouj. The mixed Omani-non-Omani Al Mouj is looking to spring a surprise in their first SATT experience, backed by the experienced leadership of co-skippers French navigator Nico Lunven, who has Volvo Ocean Race, Tour de France a Voile, Figaro and RORC miles and a SATT 2015 trophy under his belt, and seasoned campaigner Gilles Favennec, a member of Oman Sail's MOD 70 and M34 crew.

Bringing together local and French sailors, the skippers focused on building a team comradery that would carry them through the gruelling two week race. "This Al Mouj team was put together by Gilles and I and we decided to try to build a team where the goal is to be happy working well as a team for a month," explained Lunven. "We decided our focus was on being happy so we have a team who know each other and spend a lot of time together."

The debutant team are excited to tackle the new route, despite not having time to train in the early months leading up to the kick off in Dubai on 15 February, as their skills are sure to shine during the second upwind leg to Doha and the marathon third leg to Khasab. This is where they hope to rack up the points and are serious contenders for a podium place with ambitions to dislodge favourites EFG Bank Monaco from the top spot.

"We would like play for the first place," said Lunven, before adding "We are especially looking forward to competing against Sidney Gavignet's team EFG Bank Monaco."

The 2016 EFG Sailing Arabia - the Tour, also sponsored by Al Thuraya, is the sixth edition of the race with some of the world's most highly regarded international sailing teams set to grace the waters of the Arabian Gulf. The race combines long offshore legs with high action racing 'around the cans' in harbours along the 750 nms course. Oman Sail first launched the race in 2011 and since then, it has grown into the jewel in the crown of Middle East sailing, as the Gulf region's only long distance offshore event.

LEAGUE PROUD TO BE PROGRESSIVE, BUT MORE CAN BE DONE

TORONTO: The NBA has long been considered the most progressive of North America's four major professional sports leagues when it comes to gender equity but more work can be done, according to some owners and former players. Heading into the NBA's current season, currently on break for All-Star Weekend in Toronto, the league led the way in North America with two female assistant coaches among its 30 teams. "We can always do more but I think the NBA has always been a leader in human rights and I think we're a very inclusive league and product from a fan standpoint as well," said Steve Nash, a two-time NBA Most Valuable Player who retired last year, told Reuters.

The San Antonio Spurs and Sacramento Kings both have women on their coaching staffs while the NBA was the first of North America's core four professional sports leagues to have a full time female referee when Violet Davis took the court in 1997. "You can always say with diversity, when you have underrepresented groups, that you can always do more," said Sacramento Kings co-owner Paul Jacobs. "Then the question is how do you get from here to there, and how do you make sure that there is a pipeline of people and that those people are having adequate access." Last week the National Football League said during its first Women's Summit ahead of Super Bowl 50 that they are instituting a rule requiring all 32 teams to interview women for open executive positions.

While applying a similar rule for NBA teams may boost the number of women in executive positions, Boston Celtics owner Stephen Pagliuca said it was too soon to determine whether the league should adopt an NFL-type rule.

"You don't want to have unintended consequences of any rule so it really needs to be discussed and deliberated," said Pagliuca, whose Celtics had the NBA's first all-black starting lineup (1963) and first black head coach (1966). "But I think the feeling is there in the NBA that we want to be gender neutral, we want to be race neutral and it's all about a meritocracy."

Retired 11-year NBA veteran Jerome Williams applauded the idea of having more women in the league but said ultimately it is about finding the person who best connects with players. "In sports, you have to understand that just like in any job ... it's always going to come through the players," said Williams.

"Whoever the players are comfortable with, whoever the players respond to, whether that's a man, a woman ... it's just all about the response."

"But as these opportunities are more readily accessible, or shown that they are accessible to more women, more women will start to pursue them." —Reuters



EFG Sailing Arabia - The Tour in 2015 (inset) Gilles Favennec of Al Mouj.

US BEAT WORLD 157-154 IN RISING STARS CHALLENGE

TORONTO: Zach LaVine hoisted the MVP trophy above his head, laughing along with Minnesota Timberwolves teammates Andrew Wiggins and Karl-Anthony Towns as he stood on the podium.

One win down at All-Star weekend. One to go. LaVine had 30 points and seven rebounds and the United States team beat the World team 157-154 in the Rising Stars Challenge on Friday night to kick off the weekend festivities. In the game featuring some of the best rookies and sophomores in the league, LaVine geared up to defend his slam dunk title last night by making 13 of 20 shots to beat Wiggins, who took home MVP honors last year in Brooklyn.

"I'm excited for tomorrow," said LaVine, who revived interest in the dunk contest with an electrifying performance last year. "I'm ready to put on a show." Kristaps Porzingis scored 30 points, and Emmanuel Mudiay had 30 points and 10 assists for the World team. Wiggins scored 29 points while playing in front of his hometown fans. Los Angeles Lakers sophomore Jordan Clarkson added 25 for the Americans. The Rising Stars game can sometimes take on the feel of a sideshow, something that forces the next generation into a spotlight that they aren't always ready for. But the court was loaded with talent on Friday night in Toronto, players like Wiggins, Porzingis, Karl-Anthony Towns, Elfrid Payton and Jabari Parker.

The influx of talent has given several long-suffering franchises - the Timberwolves, Knicks, Bucks - hope that better days are arriving soon. For most fans in attendance, Wiggins was the star attraction. He has been churning out highlight reels since he was 14 years old, was drafted No. 1 overall last season and won the rookie of the year award. The locals have called him "Maple Jordan" and openly pine for him to one day come home and play for the Raptors.

"It felt great," Wiggins said. "I got to play in front of a lot of people I haven't seen in a long time. My family, friends got to watch it. It was great being back home and playing in front of my hometown."

THUNDEROUS OVATION

Wiggins has stated time and again that he loves it in Minnesota and envisions a long and bright future with Towns, LaVine and the rest of the Timberwolves' promising young core. But he has never shied away from his love of Toronto and he said he was looking forward to being back in Canada for an extended stretch this weekend while the rest of the basketball world finally trained its focus on his hometown.

Wiggins received a thunderous ovation upon introduction in the starting lineup and was serenaded with chants of "M-V-P! M-V-P!" late in the game.

"He's a rock star in his hometown," LaVine said. For as much time as the 20-year-old Wiggins has spent in the spotlight in his young life, he is remarkably disinterested in attention. He threw down a few big dunks early in the game - one off of a backboard pass from Mudiay - to get the crowd on its feet, but was also happy to let his teammates get in on the action until a late flurry that got the World team back in it. Porzingis, the Latvian who captivated the Big Apple and helped revive the Knicks, hit 5 of 8 3 pointers and threw down an alley-oop midway through the second half. And Mudiay, the Nuggets rookie who has struggled with his shot this season, hit 5 of 10 from deep. Phoenix Suns rookie Devin Booker scored 23 points, and Towns had 18 for the US team. And Wiggins wasn't mad at all that LaVine walked out of the arena with the MVP trophy. "I got it last year, he got it this year," Wiggins said. "(Towns) is going to get it next year. We're going back-to-back-to-back. That's the plan." — AP



TORONTO: United States' Jabari Parker, right, reaches for the ball as World's Raul Neto (25) shoots during the second half of the NBA Rising Stars Challenge basketball game in Toronto on Friday. — AP

PINTURAUULT WINS MEN'S WORLD CUP GIANT SLALOM

YUZAWA: Alexis Pinturault led a 1-2 finish for France in the men's World Cup giant slalom yesterday. Pinturault, who was second after the first run, used a blistering second run of 1 minute, 17.78 seconds to finish 0.51 ahead of compatriot Mathieu Faivre. Massimiliano Blardone of Italy was third, 0.67 off the pace.

"The race was not easy," Pinturault said. "It was quite bumpy on the second run and there were some gates you had to control and some gates you had to attack." Fritz Dopfer of Germany led after the first run but dropped down to seventh after a second effort of 1:19.75.

Marcel Hirscher of Austria, who leads the giant slalom standings, was sixth, 1.31 seconds back. With his first giant slalom win of the season, Pinturault moved into second place in the standings. "Giant slalom is my best discipline," Pinturault said. "I would like to improve in slalom and Super G but giant slalom is where I have my most podiums. I'm more a technical guy than a speed guy."

Ted Ligety of the United States is third in the standings but did not take part in yesterday's race. Saturday's giant slalom was the first since Dec. 21 after races in Germany and Switzerland in January were cancelled due to warm weather.

It was the first World Cup podium for Faivre. "I'm very happy with the first podium," Faivre said. "I've been getting closer with a lot of Top 10 finishes so it's nice to finally break through. As Alexis said, it was not an easy race and it was quite bumpy on the second run." — AP



NAEBA: FIS Ski World Cup 2015/2016 6th men's giant slalom winner Alexis Pinturault of France listens to the national anthem on the podium in Naeba, Niigata prefecture yesterday. — AFP

WINDIES SEEK RETURN TO GLORY IN U19 AGAINST INDIA

DHAKA: The West Indies will hope to rekindle memories of their former glory in the Bangladeshi capital Dhaka today as they take on modern-day giants of the game India in the ICC Under-19 World Cup final.

The young Caribbeans exceeded all expectations to reach the final of the prestigious meet, despite starting the tournament on a wrong foot with a 61-run loss to England in their opening match.

But they have not looked back since, beating Fiji and Zimbabwe in the group stage to qualify for the quarter-final. They reserved their best for the knock-out rounds, first stunning Pakistan by

five wickets before ending the dream of hosts and tournament favourites Bangladesh with a thrilling three-wicket win in Thursday's semi-final.

Skipper Shimron Hetmyer, Shamar Springer and the hard-hitting Gidron Pope starred in both the run-chases, while fast bowler Alzarri Joseph's fiery spells have often been timed at above 145 kph (90 mph). Former Caribbean fast bowler Ian Bishop said he believed West Indies cricket still had a deep reservoir of talent.

"(The) kids have done better than I thought they would have," Bishop told AFP in an interview yesterday. "I wouldn't say they were as prepared as

they could have been. So to get to the final... I think it will encourage a lot of West Indian supporters."

Bishop, a member of a great West Indies team of the 1990s, is in Dhaka as a television commentator for the tournament.

"It also give a glimpse that West Indies do have talents, if not as much as before," he said.

He said that the West Indies should have "programmes in place" to turn talented youngsters into world beaters like their predecessors of the 1970s-90s.

INDIA FAVOURITES

India will start the match as the

favourites being the only unbeaten side so far, but West Indies captain Hetmyer is not too concerned. "They are a very good team and are unbeaten but two days ago we played against Bangladesh who were unbeaten. We beat them," Hetmyer said.

"We just go out and play our best cricket in the tournament, tomorrow. Let's hope we come out on top." India are on a 15-match winning streak in the tournament since losing to England in the quarter-final of the previous edition in the United Arab Emirates two years ago.

They have also won 20 of its 21 one-day matches since January 2014.

India Under-19 captain Ishan Kishan said they are not intimidated by the West Indies' fast bowlers, who also include opening bowler Chemar Holder.

"Most of us who are batting in the top order play domestic cricket back in India," said Kishan. "We face senior fast bowlers in first-class cricket. So, it's not a problem. But it is about how we plan to tackle them and how we execute it on the field."

India won the tournament three times previously and are making their fifth final. The West Indies will be chasing their maiden title, having reached their second final. —AFP

PEARSON'S GOAL POWERS KINGS TO 5-4 WIN OVER RANGERS

NEW YORK: Tanner Pearson's goal with 1:50 left in overtime powered the Los Angeles Kings to a 5-4 win over the New York Rangers on Friday. Anze Kopitar recorded a hat trick, and Marian Gaborik added a goal for Pacific Division-leading Los Angeles, which has won three of its last five. Peter Budaj made 24 saves in his season debut start. Budaj, who spent the season with the Kings' AHL farm team in Ontario, California, last played in the NHL on May 17, 2014. Kevin Hayes and Mats Zuccarello each finished with a goal and an assist for New York, which lost for the first time since Feb. 2. Viktor Stalberg and Derek Stepan also scored for the Rangers.

SABRES 6, CANADIENS 4

Marcus Foligno scored twice, including once on a penalty shot, and the Buffalo Sabres hung on to snap a four-game skid by beating the Montreal Canadiens. Foligno also had an assist for a career-best three points. Evander Kane scored twice, including an empty-netter with 55 seconds left, while Josh Gorges and David Legwand also scored for Buffalo. The Sabres nearly squandered a 4-1 lead, but won at home for just the second time in their past 11 (2-7-2). Alex Galchenyuk and rookie Sven Andrighetto scored two goals apiece for Montreal. The Canadiens had a three-game winning streak snapped and dropped to 1-5-1 in their past seven road games.

PENGUINS 2, HURRICANES 1, SO

Kris Letang scored on the final shot of a shootout, Marc-Andre Fleury made 29 saves and the Pittsburgh Penguins beat the Carolina Hurricanes. The win was Pittsburgh's eighth in 10 games and gave the Penguins a 2-1-1 lead in the season series. Andrej Nestrasil scored late in the third period for the Hurricanes to send the game to the extra period. Phil Kessel scored Pittsburgh's regulation goal in the second period.

AVALANCHE 3, RED WINGS 2, SO

Semyon Varlamov made 43 saves and Blake Comeau scored in both the third period and the shootout to lift the Colorado Avalanche over the Detroit Red Wings. Matt

Duchene also scored for the Avalanche, who won despite being outshot 45-21. Colorado has won nine of its last 12 road games. Jonathan Ericsson and Pavel Datsyuk scored for Detroit, which had its three-game winning streak snapped. The Avalanche, who won at Ottawa on Thursday, improved to 6-2 on the season in the second game of a back-to-back.

LIGHTNING 4, PREDATORS 3, OT

Steven Stamkos scored the tying goal late in the third period, Tyler Johnson won it 1:04 into overtime and the Tampa Bay Lightning beat the Nashville Predators for their ninth straight home win. J.T. Brown and Nikita Kucherov also scored for the Lightning. Ben Bishop made 27 saves to give him a victory over all 30 NHL teams. Nashville got goals from Mike Fisher, James Neal and Filip Forsberg. Pekka Rinne stopped 24 shots and is 5-1-1 against Tampa Bay.

BLUES 5, PANTHERS 3

David Backes, Jaden Schwartz and Robby Fabbri scored in the first period and the St. Louis Blues cruised to a win over the Florida Panthers. Vladimir Tarasenko and Alexander Steen also scored for the Blues, and Colton Parayko had two assists. Brian Elliott made his 13th straight start in place of top goalie Jake Allen and had 29 saves for St. Louis. Derek MacKenzie, Aaron Ekblad and Jonathan Huberdeau scored for Florida, and Jaromir Jagr had two assists. Goalie Roberto Luongo moved past Glenn Hall and into sixth in career NHL games played with his 907th appearance.

COYOTES 4, FLAMES 1

Shane Doan had two goals and an assist to become the Coyotes' franchise leader with 931 career points and Arizona beat the Calgary Flames 4-1 to snap a season-worst five-game losing streak. Doan's 4-on-4 goal 3:31 in tied him with Hall of Famer Dale Hawerchuk on the team list. Near the end of the game, a scoring change gave Doan an assist on Oliver Ekman-Larsson's second-period goal. Joe Colborne scored in the third for the Flames, who had their three-game winning streak snapped. — AP

NHL results/standings

Buffalo 6, Montreal 4; Los Angeles 5, NY Rangers 4 (OT); Pittsburgh 2, Carolina 1 (SO); Colorado 3, Detroit 2 (SO); Tampa Bay 4, Nashville 3 (OT); St. Louis 5, Florida 3; Arizona 4, Calgary 1.

Western Conference

Central Division

	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS
Chicago	36	18	4	161	134	76
Dallas	35	15	5	180	149	75
St. Louis	31	17	9	141	137	71
Colorado	29	25	4	157	160	62
Nashville	25	21	9	144	149	59
Minnesota	23	21	10	133	136	56
Winnipeg	24	27	3	140	159	51

Pacific Division

Los Angeles	33	18	3	153	130	69
San Jose	28	20	5	156	145	61
Anaheim	26	19	8	122	128	60
Arizona	25	23	6	144	165	56
Vancouver	22	20	12	129	147	56
Calgary	25	26	3	146	162	53
Edmonton	22	29	5	142	169	49

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division

Florida	32	17	6	158	128	70
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Detroit

Detroit	28	18	9	139	138	65
Tampa Bay	30	20	4	146	133	64
Boston	29	19	6	163	149	64
Montreal	27	25	4	155	152	58
Ottawa	25	25	6	161	177	56
Buffalo	22	28	6	132	159	50
Toronto	19	25	9	127	154	47

Metropolitan Division

Washington	40	9	4	178	121	84
NY Rangers	31	18	6	160	142	68
NY Islanders	29	18	6	154	134	64
Pittsburgh	28	19	7	141	139	63
New Jersey	27	21	7	124	129	61
Carolina	24	21	10	131	146	58
Philadelphia	24	20	9	129	143	57
Columbus	22	28	6	144	176	50

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



WELLINGTON: Australia's Adam Voges sweeps in front of New Zealand's BJ Watling on the second day of the first International Cricket Test match at Basin Reserve in Wellington, New Zealand, yesterday. — AP

VOGES CASHES IN AS AUSTRALIA FORGE LEAD

WELLINGTON: Adam Voges continued to capitalise on an early reprieve by scoring his fifth test century as Australia eased to 463 for six by the close of the second day's play of the first match against New Zealand at the Basin Reserve yesterday.

Voges was unbeaten on 176 at stumps with Peter Siddle on 29 as the Australians stretched their advantage to 280 runs, snuffing out any hope New Zealand had of claiming victory in captain Brendon McCullum's 100th test.

The 36-year-old Voges has made the most of a lifeline when he was bowled by Doug Bracewell for seven with two deliveries remaining on Friday, only for umpire Richard Illingworth to signal a no-ball.

Television replays showed the delivery was legal but because the infraction had been called on the field, New Zealand were unable to ask for a review. Voges was involved in partnerships of 168 with Usman Khawaja (140) and 96 with wicketkeeper Peter Nevill (32) to prevent New Zealand from gaining any momentum on a tough day for the hosts.

New Zealand briefly appeared to be in position to expose the Australian tail during the middle session when Trent Boult took two wickets, including Khawaja's, in three deliveries but Voges calmly ensured that the visitors maintained their dominance.

The late-blooming Voges, who was 35 when he made his debut against West Indies last June, has scored 1,204 runs in a bountiful test career to date, boasting a high score of 269 not out and an average of 100.33.

"He's got an average higher than (Australian batting legend) Don (Bradman) at the moment, so I might just have to call him Sir Voges," Khawaja joked.

SLIM HOPE

"He's almost faultless the way he went about it. Batted very sensibly, patiently at the start, was hitting a lot of good shots straight to fielders, but didn't get frustrated with it.

"The way he's been batting lately it feels like he's not going to get out."

As Australia resumed on 147-3 in response to New Zealand's 183 all out, the only excitement for locals at a sold-out Basin Reserve came during that eventful Boult over in the middle session.

Corey Anderson claimed the only other wicket of the day when he enticed Nevill to edge behind to make the score 395-6.

While Australia have batted themselves

into a position they are unlikely to lose from, New Zealand's past record at the Basin Reserve should provide local fans with some hope. In their last two matches at the Wellington ground, they conceded large first innings leads before scoring 680-8 to save a test against India two years ago and 524-5 to set up a win last year against Sri Lanka.

"We can see how flat the wicket has

become. We're not getting a lot of movement out of it," New Zealand bowling coach Dimitri Mascarenhas said.

"Hopefully that will be the same for the Aussies when they have to bowl on it. We just have to get through that new ball because you can take wickets with it." The second test of the two-match series is in Christchurch from Feb. 20-24. — Reuters

SCOREBOARD

WELLINGTON: Scoreboard at stumps yesterday on the second day of the first cricket test between New Zealand and Australia at the Basin Reserve:

New Zealand, 1st Innings 183
Australia, 1st Innings (Overnight: 147-3)

Joe Burns c Watling b Southee	0
David Warner c Watling b Southee	5
Usman Khawaja lbw b Boult	140
Steve Smith c and b Craig	71
Adam Voges not out	176
Mitch Marsh c and b Boult	0
Peter Nevill c Watling b Anderson	32
Peter Siddle not out	29

Extras (4b,2lb,2w,2nb)	10
TOTAL (for six wickets)	463
Overs: 130	
Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-5, 3-131, 4-299, 5-299, 6-395.	
Yet to bat: Josh Hazlewood, Nathan Lyon, Jackson Bird.	
Bowling: Tim Southee 28-5-76-2 (1w), Trent Boult 27-6-80-2, Doug Bracewell 25-4-97-0 (2nb), Corey Anderson 14-0-68-1 (1w), Mark Craig 32-2-128-1, Kane Williamson 4-0-8-0.	



NEW YORK: Los Angeles Kings left wing Tanner Pearson (70) celebrates with center Tyler Toffoli (73) and defenseman Alec Martinez (27) after scoring against the New York Rangers in overtime of an NHL hockey game, Friday, in New York. The Kings won 5-4. — AP



VISAKHAPATNAM: Indian cricketer Ravichandran Ashwin (R) arrives at the airport in Visakhapatnam yesterday. The third T20 international match between India and Sri Lanka will be played today. — AFP

KOHLSCHEIBER SENDS CILIC CRASHING OUT IN ROTTERDAM

ROTTERDAM: German Philipp Kohlschreiber stunned second seed Marin Cilic 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 on Friday to move into the semi-finals of the Rotterdam World Tennis at the eighth attempt. The 32-year-old improved to 6-3 over former US Open win-

ner Cilic as he won a comeback duel in just over two hours.

"I gained a lot of confidence after my break in the second set and it gave me belief that I could win the match", Kohlschreiber said. "It feels great to stun a great player like Marin in such a big tournament. "Sometimes everything falls into place. Looking back, I made the right decisions on the decisive moments."

Kohlschreiber, ranked 33rd in the world, fought off 15 Cilic aces while producing nine of his own, along with 38 winners and 20 unforced errors. Fifth seed Gael Monfils stopped an upset bid from German teenager Alexander Zverev, 7-6 (7/4), 6-3, with the Frenchman making life hard on himself.

Monfils was broken while serving for the first set before salvaging it in a tiebreaker. Leading 3-1 in the second, he sent over a double fault to suddenly face three break points, saving them all for 4-1.

The showman finally finished off the win on a second match point after saving three more break points in the final game.

He will next face Kohlschreiber against who he boasts a 11-2 career lead. Slovakia's Martin Klizan saved five match points to stun in-form Spanish sixth seed Roberto Bautista Agut 6-7 (5/7), 7-6 (8/6), 6-0.

Klizan was unaware of his impressive rearguard action against Bautista Agut, the winner of the Sofia title last week and who was bidding for a 15th match win of the season.

"I thought it was only two match points," Klizan said. "All I could do out there was to fight on every point. "There was not really a turning point in the match, every ball was difficult, there were no easy points. We had a lot of rallies and it was good to watch."

Bautista Agut, ranked 17th, missed a chance for a straight-sets victory when he was broken for 5-5 in the second set despite saving four break points in the game.

Klizan seized his chance, holding for 6-5 and won a tiebreaker to take the match into a deciding third set, where he dominated to love with the win in two and three-quarter hours.

Klizan will next face French qualifier Nicolas Mahut, who put out eighth seeded Viktor Troicki of Serbia, 6-2, 6-1. Mahut, ranked 54th in the world, has a winning past in the Netherlands, earning a pair of trophies at the grass event at Rosmalen in 2013 and 2015. —AFP

WILLIAMS, KERBER PULL OUT OF DUBAI OPEN

DUBAI: Top seeds Serena Williams and Angelique Kerber have withdrawn from the WTA Tennis Championships, organisers announced yesterday.

"We regret to announce that Serena Williams and Angelique Kerber have withdrawn due to illness and injury," the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships wrote on their official Twitter account ahead of the draw.

The news is a double blow for organisers with Williams and Kerber, the world's top two players, seeded number one and two respectively.

The 28-year-old German shocked Williams, 34, in the Australian Open final last month to win her first Grand Slam title. Williams, whose pullout was her third in four years on short notice in Dubai, said: "I'm disappointed to have to withdraw from the Dubai Tennis Championships.

"I have come down with the flu and I am not at 100 percent, so I need to take this time to recuperate." Williams last appeared at the tournament in a semi-final two years ago, losing to Alize Cornet.

Kerber said: "I am very sad to announce that I have to withdraw from this great tournament in Dubai due to an injury of my right upper thigh.

"I wish all of you a lot of fun and great week of tennis. Looking forward to being on court again as soon as possible." In addition to Williams and Kerber, other absentees include 2012 champion Agnieszka Radwanska, Switzerland's Roland Garros semi-finalist Tímea Bacszinsky, Dane Caroline Wozniacki, the winner in 2011, plus China's Peng Shuai and injured Frenchwoman Cornet.

Defending champion Simona Halep of Romania is now the top seed in the tournament which starts tomorrow with world number five Garbine Muguruzza of Spain moving up to second seed. —AFP



DORTMUND: Dortmund's Matthias Ginter, left, and Hannover's Salif Sane challenge for the ball during the German Bundesliga soccer match between Borussia Dortmund and Hannover 96 in Dortmund, Germany, yesterday. —AP

MKHITARYAN SINKS HANOVER AS DORTMUND KEEP UP THE CHASE

BERLIN: Borussia Dortmund needed a moment of inspiration from Henrikh Mkhitaryan to overcome bottom side Hanover 96 by a single goal and keep up the chase on Bundesliga leaders Bayern Munich yesterday.

At the other end of the table, Julian Nagelsmann, at 28 the Bundesliga's youngest-ever coach, made his debut on the Hoffenheim bench and watched his side draw 1-1 at Werder Bremen in a crunch relegation battle.

Dortmund, missing league top-scorer Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang through injury, struggled to break down Hanover in a match which pitted the Bundesliga's best attack against its second-worst defence.

The finally broke through in 56th minute when Mkhitaryan collected the ball just inside the Hanover half, ran at the defence, cut inside and unleashed a 25-metre shot which flew past Ron-Robert Zieler.

Dortmund, five points behind Bayern who face Augsburg on Sunday, have scored 53 goals

this season and the game could have been much easier if Marco Reus had converted one of two early chances.

Reus, almost back to his best after injuries and illness, was denied when Zieler somehow kept out his effort from point-blank range and again when his free kick smacked against the crossbar.

Hanover, who have conceded 36 goals, held firm until Mkhitaryan struck his eighth goal of the season. Hoffenheim, one off the bottom of the 18-team table, were facing Werder Bremen, who are one place and five points ahead of them in the relegation playoff spot.

Kramaric gave Nagelsmann a dream start when he headed in after 10 minutes, but Bremen levelled three minutes later when defender Papy Djilobodji scored with a deflected effort following a corner.

Kramaric was sent off with 13 minutes left for a second bookable offence but Hoffenheim held on. Bayer Leverkusen moved into distant third,

13 points behind Dortmund, by coming from behind to win 2-1 on a difficult pitch at Darmstadt.

A blunder by Leverkusen goalkeeper Leno, who failed to hold the ball following a throw-in, allowed Wagner to head Darmstadt in front after half an hour.

But another moment of misfortune, this time by Darmstadt defender Aytaç Sulu who headed into his own goal, allowed Leverkusen to level just after the hour before Julian Brandt snatched the winner in the 77th minute.

Hertha Berlin dropped to fourth, behind Leverkusen on goal difference, after losing 2-0 at VfB Stuttgart, who notched their fifth win in a row.

Ivorian midfielder Serey Die opened the scoring with a superb strike with the outside of his foot just after halftime and Filip Kostic added the second. Julian Draxler and Robin Knoche scored as VfL Wolfsburg overcame Ingolstadt 2-0 to claim their first win of 2016. —Reuters



VILA-REAL: Malaga's Argentinian midfielder Fernando Tissone (L) vies with Villarreal's midfielder Bruno Soriano during the Spanish league football match Villarreal CF vs Malaga CF at the El Madrigal stadium in Vila-real yesterday. —AFP

HULL DOWN BLACKBURN TO REGAIN POLE POSITION

LONDON: Hull's bid for a quick return to the Premier League gathered pace as they swept back to the top of the Championship with a 2-0 win against Blackburn yesterday. Steve Bruce's side dominated at Ewood Park and eventually secured their seventh win in their last eight matches thanks to goals from Abel Hernandez and Mohamed Diame.

Diame found Hernandez who rounded Jason Steele before stroking home his 17th goal of the season. Blackburn's new signing Elliott Ward had one cleared off the line moments later, but that would have been unfair overall and Hull put the result beyond doubt in the 63rd minute when Hernandez squared to give Diame his easiest finish of the season.

Hull's first success at Ewood Park since 1986 took them two points clear of Middlesbrough, who drop to second but could regain top spot with a win over Leeds tomorrow. Third placed Burnley's hopes of automatic promotion suffered a blow when they were held to a 0-0 draw by Reading at the Madejski Stadium. Although Burnley extended their undefeated league run to eight matches, they still finished frustrated after missing a 59th-minute penalty, when Andre Gray's spot-kick was saved by home goalkeeper Ali Al-Habsi.

Burnley are one point behind the top two and level on points with fourth placed Brighton, who defeated Bolton 3-2 at the Amex Stadium.

An early goal by Jamie Murphy gave Albion the lead but Emile Heskey levelled before Tomer Hemed restored the Seagulls' advantage. Jay Sparring made it 2-2 short-

ly after the break but Brighton had the greater quality and Beram Kayal won it for the Seagulls.

Sheffield Wednesday cruised to a 4-0 victory over 10-man Brentford at Hillsborough. An early red card for Brentford's Yoann Barbet opened the floodgates as goals from Fernando Forestieri, Gary Hooper, Kieran Lee and Lucas Joao moved the in-form Owls up to fifth place.

Derby started life under new head coach Darren Wassall with a 1-0 defeat against Milton Keynes Dons at the iPro Stadium. The Rams, who sacked former Chelsea and Real Madrid assistant Paul Clement on Monday after less than a season in charge, were rocked when the visitors scored with a Jake Forster-Caskey free-kick eight minutes from full-time.

Derby remain without a league win in 2016 and drop down to sixth place. Neil Warnock's survival mission at third-from-bottom Rotherham began with a 0-0 draw against Birmingham.

The 67-year-old was appointed as the Millers' new manager on Thursday after Neil Redfern was sacked. And Warnock watched as his new side put in a battling performance despite playing the last 12 minutes with 10 men following Richard Wood's red card and also having Joe Mattock dismissed in stoppage-time.

Elsewhere, Fulham won 3-1 at west London rivals QPR, Bristol City beat Ipswich 2-1 and Huddersfield beat Nottingham Forest 2-0. Preston won 2-1 at Wolves and Charlton drew 0-0 with Cardiff. —AFP

CELTIC MOVE CLEAR WITH COUNTY WIN

GLASGOW: Celtic moved three points clear at the top of the Scottish Premiership with a 2-0 win over Ross County as they gained some revenge for their recent League Cup semi-final defeat.

The Hoops' hopes of a treble had been ended following their 3-1 defeat at Hampden to the Highland side and the hosts started brightly at Celtic Park as they looked to make amends for that loss.

However, it took until the 45th minute for Celtic to make the breakthrough as Leigh Griffiths volleyed home his 30th of the season.

The Glasgow giants then earned some breathing space when Dedryck Boyata headed home to make it 2-0 in the 57th minute. Aberdeen, who kept their title challenge firmly alive by defeating Celtic on their last league outing, could again draw level with the Hoops at the top of the table if they can win away to Inverness Caledonian Thistle tomorrow.

It had taken Celtic just 25 seconds to find the back of the net against County in their semi-final clash two weeks ago and the Hoops looked

determined to make a similar start as Griffiths forced Scott Fox into a save at his near post with little over a minute played.

Fox was called into action minutes later to turn a strike from Gary Mackay-Steven round the post after the winger had been played through by Stefan Johansen.

At the other end former Celtic player Jackson Irvine dragged a shot narrowly wide from a Richard Foster cross as the visitors threatened for the first time. Griffiths blew a golden chance to put Celtic ahead in the 35th minute when the Scotland striker raced through on goal but, after rounding Fox, he saw his shot slam off the base of the post before the 'keeper then smothered the danger.

AMENDS

However, Celtic's top scorer made amends for his miss as he fired the hosts in front seconds before the break.

A poor defensive header from a Johansen cross landed at Griffiths' feet at the edge of the box and the striker sent an angled volley bounc-

ing into the ground and beyond Fox.

Despite Celtic's advantage, the home fans started to become increasingly disgruntled as their side misplaced a number of passes at the start of the second half. Nevertheless, the pressure eased when Boyata headed home a second for the Hoops in the 57th minute.

Armstrong broke down the left and floated a ball to the far post where the Belgian craned his neck to nod past Fox from close range.

Celtic nearly added another in the 69th minute when new signing Erik Sviatchenko came close to marking his home debut with a goal but the Danish defender sent his header from Armstrong's corner just by the post. Sviatchenko then caused his side problems at the other end when his misplaced pass allowed Michael Gardyne to break into the box only to see his effort hooked off the line by Bitton.

County remain fourth, ahead of Dundee on goal difference. Elsewhere, managerless Kilmarnock moved out of the relegation play-off position at the expense of Motherwell after winning 2-0 at Fir Park. — AFP



PARIS: Paris Saint-Germain's Uruguayan forward Edinson Cavani (L) vies for the ball with Lille's Nigerian goalkeeper Vincent Enyeama during the French L1 football match between Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) and Lille (LOSC) at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris, yesterday. — AFP

LONG SENDS SOARING SOUTHAMPTON UP TO SIXTH



SWANSEA: Shane Long struck as in-form Southampton climbed to within one point of the Premier League's European places with a 1-0 victory at relegation-threatened Swansea City yesterday.

The Irishman nodded home a cross from James Ward-Prowse in the 69th minute at the Liberty Stadium as Southampton stretched their unbeaten run to six league games, during which time they have not conceded a single goal.

It lifted Ronald Koeman's side up to sixth place in the table, one point below fifth-place Manchester United and seven points off the Champions League berths. Swansea, beaten for the first time since Francesco Guidolin's appointment as head coach, remain 16th but are now only three points above the bottom three.

They visit Tottenham Hotspur and Arsenal in their next two games. Unbeaten in their previous four matches, Swansea fielded an unchanged side, with South Korea midfielder Ki Sung-Yueng returning to the bench after missing the 1-1 draw at home to Crystal Palace with concussion.

Southampton recalled four players, among them fit-again pair Matt Targett and Steven Davis, and procured an early sight of goal when Graziano Pelle shot straight at Lukasz Fabianski from the edge of the box.

Swansea replied with a tame Andre Ayew effort, but the first half did not come to life until the verge of half-time, when the teams exchanged good chances in the space of a minute. First, Gylfi Sigurdsson volleyed over for Swansea from Alberto Paloschi's flick-on, before the unmarked Long headed straight at Fabianski at the other end. Pelle thought he had given Southampton the lead just before the hour when he turned the ball in after Fabianski had dropped it under pressure from Jose Fonte, but referee Jon Moss ruled that the Pole had been fouled.

However, 11 minutes later the visitors did go ahead as Long headed home an inviting cross from Ward-Prowse. — AFP



LIVERPOOL: Everton's Belgian striker Romelu Lukaku (C) heads the ball towards goal but fails to score during the English Premier League football match between Everton and West Bromwich Albion at Goodison Park in Liverpool, north west England yesterday. — AFP

WEST BROM DIG DEEP TO WIN AT EVERTON



LIVERPOOL: Venezuelan striker Salomon Rondon scored a potentially priceless goal as West Bromwich Albion eased their Premier League relegation concerns with a hard-earned 1-0 victory at Everton yesterday. West Brom struck early, and completely against not only the run of play but also the form-book, with a set-piece goal from their very first attack in the 14th minute.

Stephane Sessegnon's left-wing corner found Jonas Olsson at the near-post, his header looped towards the far corner and Rondon helped the ball over the line with his chest from point-blank range.

His goal left Tony Pulis's side eight points above the bottom three. Everton, and in particular right winger Aaron Lennon, had made a strong start and would continue in that vein throughout a first half in which Roberto Martinez must have wondered how his team did not produce an equaliser. In the space of

two minutes towards the end of the opening period, the hosts twice hit the same West Brom post. After 37 minutes, Albion failed to clear a home attack on the edge of their area and Ross Barkley curled an accurate shot beyond goalkeeper Ben Foster, only to see the woodwork deny him a goal.

Moments later, Foster was again well beaten, this time from Tom Cleverley's cross-shot from the left, which drifted over his head and appeared destined for the back of the net until it hit the upright.

Everton's frustrations were compounded by West Brom seeking to waste time, almost from the moment they took the lead, with referee Michael Oliver talking to Foster about precisely that before half an hour had passed. But Pulis's team could feel satisfied at their defensive display in that opening 45 minutes even if, aside from a Rondon shot into the side-netting, they failed to create any other chances.

SIXTH HOME DEFEAT

Seamus Coleman flicked a header just wide from Romelu Lukaku's driven shot, Barkley saw an effort deflected behind and a Lennon effort deviated awkwardly off James Chester and had to be pushed over the crossbar by Foster. Defender Ramiro Funes Mori almost levelled, from one of the home team's eight first-half corners, with a shot into the side-netting, while

Gareth Barry ended the half with a header that just missed the target. By five minutes into the second half, Oliver had seen enough of the visitors' time-wasting, booking veteran Darren Fletcher, and soon added the name of James McClean for a foul that stopped a Coleman-led break. McClean might have been sent off three minutes later for a cynical trip on Lennon, prompting Pulis to substitute him.

Meanwhile, Barry maintained the pressure on the visitors with a shot that rose over from the edge of the area.

McClean's replacement, Chris Brunt, almost scored from his first involvement, on a rare West Brom sortie, as he collected Rondon's pass and placed a shot just beyond the far post.

But there were fewer chances for the hosts in the second half and more frustration, with West Brom goalkeeper Foster another player cautioned for time-wasting. Martinez's decision to take off Lennon added to that frustration and was met with disapproval from the home supporters, although the winger had been less menacing in the second period.

His replacement Gerard Deulofeu almost made a quick impact as his right-wing cross was helped back by Bryan Oviedo for Barry, whose eight-yard attempt was blocked. Everton, 10th, have now lost six times at home this season and trail the European places by six points. — AFP

HAMMERS BATTLE BACK TO FRUSTRATE NORWICH



NORWICH: Dimitri Payet underlined why West Ham splashed out on a new contract for the France midfielder this week as his influential display helped rescue a 2-2 draw against Norwich yesterday.

Slaven Bilic's side were heading for defeat at Carrow Road after goals from Robbie Brady and Wes Hoolahan appeared to have put lowly Norwich in complete control.

But Payet, who signed a bumper deal as West Ham moved to keep him following a reported offer from the wealthy Chinese league, maintained the superb form that has made him such a hit since his pre-season move from Marseille.

He sparked West Ham's revival with a 74th-minute goal and then set up Mark Noble's blistering equaliser two minutes later to ensure his club remain firmly in the hunt for a Europa League place.

Norwich's late meltdown was a significant blow to their hopes of avoiding relegation and they remain in the drop zone.

After five successive league defeats, Norwich's predicament had taken another turn for the worse before kick-off as relegation rivals Sunderland defeated Manchester United to climb above the Canaries.

Alex Neil's team had conceded 19 goals in their last six matches in all competitions, with last weekend's woeful 2-0 loss at bottom club Aston Villa an especially alarming setback.

Norwich defender Russell Martin tried to set the tempo with a first minute burst forward that ended with a powerful shot over the crossbar.

West Ham arrived in Norfolk in buoyant mood after their midweek FA Cup fourth round replay win over Liverpool.

And the visitors threatened when Enner Valencia cleverly worked space for a shot from a tight angle that Canaries goalkeeper John Ruddy did well to tip over.

Norwich broke the deadlock in the 54th minute when Brady stole possession from Michail Antonio and curled a fine shot that hit the underside of the bar and bounced down over the line.

It was just Brady's second goal of the season, with his other one also coming against West Ham.

Bilic responded by sending on forwards Andy Carroll and Victor Moses, but Norwich doubled their lead in the 65th minute.

Steven Naismith's shot from the edge of

the area deflected off James Collins into the path of Hoolahan, who side-footed home from close range despite West Ham's appeals for offside.

Bilic's team needed to hit back quickly and they struck in the 74th minute when Moses's shot was pushed out by Ruddy into the path of Payet, who slotted into the empty net.

West Ham were suddenly inspired and two minutes later Noble equalised with a superb strike from Payet's pass.

Emmanuel Emenike had a chance to cap the fightback in stoppage-time, but the West Ham substitute missed his kick from close-range. — AFP



ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Arsenal v Leicester City	15:00
betIN SPORTS 2 HD	
Aston Villa v Liverpool	17:05
betIN SPORTS 2 HD	
Man City v Tottenham	19:15
betIN SPORTS 2 HD	

SPANISH LEAGUE

Real Sociedad v Granada	14:00
betIN SPORTS 3 HD	
Sevilla FC v Las Palmas	18:00
betIN SPORTS 3 HD	
Getafe v Atletico de Madrid	20:15
betIN SPORTS 3 HD	
SD Eibar v Levante	20:15
betIN SPORTS 13 HD EN	
Barcelona v Celta de Vigo	22:30
betIN SPORTS 3 HD	

ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE

AC Milan v Genoa CFC	14:30
betIN SPORTS 4 HD	
Udinese Calcio v Bologna	17:00
betIN SPORTS	
UC Sampdoria v Atalanta	17:00
betIN SPORTS 4 HD	
Citta di Palermo v Torino	17:00
betIN SPORTS	
Florentina v Inter	22:45
betIN SPORTS 4 HD	

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

Hamburger v Monchengladbach	17:30
betIN SPORTS 5 HD	
FC Augsburg v Bayern Munich	19:30
betIN SPORTS 5 HD	

FRENCH LEAGUE

Olympique Lyonnais v Caen	16:00
betIN SPORTS 6 HD	
Saint Etienne v AS Monaco	19:00
betIN SPORTS 6 HD	
Nice v Olympique de Marseille	23:00
betIN SPORTS 6 HD	

PALACE SLUMP CONTINUES AS DEENEY GIVES WATFORD WIN



LONDON: Watford heaped more misery on Crystal Palace as their winless Premier League run stretched to nine matches with a 2-1 defeat at Selhurst Park yesterday. Troy Deeney scored a brace either side of Emmanuel Adebayor's first goal for the Eagles as the visiting Hornets brought their own recent slump to an end.

Deeney put Watford in front from the penalty spot on 16 minutes and fired home the winner eight minutes from time. "It is a massive win. We target teams in and around us to take the points and it was a well deserved victory, and a well

fought one," the match-winner told the BBC. Adebayor had equalised on the stroke of half-time while Palace had Pape Souare sent off deep into injury time. Watford moved up to eighth with the win while Palace stayed 12th.

"We were not good in the first half. We were much improved in the second half and should have won it, so a bit of a blow to lose the game," admitted Palace boss Alan Pardew. The visitors were on top in the early stages as Mile Jedinak got in a crucial block to deny Deeney.

But Jedinak wrestled Deeney to the ground in the box and the striker dusted himself down to slot home from the spot, sending Wayne Hennessey the wrong way.

Heurelho Gomes then produced a wonder save to deny Yohan Cabaye's low strike that looked headed for the bottom corner of the net. Odion Ighalo pounced on a poor Jedinak pass, wriggled into the area and fired a shot off the base of the post, with Hennessey up quickly to block the follow-up from Nordin Amrabat.

Ighalo couldn't keep down his flick from Deeney's ball over the top as Watford continued to dominate, but against the run of play Adebayor equalised with a looping header after climbing above Craig Cathcart. Pardew switched former Manchester United winger Wilfried Zaha from the right to the left at half-time and the speedy England international's influence increased. He created a pair of chances for Adebayor while Jordon Mutch forced Gomes into a decent stop. But this time, as Palace dominated, it was Watford who found the decisive breakthrough. Ben Watson's deflected cross dropped kindly for Deeney, who controlled the ball on his thigh before drilling home past Hennessey. Palace came a lick of paint away from snatching a share of the spoils as Cabaye crashed a volley off the lower part of the upright late on. But Souare was dismissed for a two-footed lunge on Valon Behrami before Joel Ward turned Zaha's cross over the bar as Palace's hopes of snatching a draw fizzled out. — AFP

IMBULA CRACKER SETS UP STOKE WIN



BOURNEMOUTH: Club record signing Giannelli Imbula scored his first goal for Stoke City to set his new side on their way to a 3-1 Premier League win at Bournemouth yesterday. Imbula's superb volley nine minutes in at the Vitality Stadium put Stoke ahead and two goals early in the second half by Ibrahim Afellay and Joselu put them out of sight before Matt Ritchie pulled one back. The win ended a run of three straight defeats for Stoke and four games without even scoring a goal, with Mark Hughes's side climbing back up to ninth. Bournemouth, meanwhile, are four points clear of the relegation zone after suffering a second consecutive defeat at

home. Eddie Howe's men never recovered from the loss of the early goal to Imbula, the Belgian-born midfielder not breaking his stride as he latched onto a Simon Francis clearance to volley low into the far corner from just outside the area. It was Imbula's first goal since signing from FC Porto for a club record £18.3 million (\$26 million) just before the transfer window shut. Jonathan Walters was back in the Stoke side in place of the ill Marko Arnautovic and both he and Xherdan Shaqiri had chances to increase the lead before the break. Bournemouth had enjoyed most of the possession but Stoke were creating the chances and Howe responded by sending on Ritchie and Josh King at half-time for Dan Gosling and Marc Pugh.

But Stoke doubled their lead on the break seven minutes into the second half, Walters teeing up Afellay, who beat Artur Boruc with a first-time finish. The visitors then lost Glen Johnson to injury and, with no obvious replacement on the bench, Spanish forward Joselu came on as Mame Biram Diouf filled in at full-back. — AFP



LONDON: Watford's Nathan Ake, left, and Crystal Palace's Wilfried Zaha battle for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match at Selhurst Park, London, yesterday. — AP

Sports

US beat World
157-154 in Rising
Stars Challenge



Voges cashes
in as Australia
forge lead



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WEST BROM DIG DEEP TO WIN AT EVERTON

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SUNDERLAND: Sunderland's French-born Ivorian defender Lamine Kone (2L) heads the ball towards Manchester United's Spanish goalkeeper David de Gea (2R) to score his team's second goal during the English Premier League football match between Sunderland and Manchester United at the Stadium of Light in Sunderland, northeast England yesterday. — AFP

MAN UTD TOP-FOUR HOPES FADE



LONDON: Louis van Gaal conceded that Manchester United may need to win the Europa League to qualify for the Champions League after their 2-1 defeat at Sunderland yesterday.

Bidding to close the six-point gap separating them from the Champions League places, United fell behind in the third

minute when Wahbi Khazri's free-kick from wide on the Sunderland left crept in.

Anthony Martial levelled before half-time, but an unfortunate 82nd-minute own goal by United goalkeeper David de Gea gifted Sunderland the points and increased the pressure on embattled United manager Van Gaal. "It will be very difficult now (to finish in the top four) because we give five points away, Chelsea and now," Van Gaal said, referencing last weekend's 1-1 draw at Chelsea. "It's too much at this time."

United face Danish side FC Midtjylland in the Europa League last 32 next week and Van Gaal agreed when it was put to him that his side's best chance of reaching the Champions League is to win the competition. "After this match, I think that is the

best route," he told BT Sport at the Stadium of Light. Compounding United's misery, Italian right-back Matteo Darmian sustained a dislocated left shoulder that Van Gaal said would keep him out for "several weeks".

With Antonio Valencia, Marcos Rojo, Ashley Young, Phil Jones, Guillermo Varela and Luke Shaw already sidelined, United finished the game with Cameron Borthwick-Jackson, 19, and 21-year-old Donald Love at full-back.

Khazri had set up Jermain Defoe for a late equaliser in Sunderland's 2-2 draw at Liverpool and he made an early impression on his home debut with a free-kick that eluded everyone to nestle in the bottom-right corner. United built up a head of

steam and equalised in the 39th minute when Martial artfully dinked in his 10th goal of the season after Vito Mannone had parried Juan Mata's low shot. But Sunderland regained the lead when the unmarked Lamine Kone met Khazri's right-wing corner with a powerful header that found the net via Martial's right foot and De Gea's right elbow.

United were last week reported to have approached Jose Mourinho about succeeding Van Gaal. The Dutchman has described the story as a media invention and when asked if he felt like the result at Sunderland had put him under more pressure, he replied: "No." Mourinho's former club Chelsea host Newcastle United later on Saturday when the reigning champions will

seek to extend their unbeaten run under interim manager Guus Hiddink to 11 matches. With fourth-place Manchester City hosting Tottenham Hotspur and leaders Leicester City visiting third-place Arsenal today, defeat was doubly frustrating for United as they had a chance to close on the top four.

But they held onto fifth place because West Ham United fell just short of a stirring comeback after coming from 2-0 down to draw 2-2 at Norwich City. Dimitri Payet celebrated his new West Ham contract by scoring and then teeing up Mark Noble for a thumping 76th-minute equaliser after goals from Robbie Brady and Wes Hoolahan appeared to have put Norwich in control. — AFP

RONALDO DOUBLE KEEPS PRESSURE ON BARCA

MADRID: Cristiano Ronaldo struck twice as Real Madrid overcame a stiff test from Athletic Bilbao to move within a point of Barcelona at the top of La Liga with a 4-2 win yesterday.

Ronaldo's early opener was cancelled out by Javi Eraso before a two-goal burst just before half-time from James Rodriguez and Toni Kroos put Madrid in control. Real were reduced to 10 men late on as Raphael Varane saw a red card, but Ronaldo made sure of the points before Gorka Elustondo grabbed a consolation in stoppage time.

Barca have two games in hand on Madrid and face Celta Vigo in the first of those today. Victory also extended Madrid's impressive run of five wins and a draw in six games since coach Zinedine Zidane took charge.

"You will always have errors, but I am not worried about that. I think we were good physically, on the ball and I am happy with what we did today," said Zidane.

Ronaldo had been much criticised for his poor performance as Madrid struggled past Granada last weekend, but was sharp from the off back on home soil as he turned inside from Karim Benzema's pass and smashed home his 31st goal of the season.

"The press are here to opine on whether Ronaldo plays well or badly, if

he is finished, but today he has showed he is bloody brilliant," added Zidane. However, Athletic reacted well to going behind in a hugely entertaining first half with chances flowing at either end.

The visitors were level on 10 minutes when Varane's errant backpass was only parried by Keylor Navas into the path of Eraso to slot home. Navas then had to produce a brilliant save to parry Aritz Aduriz's powerful downward header. At the other end, Gorka Iraizoz also made a great save to deny Danilo. And Aduriz came close again on the half-hour when his deflected shot came back off the crossbar.

FIREPOWER

However, the Basques were made to pay for their profligacy as Madrid showed their firepower with two goals in eight minutes before half-time.

Rodriguez regained the lead with a trademark drive into the bottom corner from outside the box for just his fifth goal of the season.

Kroos then put the game beyond Athletic as he received Ronaldo's pass just inside the area and saw his shot flick off Aymeric Laporte on its way past Iraizoz.

Ronaldo came close to extending the lead when he struck the post from range just after the break. Navas was



MADRID: Real Madrid's Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo (R) vies with Athletic Bilbao's defender Xabier Etxeita during the Spanish league football match Real Madrid CF vs Athletic Club Bilbao at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid yesterday. — AFP

also called on to make another fine save to smother Aduriz's effort on the edge of the area after a rare wayward pass from Kroos.

Madrid had to see out the final seven minutes with 10 men as Varane saw a second yellow card for leading with his elbow in an aerial clash with Aduriz.

Yet, even with a man less, Ronaldo got his second of the afternoon to move ahead of Luis Suarez as La Liga's top goalscorer by controlling Lucas Vazquez's cross before firing home from close range. — AFP

SLICK CHELSEA DEMOLISH NEWCASTLE



LONDON: Champions Chelsea's most convincing display of the season extended their unbeaten run under Guus Hiddink and left Newcastle United in the Premier League relegation zone.

Mourinho's former club Chelsea continue to prosper under interim manager Guus Hiddink and extended their unbeaten run to

12 matches with a breezy 5-1 home win over Newcastle United. A masked Diego Costa, who broke his nose in training, slotted Chelsea in front after five minutes and the Blues were three ahead with 17 minutes on the clock after Pedro and Willian punished lackadaisical Newcastle defending. Newcastle launched the goal flow until the hour mark when Cesc Fabregas's pass sent Pedro away to make it 4-0 before Bertrand Traore added a fifth. Andros Townsend replied late on for Steve McClaren's Newcastle, who slumped back into the relegation zone.

Chelsea are now eight points shy of the European places, but victory came at the cost of an injury to departing captain John Terry, who went off in the 38th minute after an awkward landing. — Reuters



LONDON: Chelsea's Spanish midfielder Pedro (L) scores his second and Chelsea's fourth goal during the English Premier League football match between Chelsea and Newcastle United at Stamford Bridge yesterday. — AFP

Kuwait Times BUSINESS

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YOUR PRIUS IS THE FUTURE

Gulf Insurance Group
posts KD 14.09m in profits

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Modi govt failing to boost
economic investment: Singh

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KFH-Bahrain, King Faisal
Co ink MoU on Avenues-
Bahrain Project

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MIAMI: Shoppers are shown in Miami. The Commerce Department released retail sales data for January. —AP

US CONSUMERS COUNTER RECESSION FEARS

RETAIL SALES RISE 0.2%; IMPORT PRICES FALL 1.1% IN JANUARY

WASHINGTON: US consumer spending regained momentum in January as households ramped up purchases of a variety of goods, in a hopeful sign that economic growth was picking up after slowing to a crawl at the end of 2015. But the outlook for consumer spending was tempered by another report on Friday showing sentiment among households ebbed in early February. Still, the increase in consumer spending last month underscored the economy's resilience and challenged the view that a recession was looming.

"The markets may have decided that the US is headed for recession, but obviously no one told US consumers," said Paul Ashworth, chief economist at Capital Economics in Toronto.

The Commerce Department said retail sales excluding automobiles, gasoline, building materials and food services increased 0.6 percent last month after an unrevised 0.3 percent decline in December. These so-called core retail sales correspond most closely with the consumer spending

component of gross domestic product. Economists had forecast core retail sales increasing 0.3 percent last month.

US stocks, which had been aggressively sold this week on concerns the economy was heading into recession, rallied on the data. Market sentiment was also buoyed by a rebound in oil prices from 12-year lows.

Prices for US Treasury debt fell, while the dollar rose against a basket of currencies. Though signs of firming consumer spending are likely to be welcomed by Federal Reserve officials, the stock market turmoil and tame inflation environment make it unlikely the US central bank will raise interest rates next month. Rate hike prospects for the rest of the year have also diminished. The Fed raised its short-term interest rate in December, the first increase in nearly a decade. "From the Fed's perspective, any further evidence of the US economy weathering the market turmoil at the start of the year is confirmation the Fed should continue to

focus on the longer run and ignore short-term disruptions," said Lindsey Piegza, chief economist at Stifel Fixed Income in Chicago.

Consumer spending accounts for more than two-thirds of US economic activity and is being supported by a tightening labor market, which is starting to lift wages. Savings, which hit a three-year high in 2015, are seen boosting future spending.

Q1 GDP ESTIMATES RISE

Growth in consumer spending moderated in the fourth quarter. That, together with weak export growth due to the strong dollar, efforts by businesses to sell inventory and cuts in capital goods spending by energy firms, restrained GDP growth to a 0.7 percent annual pace.

However, weak reports on inventories, factory orders and construction spending suggest the economy grew at about a 0.2 percent rate in the last three months of 2015.

In the wake of the retail sales report, forecasting firm Macroeconomic Advisers raised its first-quarter GDP growth estimate by one-tenth of a percentage point to a 2 percent annual rate, and economists at Morgan Stanley lifted their forecast to a rate of 1.5 percent from 1.2 percent.

A separate report showed the University of Michigan's consumer sentiment index fell to a reading of 90.7 in early February from 92 in January as households worried about the economic outlook.

Consumers, however, remained upbeat about their personal financial situation and anticipated that low inflation would boost their purchasing power. Consumers expect inflation to average 2.4 percent over the next five years, down from 2.7 percent in the January survey and the lowest reading since the question was added to the monthly survey in 1990. "The Fed closely watches the consumer survey measures of inflation expectations, and while today's data is only the prelimi-

nary report, it does increase the risk that the Fed's next hike is delayed beyond our current June call," said Michael Feroli, an economist at JPMorgan in New York. Inflation, which is currently running below the Fed's 2 percent target, could remain benign. The Labor Department reported on Friday that import prices dropped 1.1 percent in January after a similar decrease in December. Import prices have declined in 17 of the last 19 months, reflecting the robust dollar and plunging oil prices.

While lower oil prices have translated into cheaper gasoline, boosting household discretionary spending, they are also weighing on sales at service stations.

In January, a 3.1 percent drop in receipts at service stations restricted the gain in overall retail sales to 0.2 percent. Retail sales for December were revised to show a 0.2 percent rise instead of the previously reported 0.1 percent dip. —Reuters

IRAN TO SHIP 4M BARRELS OF CRUDE TO EUROPE IN COMING 24 HOURS

DUBAI: Iran will load 4 million barrels of crude oil on tankers destined for Europe in the coming 24 hours, a senior official was quoted as saying yesterday including 2 million barrels to be bought by France's Total. "In the coming 24 hours, 4 million barrels of crude oil will be loaded onto 3 tankers destined for Europe," Rokneddin Javadi, managing director of the National Iranian Oil Company, was quoted as saying by the Shana news agency.

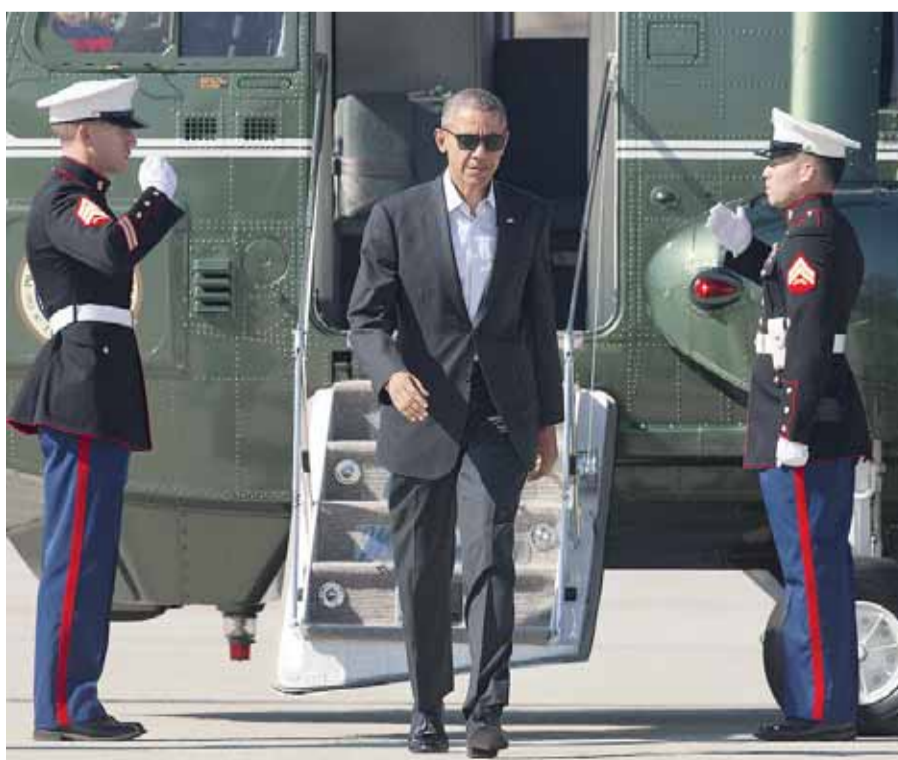
"Of those 4 million barrels of crude, 2 million barrels are assigned to France's Total, and 2 million barrels have been bought by two companies in Russia and Spain," he added.

Iran is exporting 1.3 million barrels a day (bpd) of crude oil, and will be pumping 1.5 million barrels a day by the start of the next Iranian year on March 20, a vice-president was quoted as saying yesterday. Oil traders are closely watching the pace of Iran's return to the market after a nuclear deal with world powers relieved Iran of sanctions that had cut its oil exports by more than half from their pre-sanctions 2011 peak of around 3 million bpd.

"Today our oil exports have reached 1.3 million barrels a day, and by the end of the (Iranian) year will reach 1.5 million barrels a day," Vice-President Eshaq Jahangiri was quoted as saying by the Shana news agency. "In the early parts of the next (Iranian) year, they will reach 2 million barrels a day: Iran must preserve its share of the global oil market," he added.

Some in the market fear that a ramp-up of Iranian exports could worsen a global oil glut that drove crude prices down to 12-year lows this week. Iran is also trying to increase production of gas and refined products, particularly petrochemicals. Shana reported yesterday that Iran had produced 35 million tons of petrochemical products in the nine months to December, of which 14.3 million tons were exported. —Reuters

OBAMA TO PUSH TRADE AGENDA AT SUMMIT WITH SOUTHEAST ASIA



LOS ANGELES: President Barack Obama walks from Marine One to board Air Force One at Los Angeles International Airport on Friday in Los Angeles. Obama is traveling to Palm Springs, California, then making his way over to Sunnylands in Rancho Mirage. There he will be joined by Secretary of State John Kerry for a gathering on Monday and Tuesday of the leaders of the Association of Southern Asian Nations (ASEAN). The summit is aimed at strengthening the US-ASEAN strategic partnership. —AP

MANILA, Philippines: A summit next week between Southeast Asian leaders and President Barack Obama is unlikely to deliver any big economic prizes, but will allow the American side to press the advantages of joining a Pacific trade pact that doesn't include China.

The meetings at Rancho Mirage in California set for tomorrow and Tuesday will be the first summit of its kind for the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations on US soil. Its special nature is intended to show the Obama administration's commitment to countering growing Chinese influence in a region that is home to 620 million people and a \$2.6 trillion economy.

Southeast Asian nations have benefited from increased trade and investment stemming from their giant neighbor's economic rise but many are wary of China achieving overweening influence. The U.S., meanwhile, has an interest in maintaining freedom of navigation in the South China Sea, a crucial global trade route.

The summit is meant to send a signal that the US values ASEAN, said US Deputy National Security Advisor Ben Rhodes, using the acronym for the Southeast Asian grouping. "We are going to be engaged in Southeast Asia, we're going to be engaged in working with the nations of the Asia Pacific to clear rules of the road on the various issues of common interest that we share with them," he said.

The Southeast Asian nations of Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam are already part of the US-led Trans Pacific Partnership trade pact that is awaiting ratification by national parliaments. The agreement eliminates many tariffs and also imposes minimum labor standards

on member nations as part of US efforts to set rules for trade and business in the region and beyond. Indonesia, which is the largest economy in Southeast Asia, along with Thailand and the Philippines are prospective members of the pact, which took several years to negotiate and was a main plank in Obama's drive for a deeper relationship with Asia.

Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar, which are the least developed countries in Southeast Asia, aren't eligible to join because they aren't members of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation grouping. Richard Javad Heydarian, assistant professor of political science at Manila's De La Salle University, said he expects Obama to pitch the benefits of American-led economic initiatives, and particularly for Southeast Asia's economic heavyweights, Indonesia and Thailand, to join the Pacific trade agreement.

He also expects Obama to court Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar as countries that are within the economic orbit of China.

"What the US can do, what Obama can do, is encourage these countries to be less dependent on China so that they have more options when it comes to their foreign policy, when it comes to how they govern themselves," he said.

ASEAN Connect

A new US initiative called ASEAN Connect aims to set up US government regional offices in Jakarta, Bangkok and Singapore to help Southeast Asia on infrastructure projects, and support development by helping poorer countries such as Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia to improve customs services, develop investment regulations and the rule of law. —AP

YOUR GUIDE TO BETTER EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS IN 2016

It's been well over a month since the New Year started, and if you're like most people, then you started it off with goals and plans to improve your life this year. If those goals were to improve your career, then you're in luck. Bayt.com has 16 years of experience in 'lifestyle engineering' - providing job seekers with the tools to empower them and help them lead the life of their choice.

Here's a short guide from the career experts at Bayt.com, the Middle East's leading job site to help you get on the right path this year to develop your employability skills and achieve a shining career:

1. Find what skills are in demand

When you're starting a new job search, it is of utmost importance to understand the market in your country, and to learn what skills and qualifications are in highest demand. Of course, you can spend hours researching this, and reading articles and guides, or even surveys, such as the Middle East Job Index survey by Bayt.com. But we have an even better solution for you: the Career Map on Bayt.com. This map allows you to identify the skills that are most needed in your target industry. You can use filters such as location, years of experience and level of education that will help you compare your

BAYT.COM WEEKLY REPORT

skills to the ones already in supply in the market, so that you can stay competitive and always a step ahead of everyone else. If you're changing careers, or relocating, the career map reveals what changes you can expect depending on your decision.

2. Advance your skills - Take a course

This is the perfect opportunity to use Bayt.com's learning tools, and find courses that will help you upgrade your skills, and add some new ones to your CV. Your options are wide, from soft

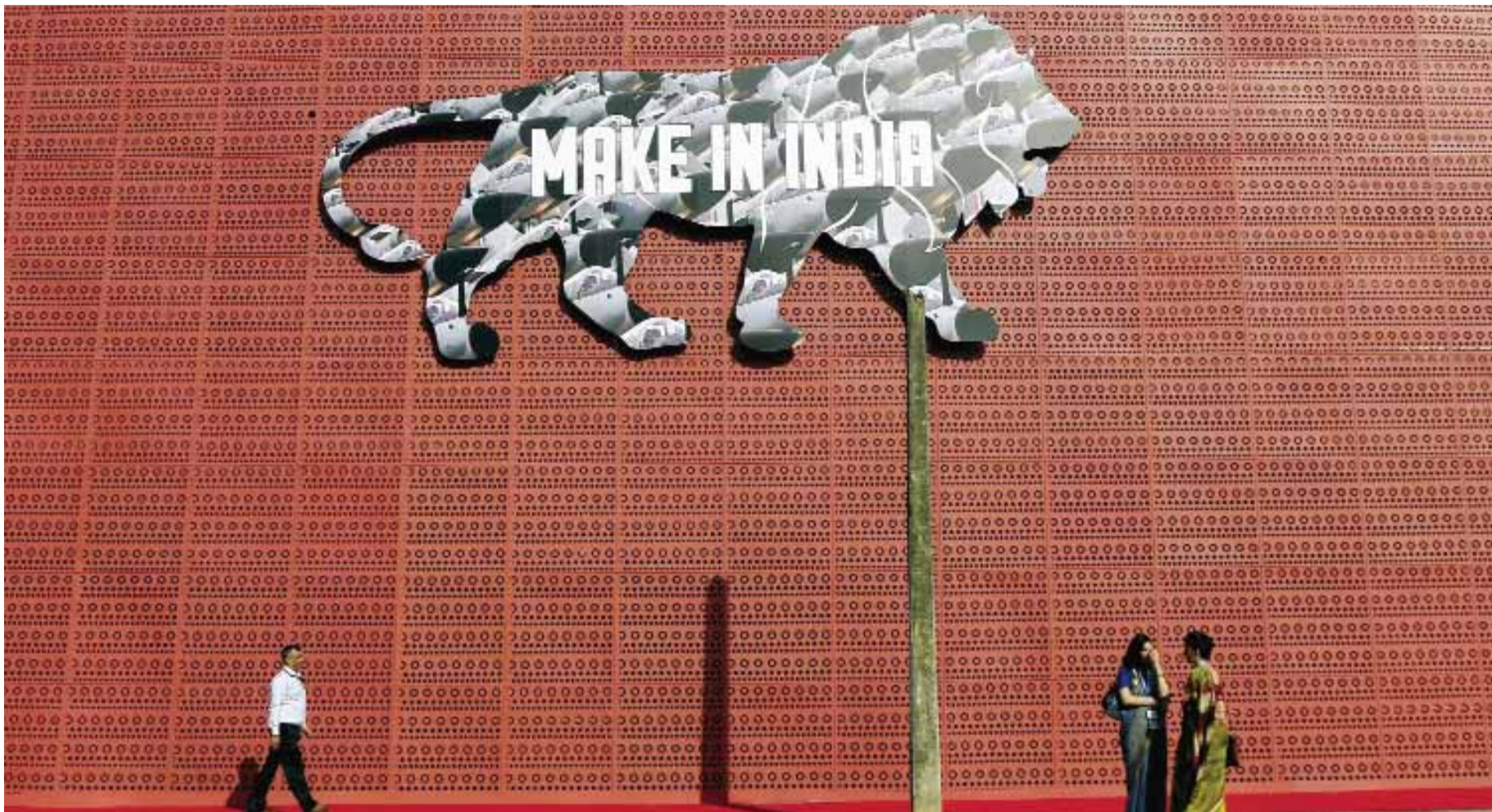
skills - like time management and communication skills - to industry-specific expertise such as Adobe courses for designers, or Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) certification for accountants. Courses are truly your gateway to a better career, so get your thinking caps on, grab your notebooks, and enjoy learning something new this year!

3. Test your skills

Now that you have the knowledge and skills employers are looking for, the only thing left to do is to show employers what you're capable of. What use are all those courses if no one knows

about them? Take a test. Bayt.com offers many tests to assess your skills, and in every field. By completing a test and publishing your result on your online CV, you get a certificate. The certificate is automatically displayed on your Bayt.com CV, making you even more discoverable to employers. You can also download your certificate in PDF format and share it with employers.

And there you have it. Your bright new career is as easy as 1-2-3. Remember, you can always visit Bayt.com's career articles and blog for expert advice on advancing - or changing - your career in 2016. Good luck!



MUMBAI: Indian participants stand near a wall bearing the image of the mascot during the opening of the 'Make in India Week' in Mumbai yesterday. Over 190 companies, and 5,000 delegates from 60 countries, are taking part in the first 'Make in India Week' to be held in Mumbai from February 13-18. — AFP

WHEAT OFFERS REMAIN SCARCE AT EGYPT GASC IMPORT TENDER

ABU DHABI: Egypt, the world's largest wheat importer, received only four offers at an international tender to buy the grain yesterday as suppliers remained reluctant to sell to the state grain buyer GASC following concern about limits on imports of wheat containing the ergot fungus.

Participation in Saturday's tender by international grain trading houses was even lower than one on Friday when five offers were made and much lower compared to tenders in the past few months.

The lowest offer presented was for French wheat at \$186.50 a tonne free-on-board (FOB) and \$194 a tonne cost and freight (C&F) by Soufflet, traders said. The remaining three offers were for Russian wheat, two cargoes by Union Co. and one by Aston. Still, traders said there was a technical issue with the French freight price of \$7.50 a tonne and it could be rejected making Russian wheat the cheapest on a cost and freight basis.

Suppliers have been presenting offers to GASC with a risk premium added to the price for the past two tenders on the back of uncertainty about the allowed limits of ergot, a grain fungus found in wheat worldwide. GASC only managed to buy one cargo of 60,000 tons of Romanian wheat in a tender on Friday and soon after announced another wheat import tender for the same

shipment period of March 10-20, reflecting Egypt's pressing need to secure more of the grain.

Egypt's supply ministry, which includes GASC, has usually permitted a 0.05 percent level of ergot in wheat imports. But the agriculture ministry surprised traders this year by not allowing any ergot content and rejecting a 63,000 ton French wheat shipment supplied by global trading house Bunge. Bunge has launched legal proceedings against Egypt over the rejected wheat. GASC's vice chairman Mamdouh Abdel Fattah told Reuters exclusively on Friday that Bunge had offered to send a replacement for the rejected vessel and that he was studying it.

In a bid to win back confidence, the ministries of supply and agriculture held a joint press conference on Sunday assuring suppliers their wheat shipments can contain up to 0.05 percent of ergot, a common global standard GASC traditionally used in its import tender specifications.

But traders said they were concerned about the lack of a written statement from the Egyptian authorities, and feared that shipments could still be rejected. "Everyone is still waiting for that paper guarantee, if they don't have that how can they not add a risk premium," one Cairo-based trader said. — Reuters

HONDA ALGHANIM CELEBRATES HALA FEBRUARY WITH MAGNIFICENT OFFERS

KUWAIT: As part of its commitment to offer the most competitive promotions in February, Kuwait's most joyous month of national festivities and non-stop shopping, Alghanim Motors, the exclusive distributor of Honda vehicles in the country, is presenting a special offer for its customers, entailing an amazing service package and exceptional prices on all Honda vehicles throughout the month of February.

This one-of-a-kind offer guarantees the customer's peace of mind thanks to a free package that includes a free service contract for 2 years, effectively offering great value and comfort every time a Honda owner visits the showroom for service maintenance purposes. Also included are free registration & 3rd party insurance, which both can also save Honda owners a lot of time and money. And last but not least, a free 1000L fuel voucher that will certainly come in handy for all the driving and family visitations that customers will do during the month of festivity.

Due to this offer being available for a limited period, Honda Alghanim urges its customers and all Honda enthusiasts to visit the brand new 9,000-square-meter Honda showroom at Safat Alghanim in Al-Rai, which is proudly considered the largest in the MENA region, boasting three distinctive floors and a service center of an awe-inspiring capacity, ready to service 70 cars daily across 16 service stations. The showroom's working hours are from 8:30 AM until 10:00 PM, Saturday to Thursday, and from 9:30 AM until 10:00 PM on Fridays.

Alghanim Motors, the exclusive distributor of Honda automobiles, motorcycles, power products, and marine products in Kuwait, is committed to providing customers with flexible payment solutions and efficient and cost-effective services. The waiting lounge offers entertainment and comfort for customers with gaming consoles, digital satellite TV, free wireless internet and relaxing massage chairs. For more information, please call 1822777.

News

in brief

Kuwaiti oil price up \$1.34 to \$24.04 pb

KUWAIT: The price of Kuwaiti oil went up \$1.34 Friday to settle at \$24.04 per barrel after being at \$22.70 the day before, said Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) yesterday. At the global level, the price of oil went up by five percent after news began to circulate on OPEC's intention to hold talks on curbing supplies with other oil exporters. Meanwhile, the price of the Brent mix was up \$1.37 to reach \$31.43 per barrel, a similar case for the West Texas Intermediate crude price which went up \$1.21 to reach \$27.42 pb.

Dubai Petroleum says gas leak occurred at Fateh oilfield

ABU DHABI: Dubai Petroleum said yesterday a gas leak had occurred at its offshore Fateh oilfield on Thursday but that the situation was now stable. The source of the gas leak was at an area where a previous fire had occurred in 1975 and was dealt with immediately and in a safe manner, state news agency WAM said quoting a company statement. Operations have resumed since then and the situation is stable, the statement said.

Dubai Holding Commercial Operations Group net profit

ABU DHABI: Dubai Holding Commercial Operations Group, a business group of Dubai Holding, said yesterday its 2015 net profit grew 25 percent to 5.83 billion (\$1.59 billion) dirhams. The group's total revenues were up 15 percent at 14.53 billion compared to 12.63 billion a year ago, a statement by the company said. The growth was supported by strong performance from the firm's business units TECOM Group, Jumeirah Group and Dubai Properties Group. Dubai Holding Commercial Operations is targeting an annual profit of 10 billion in four years.

GULF INSURANCE GROUP POSTS KD 14.09M IN 2015 PROFITS

KUWAIT: The Gulf Insurance Group yesterday reported net profits of KD 14.09 million (\$46.9 million) for the fiscal year ending on December 31st, 2015; 78.60 fils per share. The profits showed a rise of 17 percent compared with last year's profits of KD 12.3 million, the group said in a statement.

Shareholders' equity went up by 6 percent in 2015, or KD 5.4 million, up to KD 89.6 million, compared with KD 84.2 million in 2014, it added. The group's net profits of investment and revenues hit KD 12.3 million (USD 40.09 million), up by 6.0 percent over last year's figure, according to the statement.

Its assets hiked to \$368.4 million (\$1.2 billion), up 6.1 percent, compared with the FY ending on December 31st, 2014, it pointed out. — KUNA

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.615
Indian Rupees	4.419
Pakistani Rupees	2.871
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.083
Nepali Rupees	2.772
Singapore Dollar	215.430
Hongkong Dollar	38.428
Bangladesh Taka	3.811
Philippine Peso	6.295
Thai Baht	8.467
GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	79.923
Qatari Riyal	82.328
Omani Riyal	778.456
Bahraini Dinar	795.930
UAE Dirham	81.599
ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	36.625
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	38.321
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.399
Tunisian Dinar	150.300
Jordanian Dinar	422.170
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.197
Syrian Lira	2.136
Morocco Dirham	31.366
EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	299.550
Euro	340.290
Sterling Pound	435.100
Canadian dollar	216.130
Turkish lira	101.960
Swiss Franc	309.770
Australian Dollar	212.680
US Dollar Buying	298.350

GOLD	
20 Gram	239.100
10 Gram	122.470
5 Gram	62.080

UAE EXCHANGE CENTRE WLL

CURRENCIES	TELEX TRANSFER PER 1000
Australian Dollar	204.16
Canadian Dollar	220.30
Swiss Franc	307.24
Euro	338.23
US Dollar	301.25
Sterling Pound	439.64
Japanese Yen	2.60
Bangladesh Taka	3.838
Indian Rupee	4.439
Sri Lankan Rupee	2.092
Nepali Rupee	2.776
Pakistani Rupee	2.888
UAE Dirhams	0.08198
Bahraini Dinar	0.8006
Egyptian Pound	0.03836
Jordanian Dinar	0.4285
Omani Riyal	0.7823
Qatari Riyal	0.08306
Saudi Riyal	0.08030

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	299.350
Canadian Dollar	217.985
Sterling Pound	435.055
Euro	338.095
Swiss Franc	293.515
Bahrain Dinar	791.920
UAE Dirhams	81.745
Qatari Riyals	82.950

Saudi Riyals	80.505
Jordanian Dinar	421.685
Egyptian Pound	38.118
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.082
Indian Rupees	4.381
Pakistani Rupees	2.860
Bangladesh Taka	3.803
Philippines Peso	6.282
Cyprus pound	570.157
Kenyan Shilling	3.635
Syrian Pound	2.360
Nepalese Rupees	3.735
Malaysian Ringgit	72.895
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	46.190
Thai Bhat	9.380
Turkish Lira	102.330

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.426376	0.435376
Czech Korune	0.004490	0.016490
Danish Krone	0.041217	0.046217
Euro	0.332551	0.340551
Norwegian Krone	0.030865	0.036065
Romanian Leu	0.075182	0.075182
Slovakia	0.008874	0.018874
Swedish Krona	0.031534	0.036534
Swiss Franc	0.301364	0.311564
Turkish Lira	0.095850	0.106150
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.202898	0.214398
New Zealand Dollar	0.191659	0.201159
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.209892	0.218392
US Dollars	0.295450	0.299950

US Dollars Mint	0.295950	0.299950
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003430	0.004030
Chinese Yuan	0.044126	0.047626
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036351	0.039101
Indian Rupee	0.004138	0.004528
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023
Japanese Yen	0.002530	0.002710
Kenyan Shilling	0.002937	0.002937
Korean Won	0.000239	0.000254
Malaysian Ringgit	0.068186	0.074186
Nepalese Rupee	0.002839	0.003009
Pakistan Rupee	0.002594	0.002874
Philippine Peso	0.006195	0.006475
Sierra Leone	0.000070	0.000076
Singapore Dollar	0.211398	0.217398
South African Rand	0.012623	0.021123
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001730	0.002310
Taiwan	0.008911	0.009091
Thai Baht	0.008155	0.008705

Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.787680	0.795680
Egyptian Pound	0.034113	0.038449
Iranian Riyal	0.000083	0.000084
Iraqi Dinar	0.000197	0.000257
Jordanian Dinar	0.418470	0.425970
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000148	0.000248
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020484	0.044484
Nigerian Naira	0.001229	0.001864
Omani Riyal	0.771633	0.777313
Qatar Riyal	0.081568	0.082781
Saudi Riyal	0.078993	0.079943
Syrian Pound	0.001268	0.001488
Tunisian Dinar	0.146701	0.154701
Turkish Lira	0.095850	0.106150
UAE Dirhams	0.080875	0.081724
Yemeni Riyal	0.001353	0.001433

WITH NISSAN AL-BABTAIN YOUR WIN IS GUARANTEED

CASH PRIZES UP TO KD 250,000 • SPECIAL OFFERS ON CARS AND CASH PRIZES

KUWAIT: Your win is guaranteed with NISSAN Al-Babtain, Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Co, the exclusive agent of Nissan in the State of Kuwait, launched the special "Hala February campaign", with cash prizes up to 250,000 KD and a grand draw on a 2016 X-Trail Nissan.

As a part of the Hala February celebrations, Nissan Al-Babtain is giving away amazing cash prizes on all vehicles, with every purchase, customers are eligible to enter the grand draw on

the 2016 X-Trail Nissan. Hala February is considered the biggest celebration throughout the whole year here in Kuwait and it gets many participants from all ages and gives them a combination of art, culture, religion and entertaining activities. That is exactly why Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Co, always wanted and always will want to be a part of this patriotic celebration.

Nissan Al Babtain is known for always providing the customers with

exceptional offers throughout the year to keep them exceptional in the market. Now Nissan Al-Babtain is asking all the loyal customers to celebrate this special month and use these special offers and surprises.

Al-Babtain Group was founded in 1948, to present a model of honesty, integrity and total dedication, gaining a solid reputation in the State of Kuwait and the Middle East area.

Today, Al-Babtain Group has licensing rights for some of the world's lead-

ing brands stretching the globe from the USA to the Far East.

For more than 60 years, Al-Babtain Group has experienced continued success and a large measure of this success came from the Group's advanced flexible management style and long-term vision. These astounding results were achieved due to a versatile strategic formula focusing on growth amongst its sphere of activities; including automotive, technology, investment, information technology, indus-

trial and Finance.

The automotive sector is the main activity within Al-Babtain Group's business, which represents some of the bestselling brands in Kuwait, in addition to heavy equipments.

The Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al Babtain Co. (AABC) is proud to be the exclusive agent and distributor of leading Japanese, European (French) and Chinese vehicles in Kuwait such as Nissan, Infiniti Renault & Citroen.



MUMBAI: Prime Minister of Sweden Stefan Lofven (left) Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (center) and Prime Minister of Finland Juha Sipila (right) walk after the inauguration of the 'Make in India' center in Mumbai yesterday. 'Make in India' is an initiative launched last year to encourage international companies to manufacture their goods in India. — AP

MODI GOVT FAILING TO BOOST ECONOMIC INVESTMENT: SINGH

GOVT INCONSISTENT IN POLICY TOWARDS PAKISTAN

MUMBAI: India's former prime minister Manmohan Singh criticized his successor Narendra Modi's government in a rare interview, saying it has failed to capitalize on lower commodity prices to propel growth and is inconsistent in its policy towards neighboring Pakistan.

Speaking to the India Today magazine, Singh said Modi's government should use improving fiscal balances to raise investment in the economy and increase the availability of credit to businesses.

"In the hands of a purposeful government, this could be an opportunity to step up investment in the economy in a big way," said Singh, who left office after a 2014 election loss.

Singh, regarded as the architect of economic reforms that led to years of rapid growth, said the government has not been able to take advantage of falling oil and commodity prices that have lowered India's import bill. Sharp falls in import prices have reduced the trade deficit, raising hopes that it will boost economic activity. But turbo charged growth figures have been criticised by many analysts for giving too flattering a view.

The economy expanded 7.3 percent in the quarter through December, but consumer inflation inched up unexpectedly last month and capital goods production, a proxy for investments, fell nearly 20 percent in December.

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley wants to present a credible budget on Feb. 29, people involved in the process say, but the government may end up breaking its budget deficit targets to stimulate demand.

In a rebuttal on his website and social media accounts, Jaitley blamed Singh's administration for mismanaging the economy, adding that the opposition Congress has been unwilling to support reforms in parliament. "Both the Parliamentary Affairs Minister and myself have discussed the GST with every senior Congress leader in Parliament," he said, responding to Singh's criticism that the government has not consulted the opposition.

The proposed goods and services tax (GST), India's biggest revenue shake-up since independence in 1947, has been stuck in the upper house where it needs Congress' support to make it a law.

Singh also said Modi should focus on improving relations with neighbouring countries, adding that the government had not succeeded at making headway with arch-rival Pakistan, which India accuses of supporting insurgents across their shared border.

"Certainly relations with major powers have improved... But I would say that the real test of foreign policy is in the handling of your neighbours. And here I would say that the Modi government's handling of Pakistan is inconsistent," 83-year old Singh told the magazine.

"It has been one step forward, two steps back."

India and Pakistan have fought three wars since independence and partition in 1947, two over Kashmir. Their disputed frontier is one of the world's most heavily militarised regions. Border clashes and incursions pose a constant risk of escalation. Singh, an Oxbridge-educated economist, was credited as finance minister in 1991 for reforms that opened up the economy. But his legacy is marred by his final term marked by corruption scandals, ballooning inflation and slowing economic growth. — Reuters

NISSAN REPORTS 452.8BN YEN NET INCOME FOR 9 MONTHS OF FY2015

YOKOHAMA, Japan: Nissan Motor Co, Ltd yesterday announced solid financial and operational results for the nine month period to December 31, 2015, as strong demand in North American and Western Europe offset weakness in several emerging markets.

Operating profit 587.5 billion yen, representing a 6.6 percent margin on net revenues that rose 10.6 percent to 8.94 trillion yen.

"Our product offensive has reaped rewards in North America and Western Europe, where buoyant consumer demand and rising unit sales underpinned Nissan's overall profit-growth," said Carlos Ghosn, president and chief executive officer. "Our strong performance in these markets offset the impact of unfavorable exchange-rates from emerging markets and challenging market conditions elsewhere in the world."

On a management pro forma basis, which includes the proportionate consolidation of results from Nissan's joint venture operation in China, net revenues in the period increased to 9.72 trillion yen, up 10.5 percent year-on-year. Operating profit was up 32.1 percent versus the same period last year, to 682.6 billion yen, resulting in a 7.0 percent operating profit margin.

On a global basis, Nissan sold 3.89 million vehicles in the period, a 1.4 percent rise year-on-year.

"Nissan remains on track to achieve its full year financial forecast, reflecting encouraging sales trends in the US and parts of Europe, along with the continued benefits of our cost-discipline and Alliance strategy," said Ghosn.

FY2015 Outlook

Nissan is maintaining the revised forecasts issued with its first-half results. Calculated under the equity accounting



method for our joint venture in China for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2016, the forecasts showed:

Nissan FY15 Outlook - TSE report basis - China JV equity basis
Net revenue
•12.25 trillion
(\$102.6 billion/€92.4 billion)
Operating profit
•730.0 billion
(\$6.1 billion/€5.5 billion)
Ordinary profit
•790.0 billion
(\$6.6 billion/€6.0 billion)
Net Income
•535.0 billion
(\$4.5 billion/€4.0 billion)
Calculated on exchange rate of JPY 119.4/USD and JPY 132.6/EUR

Since the beginning of fiscal year 2013, Nissan has reported figures calculated under the equity method accounting for its joint venture with Dong Feng in China. Although net income reporting remains unchanged under this accounting method, the equity-accounting income statements no longer include Dong Feng-Nissan's results in revenues and operating profit.

ECB: GREEK BANKS WON'T NEED FURTHER RECAPITALIZATION

ATHENS: There is no reason to believe that Greek banks will need further recapitalisation, after the latest round provided them with 14.4 billion euros of funding, the head of the European Central Bank's supervisory agency was quoted as saying yesterday.

"The capital plans have been fulfilled, so there is no need for additional capital requirements. We are in good shape in that respect," Daniele Nouy, who chairs the Single Supervisory Mechanism, told the Greek newspaper Agora. Nouy said Greek banks would be excluded from the ECB's stress tests this year, since they had already gone through "rigorous" health check last year.

The ECB carried out an asset-quality

review and stress tests of the four biggest Greek banks in October, after they were weakened by political instability, a loss of deposits and the imposition of capital controls in July, which remain in force.

She called on the banks to use "all available tools" to tackle bad loans, including selling them.

"All possibilities should be examined as we have a wide variety of situations," she said.

The Bank of Greece, which supervises a 9.5 billion-euro (\$10.68 billion) portfolio of 14 bad banks after a wave of consolidation, has so far managed to recover 800 million euros of low-quality loans. — Reuters



TORONTO: The hybrid BMW i8 is on display at the 2016 Canadian International Autoshow in Toronto. — AP

CHINA UNDERGROUND BANKS DID \$150BN IN TRANSACTIONS IN 2015

BEIJING: Underground banks in China did more than 1 trillion yuan (\$152 billion) in transactions last year and the government will step up efforts to combat the problem this year, state media said on Saturday citing the foreign exchange regulator. China's economic slowdown and market volatility have sparked a wave of capital outflows running into hundreds of billions this year, triggering alarms for China's foreign exchange management system.

Zhang Shenghui, head of the State Administration of Foreign Exchange's inspection division, told the official

Xinhua news agency his department last year had participated in breaking up more than 60 underground banks suspected of doing more than 1 trillion yuan in transactions. The regulator will also demand that above-board banks increase their oversight of any suspicious activities, and will also look more closely at securities, insurance and third-party payments providers, Zhang added. Last year, Chinese police, the central bank and the foreign exchange regulator busted the country's biggest-ever underground banking case involving transactions totalling \$64 billion. — Reuters

FRESH PROTESTS IN ATHENS OVER PENSION REFORMS

ATHENS: Thousands of demonstrators gathered in Athens yesterday in solidarity with farmers who have blocked dozens of highways and border crossings in recent weeks in protest over a pensions overhaul.

An estimated 12,000 people gathered in the Greek capital's central Syntagma Square outside parliament, police said. More than half were members of the communist-leaning Pame trade union, offering support for the huge wave of farmers who arrived in Athens from the countryside Friday to protest against the reforms.

On Friday evening, around 10,000 protesters waving black flags, including thousands of farmers, marched through Athens behind a column of tractors blaring their horns.

Earlier Friday, protesters had clashed with police in front of the agriculture ministry and on a motorway outside the city. Vowing to keep up the protests throughout the weekend, dozens of farmers spent Friday night camped out in Syntagma Square, lighting a fire in front of parliament.

The farmers are angry about government plans to increase their social security contribu-

tions as part of pension reforms demanded by Greece's creditors in exchange for a third massive bailout agreed last year.

Widespread opposition to

the reforms has led to the rare sight of professionals marching alongside blue-collar workers in recent weeks, a phenomenon that has been dubbed the "necktie movement". Farmers

also reject plans to scrap benefits such as cheaper fuel and double their income tax by 2017 as the debt-wracked Greek government tries to replenish its coffers. — AFP



ATHENS: Farmers take part in an anti-government rally in front of the parliament in Athens yesterday. Farmers from across Greece gather in Athens for a two-day protest against the government and its plans to impose new tax hikes and pension charges. — APP

KUWAIT STOCKS UNDER SELLING PRESSURE

BAYAN WEEKLY MARKET REPORT

KUWAIT: Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE) ended last week in the red zone. The Price Index closed at 5,131.56 points, down by 1.29 percent from the week before closing, the Weighted Index decreased by 1.95 percent after closing at 350.36 points, whereas the KSE-15 Index closed at 827.17 points down by 1.59 percent. Furthermore, last week's average daily turnover decreased by 26.71 percent, compared to the preceding week, reaching KD 12.01 million, whereas trading volume average was 141.34 million shares, recording an decrease of 23.18 percent.

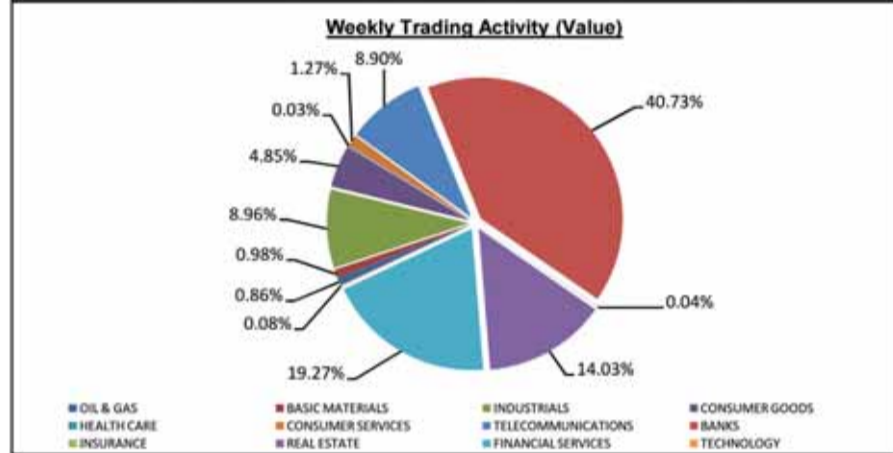
Kuwait Stock Market witnessed a decline in the three stock indicators' performance last week, among a decreased trading activity compared to a week earlier, as some traders exercised profit collection operations, ignoring the positive results disclosed by some listed companies and banks during the week, which negatively affected the indices performance to end the week in the red zone.

By the end of the week, the number of the companies that disclosed its 2015 financial results reached 42 company, realizing around K.D. 910.84 million, with an increase of 5.46 percent from the results of the same companies for the same period of 2014. On the other hand, the market capitalization for the 190 listed companies in the official market reached KD 23.33 billion, declining by KD 365.65 million or 1.54 percent of its value at a week earlier, where it was K.D.23.69 billion. On an annual level, the market has lost about KD1.94 billion since the beginning of 2016, declining by 7.67 percent.

As far as the market daily trading activity, the first session of the week witnessed mixed performance for the three indices, whereas the Price Index and KSE-15 Index were able to realize some increase, affected by the positive news of some investment groups, while the Weighted Index decreased slightly as a result to the selling operations executed on some large cap stocks, among a decrease in the trading activity, as the liquidity declined by KD5 million or about 24 percent. On the next session, the fluctuation continued in controlling the market trading activity to close with mixed performance for the three indices, where the Price Index and KSE-15 Index continued its gains, however limited, whilst the Weighted Index declined due to the selling pressures; also, the Price Index was able to maintain the 5,200 point level, supported by the active trade on most of the sectors and the strong purchasing operations on the low priced stocks, which are expected to announce good financial results for 2015, in addition to some leading stocks, which pushed the cash liquidity to compensate its previous session's losses.

On Tuesday's session, the market recorded a grouped decline for the three indices, whereas the Price Index lost 45.48 point to reach 5,163.80 point, as a result to the heavy selling pressures and the profit collection operations that reached many idle stocks, in a restructuring operation, among a noticeable decline in the trading activity.

KSE INDICES				
		Price Index	Weighted Index	KSE 15
Weekly	Last week	5,131.56	350.36	827.17
	Previous week	5,198.37	357.34	840.55
	Change (Point)	-66.81	-6.98	-13.38
Annual	Last year	5,615.12	381.70	900.43
	Change (Point)	-483.56	-31.34	-73.26
	Change (%)	-8.61%	-8.21%	-8.14%



SECTORS' WEEKLY TRADING ACTIVITY				
Sector	Volume	To Market %	Value	To Market %
OIL & GAS	18,849,461	2.67%	515,022	0.86%
BASIC MATERIALS	2,376,020	0.34%	589,840	0.98%
INDUSTRIALS	72,052,039	10.20%	5,382,300	8.96%
CONSUMER GOODS	3,258,438	0.46%	2,914,212	4.85%
HEALTH CARE	121,772	0.02%	16,987	0.03%
CONSUMER SERVICES	7,100,547	1.00%	759,916	1.27%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	17,025,588	2.41%	5,341,200	8.90%
BANKS	79,228,684	11.21%	24,458,545	40.73%
INSURANCE	188,857	0.03%	22,489	0.04%
REAL ESTATE	204,732,384	28.97%	8,425,183	14.03%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	301,017,678	42.59%	11,569,794	19.27%
TECHNOLOGY	766,720	0.11%	48,089	0.08%

MARKET ACTIVITY			
	Last Week	Previous Week	Ch. %
Volume	706,718,188	919,913,867	-23.18%
Value (K.D)	60,043,578	81,920,938	-26.71%
Deals	17,649	22,741	-22.39%

MARKET CAPITALISATION (K.D.)			
Last Week	Previous Week	Weekly Ch. %	Annual Ch. %
23,328,406,521	23,684,211,722	-1.50%	-7.67%

TOP GAINERS OF THE WEEK				
Company	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Ch. (fils)	Ch. %
KSHC	30.00	24.50	5.5	22.45%
CITYGROUP	500.00	410.00	90.0	21.95%
FOOD	2,380.00	2,000.00	380.0	19.00%
KOUTFOOD	650.00	550.00	100.0	18.18%
REAM	186.00	158.00	28.0	17.72%

TOP LOSERS OF THE WEEK				
Company	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Ch. (fils)	Ch. %
CABLETV	25.00	32.50	-7.5	-23.08%
EKHOLDING	126.00	156.00	-30.0	-19.23%
AGHC	60.00	71.00	-11.0	-15.49%
MUBARRAD	60.00	70.00	-10.0	-14.29%
ALAQARIA	18.00	20.50	-2.5	-12.20%

On Wednesday's session, the market continued its downward direction, under the effect of the continued strong selling operations and the profit collection operations executed on the leading stocks, especially in the Banks sector, in addition to the speculation operations on the low-priced stocks of previous gains, which caused most of the traded stocks during the session to decline and the three stock market indicators to decrease, among a noticeable drop in the trading activity, especially the volume, which declined by 37.87 percent. The market ended the last session of the week with a grouped

decline for the three indices on Thursday's session, affected by the continued selling operations executed on the traded stocks throughout the week, where the Price Index lost 66.81 point. As far as KSE annual performance, the price index ended last week recording 8.61 percent annual loss compared to its closing in 2015, while the weighted index decreased by 8.21 percent, and the KSE-15 recorded 8.14 percent loss.

Sectors' Indices
Five of KSE's sectors ended last

week in the green zone, while the other seven recorded declines. Last week's highest gainer was the Consumer Goods sector, achieving 3.12 percent growth rate as its index closed at 1,069.30 points. Whereas, in the second place, the Consumer Services sector's index closed at 965.73 points recording 1.16 percent increase. The Oil & Gas sector came in third as its index achieved 0.16 percent growth, ending the week at 765.84 points. On the other hand, the Telecommunication sector headed the losers list as its index declined by 4.90 percent to end the week's activity at

551.46 points. The Banks sector was second on the losers' list, which index declined by 3.89 percent, closing at 789.82 points, followed by the Financial Services sector, as its index closed at 523.90 points at a loss of 2.89 percent. **Sectors' activity** The Financial Services sector dominated a total trade volume of around 301.02 million shares changing hands during last week, representing 42.59 percent of the total market trading volume. The Real Estate sector was second in terms of trading volume as the sec-

tor's traded shares were 28.97 percent of last week's total trading volume, with a total of around 204.73 million shares. On the other hand, the Banks sector's stocks were the highest traded in terms of value; with a turnover of around KD 24.46 million or 40.73 percent of last week's total market trading value. The Financial Services sector took the second place as the sector's last week turnover was approx. KD 11.57 million representing 19.27 percent of the total market trading value. —Prepared by the Studies & Research Department

US STOCKS END A DOWN WEEK ON AN UP NOTE

WALL STREET WEEKLY ROUNDUP

NEW YORK: US stocks ended a down week on a high note Friday, snapping a five-day losing streak on the strength of energy and financial companies. A sharp rebound in oil prices and an encouraging report on retail sales helped lift the stock market to its first gain since late last week.

Despite the rally, the major US stocks indexes ended the week down about 1 percent and they remain down more than 8 percent for the year.

"It's a relief to see after several very ugly days in a row, but I wouldn't hang my hat on it and say the worst is over," said Rob Eschweiler, global investment specialist at J.P. Morgan.

The Dow Jones industrial average rose 313.66 points, or 2 percent, to 15,973.84. The Standard & Poor's 500 gained 35.70 points, or 2 percent, to 1,864.78. The Nasdaq composite added 70.67 points, or 1.7 percent, to 4,337.51.

Global stocks have been in a slump since the beginning of the year on concerns that growth in China, which has been the engine of the global economy in recent years, is slowing far faster than expected. Plunging oil prices and low inflation have added to the market's jitters that the global economy is sputtering.

Those worries also helped drive the stock market lower in recent days, and continued to batter stocks in Asia. Japan's main stock index lost nearly 5 percent Friday. But the downbeat trend in the US snapped as investors were encouraged by retail sales and a rally in European stocks. A surge in oil prices helped put investors in a buying mood early on. A day after sinking to

its lowest level since May 2003, benchmark US crude climbed \$3.23, or 12.3 percent, to close at \$29.44 a barrel in New York. Brent crude, a benchmark for international oils, gained \$3.30, or 11 percent, to \$33.36 a barrel in London.

The oil rebound sent the S&P 500's energy companies 2.6 percent higher. Marathon Oil was the best performer

in the sector, rising 48 cents, or 6.8 percent, to \$7.49.

"Oil, which has been one of the most fickle, most volatile series that everybody's watching, is having a nice day," said Tim Dreiling, regional investment director for The Private Client Reserve of US Bank. "Europe is continuing to look good. And it looked like (the market) was oversold."

Financial shares led the market's advance. The sector is the worst performing part of the market this year because investors expect that low interest rates around the world will sap bank profits, but it rallied 4 percent Friday. JP Morgan Chase climbed \$4.42, or 8.3 percent, to \$57.49, while Citigroup added \$2.56, or 7.3 percent, to \$37.54. Bank of America rose 79

cents, or 7.1 percent, to \$11.95. Meanwhile, Deutsche Bank AG surged 12.1 percent after the bank offered to buy back more than \$5 billion in bonds in a display of financial strength. The stock gained \$1.87 to \$17.38.

Traders also welcomed a report from the Commerce Department indicating a modest gain in retail sales last month. The data, which came in ahead of expectations, suggested that consumers kept shopping despite sharp drops in stock prices.

The positive sales report and recent jobs data showing a pickup in wage growth suggest the economy is holding up better than Wall Street thinks, Eschweiler said.

"It solidifies our view that the markets are pricing in a significantly higher probability of recession than what we think the fundamentals currently dictate," he said.

Encouraging quarterly results from some companies also helped lift the market. Wynn Resorts surged 15.8 percent after the casino operator reported better-than-expected quarterly results Thursday. The stock gained \$9.45 to \$69.14. Groupon vaulted 29 percent after the online daily deal service's latest quarterly profit and revenue topped Wall Street estimates. The stock added 65 cents to \$2.89.

Some companies didn't fare as well, however. Activision Blizzard slid 7.9 percent after the video game company reported weaker-than-anticipated quarterly revenue Thursday. The stock was one of the biggest decliners in the S&P 500 index, losing \$2.40 to \$28.12. Pandora Media slumped 12 per-

cent after the Internet radio company's fourth-quarter profit fell short of estimates and the company didn't comment on rumors that it's looking to sell itself. The stock lost \$1.09 to \$8. In Europe, Germany's DAX was up 2.5 percent, while France's CAC 40 was up 2.5 percent. Britain's FTSE 100 rose 3.1 percent.

In Asia, Japan's main stock index fell sharply, leading other Asian markets lower. Tokyo's Nikkei 225 plunged 4.8 percent after earlier sinking as much as 5.3 percent. Hong Kong's Hang Seng fell 1.2 percent. South Korea's Kospi gave up 1.4 percent and Australia's S&P/ASX 200 fell 1.2 percent. Shares in New Zealand and Southeast Asia also fell. Markets in China and Taiwan were closed all week for Lunar New Year holidays and will reopen tomorrow. A day after surging 4.5 percent, gold fell \$8.40, or 0.7 percent, to \$1,239.40 an ounce. Silver was flat at \$15.79 an ounce. Copper, an industrial metal that will often rise and fall along with investor's optimism about the global economy, rose 2 cents, or 1.1 percent, to \$2.03 a pound. In other energy trading in New York, wholesale gasoline jumped 10 cents, or 10.8 percent, to close at \$1.04 a gallon, while home heating oil climbed 9 cents, or 9.2 percent, to close at \$1.07 a gallon. Natural gas fell 3 cents, or 1.4 percent, to \$1.97 per 1,000 cubic feet.

Bond prices fell. The yield on the 10-year Treasury rose to 1.74 percent from 1.66 percent late Thursday. In currency markets, the dollar rose to 113.26 yen from 112.27, while the euro fell to \$1.1255 from \$1.1330. —AP



NEW YORK: Trader Sal Suarino works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange on Friday. US stocks opened higher, seeking their first gain this week, as beaten-down energy and financial companies rebounded. —AP

MEDIATOR: PROGRESS IN TALKS TO RESOLVE ARGENTINA'S DEBT

NEW YORK: A court-appointed mediator reported more progress Friday in efforts by Argentina to resolve a dispute with bondholders who claim they are owed about \$10 billion by the financially strapped South American nation.

A week after two of six leading bondholders settled their claims for well over \$1 billion, the rest of them were completing a week of "intensive discussions" with high-ranking Argentine government officials, mediator Daniel Pollack said in a statement.

"These discussions have gone late into the night and will continue. I do not know whether agreements in principle will be reached with these four bondholders, but I will continue to do everything in my power to see that it happens," Pollack said.

He called it an "eventful week in the negotiations."

Last week, Argentina offered bondholders a \$6.5 billion deal to settle cases stemming from its 2001 default. Holdout bondholders were seeking about \$10 billion.

U.S. hedge funds are among bondholders that refused to trade bonds at discounted prices after Argentina defaulted on \$100 billion in debt in 2001.

Among others, billionaire hedge fund investor Paul Singer's NML Capital Ltd took Argentina to court and won judgments against it. Besides the big remaining four bondholders, Pollack said other parties with substantial bond holdings have expressed interest in settling and were trying to reach agreements with Argentina.

Lawyers for bondholders and Argentina have met several times since last month as Argentina seeks to end a long-running legal dispute that impedes its ability to help its struggling economy in global credit markets.

Pollack said any agreements reached cannot be consummated until Argentina's Congress lifts laws blocking potential deals and until US District Judge Thomas Griesa in Manhattan lifts a court order that would stand in the way. Lawyers for bondholders and Argentina did not immediately return messages seeking comment Friday. —AP

WALL ST TRIES TO RESET DEBATE ON ACTIVISM

NEW YORK: Wall Street is hoping to reset the debate on US corporate governance following a wave of shareholder activism that has challenged many of the biggest companies.

Since August, JPMorgan Chase chief executive Jamie Dimon has been working with leaders in finance and investing to hash out guidelines on best practices for corporate governance, according to people familiar with the talks. The initiative follows a rising wave of investor activism that has roiled numerous large companies, including JPMorgan, which has successfully beaten back shareholder efforts in recent years to split the chief executive and chairman roles.

Other big shareholder campaigns have targeted Apple, PepsiCo and insurer AIG, which Thursday announced it installed activists John Paulson and Carl Icahn on its board, removing the chance of them mounting proxy fight against the management.

Dimon has convened meetings at JPMorgan's Park Avenue headquarters with financial luminaries that include investing legend Warren Buffett, BlackRock chief Laurence Fink, Fidelity chief executive Abigail Johnson, as well as executives from Vanguard, Capital Group and Canadian pension fund CPPIB, said people close to the talks. —AFP

IN CRISIS-RIDDEN VENEZUELA, ELECTRICITY IS ALSO SCARCE

CARACAS: Venezuelans are accustomed to severe shortages of oil, diapers and other staple products. But those hoping to buy what they could find got a new unpleasant surprise this week. They found malls dark and shuttered on the first day of a government electricity rationing regime. "This is madness, this is not the solution!" said Nataly Orta, 48, at the locked gate of the Lider mall in eastern Caracas. "It's a drastic measure that will only create more unemployment and worsen an economy already in crisis." Authorities say the three-month restrictions will affect more than 250 shopping centers that must find other sources of power from 1:00 to 3:00 pm and again from 7:00 to 9:00 pm.

Unable to generate their own electricity, most malls are shutting their doors during those hours.

"I came to the pharmacy and supermarket to see what I could find and I come across this instead," said Julia Torres, 54. "Every day, we're a little more surprised by what's happening in Venezuela." Security concerns make the well-lit, guarded malls with their restaurants, cinemas and theaters a preferred leisure option for Venezuelans. The country's homicide rate is among the world's highest at 58 deaths per 100,000 people. On Thursday, a top hoteliers' association said that five-star hotels would also have to start generating their own power for several hours a day. The authorities say the rationing is a temporary measure brought on by the El Nino weather phenomenon, blamed for a drought that has lowered production at the country's hydropower plants.

"The government is taking concrete action to minimize the decline" in reservoir levels, Electricity Minister Luis Motta said on Wednesday. But the opposition, recently boosted by winning a majority in the legislature, accuses socialist President Nicolas Maduro's administration of failing to anticipate the problem and not adequately investing in the country's power grid.

'Absurd' situation

A business association representing shopping centers, Cavececo, has proposed minimizing the power cuts' effects with a deal that would increase rationing to five hours a day instead of four in exchange for an uninterrupted supply of electricity between noon and 7:00 pm. "The cuts will affect 2.5 million people who go to these places daily," said Cavececo director Claudia Itriago, adding that the government has yet to respond. "Shopping centers account for only three percent of national electricity consumption," she said. —AFP



CARACAS: National Assembly President Henry Ramos Allup speaks during a press conference at the National Assembly building in Caracas on Friday. —AP



MANAMA: Alkhayyat and Al-Sherian signing the MoU.—KUNA

KFH-BAHRAIN, KING FAISAL CO INK MOU ON AVENUES-BAHRAIN PROJECT

MABANEE OWNS 35% OF KING FAISAL COMPANY

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House- Bahrain (KFH-Bahrain) and King Faisal Corniche Development Company in which Mabaneer-Bahrain, a subsidiary 35 percent owned by Mabaneer-Kuwait, have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) subject to final approvals to offer financing of \$94 million to perform and develop the "Avenues-Bahrain" Project during a period of 12 months, located on Bahrain Bay in the Capital Manama.

The signing ceremony was attended by Abdulhakeem Al-Khayyat, the Managing Director and CEO of KFH-Bahrain and Waleed Khalid Al-Sherian, CEO of "Mabaneer" Company - owner of the project. Those in attendance were Peter Verhoeven, Group Chief Wholesale Banking at KFH Group and Zahed Kasmani, Senior Financial Director at Mabaneer, and a number of managers from both the Bank and the "Mabaneer" Company.

On this occasion, Waleed Khalid Al-Sherian, CEO of "Mabaneer" Company commented, "We chose KFH-Bahrain to finance the project based on the Banks' ability to pro-

vide outstanding Islamic Financing Solutions that are a perfect fit to our project. It is our pleasure to have KFH-Bahrain as our Financial Partner in completing this project. This arrangement emphasizes on the Banks' confidence in the project as contributors, along with the investment guarantees."

Al-Sherian added: "This financing for the "Avenues-Bahrain" Project which is considered one of a kind in the Kingdom of Bahrain, from its immensity and diverse activities that will be provided for its visitors. In addition, the Project is expected to boost the tourism and trade in the Kingdom, through the support it will provide for the retail industry, especially that it will provide an exquisite shopping and entertaining experience to its visitors. It will also be the anchor for many global reputed brands and shops along with family entertaining facilities, all under one roof."

Meanwhile, Abdulhakeem Al-Khayyat commented, "We are extremely pleased with the decision of

"Mabaneer" company have made of having KFH as their Financial Partner. By signing this arrangement, KFH-Bahrain has already reached one of its goals which is a constant strive to finance new innovative projects that will support the economy of the Kingdom of Bahrain and will contribute to boosting it."

The "Avenues-Bahrain" Project

The Avenues-Bahrain is expected to open in the middle of 2016. The Avenues-Bahrain compasses of 265,000 square meters in a strategic location with a unique view over 1.5 kilometers with a sea view, which will make it a new feature added to the city distinctive features. 38,000 square meters were assigned to commercial shops which is comes to 15 percent of the total area. The larger area will be assigned for family entertainment purposes where it contain running track, children arcade, cinema theaters, elegant restaurants and cafes along with a spacious public park with access to the water view.



EXPERIENCE LUXURY OF THE HIGHEST STANDARDS WITH THE CADILLAC ATS

OWN IT TODAY WITH NO DOWN PAYMENT, STARTING FROM KD 169 PER MONTH

KUWAIT: In a move that demonstrates its love and reverence for Kuwait and its people, Yusuf A. Alghanim & Sons Automotive, the exclusive distributor of Cadillac vehicles in the country, is happy to celebrate the National Liberation Holiday with a limited time promotion.

The star of this magnificent February-only offer is the Cadillac ATS, the luxury sedan that transcends the boundaries of design and artful engineering, which is now available at the starting price of KD 9,999. And in reflection of Kuwait's unending generosity, Alghanim Automotive has collaborated with Al Amana Investment Company & Boubyan Bank to bring the car's monthly installments to an unprecedented, reduced rate, with installments starting from KD 169 with no down payment!!!

The Cadillac ATS compact luxury sports sedan challenges the world's best premium cars with an acclaimed balance of performance and refinement, effectively wrapped in a progressive expression of Cadillac's Art & Science design philosophy. With one of the lowest curb weights in the segment-less than 1,542 kg-the ATS's driving dynamics are rooted in mass efficiency, which helps make it Cadillac's lightest and most agile sedan. Cadillac proprietary computational fluid dynamics (CFD) analysis techniques were used to develop an all-new combustion system with a higher compression ratio, which also

helps boost efficiency. ATS provides standard NHTSA 5-Star all-around and overall crash safety ratings (Sedan model tested), the highest safety ratings available.

ATS powertrains

The engine lineup includes a standard 2.5L four-cylinder and 3.6L V6. The 2.5L is rated at 202 horsepower (151 kW) and 191 lb.-ft. or torque (259 Nm), while the award-winning 3.6L V-6 is rated at 321 horsepower (239 kW) and 275 lb.-ft. of torque (373 Nm). All of the engines feature direct injection and dual overhead camshafts with continuously variable valve timing, which help optimize power and efficiency, as well as reduce emissions. And all of the engines are matched with six-speed transmissions, including the Hydra-Matic 6L45 automatic with tap-shift control.

ATS Exterior Features

The Dynamic performance of the ATS Sedan is reflected on every line and curve of the vehicle. As it approaches, you'll see its low athletic stance and ironic grill. When it roars away, you will notice the vertical LED and aerodynamic trunk that give it the unmistakable look of Cadillac. Bold lighting elements are a Cadillac signature feature and the ATS advances the tradition with available high-intensity discharge (HID) headlamps, light-emitting diode (LED) verti-

cal light signature elements and Adaptive Forward Lighting. The Standard model features projector-beam halogen headlamps, while the HID headlamps and front vertical LED light signatures are included on all collections above the Standard model on Coupe, and on the Performance and Premium Collections for Sedan. Illuminated outside door handles on Performance and Premium Collections lend technologically advanced style and function. All models feature LED technology for the taillamps and rear-center stop lamp. The IntelliBeam feature - included with the Driver Awareness or Driver Assist packages - automatically deploys high-beam headlamps when needed and instantly turns them down when oncoming traffic is detected.

ATS interior features

A driver-focused interior with integrated technology and crafted materials complements the exterior elements and supports the ATS's driving experience. Everything from the placement of the pedals to the position of the shifter is designed for effortless and intuitive performance driving. Available performance seating includes power-adjustable bolsters to optimize lateral support during high-load cornering.

Contributing to the interior's intuitive feel is an instrument panel that wraps into the doors and a center stack

into the mid-instrument panel that flows into the center console. LED lighting within the bold gauge cluster enables clear, at-a-glance viewing in all lighting conditions, while ambient lighting accents functional elements of the console and doors.

Real wood, metal plating and carbon fiber trim and Cadillac's cut-and-sewn instrument panel, console and doors enhance the emotional connection to the ATS. Choices of many interior environments, each with unique accent trim material, cover a wide range of flavors - from light, open and warm to dark and serious, bold, technical and sporty.

All Cadillac cars are enhanced with Cadillac User Experience (CUE), a comprehensive in-vehicle experience that merges intuitive design with auto industry-first controls while providing connectivity, control and convenience to the driver and passengers alike. It pairs entertainment and information data from up to 10 Bluetooth-enabled mobile devices, USBs, SD cards and MP3 players with a vehicle infotainment system. A setup that will reduce complexity and confusion through natural voice commands, customized information, and fewer buttons and larger icons. CUE is operated from a vibrant 8-inch LCD touch screen that resembles a smart phone's screen by using large easy-to-see icons to control commands and functions. The screen seamlessly inte-

grated into the top of the central instrument panel, and a motorized fully capacitive faceplate at the bottom conceals a large storage area.

Premium Care Program

Yusuf Ahmed Alghanim & Sons Automotive's showcases the company's commitment to enhance customers' unique Cadillac experience by offering customers peace of mind with a comprehensive insurance program. In addition, all Cadillac owners will enjoy service and maintenance for four years or 100,000 km, warranty for 4 years or 100,000 km, 24-hour roadside assistance anywhere in the Middle East for four years (unlimited miles) plus a courtesy transportation and a replacement vehicle upon availability.

Adding to the luxury experience, Cadillac offers its customers in Yusuf Ahmed Alghanim the highest quality of services. The service center is equipped with a large variety of the most advanced equipment operated by a team of skilled professionals and effective consultants who ensure timely service. Cadillac Alghanim invites its customer to visit its showroom in Safat Alghanim in Alrai today during the month of February, and double the joy of national holiday with a brand new car that pushes the boundaries of iconic design and artful engineering with an unswerving passion for innovation.



High-rigidity body based on the TNGA concept provides faithful handling, as well as excellent comfort and quietness



Prius Energy Monitor provides a real-time display of the energy flow through the hybrid system



YOUR PRIUS IS THE FUTURE

SOON YOU ARE GOING TO SEE THE NEW PRIUS EVERYWHERE ON THE ROADS

The Prius was the world's first mass-produced hybrid, appearing on the market in Japan in 1997 and sold globally in 2000. The Prius has constantly evolved to meet every challenge and stay at the forefront of hybrid technology. The history of the Prius since its debut in 1997 is a fascinating one and showcases the enormous strides taken in developing an iconic vehicle for our times.

The new Prius that you will be seeing and probably driving in 2016 will be the fourth generation. It's a truly exciting development in the series.

A history of innovation and progress

The first generation Prius stunned the automotive world. But that was just the start with more exciting developments on the horizon.

The second generation Prius arrived in 2003. It was completely redesigned to be larger, with improved aerodynamics and even better fuel economy. The third generation in 2009 built on previous achievements in every aspect, taking advantage of continuous research and world-class technology.

When the fourth generation Prius was unveiled in September of 2015, it not only offered significantly improved fuel economy in a more compact package and attractive design, but it was lighter, roomier and performed even better than previous models.

So, the Prius just gets better and better. And the world has recognized its advantages. Over 3.5 million¹ satisfied customers have put their faith in the Prius to make it the world's most popular hybrid.

Combining a gasoline engine and an electric motor, this vehicle benefits from the best features of both. The batteries, made more compact to hide under the rear seats, are continuously charged when braking and decelerating so you don't need to plug in a power cord as you would with electric-only vehicles. And, of course, you also don't have to stop for gasoline as much as you would with a conventional gasoline vehicle. The new Prius offers superb energy efficiency. What's not to like?

Amazing fuel economy

Building firmly on the environmentally friendly credentials of its predecessors, the new Prius model's fuel economy reaches an outstanding 40.8 km/litre² which is more than 20 percent better compared to the previous model, and makes it superior to any other hybrid vehicle in its class. As Chief Engineer Kouji Toyoshima explains, "This is something that we accom-

plished through incremental improvements, with each new innovation contributing to the overall result".

As part of this process, every feature had to evolve-not only the hybrid system, but also the engine and aerodynamics.

The hybrid system was extensively re-engineered. Both motors now incorporate an innovative rolling-coil structure. The control systems have been completely revised down to the smallest components. The vehicle is lighter, more compact and has better performance. The thermal efficiency of the 1.8-litre gasoline engine is

better-40 percent compared to about 20 to 30 percent for ordinary gasoline engines. The new Prius retains its distinctive triangular silhouette but the peak of the roof has been moved forward; it is not only more attractive-it delivers improved aerodynamics. The drag coefficient is better too, achieving a distinctly world-class level of 0.24.

formance and fuel economy-not to mention more attractive styling.

TNGA sounds pretty technical. To really understand it, you have to drive a new Prius. Get behind the wheel, step on the accelerator-and you will be surprised. You get an instant response-swift and seamless acceleration with the electric motor shifting automatically to the gasoline engine at a certain speed. It's smooth,

Chief Engineer Toyoshima: "It was relatively easy for Usain Bolt to run a hundred meters in 10 seconds-it was quite another thing for him to break the world record with a 9.58 second dash. Coming first requires huge effort. But if you keep on working at it, you can achieve it. That's our philosophy in developing the Prius, "Ever better."

The analogy is a good one. The new nose-



Kouji Toyoshima, Chief Engineer for the third generation Prius, Prius PHV and now the fourth generation Prius. His department has overall responsibility for developing next-generation environmentally friendly vehicles.

plished through incremental improvements, with each new innovation contributing to the overall result".

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TNGA = Fun to Drive

The new Prius is the first vehicle developed using Toyota New Global Architecture (TNGA), which aims at modularizing in addition to integrating development and manufacturing, allowing more time for design.

Using this system, the skeletal structure of the Prius was improved with an increase in torsional rigidity of more than 60 percent compared to previous models, maximizing the performance of the suspension for better control and a quieter, more stable ride. TNGA offers not only improved handling, but also enhanced overall driving per-

formance and fuel economy-not to mention more attractive styling.

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Ever Better

The Prius has always been at the forefront of automotive evolution. Even its name, "Prius" is derived from "prior" in Latin-which means "coming before". The Prius is always the first, in every way.

The fourth generation Prius is a world beater-the culmination of almost two decades of experience and development. To paraphrase

down Prius even looks like a runner in the starting blocks. And it performs like a top-class sprinter, too.

The challenges to the Prius were many-but overcome with Toyota's famously relentless Kaizen development process. The result is a vehicle that not only provides great fuel economy, but is also fun to drive. It gets your pulse racing. Drive the new Prius and you will feel the difference. This is the cutting edge. A better way to the future. It will change your perception of what an eco-friendly car should be like to drive and to look at.



Hybrid system combining a 1.8-liter engine and electric motor delivers outstanding fuel economy of 40.8 km/litre which is more than 20 percent better compared to the previous model



AIR ARABIA DELIVERS 2015 NET PROFIT OF AED 531 MILLION

SHARJAH: Air Arabia (PJSC) yesterday announced strong full-year financial results for 2015 as the Middle East and North Africa's first and largest low-cost carrier continued to deliver healthy growth and strong levels of profitability.

Air Arabia's net profit for the full year ending December 31, 2015 was AED 531 million, 6 per cent lower than 2014 figure of AED 566 million. Turnover in 2015 reached AED 3.8 billion, an increase of 3 per cent on the preceding 12 months as the airline continued to expand its customer base. More than 7.6 million passengers flew with Air Arabia in 2015, a 12 per cent year-on-year increase. The average seat load factor - or passengers carried as a percentage of available seats - in 2015 stood at an impressive 79 per cent.

Following its strong 2015 performance, Air Arabia's Board of Directors proposed a dividend distribution of 9 per cent of share capital, which is equivalent to 9 fils per share. This proposal was made following a meeting of the Board of Directors of Air Arabia and is subject to ratification by Air Arabia's shareholders at the company's upcoming Annual General Meeting on February 25, 2016.

"2015 was a year of growth and achievement for Air Arabia as our expansion strategy, efficient operations and tight cost controls reinforced our market leading position," said Sheikh Abdullah Bin Mohammad Al-Thani, Chairman of Air Arabia. "The impact of low oil prices continues to have its effect on the wider global economy, while pressure on yields and geo-political uncertainty continued to weigh on the aviation industry. Despite these challenges, Air Arabia once again delivered a strong set of numbers and remains well positioned for further growth in 2016."

Air Arabia added 23 routes to its network in 2015, including the significant achievement of becoming the first low-cost airline from the Middle East and Africa to enter the Chinese market with the launch of regular non-stop services to Urumqi, the largest city in Western

China. The airline also added a fifth international hub with the formation of "Air Arabia Jordan" and the opening of a fixed-based operation at Amman Queen Alia International Airport.

Sheikh Abdullah Bin Mohammad Al-Thani added: "Going forward, we will remain focused on ceaselessly delivering on our promise to help people fly more for less, with innovation and operational efficiency at the heart of our business."

Customer retention was boosted in 2015 with the launch of Airewards, the first loyalty program from a regional low-cost carrier. It offers the same simple, transparent and value-packed experience that customers associate with Air Arabia, with points based on money spent rather than distance flown, and able to be earned on any product or service purchased from the airline.

In the fourth quarter of 2015, Air Arabia reported a net profit of AED 59 million, 13 per cent less than the corresponding 2014 figure of AED 68 million. Turnover for the three months ending December 31, 2015, was AED 957 million, compared to AED 924 million in the same period in 2014, an increase of 4 per cent. Air Arabia flew 2 million passengers in the final quarter of 2015, up 17 per cent on the corresponding 2014 figure.

Among the awards won by Air Arabia in 2015 were "World Travel Leaders Award" at the World Travel Market 2015 in the United Kingdom, "Best Low-cost Airline in the Middle East" at the Skytrax World Airline Awards in France, "Best Low-Cost Carrier" at the 2015 World Tourism Forum Awards in Turkey, "Airline of Year" at the Aviation Business Awards, and "Award for Customer Innovation" at the first Aviation Achievement Awards.

A highly successful year was then capped when data from Google revealed Air Arabia was the airline most searched for by UAE users in 2015, reflecting the strength of the airline's online presence and product offering to its customers.

MERCEDES-BENZ ACCESSORIES DELIVER ADDED STYLE AND IRRESISTIBLE APPEAL

KUWAIT: Mercedes-Benz Kuwait recently opened their new boutique and accessory corner for Mercedes-Benz lifestyle items at A.R. Albisher & Z. Alkazemi's main service centre in Shuwaikh. The available collection offers a comprehensive range of stylish and popular merchandise to deliver additional style for Mercedes-Benz lovers.

With the same attention to detail and highest quality applied to all Mercedes-Benz cars, the Mercedes-Benz Boutique & Accessories collection has undergone in-house team design, development and testing to perfect function and fit. Available for both adults and children, the wide range includes collaborations with internationally renowned brands such as Hugo Boss, Puma, Ritzenhoff, Samsonite, Sch?ffel and TaylorMade.

Commenting on the Boutique & Accessories collection, Michael Ruehle, CEO of Abdul Rahman Albisher & Zaid Alkazemi Co said: "Mercedes-Benz is the ultimate brand, with an uncompromising quality that extends across its full range of products. Now with a new and bigger Boutique & Accessories corner at our Shuwaikh Service Center, our customers and fans have the chance to extend their love of the brand, whether buying for themselves or for the perfect gift."

From water-resistant sport-fashion watches to high-class chronographs in stainless steel, ceramic or retro gold; the collection offers a range of men's and women's sporty, classic, and elegant watches in a variety of complications and designs. Working closely with German and Swiss manufactures to ensure each piece receives the German or Swiss 'quality seal', designers use top-class materials and movements from Citizen Miyota and Ronda, making Mercedes-Benz watches as high precision as their vehicles.

The extensive range of top quality professional apparel includes everything from business shirts to t-shirts, sweatshirts, flat and classic caps, socks, ties and beanies, for all ages. Similarly, intelligent functions and unmistakable designs make the Mercedes-Benz travel accessories the perfect addition for every occasion or outfit. Whether for business trips, sporting outings or shopping excursions, the range of lightweight luggage, laptop bags, beauty and toiletry cases, business, sport and shoulder bags, wallets and phone accessories are both versatile and stylish.

The cross category collection also includes key rings, sporting goods, toys, writing instruments and model cars. Additional lines are available for AMG and F1 enthusiasts, with team shirts and a range of exciting products embodying the passion of motorsport.

Customers can visit the new boutique and accessory during the official working hours of the Shuwaikh Service centre which is open from Sat-Wed 07:30 am to 06:00 pm & on Thursdays from 07:30 am to 12:00 pm, or can call 1833-111 ext 228 for availability and details.

Customers can sip on a good cup of coffee and enjoy complimentary Wi-Fi at the connecting Mercedescafe while browsing through the new collection.

MERCEDES-BENZ RETAINS EURO NCAP RATINGS TITLE FOR SECOND YEAR

KUWAIT: Mercedes-Benz has continued its dominance in the Euro New Car Assessment Programme (NCAP) Ratings for the second year in a row, with the GLC receiving the coveted "Best in Class" award for 2015. The independent assessment body of automotive safety for Europe established in 1997, Euro NCAP is one of the most recognised safety ratings systems in the industry. Following on the success of the C-Class in 2014, the new Mercedes-Benz GLC was awarded top in vehicle safety assessments and takes the lead in the "Small Off-Roader" category. The Euro NCAP created the five-star safety rating system to help consumers, their families and businesses compare vehicles more easily and to help identify the safest choice for their needs. The safety rating is determined from a series of vehicle tests, designed and carried out by Euro NCAP, simulating real life accident scenarios that could result in the serious injury of car occupants or other road users.

The GLC received five Euro NCAP stars in December 2015 for the combined evaluation of occupant safety, child safety, pedestrian protection and assistance systems. The basis for a top result is a combination of effective interaction of active and passive safety systems with the most modern driver assistance systems, an extremely stable safety passenger compartment and efficient restraint systems.

Almost all of the driver assistance systems familiar from the C-Class, E-Class and S-Class are available in the new GLC. These systems, in accordance with the Intelligent Drive concept, combine data from different sensors such as camera and radar, providing increased comfort and safety.

A.R. Albisher & Z. Alkazemi, the Authorised General Distributor of Mercedes-Benz in Kuwait acknowledges the importance of this recognition in confirming the uncompromising standards of safety of all Mercedes-Benz models, including the GLC.

"This acknowledgement consolidates the reputation of the GLC as the ultimate mid-size SUV, offering the best in driving comfort and safety, with a sporty touch. The new successor to the GLK is more spacious and refined than its predecessor and has been extremely popular since its launch in Kuwait

last October," said Michael Ruehle, CEO, Abdul Rahman Albisher & Zaid Alkazemi.

In addition to the requirements of the Euro NCAP Rating, the PRE-SAFE(r) and ATTENTION ASSIST systems were awarded two "Advanced Rewards" by Euro NCAP.

The GLC is available in two models, the GLC 250 4MATIC and the GLC 300 4MATIC. The former comes with the OFF ROAD Line exterior that includes 19-inch multi-spoke light alloy wheels, radiator grille with twin louvres and chrome inserts, bumpers with a chrome-plated underguard at front and rear, two chrome-plated tailpipes, polished aluminium trim and roof rails in anodised aluminium. The GLC 300 4MATIC comes with the sporty AMG Line exterior - with distinctive AMG body styling, AMG wheels, chrome package, and enhanced performance and driving dynamics thanks to the sports suspension.

A key focus of the totally new interior design is the dashboard and the centre console with its flowing lines, and large, one-piece console panel sweeping elegantly from the centre air vents to the armrest. These clear-cut lines create a feeling of open space and establish a purist, modern vibe.

Both models come with a 4-cylinder petrol engine with direct injection and turbocharging, 4MATIC permanent all-wheel drive and a nine-stage 9G-TRONIC automatic transmission. The GLC 300 4MATIC offers 370 Nm of torque and reaches a top speed of 235 km/h while the GLC 250 4MATIC offers 350 Nm of torque and a speed of 223 km/h.

Offering an enjoyable driving experience, the GLC comes with DYNAMIC SELECT handling control system with five driving programs as standard. It also comes with an advanced Head-up Display (HUD) projecting important information directly in the driver's field of vision on the front windscreen to reduce distraction from the road ahead and COLLISION PREVENTION ASSIST PLUS, Crosswind Assist, Headlamp Assist and ATTENTION ASSIST ensuring the safest drive possible.

The GLC 250 4MATIC and GLC 300 4MATIC are available in Kuwait at A.R. Albisher & Z. Alkazemi Company's Shuwaikh showroom.

JUST WHAT ARE EINSTEIN'S GRAVITATIONAL WAVES?

WASHINGTON: Astronomers on Thursday announced that their new billion-dollar US observatory has detected a gravitational wave, a phenomenon Albert Einstein predicted a century ago in his theory of general relativity. Here's what that breakthrough means.

WHAT IS A GRAVITATIONAL WAVE?

Gravitational waves are extremely faint ripples in the fabric of space and time that come from some of the most violent events in the universe. In this case, it is from the merger of two black holes 1.3 billion light-years away. The way to think of this is to imagine a mesh net and visualize pulling on its ends. Those kinks are sort of like what a gravitational wave does.

WHAT IS SPACE-TIME?

Space-time is the mind-bending, four-dimensional way astronomers see the universe. It melds the one-way march of time with the more familiar three dimen-

sions of space. General relativity says that gravity is caused by heavy objects bending space-time. And when massive but compact objects like black holes or neutron stars collide, their immense gravity causes space-time to stretch or compress.

HOW IS THIS 'HEARING' THE COSMOS?

Scientists mostly use the word "hear" when describing gravitational waves, and the data does, in fact, arrive in audio form. The researchers can don headphones and listen to the detectors' output if they want. On Thursday, to prove they found a gravitational wave, the researchers played a recording of what they called a chirp.

HOW CAN THEY BE CERTAIN THIS IS REAL?

Astronomers sat on the discovery for nearly five months, since Sept. 14, checking back and forth to make sure it was right. They considered all sorts of Earth-

bound interference or noise, examined the possibilities and eventually dismissed them. The astronomers are so cautious that they routinely have other scientists deliberately inject false data to test their abilities. In those tests, the observatory team was able to show that the injected data wasn't real. In the case of the discovery announced Thursday, they are extra certain they are not seeing injected or hacked data because the system that allows false information to be inserted was down at the time. In addition, the team of 1,004 scientists on the project looked over the data, and the results were then peer-reviewed by even more experts and published in the journal *Physical Review Letters*.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Expect more waves. It could be as many as a few a month or as little as a few per year. The observatory is also being further upgraded to hear even fainter, more distant waves. — AP



WASHINGTON: A visual of gravitational waves from two converging black holes is depicted on a monitor behind Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) Co-Founder Kip Thorne as he speaks to members of the media following a news conference at the National Press Club on Feb 11, 2016. — AP

FACEBOOK NUDE ART CASE CAN FACE TRIAL IN FRANCE

PARIS: If you post a 19th-century nude painting on Facebook, is it art or impermissible nudity? That question is now cleared for trial in France, after an appeals court there ruled that an aggrieved user can sue the social network over the issue. Five years ago, Facebook suspended the account of Frederic Durand-Baissas, a 57-year-old Parisian teacher and art lover, without prior notice. That was the day he posted a photo of Gustave Courbet's 1866 painting "The Origin of the World," which depicts female genitalia.

Durand-Baissas wants his account reactivated and is asking for €20,000 (\$22,550) in damages. He said he's "glad" he has been given the chance to get some sort of explanation from the powerful social network. "This is a case of free speech and censorship on a social network," Durand-Baissas told The Associated Press in a phone interview. "If (Facebook) can't see the difference between an artistic masterpiece and a pornographic image, we in France (can)."

The case is an illustration of the tricky line social media sites walk globally when trying to police explicit content. "It's another hole in the fabric, at least in Europe, when it comes to users' rights running counter to the way these companies operate in the US," said Steve Jones, a communications professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago. "Social networks are going to have to be much more careful about how they interact with users and how they summarily make decisions about those users' accounts," he said.

Facebook has never provided any specific explanation for the suspended account. "This case dates back more than five years and Facebook has evolved considerably since then," spokeswoman Christine Chen said in an emailed response to a request for comment. "While we are disappointed by today's ruling on jurisdiction, we remain confident that the court will find the underlying case itself to be without merit."

The social network's current "Community Standards" page, which Facebook revised in March 2015 to provide "more detail and clarity," states: "We restrict the display of nudity because some audiences within our global community may be sensitive to this type of content - particularly because of their cultural background or age." But Facebook's current policy - revised well after Durand-Baissas' suspension - also now appears to allow postings such as a photo of the



PARIS: Frederic Durand-Baissas, a 57-year-old Parisian teacher and art lover whose Facebook account was suspended five years ago without prior notice, speaks during his interview with AP on Friday. — AP

Courbet painting. Facebook's standards page now explicitly states: "We also allow photographs of paintings, sculptures, and other art that depicts nude figures."

Facebook's nudity policy has not yet been aired in French court. So far, Facebook lawyers have argued that under its terms of service, lawsuits like the one filed by Durand-Baissas could only be heard by a specific court in California, where Facebook is headquartered. The social network also argued that French consumer-rights law doesn't apply to its users in that country because its worldwide service is free.

Legal Precedent

The Paris appeals court dismissed those arguments. The ruling could set a legal precedent in France, where Facebook has more than 30 million regular users. It can be appealed to France's highest court. The appeals court said the small clause included in Facebook's terms and conditions requiring any worldwide lawsuits to be heard by the Santa Clara court is "unfair" and excessive. In addition, the judges said the terms and conditions contract signed before creating a Facebook account does fall

under consumer rights law in France. "This is a great satisfaction and a great victory after five years of legal action," lawyer Stephane Cottineau, who represents the teacher, told AP. He said it sends a message to all "web giants that they will have now to answer for their possible faults in French courts". "On one hand, Facebook shows a total permissiveness regarding violence and ideas conveyed on the social network. And on the other hand, (it) shows an extreme prudishness regarding the body and nudity," he said.

The French government has lobbied Silicon Valley tech giants to take down violent extremist material, notably after deadly attacks in Paris last year. Facebook has had a tough week in France. France's independent privacy watchdog said Facebook is breaching user privacy by tracking and using their personal data, and set a three-month limit ahead of eventual fines. And the government's anti-fraud agency issued a formal notice giving the company two months to comply with French data protection laws or risk sanctions. It notably accused Facebook of removing content or information posted by users without consultation. — AP

WHAT FACEBOOK'S POLICY ON NUDDITY MEANS IN PRACTICE

NEW YORK: What are Facebook's rules for posting nude images? The question is at the forefront again after a French court ruled Friday that a French art teacher can sue the social media service after it suspended his Facebook account. Although Facebook hasn't given a reason, the account suspension came after he posted an image of a classical painting featuring a female nude. Facebook's rules on nudity have evolved over time.

The latest community-standards policy, from March 2015, says Facebook restricts photos of genitals or fully exposed buttocks, as well as some images of breasts if they include the nipple. But Facebook says it allows photos of women actively engaged in breastfeeding or showing breasts with post-mastectomy scarring. "We restrict the display of nudity because some audiences within our global community may be sensitive to this type of content - particularly because of their cultural background or age," the policy states.

Here's what that means in practice:

BREASTFEEDING: Breastfeeding pictures were the subject of controversy for years. Breastfeeding moms protested when images were pulled. In 2009, 11,000 people staged a virtual "nurse-in," replacing their profile photos with nursing ones. It's not clear when Facebook's policy changed internally, but about two years ago the policy wording changed to specifically allow photos of nursing mothers.

MASTECTOMY PHOTOS: In 2013, more than 20,000 people signed an online petition, led by photographer David Jay and breast-cancer survivor Ann Marie Giannino-Otis, urging Facebook not to ban mastectomy images. Facebook responded with an official policy that permits the vast majority of mastectomy photos. Giannino-Otis said Friday that while the policy change helped, many mastectomy photos are still flagged by other users and removed by Facebook. Facebook didn't respond to requests for

comment Friday.

PHOTOS OF CHILDREN: In July 2014, North Carolina photographer Jill White's Facebook account was suspended after she posted a photograph of her daughter and a friend on Coppertone's Facebook page. Her 2-year-old daughter's buttocks were partially visible, an homage to the famous Coppertone image of a dog tugging at a child's swimsuit. White says her account was suspended twice, and she was warned it would be banned permanently if she didn't take the photo down. She replaced it with the same image with an emoji covered the offending part. But after friends got away with posting the original photo, she started doing it, too - so far without problems. White says she still doesn't understand Facebook's rules or how they are enforced.

BIRTH PHOTOGRAPHY: In 2011, Facebook apologized for disabling the account of an Iowa photographer who posted shots of a friend and her newborn moments after birth; the images partially showed her friend's breasts, but not her nipples. Laura Eckert's photography business, New Creation Photography & Design, specializes in pictures of pregnant women and the first moments of a baby's life. Facebook emailed Eckert to apologize and say that disabling the account had been in error.

ARTWORK: Facebook's policy allows "photographs of paintings, sculptures, and other art that depicts nude figures". Yet many users have run into trouble after posting art containing nudity. Frederic Durand-Baissas, the teacher whose account was suspended, had posted Gustave Courbet's 1866 nude painting "The Origin of the World". Artist Jerry Saltz said in a column for New York magazine's *Vulture* blog that he lost his account after posting graphic images from medieval art. And in January a Facebook account for the Christopher Stout gallery in New York was suspended after posting an image of an artist sitting topless on a toilet. — AP

PICASA BEING SHUT IN SHIFT TO GOOGLE PHOTOS

SAN FRANCISCO: Google on Friday said it will be shuttering Picasa to shift its focus to the new Google Photos service launched less than a year ago. "We believe we can create a much better experience by focusing on one service that provides more functionality and works across mobile and desktop, rather than divide our efforts across two different products," Google Photos chief Anil Sabharwal said in a blog post. Pictures or videos in Picasa online albums will be automatically available in people's

Google Photos accounts, according to Sabharwal.

Those wishing not to shift to the new service will still be able to view, download or delete photos in Picasa albums, but the software won't be updated and adding images won't be an option. "We apologize for any inconvenience this transition causes, but we want to assure you that we are doing this with the aim of providing the best photos experience possible," Sabharwal said. "Google Photos is a new and smarter product." — AFP

SQUARE SURGES AFTER VISA REVEALS DETAILS OF STAKE

SAN FRANCISCO: Shares in Square leapt Friday after financial giant Visa revealed details of its stake in the mobile payments group led by Twitter co-founder Jack Dorsey. Square closed up 7.89 percent at \$9.30 following the news, after rising as much as 14 percent during the trading session. The stock held gains even after Visa noted that some early reports on its regulatory filing were erroneous. "Visa has not bought or sold Square shares since its original investment," the payments giant said in a statement to AFP.

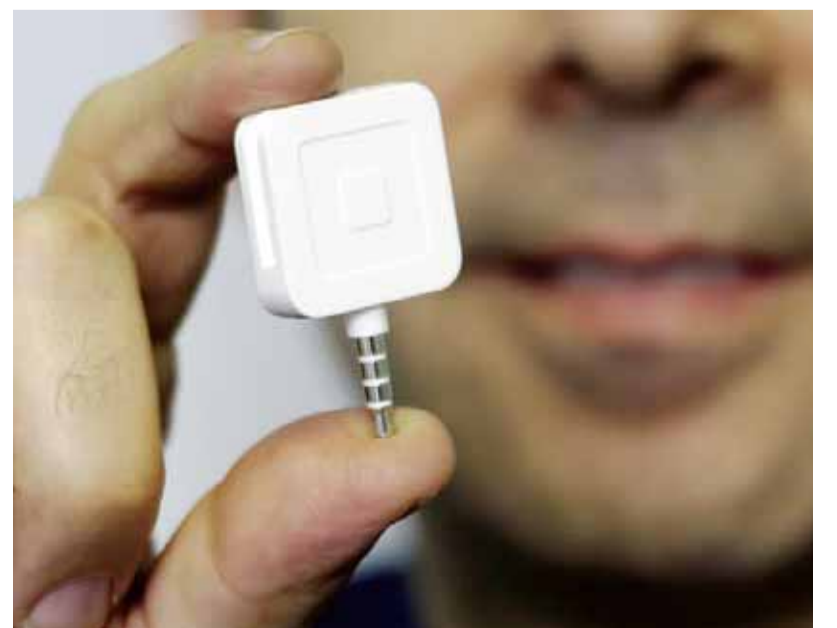
Visa added that "various news outlets have incorrectly reported that Visa is currently a top five percent shareholder of Square Inc., currently owning 9.99 percent of Square's Class A common stock." The statement noted that Visa holds "approximately one percent of Square's fully diluted common equity as of December 31, 2015." While Visa holds private shares from its 2011 investment before Square's public offering, it has an option to convert the stake to Class A or public shares which would represent around 10 percent of that share class, according to the filing.

Square's rally began early in the session and held despite the initial confusion from some of the reports. Mark Palmer at BTIG Research, in a note to clients early in the day, said

the news "was particularly notable insofar as it served as a vote of confidence in the company's business model, its brand, and its ability to continue to grow both domestically and internationally." The analyst also said the Visa stake "should serve as a reminder of Square's attractiveness as an acquisition target."

The San Francisco firm led by Dorsey, who is chief executive of both Twitter and Square, launched its initial public offering in

November, raising \$243 million. Square, which started in 2009 by providing financial transaction software for smartphones or tablets along with free "dongles" that read magnetic strips on payment cards, was among prominent "unicorns" with valuations of at least \$1 billion in startup-rich Silicon Valley. But its value slipped from a level of \$6 billion during its private fundraising phase to around \$4 billion ahead of its IPO. — AFP



NEW YORK: In this Jan 5, 2015 file photo, Dr. Greg Werner poses for a picture with his Square credit card reader at his office. — AP

DR DRE MAKING APPLE'S FIRST ORIGINAL TV SHOW

SAN FRANCISCO: Rap music legend Dr. Dre is starring in Apple's first original television show, according to a story published Friday in the *Hollywood Reporter*. The co-founder of Beats Music, which Apple bought nearly two years ago in a deal valued at \$3 billion, will star in and produce "Vital Signs," a six-episode series the report described as a semi-autobiographical "dark drama with no shortage of violence and sex." Apple is financially backing the series, but it remained unclear what roles Apple Music, Apple TV, the iTunes stores and the California companies other resources would play when it comes to digitally delivering the show, according to the report. Apple did not reply to an AFP request for comment.

Netflix and Amazon have found success with origi-

nal television programming, but this would be the first time Apple raises the curtain on a show of its own making. Apple in mid-2014 closed its deal for Beats, the high-end audio equipment and streaming music service. Apple's biggest-ever acquisition also bring onboard the talent of Beats brains and co-founders Dr. Dre and Jimmy Iovine.

Iovine, a producer for U2, Dire Straits, Stevie Nicks, Tom Petty and The Heartbreakers, and Patti Smith, is seen by some as a visionary for recognizing the trend toward online streaming and subscriptions. The television series project evidently originated with Dr. Dre, who conceived the idea and pitched it directly to partner Iovine, the *Reporter* said, citing unnamed sources. — AFP

LIVING WITH CONTAMINATION: FEAR AND ANGER IN FLINT

FLINT: Eighty-year-old Melvina Fields worries about getting contaminated water in her mouth each time she bathes. But what upsets her most, as the crisis in Flint drags on, is the thought of the babies harmed by the city's lead-tainted water supply. The slightest household chore is a challenge without a steady supply of clean water, as the poor and mostly black Michigan city discovered the hard way after the scandal broke four months ago and its entire population switched in a panic from tap to bottled water.

It takes time to fill a cooking pot or a sink to wash dishes, one bottle at a time. It takes time to trudge back and forth to stock up on water bottles. And officials have no idea how long it will be until the city's corroded pipes stop leaching poisonous lead. There's the stress of trying to bathe without ingesting any water, and never feeling like your clothes are really clean when they come out of the washing machine. "I tell my husband to not get any on his lips or in his mouth because it's contaminated," Fields said, as a soldier handing out bottled water at a fire station lifted a case into the car of the neighbor who drove her there.

"I think it's worse on the little bitty kids just born in this world," Fields said. "Their mother goes to fix formula out of river water.

It messes up their little heads." Lead exposure is harmful to everyone, but it can have devastating impacts on young children by irreversibly harming brain development. It has been shown to lower intelligence, stunt growth and lead to aggressive and anti-social behaviors. The US Justice Department is investigating why it took until October 2015 for officials to tell residents to stop drinking Flint's water despite months of tests showing dangerous high levels of lead. Flint residents have since been told to consume only filtered or bottled water.

'How long?'

Flint residents began complaining that the foul-smelling and discolored water coming out of their taps was making them sick soon after city officials switched to a new water supply in April 2014 in an effort to cut costs. One of Chantel Jackson's grandsons has since tested positive for lead in his blood. And while doctors assured her that the amount of lead in his system wasn't enough to pose a long-term threat to his health she can't quite believe them.

The anxiety about what the water may have done to her children and grandchildren is overwhelming, said the 55-year-old, as her teenaged son helped her load bottled water

into their car. "You're worried about your kids," Jackson said. "How long is this supposed to go on...and what's going to happen next and what's going to happen to them." Months after officials admitted the water was unsafe, fearful and frustrated residents have resigned themselves to the drudgery of packing their cars with cases of bottled water. "Water is like liquid gold around here," said David Madden, 56, as he picked up his latest shipment of bottles.

Madden, who lives on a fixed income from disability payments, tries to ration his family's use of bottled water by using it only for drinking, cooking and cleaning dishes. Bottled water is now being handed out for free by the National Guard. But Madden still finds himself eating up time and fuel driving to the fire station nearly every day to fill up as the empty plastic bottles pile up. Governor Rick Snyder—who faces calls to resign over his handling of the scandal—on Wednesday sought \$30 million to repay residents for most of what they've spent on their water bills since the ill-fated switch.

'Clean uniform for work'

It's a welcome move, but won't begin to compensate people for the expense incurred until the city admitted its water was



FLINT: Garbage floats in the Flint River in Flint, Michigan. Months ago, the city told citizens they could use tap water if they boiled it first, but now say it must be filtered to remove lead. — AFP

unsafe and began distributing bottles. Verastine Lane, 65, had been buying bottled water with her own money for nearly two years because she didn't trust what was coming out of her taps. "I'm glad they're giving it to us now. It was getting kind of

expensive," said Lane, who has lived in the same house for 45 years in Flint's north side neighborhood, a predominantly African-American community of modest bungalows, boarded-up store fronts and crumbling sidewalks and streets. — AFP



CALL: A pregnant woman holds a mosquito net in Cali. The Colombian Health Ministry began delivering mosquito nets for free to pregnant women to prevent the infection by Zika virus, vectored by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito. The World Health Organization has urged caution about linking the Zika virus with a rare nerve disorder called Guillain-Barre which health officials in Colombia have blamed for three deaths. — AFP

GUILLAIN-BARRE ON RISE IN 5 LATAM COUNTRIES, NO PROVEN LINK TO ZIKA

NO PROOF OF LINK BETWEEN ZIKA, GBS, MICROCEPHALY

GENEVA: A neurological disorder suspected of links to the mosquito-borne Zika virus is on the rise in Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Suriname and Venezuela, the World Health Organization (WHO) said yesterday. The rare Guillain-Barre syndrome, in which the body's immune system attacks part of the nervous system, causes gradual weakness in the legs, arms and upper body and sometimes leads to total paralysis.

"In the context of the Zika virus outbreak, Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Suriname and Venezuela have reported an increase of GBS (Guillain-Barre Syndrome)," the WHO said in a weekly report on Zika virus now circulating in 34 countries, including 26 in the Americas. "The cause of the increase in GBS incidence observed in Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador and Suriname remains unknown, especially as dengue, chikungunya and Zika virus have all been circulating simultaneously in the Americas," it added.

Investigations continue to determine the cause, WHO said, noting that there was no laboratory confirmation of Zika virus in patients

with GBS in Colombia and El Salvador. Venezuela has reported 252 cases of Guillain-Barre occurring at the same time and place as Zika infections, it said. "Zika virus infection was confirmed for three of the GBS cases, including one fatal case." Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro said on Thursday that three people had died of complications linked to Zika virus and that suspected cases of Zika had risen to 5,221.

Even in the best of settings, 3 to 5 percent of Guillain-Barre patients die from complications, which can include paralysis of the muscles that control breathing, blood infection, lung clots or cardiac arrest, according to the WHO. In French Polynesia, all 42 GBS cases identified during the Zika virus outbreak in 2013-2014 tested positive for dengue and Zika virus infection, the WHO said. There is no proven link between the Zika virus, the birth defect microcephaly and Guillain-Barre syndrome, but senior WHO expert Marie-Paule Kienny said on Friday that scientists suspected on and might be able to confirm it within weeks.

Microcephaly is a condition marked by a

baby's abnormally small head size, which can result in developmental problems. "Prevention measures have become critical. There are concerns that the Zika virus may spread globally to environments where mosquitoes can live and breed," the WHO said on Saturday.

Brazil is investigating the potential link between Zika infections and more than 4,300 suspected cases of microcephaly. Researchers have confirmed more than 460 of these cases as microcephaly and identified evidence of Zika infection in 41 of these cases, but have not proven Zika can cause microcephaly. Pregnant women should consider putting off travel to areas infected with the Zika virus as a precautionary measure, the WHO said on Friday. "Brazil will not stand down from hosting the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio. The risk of contracting the Zika virus is minimal in August, the height of winter in the region and a time of year when mosquitoes are least active," WHO said on Saturday, citing remarks made by member states at a private briefing last week. — Reuters

WHY THE ZIKA VIRUS IS CAUSING ALARM

Global health officials have said that the Zika virus, which has been linked to severe birth defects in thousands of babies in Brazil, is rapidly spreading in the Americas and could infect up to 4 million people. The race is on to develop a Zika vaccine. The following are some questions and answers about the virus and the current outbreak.

How do people become infected?

The virus is transmitted to people through the bite of infected female *Aedes* mosquitoes, the same type of mosquito that spreads dengue, chikungunya and yellow fever. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) said *Aedes* mosquitoes are found in all countries in the Americas except Canada and continental Chile, and the virus will likely reach all countries and territories of the region where *Aedes* mosquitoes are found.

How do you treat Zika infection?

There is no treatment or vaccine available for Zika infection. Companies and scientists are racing to develop a safe and effective vaccine for Zika, but the World Health Organization said it would take at least 18 months to start large-scale clinical trials of potential preventative shots.

How dangerous is it?

The PAHO said there is no evidence that Zika can cause death, but some cases have been reported with more serious complications in patients with pre-existing medical conditions. The virus has been linked to microcephaly, a condition in newborns marked by abnormally small heads and brains that have not developed properly. It also has been associated with Guillain-Barre syndrome, a rare disorder in which the body's immune system attacks part of the nervous system. The suspected link

between the Zika virus and the two birth defects could be confirmed within weeks, the WHO said.

How is Zika related to microcephaly?

Much remains unknown about Zika, including whether the virus actually causes microcephaly. Brazil is investigating the potential link between Zika infections and more than 4,300 suspected cases of microcephaly, a condition marked by abnormally small head size that can result in developmental problems. Researchers have confirmed more than 460 of these cases as microcephaly and identified evidence of Zika infection in 41 of these cases, but have not proven that Zika can cause microcephaly. It is unclear whether in pregnant women the virus crosses the placenta and causes microcephaly. Research in Brazil indicates the greatest microcephaly risk appears to be associated with infection during the first trimester of pregnancy.

What are the symptoms?

People who get Zika virus disease typically have a mild fever, skin rash, conjunctivitis, muscle and joint pain and fatigue that can last for two to seven days. But as many as 80 percent of people infected never develop symptoms. The symptoms are similar to those of dengue or chikungunya, which are transmitted by the same type of mosquito.

How can Zika be contained?

Efforts to control the spread of the virus focus on eliminating mosquito breeding sites and taking precautions against mosquito bites such as using insect repellent and mosquito nets. U.S. and international health officials have advised pregnant women to avoid travel to Latin American and Caribbean countries where they may be exposed to Zika. — Reuters



LIMA: A health worker fumigates against the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito at the Presbitero Maestro cemetery in Lima yesterday. The *Aedes aegypti* is the vector of Zika, Dengue and Chikungunya. — AFP

200 MILLION WOMEN, GIRLS LIVING WITH FGM: UNICEF

UNITED NATIONS: At least 200 million girls and women worldwide have been subjected to female genital mutilation with half of those living in Egypt, Ethiopia and Indonesia, according to the UN children's agency. Somalia, Guinea and Djibouti continue to show the highest prevalence of FGM globally, but the overall rate in some 30 countries has dropped, said a UNICEF report released ahead of International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM.

The United Nations is working to end the practice of cutting women's genitalia by the target date of 2030, a goal set in its new development agenda that was adopted in September by all UN member-states. Of the 200 million FGM victims, 44 million are girls age 14 and younger. In the 30 countries where the practice is most widespread, the majority of girls have undergone FGM before their fifth birthday, said UNICEF which declared the practice a clear violation of children's rights.

"In countries like Somalia, Guinea and Djibouti, the practice is practically universal," said Claudia Cappa, the lead author of the report. "Being born in those countries means you have 9 out of 10 possibilities of undergoing the practice." The prevalence rates for FGM in Somalia stands at a staggering 98 percent for Somalia, 97 percent for Guinea and 93 percent for Djibouti. The new global figure on FGM includes nearly 70 million more girls and women than the last estimate for 2014, largely due to new data provided

by Indonesia and population growth in some countries.

Some progress

Overall, the prevalence of FGM among teenage girls has dropped in the 30 countries, from 51 percent in 1985 to 37 percent today. There have been major strides in Liberia, Burkina Faso, Kenya and Egypt to end the mutilation of girls. Attitudes are changing, Cappa said, pointing to surveys showing that a majority of people in those countries want the practice to end. "We need to support national efforts to promote the abandonment of the practice," said Cappa, pointing to successes in efforts to "change the way communities see FGM and cutting."

Since 2008, more than 15,000 communities have abandoned FGM including 2,000 last year alone. Five countries have passed laws criminalizing the practice: Kenya, Uganda, Guinea-Bissau and recently Nigeria and Gambia in 2015. The new legislation in Gambia is seen as a major step forward as the country has the highest prevalence of FGM among girls 14 and younger - 56 percent. Some 54 percent of girls under 14 have undergone FGM in Mauritania as have about half of girls 11 and younger in Indonesia. Despite gains, the rate of progress does not keep up with population growth, said Cappa, who called for stepped up efforts to address FGM. — AFP

HARMFUL ALGAE TOXINS IN ALASKA MARINE MAMMALS

ANCHORAGE: A review of more than 900 marine mammals hunted, stranded or captured for research along Alaska's coast has found toxins from harmful algae in 13 species, creating concern that the natural poisonous substances could increase as water temperatures warm and sea ice diminishes. Algal toxins were present in animals sampled from southeast Alaska to the Arctic Ocean. Researchers from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and other agencies examined feces, stomach content and urine for two toxins.

Algal toxin has led to deaths of sea lions documented since 1998 in central California. They have been found previously in Alaska, at times creating health concerns for people eating clams, but have not been documented to this extent, said Kathi Lefebvre, a research biologist for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. "The real concern is that the waters are warming and the sea ice is melting and the light is more available, making it more favorable for these blooms of algae," she said.

Algae are simple organisms, sometimes single-cell, that like other phytoplankton,

float in the ocean at the mercy of ocean currents. Harmful algae species produce toxins. When conditions are right, with optimal temperature and nutrients, harmful algae can grow rapidly divide and create dense blooms. They're eaten by zooplankton or filter feeders such as clams, shellfish or tiny fin fish, allowing the toxin to move higher in the food web.

Lefebvre is program leader for NOAA's West Coast Wildlife Algal-toxin Research and Response Network in Seattle, which looked at samples from 905 animals collected in Alaska wildlife over nine years. The sampling was "opportunistic," meaning the same species of animal was not sampled regularly. That means the study could not detect whether toxins had increased in particular species over a decade, Lefebvre said.

No 'Smoking Gun'

Researchers looked for domoic acid and saxitoxin. Domoic acid has killed California sea lions. A study last year indicated affected animals that survive can suffer brain damage that leads to significant deficits in spatial memory, which could affect their ability to forage, migrate or avoid ship

strikes, Lefebvre said. Domoic acid was found in all 13 Alaska species reviewed and was found in 68 percent of bowhead whales samples and 67 percent of harbor seals.

Saxitoxin, which causes paralytic seafood poisoning in clams, was found in 10 of the 13 species. It was detected in 50 percent of the humpback whale samples and 32 percent of bowhead whale samples. Researchers could not conclude whether algal toxins were related to 2015 Alaska marine mammal die-offs, such as fin whales and sea otters. "We don't have the smoking gun," Lefebvre said. "We don't have the right kinds of samples to look at." Instead, the research emphasizes the importance and potential impacts of algal toxins in historically cold Alaska waters, she said.

Researchers also don't know whether the toxin concentrations found were high enough to cause health impacts for the marine mammals sampled. They did conclude, however, that the levels accumulating in commonly eaten parts of the animals were not at a level of a concern for human safety. — AP

AFRICAN DROUGHT THREATENS EFFORTS TO CUT SPENDING

RABAT: Abnormally dry weather across North Africa is threatening to become another financial headache for Morocco and neighboring Tunisia and Algeria, just

as each seeks to spur more economic growth and cut public spending. Rising food import costs would come at a delicate time, as Morocco faces protests over

the world's biggest wheat importers, with import levels highly sensitive to the results of the local harvest.

"Drought has a huge impact across the region," Jon Marks, chairman of the consultancy Cross Border Information, said. "It weakens the trade balance and holds back efforts to overhaul the agriculture sector." "In Algeria and Tunisia, drought may slow the pace of planned subsidy cuts," he said. "Morocco, the region's big winner from the oil price slump, may channel some more resources into rural areas." Morocco plans nearly \$600 million of measures to support farming, including assistance for small farmers, feed subsidies, and around (\$125.4 million) of insurance from the state-run Moroccan Agricultural Mutual Insurance (Mamda). It also plans to subsidize 800,000 tons of barley production and imports, by paying almost 1 dirham per kilogram of the crop. With drought looming, the Moroccan cereal harvest is expected to fall sharply from an excep-

tional 2015 crop that hit a record 11 million tons. "(The) rainfall deficit has reached around 61 percent until now. If the spring cultivation is also affected, this year's cereal harvest would reach hardly 2.5 millions tons," the head of Morocco's planning agency, Ahmed Lahlimi Alami, said.

The planning agency estimates that the drop in agricultural output will drag down gross domestic product (GDP) growth to 1.3 percent this year - against a government projection of 3 percent - from an estimated 4.4 percent in 2015. The agency, known by its French acronym HCP, says the drought would also increase government spending this year, raising doubts over plans to cut the budget deficit. The government estimates that the budget deficit will fall to 3.5 percent of GDP this year from 4.3 percent in 2015. Agriculture accounts for more than 15 percent of the Moroccan economy.

Longer import window

Experts and traders expect this year's Moroccan imports to remain under 3 million tons as last year's bumper harvest helps mitigate the impact of the drought. However, one Moroccan importer said the

country would likely have to extend its import window, which is typically open from October to April. The import window is closed to protect the local harvest, he said, but this year there may be nothing to protect. "We expect it to be expanded until the end of May," he said.

Importers expect shipments to rise next season, once last year's harvest has been worked through. They say the government should suspend custom duties on soft wheat to ensure adequate supplies to the market by the start of the next season. Across the border in Algeria, officials played down the impact of any rain shortfall on their country's economy. "We cannot talk about drought right now," Agriculture Minister Sid Ahmed Ferroukhi told reporters last week. "We had insufficient precipitation in November and December, but we got good volumes of rains and snows this month (January)." Algeria's grain imports rose 11.2 percent to 13.67 million tons last year, despite efforts to curb purchases from abroad. Its foreign exchange reserves dropped by \$6.33 billion to \$152.7 billion in the third quarter as global crude oil prices plunged. — Reuters



NSEZI: Photo shows the fast drying catchment area of the Umzingwani dam in Matabeleland, Southwestern Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe has declared a 'state of disaster' in many rural areas hit by a severe drought, with more than a quarter of the population facing food shortages. — AFP

AS CUBA STRUGGLES TO FEED ITSELF, LACK OF CASH SLOWS RISE OF URBAN FARMING

CUBA SPENDS OVER \$2 BILLION A YEAR ON FOOD IMPORT

HAVANA: Sitting beside a decaying Soviet-built housing complex on the outskirts of Havana, the Rotondo de Cojima farm grows several thousand kilos a month of carrots, lettuce and root vegetables, part of Cuba's drive to feed its people through organic farming. Like many of its Caribbean neighbors, communist-governed Cuba imports more than two-thirds of its food, despite having rich farmland and hundreds of urban farms sprouting up in old parking lots, rooftops, or other small plots of unused land.

The country spends more than \$2 billion a year importing rice, meat, grains and other foods which analysts and local farmers say could be produced at home. The government, under President Raul Castro, says it is serious about producing more food for Cuba's 11 million citizens, and some environmentalists have praised it for supporting organic urban farming, which uses no chemical pesticides or fertilizers.

But local farmers and analysts say Cuba will not achieve self-sufficiency in food in the near future, despite improved trade with the United States after Washington re-established diplomatic relations last year with its former Cold War foe. "The government is trying to make more of these organic farms," urban farmer Antonio Loma told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "But it's a lot of work for very little money." The 10 employees who work with Loma at the Rotondo de Cojima farm, a 10-minute drive from central Havana, earn the equivalent of \$25 per month, making it difficult to attract qualified workers or capital to expand production, Loma said.

Organic by necessity

Taking a break beside the store where all the farm's food is sold directly to local residents, Loma said Cuba turned to urban agriculture because it had to. "It's organic because we couldn't get fertilizer," he

said. Founded in 1994, the Rotondo de Cojima farm and hundreds of others were set up after the collapse of the Soviet Union, which had supplied its Cuban ally with energy, pesticides and machinery on preferential terms and paid above-market rates for Cuba's staple sugar crop. "Organic agriculture was essentially forced upon Cuba," Sinan Koont, an economics professor at Dickinson College in Pennsylvania, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. Cuban food output plummeted and the economy shrank after the breakup of the Soviet Union. With little fuel for trucks or tractors, state-paid farmers had to start growing vegetables close to cities, using oxen and other animals to till the fields, Koont said. Most observers in the United States assumed Cuba's communist government, then led by the current president's brother Fidel Castro, would collapse too. Between 1989 and 1995 the average Cuban's daily caloric intake fell to 1,863 calories from 2,908, according to US government data. By 1994, the average Cuban had lost about 20 pounds in weight due to food shortages, aid group Oxfam said.

The government responded to the crisis by bringing farmers like Loma from rural areas to the cities to help grow food close to the population, distributing under-used plots of land and seeds. "I had to build all the beds for the vegetables," said Vladimir Echazabal, another urban farmer who came from the countryside to Havana to create an organic garden on 400 square meters of unused land. "There was only grass here when I came - a lot of farms in Havana are like this," he said, while selling yucca and carrots to local residents. Today Cuba has about 4,000 organic urban farms, Koont said. Urban agriculture supplies about half Cuba's vegetables, according to a senior official with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

'America will sell a lot here'

Cuba's economy stabilized in the following years, and hunger receded, largely because of an influx of foreign investment for tourism projects and mining, along with support from Venezuela in the form of subsidized oil. Food imports increased, particularly from countries like Brazil and to a lesser degree the United States. Small farmers say they want to expand their organic range, but getting loans to improve their farms is difficult. Loma, for example, thinks organic chicken would be popular but he doesn't have the money to build coops. The low pay of the average Cuban means there is not enough money circulating in the broader economy to boost production, traders and farmers said. — Reuters



HAWAII: Zac Forsman, a coral recovery specialist with the state of Hawaii, holds a piece of coral he and a team of scientists have been growing at the Anuenue Fisheries Research Center's coral nursery in Honolulu. — AP

HAWAII CREATES NURSERY FOR FAST-GROWING CORAL

HONOLULU: Most of Hawaii's species of coral is unlike other coral around the world in that it grows very slowly, making restoration projects for endangered reefs in the state difficult. But officials in Hawaii have come up with a plan to grow large chunks of coral in a fraction of the time it would normally take. In doing so, they hope to create a stock of replenishing species to build up damaged or unhealthy reefs in the future. State officials gave a tour of their new coral nursery on Thursday, showing off their "Fast-Grow Protocol" and a rare coral seed bank.

Hawaii's average coral grows about one centimeter per year, while the dominant species of coral around the world, mostly in warmer waters closer to the equator, grows at up to 30 centimeters a year, Division of Aquatic Resources Coral Nursery Manager David Gulko said. The way Hawaii's coral grows makes it difficult to have a traditional replenishment program, he said, because they are usually housed in natural settings, meaning it would take decades to make large enough coral specimens to start to rebuild reefs.

"The larger the coral, the more space it provides for fish and invertebrates and the all things that are important," he said. "That means recovery takes a really long time. You can't replace a hundred-year-old coral in less than a hundred years - until now with what we're doing." With the process they are using, Gulko

said they will have a volleyball-sized chunk of coral in about one year, a fraction of the time it would take to grow naturally. "Bigger coral is much more important," he said. "If a coral this size is important to keep the shoreline from eroding, it can't wait a hundred years. We need faster techniques."

The way they are doing this is to take harbor coral that is not part of the natural reef, so they don't harm those ecosystems, quarantine it to ensure it is healthy and has no invasive species, then chop it up into tiny portions that grow the fastest. They then take those small pieces of healthy coral and expose them to optimal conditions in specially designed tanks. Once grown, the genetically identical chunks are then fused back together to make a single large portion of coral that they can transplant back onto reefs.

When they first begin growing these specimens, they are put in artificial seawater that is closely monitored for optimal health. They carefully expose them to light that would mimic their natural depths in the ocean and provide certain minerals to ensure the fastest-growing coral possible. Once they have been in that setting for long enough, the coral is moved into a natural seawater tank, still controlled but more closely resembling natural conditions, and assimilated back to their natural ocean reefs. — AP

HAWAII GOV DECLARES EMERGENCY OVER MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESSES

HONOLULU: Hawaii Gov David Ige declared a state of emergency to fight mosquito borne illnesses including dengue fever and the Zika virus. The state has been in the midst of a dengue fever outbreak on Hawaii's Big Island, where there were more than 250 confirmed cases. There have been no locally transmitted cases of the Zika virus in Hawaii, Ige said in a news conference Friday. But there's concern that the islands could be at risk because mosquitoes that can carry dengue fever also can carry the Zika virus. "We are doing everything we can to be prepared, to be proactive, to prevent vector borne diseases here in Hawaii," Ige said.

The emergency proclamation could help the state acquire more money to control outbreaks. Hawaii is rushing to build up its mosquito control staff after a December report from the Centers for Disease Control highlighted deficiencies in the state's vector control department. The state slashed its mosquito control and entomology staff during the economic downturn, from 56 employees in 2009 to 25 positions in 2016. Health officials are now searching for funding to rebuild the staff, and the Department of Health plans to hire 10 new staffers with money the governor released, said

Virginia Pressler, director of department, on Friday.

"We are actively hiring new staff, an entomologist that will be dedicated to Hawaii Island that will be starting next week as well as additional communications and vector control staff," Pressler said. Officials stressed that Hawaii is still a safe place to visit. No travel advisories have been issued about Hawaii, and tourism is off to a strong start in 2016, said George Szigeti, president and CEO of the Hawaii Tourism Authority. "There's no reason to be alarmed or to alter your traveling plans," Szigeti said.

There are active Zika outbreaks on Pacific Islands including American Samoa. Flights between American Samoa and Hawaii run several times per week. The proclamation also will give the state more power to take preventive measures, including the ability to spray pesticides regardless of a homeowner's wishes. "There are some who are holding out and not allowing us to be on their property," Pressler said. "One of the things that this emergency declaration from the governor will allow us to do is that we can in fact enforce that we will come and take care of mosquitoes on a property that someone is refusing, because it is a public health emergency." — AP

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Kuwait Times

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—Photos by Joseph Shagra

DASMAN BILINGUAL SCHOOL HOSTS UNDER-14 QUIZ BOWL

By Nawara Fattahova

Dasman Bilingual School hosted the first under-14 Quiz Bowl competition in Kuwait yesterday, which was won by the American School of Kuwait. This is a competition that allows students from American schools to compete against each other in an academic competition. The students face each other in teams and compete in multiple rounds until a final winner is announced. Quiz

Bowl includes questions from mathematics, literature, geography, history and others. Students have to excel in numerous academic areas in order to succeed in this competition. "It is an honor for our school to host the first ever under-14 Quiz Bowl competition, which is organized by the Kuwait School Activities Association," the Academic Director of Dasman Bilingual School Samar Dizmen said. "This competition reflects the educational standards of each school and its effect on stu-

dents in various fields. We are very proud of our students' achievements, not only in the field of science, but also in sports. Our soccer team won first place among school groups, representing Kuwait in the MEUC (Middle East Unity Cup) tournament held in Dubai," she said.

Dizmen noted that no matter the results of the Quiz Bowl, "we are confident that our students will always work hard and do their best to represent Dasman Bilingual School in a

wonderful way. Our main strategy at DBS is to be a leading learning community that provides students with meaningful options and opportunities that inspire, engage and motivate. We congratulate the school that wins the competition. We wish their students a bright future for their education," she concluded.

Dasman Bilingual School was chosen as the sponsor of this event by the Kuwait School Activities Association, which organized the event. "This is the first time this event is being

held. Six schools participated in this event that included about 150 students, both boys and girls under 14, coaches, and teachers," Jessica Cohen, Middle School English HoD and teacher told Kuwait Times.

"All members of the winning team were awarded by medals and prizes. Our school was chosen to host this one-day event, which is the first to be held for the under-14s, and most likely next year we will be sponsoring it as well," stressed Kristian Ivanov, Athletic Director.



—Photos by Joseph Shagra



EMBASSY SHOWCASES BELGIAN CHOCOLATE

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: The Embassy of Belgium in Kuwait held a reception on Thursday to showcase Belgian chocolate to existing and potential customers, who had chance to taste various kinds of Belgian chocolate.

"This event was held to celebrate Belgian

chocolate, which is the best in the world. Kuwaitis have good taste, and I'm happy that our chocolate is consumed a lot here. The chocolate presented here tonight was brought by Bano Group, which is a Lebanese company that has a shop in Kuwait. They import the chocolate from a very old and popular Belgian manufacturer that was

established in the 19th century," Andy Detaille, Ambassador of Belgium to Kuwait, told Kuwait Times. During this special one-day event, a well-known chocolatier was present, who made the Kuwait Towers in chocolate that was displayed. "This is the first time to hold this event, and we may repeat it in the future," he added. Belgian

chocolate is of high quality. "Some companies around the world add vegetable oils to chocolate, but in Belgian chocolate, there is no vegetable fat. In some countries, chocolate can be called 'chocolate' even if it has less than 20 percent cocoa butter, but Belgian chocolate has to have at least 35 percent cocoa butter," stressed Detaille.

Greetings



Happy 5th birthday to our sweet daughter Aisha Syed on February 14, 2016. Best wishes from mom, dad, brother Syed Danial and sister Yasmin Syed. We love you so much and wish you all the happiness and success in life.

TSC SPONSORS CAN WALKATHON

Driven by its commitment to support the community, The Sultan Center (TSC) has sponsored CAN Ladies Walkathon held under the patronage of Ahmed Al-Mansour Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Chairman and Director of the Public Authority for sports. It was held on Saturday, February 6, 2016 at Mishref Walk, with the aim of raising awareness about cancer and the importance of regular check-ups. TSC's initiative comes as a part of a



number of activities being organized to support the Gulf Cancer Awareness Week, which include amongst others: educational seminars at TSC branches, highlighting healthy products and sampling campaigns across its stores, along with a social media campaign aimed at promoting healthy living choices. Commenting on the occasion, Lisa Al-Gharib, Marketing Manager at TSC said: "TSC has been at the forefront in supporting humanitarian and social causes, out of its sincere commitment to spreading awareness on the importance of embracing a healthy life style in our daily routine."

TSC's employees have participated in the walkathon in a gesture to providing the ultimate support for the cause. The walkathon has been a demonstration of dedication and an invitation to all on the importance of regular check-ups to remain healthy. The Sultan Center continuous its efforts in implementing health awareness campaigns to promote a healthy lifestyle.



It was a rosy moment at the Life Abundant International Church in Fintas as Abraham and Haizel joined hands in holy wedlock. The marriage was attended by dignitaries, friends and well-wishers. 'May the good Lord continue to guide, protect you and crown all your efforts with success. Amen.'



AYAM ZAMAN SUBHIYA AT HOLIDAY INN SALMIYA

Honored by the presence of the International Women's Group and esteemed female personalities, Holiday Inn Kuwait - Salmiya launched "Ayam Zaman Subhiyeh" a brand new authentic breakfast

experience inspired by the famous Lebanese Heritage. Invitees were welcomed by the Holiday Inn Kuwait management team headed by the Monjed Salha, who wished everyone a pleasant time. The Invitees were treated to a

delectable breakfast enjoying a wide range of authentic Lebanese dishes and freshly prepared sweets. The members of IWC expressed their sincere delight with hospitality provided by "Ayam Zaman Subhiyeh" team.

"Ayam Zaman Subhiyeh", is considered as a remarkable addition to the restaurant as it offers the guest a special menu with variety of appetizers, light meals and dessert as well as to the live cooking stations all freshly prepared

the traditional Lebanese way. Following a good hearty meal, guests are also offered to enjoy their favorite Shisha flavor in a charming ambiance of the restaurant's terrace which overlooks the hotel's garden.





- 00:20 Ricochet
- 02:10 Mighty Fine
- 03:30 Quigley Down Under
- 05:30 Bound For Glory
- 07:55 Mannequin
- 09:25 A Star For Two
- 11:00 The Bridge In The Jungle
- 12:25 Pieces Of Dreams
- 14:05 Seven Years In Tibet
- 16:20 Puckoon
- 17:45 Punks
- 19:20 Captain Jack
- 21:00 Breaking Bad
- 22:00 Rob Roy



- 00:50 River Monsters (Best Of Series 1-5)
- 01:45 Swamp Brothers
- 02:15 Swamp Brothers
- 02:40 Dog Rescuers
- 03:30 Tanked
- 04:25 Roaring With Pride
- 05:15 Gator Boys
- 06:02 Treehouse Masters
- 06:49 Dog Rescuers
- 07:36 Swamp Brothers
- 08:00 Swamp Brothers
- 08:25 Bad Dog
- 09:15 Dog Rescuers
- 10:10 Treehouse Masters
- 11:05 Tanked
- 12:00 Bad Dog
- 12:55 Bondi Vet
- 13:50 Dog Rescuers
- 14:45 Gator Boys
- 15:40 Treehouse Masters
- 16:35 Tanked
- 17:30 Roaring With Pride
- 18:25 River Monsters (Best Of Series 1-5)
- 19:20 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
- 20:15 Tanked
- 21:10 Roaring With Pride
- 22:05 Treehouse Masters
- 23:00 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
- 23:55 Gator Boys



- 00:25 Eastenders
- 00:55 Call The Midwife
- 01:50 Call The Midwife
- 02:45 Ripper Street
- 03:40 Doctors
- 04:10 Eastenders
- 04:45 Starlings
- 05:30 Starlings
- 06:20 Doctors
- 06:50 Eastenders
- 07:20 Stella
- 08:10 Call The Midwife
- 09:05 Doctor Who
- 10:00 Doctors
- 10:30 Eastenders
- 11:00 Death In Paradise
- 12:00 Stella
- 12:45 Call The Midwife
- 13:40 Doctor Who
- 14:35 Doctors
- 15:05 Eastenders
- 15:35 Stella
- 16:25 Dickensian
- 17:10 Doctor Who
- 18:00 Doctors
- 18:30 Eastenders
- 19:05 Death In Paradise
- 20:00 Holly City
- 21:00 Stella
- 21:50 Ripper Street
- 22:45 Death In Paradise
- 23:40 Doctors
- 00:25 Eastenders
- 00:55 Call The Midwife
- 01:50 Call The Midwife
- 02:45 Ripper Street
- 03:40 Doctors
- 04:10 Eastenders
- 04:45 Starlings
- 05:30 Starlings
- 06:20 Doctors
- 06:50 Eastenders
- 07:20 Stella
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- 23:40 Doctors

- 12:45 Call The Midwife
- 13:40 Doctor Who
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- 04:45 Starlings
- 05:30 Starlings
- 06:20 Doctors
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- 09:05 Doctor Who
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- 10:30 Eastenders
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- 19:05 Death In Paradise
- 20:00 Holly City
- 21:00 Stella
- 21:50 Ripper Street
- 22:45 Death In Paradise
- 23:40 Doctors



- 00:00 The Haunting Of...
- 01:00 The Ghost Inside My Child
- 02:00 I Escaped My Killer
- 03:00 Crime Stories
- 04:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
- 05:00 The Ghost Inside My Child
- 06:00 The Haunting Of...
- 07:00 The FBI Files
- 08:00 The FBI Files
- 09:00 Private Crimes
- 09:30 Frenemies
- 10:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
- 11:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
- 12:00 Beyond Scared Straight
- 13:00 Fatal Vows
- 14:00 Crime Stories
- 15:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
- 16:00 Private Crimes
- 16:30 Frenemies
- 17:00 The FBI Files
- 18:00 Beyond Scared Straight
- 19:00 Crime Stories
- 20:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
- 21:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
- 22:00 Private Crimes
- 22:30 Frenemies
- 23:00 50 Ways To Kill Your Lover



- 00:20 Fast N' Loud
- 01:10 Mythbusters
- 02:00 You Have Been Warned
- 02:50 You Have Been Warned
- 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 Flying Wild Alaska
- 06:50 Highway To Sell
- 07:40 Fast N' Loud
- 08:30 Storage Hunters
- 08:55 The Liquidator
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- 15:10 Highway To Sell
- 16:00 Fast N' Loud
- 16:50 How It's Made: Dream Cars
- 17:40 How Do They Do It?
- 18:30 What On Earth?
- 19:20 The Pop Illusionist
- 20:10 The Liquidator
- 20:35 Auction Hunters: Pawn Shop Edition
- 21:00 What On Earth?
- 21:50 Unearthed
- 22:40 Treasure Quest: Snake Island
- 23:30 Highway To Sell



DEATH RACE ON OSN MOVIES ACTION

- 11:00 How It's Made
- 11:23 Food Factory
- 11:45 Food Factory
- 12:08 Space Pioneer
- 12:53 Prototype This?
- 13:38 Weir Or What?
- 14:23 How It's Made
- 14:46 How It's Made
- 15:10 Mythbusters
- 15:57 Food Factory
- 16:20 Food Factory
- 16:44 Space Pioneer
- 17:31 Prototype This
- 18:18 Mythbusters
- 19:05 Weir Or What?
- 19:50 Mega Builders
- 20:40 Space Pioneer
- 21:25 How It's Made
- 21:50 How It's Made
- 22:15 Mythbusters
- 23:05 Mega Builders
- 23:45 Space Pioneer

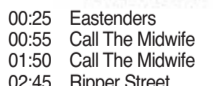


- 00:40 Solved
- 01:30 Reign Of The Dinosaurs
- 02:20 America: Facts vs. Fiction
- 02:45 America: Facts vs. Fiction
- 03:05 Dinosaurs Of The Deep
- 03:50 Solved
- 04:35 Extreme Engineering
- 05:20 Deadliest Catch
- 06:05 Bizarre Foods
- 06:50 Alps From Above
- 07:35 Origins
- 08:00 Deadliest Catch
- 08:50 Reign Of The Dinosaurs
- 09:40 Alps From Above
- 10:30 Bizarre Foods
- 11:20 Extreme Engineering
- 12:10 Deadliest Catch
- 13:00 Alone Against The Tasman
- 13:50 Bizarre Foods
- 14:40 Extreme Engineering
- 15:30 Reign Of The Dinosaurs
- 16:20 Alps From Above
- 17:10 Deadliest Catch
- 18:00 Dinosaurs Of The Deep
- 18:50 Bizarre Foods
- 19:40 Before We Ruled The Earth
- 20:30 Shadow Ops
- 21:20 Curiosity: Stonehenge
- 22:10 Extreme Engineering
- 23:00 Shadow Ops
- 23:50 Curiosity: Stonehenge



THE SONG ON OSN MOVIES HD

- 10:00 Doctors
- 10:30 Eastenders
- 11:00 Death In Paradise
- 12:00 Stella
- 12:45 Call The Midwife
- 13:40 Doctor Who
- 14:35 Doctors
- 15:05 Eastenders
- 15:35 Stella
- 16:25 Dickensian
- 17:10 Doctor Who
- 18:00 Doctors
- 18:30 Eastenders
- 19:05 Death In Paradise
- 20:00 Holly City
- 21:00 Stella
- 21:50 Ripper Street
- 22:45 Death In Paradise
- 23:40 Doctors



- 00:25 Eastenders
- 00:55 Call The Midwife
- 01:50 Call The Midwife
- 02:45 Ripper Street
- 03:40 Doctors
- 04:10 Eastenders
- 04:45 Starlings
- 05:30 Starlings
- 06:20 Doctors
- 06:50 Eastenders
- 07:20 Stella
- 08:10 Call The Midwife
- 09:05 Doctor Who
- 10:00 Doctors
- 10:30 Eastenders
- 11:00 Death In Paradise
- 12:00 Stella

- 01:00 Inside China
- 01:30 Tech Transformers: Kevin Spacey
- 02:00 U.S. Squawk Alley
- 03:00 Asia Squawk Box
- 05:00 Asia Street Signs
- 07:00 Fast Money: Half Time Report
- 08:00 Capital Connection
- 09:00 Squawk Box Europe
- 12:00 Europe Street Signs
- 13:00 Worldwide Exchange
- 14:00 U.S. Squawk Box
- 17:00 Squawk On The Street
- 19:00 U.S. Squawk Alley
- 20:00 Fast Money: Half Time Report
- 21:00 U.S. Power Lunch
- 23:00 U.S. Closing Bell



- 00:35 Weir Or What?
- 01:20 How It's Made
- 01:44 How It's Made
- 02:08 Invent It Rich
- 02:55 Space Pioneer
- 03:42 Mythbusters
- 04:29 Weir Or What?
- 05:16 Invent It Rich
- 06:03 Space Pioneer
- 06:50 Prototype This
- 07:37 How Do They Do It?
- 08:00 How Do They Do It?
- 08:23 Weir Or What?
- 09:08 Mythbusters
- 09:53 Prototype This
- 10:38 How It's Made



- 00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 01:00 Chopped
- 02:00 All Star Academy
- 03:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin

- Planet
- 10:10 Miguel's Feasts
- 10:35 Miguel's Feasts
- 11:00 Carnival Eats
- 11:25 Dream Cruises
- 12:15 A Marriage Of Flavours
- 12:40 Bangkok Airport
- 13:35 Valentine Warner Eats
- Scandinavia
- 14:00 Eat Street
- 14:30 Eat Street
- 14:55 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
- 15:50 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
- 16:20 Miguel's Feasts
- 16:45 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
- 17:15 Street Food Around The World
- 17:40 Dream Cruises
- 18:35 A Marriage Of Flavours
- 19:05 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
- 20:00 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
- 20:25 Miguel's Feasts
- 20:50 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
- 21:15 Street Food Around The World
- 21:40 Dream Cruises
- 22:30 Bangkok Airport
- 22:55 Valentine Warner Eats
- 23:45 Scandinavia

- 21:00 Tracks
- 23:00 Third Person



- 02:45 Belle
- 04:45 At Any Price
- 06:45 Half Of A Yellow Sun
- 09:00 A Civil Action
- 11:00 The Invisible Woman
- 13:00 Vanity Fair
- 15:00 Heaven's Door
- 17:30 A Civil Action
- 19:30 How I Live Now
- 21:00 Siberian Education
- 23:00 I Origins



- 01:00 The Gambler
- 03:00 Kristy
- 05:00 Pompeii
- 07:00 Accidental Love
- 09:00 Louder Than Words
- 11:00 Pompeii
- 13:00 Not Safe For Work
- 15:00 4 Minute Mile
- 17:00 The Song
- 19:00 Blended
- 21:00 Serena
- 23:00 Love, Rosie



- 00:00 Save The Date
- 02:00 Happy Gilmore
- 04:00 Garfield's Pet Force
- 06:00 The Devil Wears Prada
- 08:00 Simon Birch
- 10:00 Zoolander
- 12:00 Happy Gilmore
- 14:00 Garfield's Fun Fest
- 16:00 Simon Birch
- 18:00 Down To Earth
- 20:00 That Awkward Moment
- 22:00 John Tucker Must Die



- 01:00 Blue Elephant 2
- 02:45 The Olsen Gang In Deep Trouble
- 04:30 Dixie And The Zombie Rebellion
- 06:00 Saving Santa
- 08:00 Moomins And The Comet Chase
- 09:45 Hatching
- 11:30 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure
- 13:15 The Olsen Gang In Deep Trouble
- 15:00 Tom And Jerry: Santa's Little Helpers
- 16:00 Egon And Donci
- 18:00 Hatching
- 20:00 Marco Macaco



- 00:00 Chicago Fire
- 01:00 Criminal Minds
- 02:05 The Blacklist
- 03:00 Minority Report
- 04:00 The Player
- 05:00 Good Morning America
- 06:00 Stitches
- 07:00 Backstrom
- 08:00 The Player
- 09:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 10:00 Criminal Minds
- 11:00 Backstrom
- 12:00 Coronation Street
- 12:30 Coronation Street
- 13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 14:00 Stitches
- 15:00 Backstrom
- 16:00 Live Good Morning America
- 17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 18:00 The Player
- 19:00 Bones
- 20:00 Scandal
- 21:00 Suits



- 00:45 Persecuted
- 02:30 The Package
- 04:15 Oggly & The Cockroaches: The Movie
- 06:00 The Intruders
- 08:00 Step Up Revolution
- 10:00 A Stranger In Paradise
- 11:45 Dawn Of The Planet Of The Apes
- 14:00 40 Days And Nights
- 16:00 Step Up Revolution
- 18:00 Imogene
- 20:00 Begin Again
- 22:00 Buggy



- 01:00 Live MSNBC Mtp Daily
- 02:00 Live MSNBC With All Dues Respect
- 03:00 Live NBC Nightly News
- 03:30 ABC World News With David Muir
- 04:00 Live MSNBC All In With Chris Hayes
- 05:00 Live MSNBC The Rachel Maddow Show
- 06:00 Live MSNBC The Last Word With Lawrence O'Donnell
- 07:00 NBC Nightly News
- 07:30 ABC World News With David Muir
- 08:15 NBC Nightly News
- 08:18 ABC World News With David Muir
- 08:39 Live ABC Nightline
- 09:06 MSNBC The Rachel Maddow Show
- 10:00 MSNBC The Last Word With Lawrence O'Donnell
- 11:00 Live ABC World News Now
- 11:30 Live ABC World News Now
- 12:00 Live NBC Early Today
- 12:30 Live ABC America This Morning
- 13:00 Live ABC America This Morning
- 13:30 Live ABC America This Morning
- 14:00 Live ABC America This Morning
- 14:30 MSNBC First Look
- 15:00 Live NBC Today Show
- 18:57 MSNBC Hardball W/ Chris Matthews
- 19:38 MSNBC The Rachel Maddow Show
- 20:19 MSNBC The Last Word With Lawrence O'Donnell
- 21:00 Live MSNBC Live With Thomas Roberts
- 23:00 Live MSNBC Live With Kate Snow



- 00:00 Death Race
- 02:00 The Helpers
- 03:45 The Hulk
- 06:15 Guardians Of The Galaxy
- 08:30 The X Files
- 10:30 Age Of Dinosaurs
- 12:15 Rush Hour 2
- 14:00 The Marine 4: The Moving Target
- 15:45 Guardians Of The Galaxy
- 18:00 Abandoned Mine
- 19:45 The Perfect Storm
- 22:00 Snow White And The Huntsman



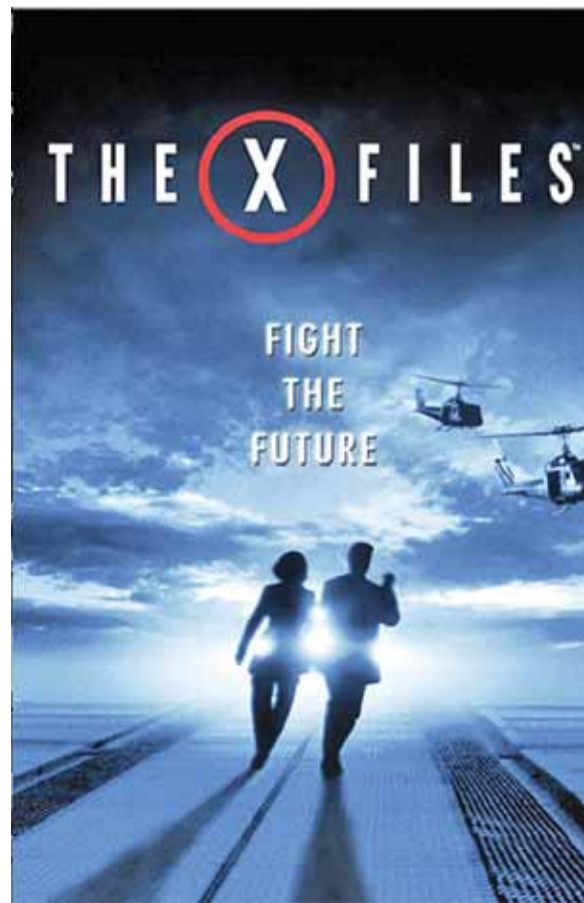
- 00:00 The Helpers
- 01:45 The Hulk
- 04:15 Guardians Of The Galaxy
- 06:30 The X Files
- 08:30 Age Of Dinosaurs
- 10:15 Rush Hour 2
- 12:00 The Marine 4: The Moving Target
- 13:45 Guardians Of The Galaxy
- 16:00 Abandoned Mine
- 17:45 The Perfect Storm
- 20:00 Snow White And The Huntsman
- 22:15 Kite



- 01:00 Yellow Rock
- 03:00 Every Day
- 05:00 Middle Of Nowhere
- 07:00 Second Coming
- 08:00 The Fold
- 11:00 Middle Of Nowhere
- 13:00 Shadow Witness
- 15:00 Two Men In Town
- 17:00 The Fold
- 19:00 A Long Way Down



- 00:10 Carnival Eats
- 00:35 Carnival Eats
- 01:00 Bangkok Airport
- 01:50 Valentine Warner Eats
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- 02:40 Eat Street
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- Scandinavia
- 08:05 Eat Street
- 08:30 Eat Street
- 08:55 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
- 09:45 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet



THE X FILES ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

- 00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 01:00 Chopped
- 02:00 All Star Academy
- 03:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin



- 00:00 Premier League Darts
- 03:30 Super League
- 05:30 Live ICC U-19 Cricket World Cup
- 14:00 Trans World Sport
- 15:00 NFL Gameday
- 15:30 Top 14 Highlights
- 16:00 Golfing World
- 17:00 NHL
- 19:00 Golfing World
- 20:00 PGA European Tour Highlights
- 21:00 Asian Tour Highlights
- 22:00 World Rugby HSBC Sevens Highlights
- 22:30 Gillette World Sport
- 23:00 Live PGA Tour



- 00:30 New Zealand v Australia ODI Highlights
- 01:30 HBL Pakistan Super League Highlights
- 02:00 ICC U-19 Cricket World Cup Highlights
- 03:00 HBL Pakistan Super League Highlights
- 03:30 ICC U-19 Cricket World Cup Highlights
- 04:30 ICC U-19 Cricket World Cup Highlights
- 05:30 Live ICC U-19 Cricket World Cup
- 14:00 HBL Pakistan Super League Highlights
- 14:25 Live HBL Pakistan Super League
- 18:00 ICC U-19 Cricket World Cup Highlights
- 18:55 Live HBL Pakistan Super League
- 22:30 HBL Pakistan Super League Highlights
- 23:00 ICC U-19 Cricket World Cup Highlights

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KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (11/02/2016 TO 17/02/2016)

SHARQIA-1	THE FINEST HOURS	1:00 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	5:30 PM
THE FINEST HOURS	1:00 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	5:30 PM	
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	1:30 PM	THE FINEST HOURS	7:30 PM	
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	3:30 PM	THE FINEST HOURS	10:00 PM	
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	5:30 PM	THE FINEST HOURS	12:30 AM	
THE FINEST HOURS	7:30 PM			
THE FINEST HOURS	10:00 PM			
THE FINEST HOURS	12:30 AM			
SHARQIA-2				
SHAKET DABOUS	11:45 AM			
SHAKET DABOUS	1:45 PM			
SHAKET DABOUS	3:45 PM			
SHAKET DABOUS	5:45 PM			
SHAKET DABOUS	7:45 PM			
SHAKET DABOUS	9:45 PM			
SHAKET DABOUS	11:45 PM			
SHARQIA-3				
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES	11:30 AM			
BROOKLYN	1:30 PM			
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES	3:45 PM			
BROOKLYN	6:00 PM			
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES	8:15 PM			
BROOKLYN	10:30 PM			
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES	12:45 AM			
MUHALAB-1				
THE FINEST HOURS	12:15 PM			
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	2:45 PM			
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	4:45 PM			
THE FINEST HOURS	6:45 PM			
THE FINEST HOURS	9:15 PM			
THE FINEST HOURS	11:45 PM			
MUHALAB-2				
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES	12:45 PM			
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES	3:00 PM			
BROOKLYN	5:15 PM			
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES	7:30 PM			
BROOKLYN	9:45 PM			
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES	12:05 AM			
MUHALAB-3				
SHAKET DABOUS	12:15 PM			
SHAKET DABOUS	2:15 PM			
SHAKET DABOUS	4:15 PM			
SHAKET DABOUS	6:15 PM			
SHAKET DABOUS	8:15 PM			
SHAKET DABOUS	10:15 PM			
SHAKET DABOUS	12:15 AM			
FANAR-1				
BROOKLYN	11:45 AM			
BROOKLYN	2:00 PM			
THE BENEFACOR	4:15 PM			
BROOKLYN	6:15 PM			
THE BENEFACOR	8:30 PM			
BROOKLYN	10:30 PM			
THE BENEFACOR	12:45 AM			
FANAR-2				
THE FINEST HOURS	1:00 PM			
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	1:30 PM			
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	3:30 PM			
FANAR-3				
FITTOOR - Hindi	11:45 AM			
THE DORAEMON MOVIE	2:30 PM			
THE DORAEMON MOVIE	4:30 PM			
FITTOOR - Hindi	6:30 PM			
FITTOOR - Hindi	9:15 PM			
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic	12:05 AM			
MARINA-1				
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES	11:30 AM			
BROOKLYN	1:30 PM			
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES	3:45 PM			
BROOKLYN	6:00 PM			
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES	8:15 PM			
BROOKLYN	10:30 PM			
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES	12:45 AM			
MARINA-2				
THE FINEST HOURS	12:30 PM			
THE FINEST HOURS	3:15 PM			
VERY BIG SHOT	5:45 PM			
VERY BIG SHOT	7:45 PM			
THE FINEST HOURS	9:45 PM			
THE FINEST HOURS	12:15 AM			
MARINA-3				
SHAKET DABOUS	12:00 PM			
SHAKET DABOUS	2:00 PM			
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	2:00 PM			
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	4:00 PM			
SHAKET DABOUS	6:00 PM			
SHAKET DABOUS	8:00 PM			
SHAKET DABOUS	10:00 PM			
SHAKET DABOUS	12:30 AM			
AVENUES-1				
FITTOOR - Hindi	11:30 AM			
FITTOOR - Hindi	2:30 PM			
FITTOOR - Hindi	5:30 PM			
FITTOOR - Hindi	8:30 PM			
THE REVENANT	11:30 PM			
AVENUES-2				
BROOKLYN	12:00 PM			
BROOKLYN	2:30 PM			
BROOKLYN	5:00 PM			
BROOKLYN	7:30 PM			
BROOKLYN	10:00 PM			
BROOKLYN	12:30 AM			
AVENUES-3				
SHAKET DABOUS	11:30 AM			
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES	1:30 PM			
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES	3:45 PM			
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES	6:00 PM			
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES	8:15 PM			
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES	10:30 PM			
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES	12:45 AM			

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, Ghallesster Valera De Jesus, Passport No. EC2905146. Petition for correction.

Place of birth Adan Hospital, Kuwait GHAL LESTER to GHALLESTER. (C 5132)
14-2-2016

I, Kaleel S/o Mohamed Mohideen, holder of Indian Passport No. G3449357, residing at No. 2 Samayana Sheik Mohamed Moopan Street, Melapalayam, Tirunelveli Dist., Pin- 627005, Tamilnadu. Shall henceforth be known as Kaleel Rahman. (C 5131)
11-2-2016

A reputed HVAC Company in Kuwait requires the following personnel:

- HVAC Technician (DX)
- HVAC Technician (Chiller)
- Driver cum Assistant Technician
- Air Balancing Technician

⇒ For positions 1 & 2, candidates should have Diploma in refrigeration & Air conditioning and minimum three years' experience.

⇒ For position 3, Candidates with valid Kuwait Driving License.

⇒ For Position 4, candidates should be able to read ducting drawings and familiar in using Air Balancing Test Equipment.

⇒ For all positions transferable residency (Article 18) is a must.

Apply immediately with complete bio-data, copies of certificates and passport details to:
Fax: +965 24767180, Email: hvac.cv2016@gmail.com

ACCOMMODATION

Sharing accommodation available in a C-AC flat for decent couple or working ladies at Jabriya, area 10, near Jabriya Indian school from 1st March 2016. Please contact: 99300513. (C 5130)
7-2-2016

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is 1889988

EMERGENCY 112

FOR SALE

OFFICE / SHOP SPACE IN ABBASSIYA

Contact: 66030651

Prayer timings

Fajr:	05:11
Shorook	06:31
Duhr:	12:02
Asr:	15:11
Maghrib:	17:34
Isha:	18:52



Flight Schedule

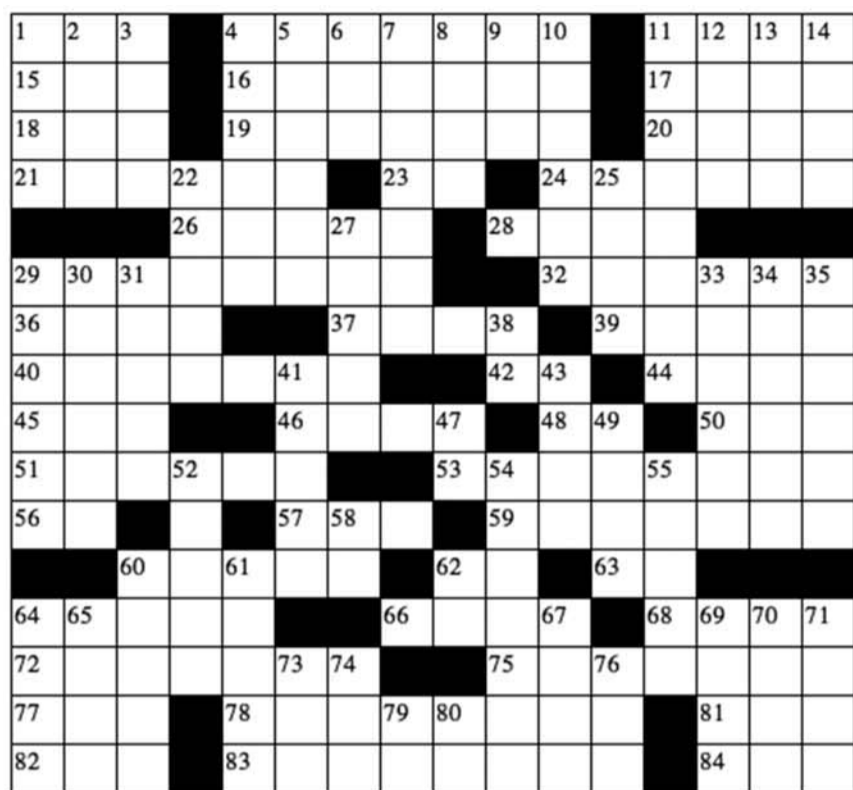
Arrival Flights on Sunday 14/2/2016				Departure Flights on Sunday 14/2/2016			
Airlines	Fit	Route	Time	Airlines	Fit	Route	Time
MSC	415	Sohag	00:05	AIC	988	Hyderabad/Chennai	00:05
JZR	239	Amman	00:25	FDB	072	Dubai	00:40
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	MSC	404	Asyut	00:55
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:55
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55	MSC	416	Sohag	01:00
RJA	642	Amman	01:05	THY	773	Istanbul	02:30
THY	772	Istanbul	01:05	DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:35
ETH	3402	Addis Ababa/Riyadh	01:30	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	02:45
DLH	635	Doha	01:35	ETH	3403	Addis Ababa	03:05
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45	KAC	381	Delhi	03:30
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00	UAE	854	Dubai	03:45
JZR	555	Alexandria	02:25	PGT	859	Istanbul	03:55
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30	OMA	644	Muscat	03:55
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	FDB	068	Dubai	04:00
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	MSR	613	Cairo	04:10
FDB	067	Dubai	03:05	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:15
MSR	612	Cairo	03:10	KKK	6508	Istanbul	04:20
CEB	7694	Manila	03:15	PGT	861	Istanbul	04:55
QTR	1076	Doha	03:15	QTR	1077	Doha	05:00
KKK	6507	Istanbul	03:20	LMU	511	Cairo	05:05
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:25	THY	765	Istanbul	05:15
KAC	544	Cairo	03:35	CEB	7695	Manila	05:20
LMU	510	Cairo	04:05	JZR	560	Sohag	06:10
PGT	860	Istanbul	04:15	FDB	070	Dubai	06:30
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:40	JZR	164	Dubai	06:55
THY	770	Istanbul	05:55	RJA	643	Amman	07:05
QTR	8511	Doha	06:10	THY	771	Istanbul	07:05
FDB	5061	Dubai	06:30	FDB	5062	Dubai	07:10
BAW	157	London	06:40	GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	07:20	QTR	8512	Doha	07:40
FDB	053	Dubai	07:25	FDB	054	Dubai	08:10
QTR	1086	Doha	07:40	QTR	1087	Doha	08:40
SVA	512	Riyadh	07:50	BAW	156	London	08:45
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50	SVA	513	Riyadh	08:50
OMA	641	Muscat	08:00	OMA	642	Muscat	08:55
KAC	354	BLR	08:15	KAC	171	Frankfurt	09:05
KAC	206	Islamabad	08:25	JZR	534	Cairo	09:15
KAC	352	Kochi	08:30	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:25
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	08:30	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40	KAC	541	Cairo	09:55
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:50	KAC	117	New York	09:55
KAC	362	Colombo	08:50	UAE	856	Dubai	09:55
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	KAC	561	Amman	10:00
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:10	KAC	671	Dubai	10:05
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:20	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:25
QTR	1070	Doha	09:25	KAC	501	Beirut	10:30
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	JZR	482	Istanbul	10:35
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:40	FDB	056	Dubai	10:35
IRC	528	Ahwaz	10:00	IRA	664	Shiraz	10:40
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	677	Abu Dhabi/Muscat	10:50
UAE	873	Dubai	11:05	QTR	1071	Doha	11:00
SYR	341	Damascus	11:25	IRC	529	Ahwaz	11:00
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:25
AGY	682	Asyut	11:40	JZR	776	Jeddah	12:20
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	SYR	342	Damascus	12:25
SAW	701	Damascus	12:20	KAC	103	London	12:25
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25	UAE	874	Dubai	12:30
JZR	561	Sohag	12:45	AGY	683	Alexandria	12:40
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	MEA	405	Beirut	12:55
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	KAC	785	Jeddah	13:00
KAC	382	Delhi	13:50	JZR	786	Riyadh	13:10
QTR	1078	Doha	14:10				
FDB	057	Dubai	14:10				

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

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

FDB	076	Dubai	13:10
KAC	791	Madinah	13:25
SAW	702	Damascus	13:35
JZR	176	Dubai	13:45
MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
FDB	058	Dubai	15:10
QTR	1079	Doha	15:10
AXB	394	Kozhikode	15:20
SVA	503	Madinah/Jeddah	15:45
GFA	222	Bahrain	15:45
KAC	617	Doha	15:45
KAC	773	Riyadh	15:50
KAC	741	Dammam	15:55
KNE	473	Jeddah	16:05

CROSSWORD 1168



ACROSS

- 1. Wild and domestic cattle.
4. Common black-and-gray Eurasian bird noted for thievery.
11. Minute floating marine tunicate having a transparent body with an opening at each end.
15. A drug combination found in some over-the-counter headache remedies (Aspirin and Phenacetin and Caffeine).
16. Brazilian tree with handsomely marked wood.
17. Humble request for help.
18. Relating to or characteristic of or occurring on the sea or ships.
19. Orange liqueur with lemon juice and brandy.
20. Any culture medium that uses agar as the gelling agent.
21. Food that is discarded (as from a kitchen).
23. A state in New England.
24. A harsh noise made by scraping.
26. Containing or made of or resembling or characteristic of a metal.
28. Exhibiting or restored to vigorous good health.
29. A great rani.
32. Used especially of timbers or boards.
36. Lie adjacent to another.
37. Cancel, annul, or reverse an action or its effect.
39. Used chiefly as a direction or description in music.
40. Arranged in or consisting of laminae.
42. 1/10 gram.
44. Quality of being active or spirited or vigorous.
45. A rapid bustling commotion.
46. A small cake leavened with yeast.
48. A public promotion of some product or service.
50. One of the five major classes of immunoglobulins.
51. United States writer of poems and plays about racial conflict (born in 1934).
53. Elder brother of Krishna.
57. In operation or operational.
58. An enclosed space.
59. (Arthurian legend) The most virtuous knight of the Round Table.
63. A Russian river.
64. Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.
66. Prepare for a military confrontation.
68. Informal or slang terms for mentally irregular.
72. Tall feather palm of northern Brazil with hard-shelled nuts yielding valuable oil and a kind of vegetable ivory.
75. United States composer and rockabilly tenor popular in the 1950s (1936-1988).
77. An extension at the end and at right angles to the main building.
78. Small genus of usually perennial herbs having deep woody taproots and flower heads of umbels or cymes.
81. The corporate executive responsible for the operations of the firm.
82. Towards the side away from the wind.
83. Ethiopian is a republic in northeastern Africa on the Red Sea.
84. An ugly evil-looking old woman.

DOWN

- 1. Having or denoting a low vocal or instrumental range.
2. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
3. A mark left by the healing of injured tissue.
4. An opaque form of quartz.
5. Bristlelike process near the tip of the antenna of certain flies.
6. Someone who is morally reprehensible.
7. Citadel of Moscow, housing the offices of the Russian government.
8. Small cubes with 1 to 6 spots on the faces.
9. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
10. The capital and largest city of Poland.
11. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
12. Primitive chlorophyll-containing mainly aquatic eukaryotic organisms lacking true stems and roots and leaves.
13. A light springing movement upwards or forwards.
14. Decrease gradually or bit by bit.
22. Italian violin maker in Cremona.
25. A sudden very loud noise.
27. Frogs, toads, tree toads.
30. A port city in southwestern Iran.
31. A message whose ingenuity or verbal skill or incongruity has the power to evoke laughter.
33. A person who is rejected (from society or home).
34. Something that baffles understanding and cannot be explained.
35. Something whose name is either forgotten or not known.
38. A doctor's degree in optometry.
41. Lower in esteem.
43. Offering fun and gaiety.
47. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
49. Herb of the Pacific islands grown throughout the tropics for its edible root and in temperate areas as an ornamental for its large glossy leaves.
52. Any property detected by the olfactory system.
54. Form a group or group together.
55. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation.
58. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
60. A telegram sent abroad.
61. Improperly forward or bold.
62. The branch of computer science that deal with writing computer programs that can solve problems creatively.
65. A strong wind moving 45-90 knots.
67. The nest of a squirrel.
69. United States writer (born in Poland) who wrote in Yiddish (1880-1957).
70. 100 toea equal 1 kina.
71. Cuddling and kissing.
73. A health resort near a spring or at the sea-side.
74. The address of a web page on the world wide web.
76. The cry made by sheep.
79. A highly unstable radioactive element (the heaviest of the halogen series).
80. Functioning correctly and ready for action.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

A new person at your work or school seems to be lonely and you might call and chat with this person and find something that you have in common. You can introduce this person to a few people and perhaps be the instrument of helpfulness and peace. An emphasis on ideas of fairness and harmony is part of the mental cycle you have just begun. The intellectual and communicative talents of those close to you take on a greater importance; any shortcomings of this kind stick out like a sore thumb. Intensity rules! Colors are brighter, images sharper, music more moving. Parts of the day that are not spent with your friends will more than likely be spent with a creative project-measuring and sculpturing may be part of this.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

A friend may need your help today. You may be called upon to lend a helping hand. This could mean that someone is moving or is ill and may need a bit of help-cooked meal, hot tea, a listening ear or a pat on the back. Being in touch with ideas and people on a large scale keeps your mind busy most days, particularly this afternoon. Broadening your intellectual and spiritual horizons takes on a high priority. You are intent on seeing the big picture and having a good understanding of whatever comes before you. You may decide that working for a travel agency or airlines will help you meet your requirements to travel. A revision in your resume or perhaps your education may help you move in whatever direction you desire.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Indulge your curiosity because today your creativity is at its best. New ideas are easily understood and bring interesting and exciting rewards. Make the most of this exciting day. Close relationships have a big impact on your life: old ones will be transformed or perhaps even ended; new ones will come on like gangbusters. A partner has a mesmerizing impact on you... Very compelling, perhaps too much so. Higher education, publishing, broadcasting or advertising could play an unexpected role in setting new directions. You may find yourself in some sort of class offered by the community schools or library with regard to publishing. When you feel that you could defend your love to the maximum-you will know you are in love-careful.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Some kind of healing process is at work in your life: you isolate what doesn't work, eliminate it and move forward. You are deeply sensitive to the needs of others and you work well with people of all ages. If you are a salesperson, you will be able to double the usual quota for most sales teams, particularly today! The few difficulties you may run across today just add to your ability to find answers. Challenges are helpful in building character and you appreciate whatever comes across your desk. You may work in the same town where you grew up and as a result, some of your clientele turn out to be people you have known for a while. This is fortunate though because you can be quite helpful in making purchasing suggestions.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

There could be guests in your house this weekend and they may tend to overstay their welcome. It's a time of refinement and tact, of an urge to please others that is so strong as to make it hard to decide or act for fear of offending someone. You will quickly learn to balance this out, or you will discover that there is no peace in compromise-and this can be tough on close relationships. The trick is to find the win-win solution-if anyone is ever up to it, you are now. You could come up with new solutions or inventions today. You demonstrate a good understanding of others and are in a good position to communicate concerning groups and society in general. Politics is something you might consider in your future. This evening is a great time for romance.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You could be working today. Motivation and ego combine to help you achieve your ambitions; full speed ahead. There is plenty of work and you are up for it; however, you may not make it home in time for dinner. Transformation is the word for today. This is in your private life as well as your professional life. You will find the need to reorganize the way you work with other people. Perhaps this means a new computer, phone or computer software. New approaches to health, diet and exercise can change your life as well-a new health-consciousness comes into play. Unfinished emotional issues may need a little attention this evening. It may be easier to look at the negative just now but compromise could bring positive results-try it.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You may find yourself teaching young people about discipline today. Whatever you put into motion now is bound to lead to success down the road. A larger vision comes when you think of the world in the hands of the next generation. Take time to enjoy the little things today. Take a stroll, talk to a friend and enjoy listening to music. Family and security are things that rattle your chain more than ever now. These are the things you want to help others build upon-a good foundation. Your passion is catching and your words help others to understand more about the importance of a strong family unit. These are areas where you make new beginnings. New ideas are surfacing that will help bring in a little extra income; keep notes. Enjoy your talents.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

It is a good time to assess what changes or improvements you would like to make in your life, particularly through helping others. You may be given a few challenges today-emotional and physical. Go for it! Your physical energy is at a high and your batting average at turning the negative into a positive is at a high. Obviously, you are optimistic and when you sense a friend or relative is frustrated with some difficulty, you know the right questions to ask. Use your insight to help this individual get to his or her truth; results are not what you think. With unrelenting perseverance, you bring home several ideas for improvements in your family's living condition. Surprisingly, when you communicate in this way, you find willing helpmates.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Whatever feelings underscore your life at this time... Will be felt more strongly. A casual time with your breakfast and the newspaper gives you some updates into the current events in your city. Do not ignore the unexpected things that present themselves later this morning. If you push the unexpected away, you could set yourself up for disruptions you cannot control. The key word here is control-and you have it just now. Close relationships will be what makes up the afternoon. This could be a time when you and your friends gather to play a trivia, board or card game. Breaking for the pizza delivery driver, you and your friends enjoy fun conversations, remembered jokes and ideas for future gatherings. A bit of gambling could be fun this evening.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

This morning affords you the opportunity to calculate and plan. Your head makes better decisions than your emotional feeling; knowing this, you may put your ideas down on paper. Check the calendar each day and make sure you have all the dates listed for the times you want to celebrate someone's birthday or holiday. Where your head goes, the quality of your life goes. Being frivolous with your life is often the way that youth navigates. You, however, regardless of your age, have the highest intention of achieving early retirement, a comfortable home and physical and mental challenges for which to aim. You feel generous toward your loved ones and this will reflect back on you in positive ways. News from longtime friends brings smiles.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Involvement with a particular group enhances your sense of purpose. This could all involve the workplace, but more than likely it will be a volunteer request that you have willingly rushed to fill. You can demonstrate great understanding to the needs of others and you are in a good position to be most helpful to this group. You could truly make the world a better place to live! You love people and any excuse for a get-together to make new friends is welcomed. You feel especially close to your loved ones and your desire to nurture and protect them is strong-just don't overdo it; you could be moving in too many different directions at once. Tonight is for friends and chatting about pleasant memories. Enjoy the celebrations.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

After a week of juggling projects at work, you may decide not to involve yourself with anything difficult in the home this weekend. You may choose to do the things you really enjoy instead of the regular duties and chores. This may include cooking, painting, reading, learning more about a musical instrument, shopping over the internet or sleeping half the day. You are attracted to people that are very creative and perhaps athletic as well. This afternoon you may feel more like enjoying the company of friends. There are stories to tell and jokes to share. You love to travel and may decide to gather ideas on your next adventure. You have a clear vision into your own inner sense of values, how you appreciate and love. This evening-relax.

WORD SEARCH

SCUBA Diving

Find and circle all of the SCUBA Diving words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the meaning of the letters of SCUBA.

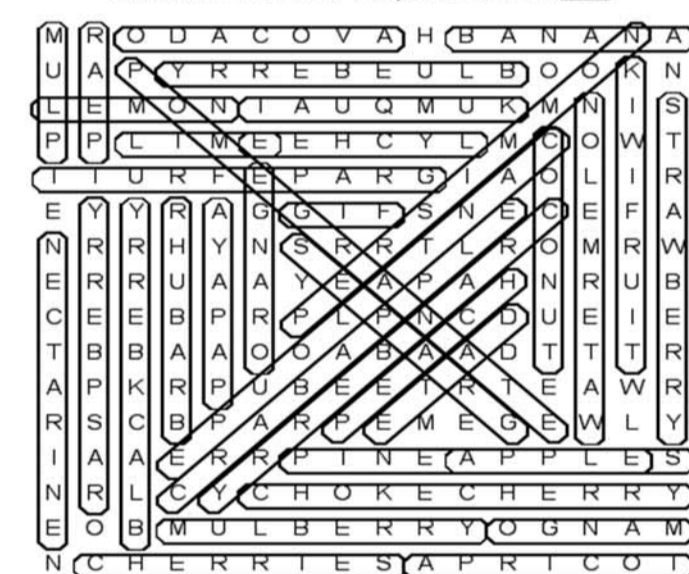


- AIR PRESSURE, ALTITUDE DIVING, ANOXIA, ATMOSPHERE, BAROTRAUMA, BOOTS, BOUNCE DIVE, BUBBLES, BUDY SYSTEM, BUOYANCY, C CARD, COMPASS, COMPRESSOR, CORAL REEF, CURRENT, DECOMPRESSION, DEPTH GAUGE, DIVE COMPUTER, DIVE FLAG, DIVE MARSHAL, DRY SUIT, EDDY, EMBOLISM, GAS CYLINDER, GAS MIXTURE, GIANT STRIDE, HELIOX, HOSE, HYPOTHERMIA, LEeward, LUNGS, MASK, MEMBRANE, MOUTHPIECE, NARCOSIS, NEOPRENE, NITROGEN, OASIS, OCEAN, OXYGEN, PANIC, REBREATHER, RECOMPRESSION, REGULATOR, SCOOTER, SEA LEVEL, SHEARS, SHOAL, SILICONE, SNORKEL, SPEAR GUN, STROBE, SWIM FINS, SWIMMING, TANK, THE BENDS, TIDE, TOXICITY, TRIMIX, UNDERSEA, UNDERSUIT, UNDERTOW, VALVE, VISION, VOLUME, WATER, WEIGHT BELT, WEIGHS, WEISUIT, WINDWARD

Yesterday Solution

Fruit

This is the solution to the puzzle located here.



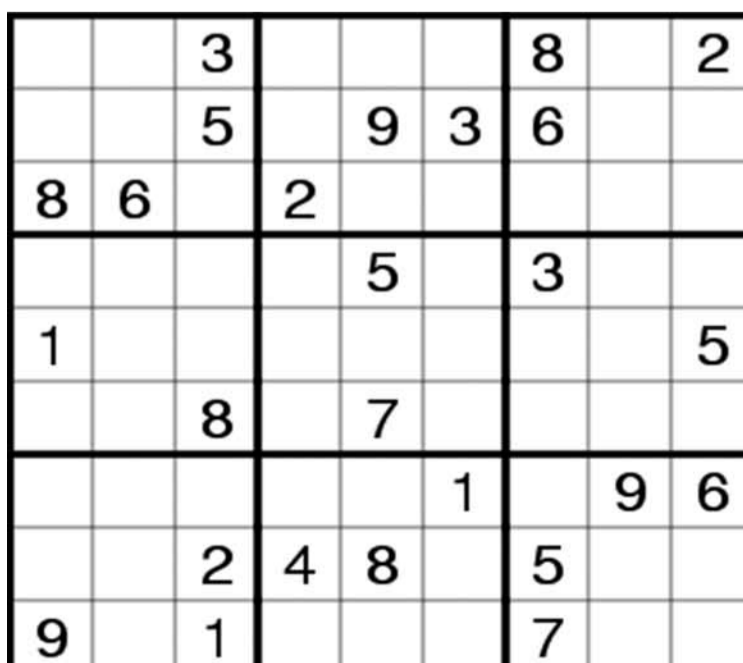
- APPLES, APRICOT, AVOCADO, BANANA, BLACKBERRY, BLUEBERRY, CANTALOUPE, CHERRIES, CHOKEYCHERRY, COCONUT, CRABAPPLE, CRANBERRY, DATE, FIG, GRAPEFRUIT, GRAPES, KIWIFRUIT, KUMQUAT, LEMON, LIME, LYCHEE, MANGO, MULBERRY, NECTARINE, ORANGE, PAPAYA, PEACH, PEAR, PERSIMMON, PINEAPPLE, PLUM, POMEGRANATE, RASPBERRY, RHUBARB, STRAWBERRY, WATERMELON

The hidden message is: HONEYDEW MELON

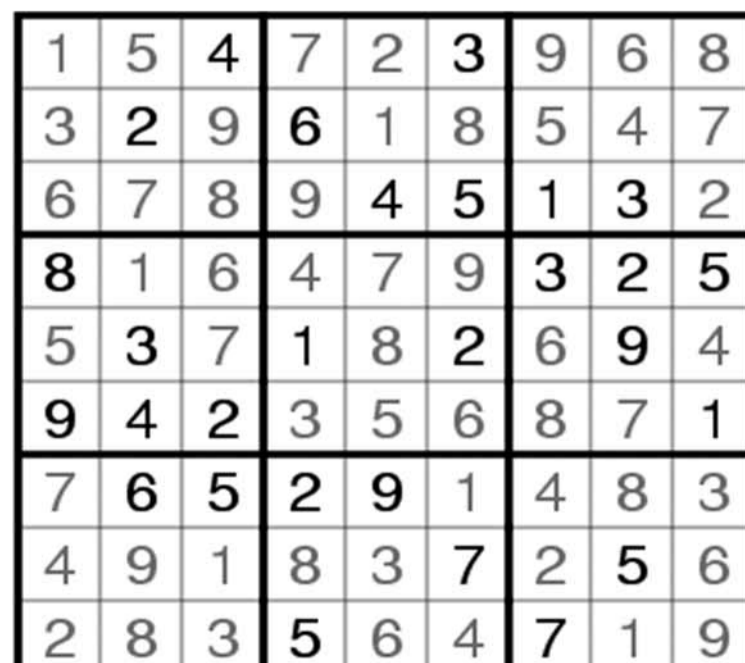
Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



For labor-related inquiries and complaints:
Call MSAL hotline 128

Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khalidiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
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 Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	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	0060
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	Nigar	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

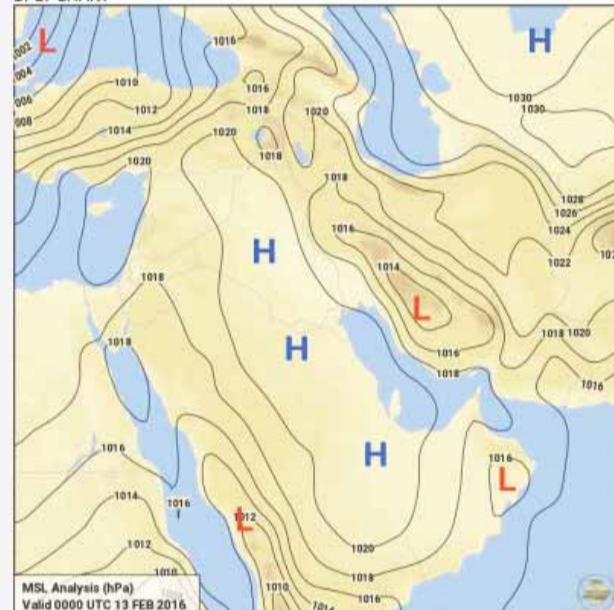
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 13/02/2016-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 22 °C

By Day : Sunny with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 12 - 38 km/h
By Night : Cold with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 28 km/h and some high clouds will appear later on

SFC. CHART



Four-Day Forecast

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Expected Weather				
Min Temp °C	07	09	09	10
Max Temp °C	24	26	25	26
Wind Direction	north westerly to light variable later on	north westerly	north westerly to light variable later on	north easterly to light variable
Wind Speed km/h	08 - 28	10 - 32	08 - 32	06 - 26

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	13		20	
KUWAIT AIRPORT	07		22	
ABDALY	08		20	
BUBYAN	08		20	
JAHRA	10		21	
FAILAKA ISLAND	10		20	
SALMIYAH	13		18	
AHMADI	11		19	
JAL ALIYAH	08		19	
QAROH ISLAND	15		18	
UMM AL-MARADEM	14		18	
NUWAISIB	09		21	
WAFRA	09		21	
MANAGISH	07		19	
SALMY	06		18	
MUTRIBA	07		20	

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	20
Min Temp (°C)	05
Max Rel Hum (%)	84
Min Rel Hum (%)	20
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	46 NW
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm

	Sunrise	06:28
	Sunset	17:36

Prayer Times

Fajr	05:08
Sunrise	06:28
Zuhr	12:02
Asr	15:12
Sunset	17:36
Isha	18:53



PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists	
Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223
Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	2455050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammed Al-Daory	25731988
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426
General Practitioners	
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi	2455050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaezem	22636920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abdallah Al-Rafea	25333501
Urologists	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abdallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

Plastic Surgeons	
Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	22547272
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	22617700
Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60
Family Doctor	
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581
Psychiatrists	
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047
Dr Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0
Gynaecologists & Obstetricians	
Dr Adrian arbe	23729596/23729581
Dr. Verginia s.Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliyami	25343406
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272
Dr. Salem soso	22618787
General Surgeons	
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148
Internists, Chest & Heart	
Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446
Dr Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3

Paediatricians	
Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maarroof	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gujare	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282
Dermatology	
Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University	23845955
Dentists	
Dr Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abdallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abdallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111
Neurologists	
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875
Gastrologists	
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abdallah Al-Ali	22633135

Endocrinologist	
Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330
Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari	25658888
Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr	25329924
Physiotherapists & VD	
Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees	22666288
Rheumatologists:	
Dr. Adel Al-Awadi	25330060
Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290
Internist, Chest & Heart	
DR.Mohammes Akkad	2455050 Ext 210
Consultant Cardiologist	
Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	25339667
Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC	2611555-2622555
Inaya German Medical Center	Te: 2575077 Fax: 25723123

Gossip



Barry Manilow is out of surgery and is doing well

The 'Copacabana' hitmaker was rushed to Los Angeles to undergo emergency surgery after previous complications following an oral operation but is recovering now. A post on his official Facebook reads: "Barry is out of surgery and doing well. His Doctors report that the surgery was successful and they expect no further complications. For the next forty eight hours, Manilow has been instructed not to talk, sing, or rap. Barry thanks everyone for their well wishes and concern." Meanwhile, health fears were first sparked for the 72-year-old singer when it emerged he had cancelled two performances to fly back to Los Angeles. A previous statement read:

"Following a triumphant sold out concert in Memphis, Barry Manilow was rushed back to Los Angeles due to complications from emergency oral surgery that Manilow had on Monday. "Manilow's concerts are being re-scheduled with new dates to be announced shortly. Ticket holders should retain their existing tickets for redemption on the night of the new date." It is still unknown whether Barry will attend the Grammy Awards.

Ritchie 'repairing the damage' Madonna has done to their son

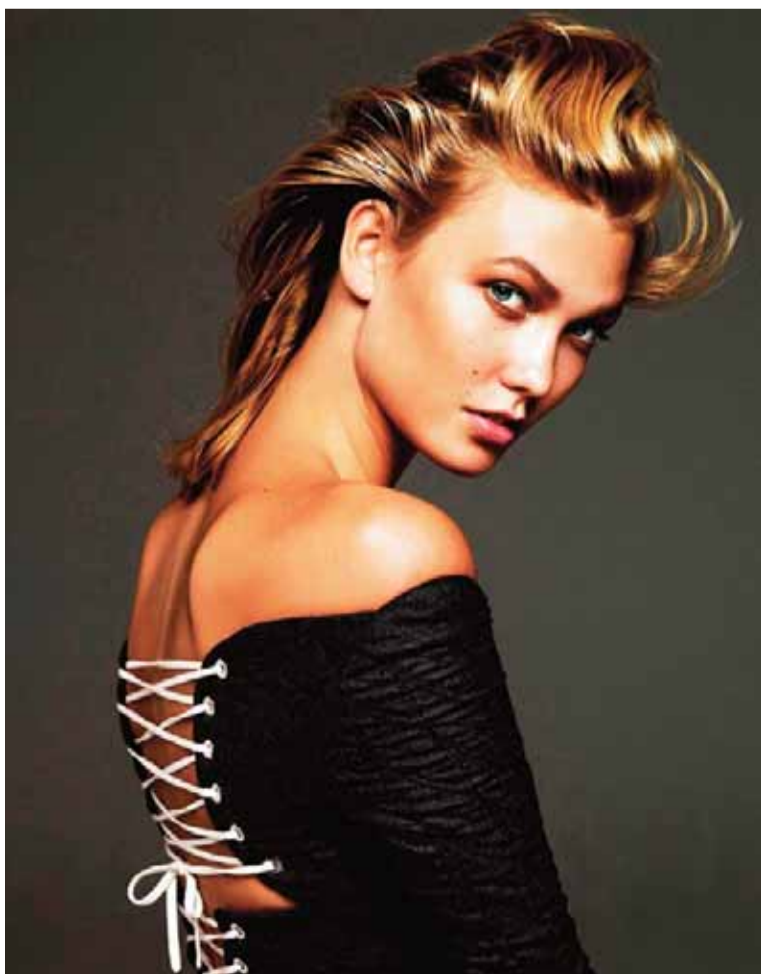
The 'Man from U.N.C.L.E.' star is reportedly keeping a "watchful eye" over his 15-year-old son Rocco as they all prepare for the custody hearing next month. A source told The Sun newspaper: "Guy wants to wait until Rocco's future is decided before making any plans for his schooling. He feels he is repairing the damage done to Rocco through being on tour with his mother last year and is in fact keeping a watchful eye over his son. "Rocco and Lourdes have always been close and he finds it hard to live with his mother without her there." Meanwhile, the 57-year-old singer previously took to Instagram to defend her parenting skills. Captioning a photo of her children - including

David, 10, and Mercy, nine - she wrote: "It's possible to be an entertainer and a good mother!!! Too bad we don't live in a society where many encourage strong independent single working moms! The next great Frontier! #revolutionoflove continues #rebelheart4ever." And the 'Living for Love' hitmaker is planning to "fight to the end" for custody. A source said at the time: "She is going to fight, fight, fight, and she is going to fight to the end. She is not happy. She is an excellent mother, and people can say whatever they want - but her children mean the world to her."



Kimberley Walsh wants another baby

The former Girls Aloud singer is keen for her and new husband Justin Scott - who has a daughter, Chloe, 16, from a previous relationship - to give their 16-month-old son Bobby a younger sibling soon. She said: "I definitely want more children... "Bobby is so sociable, he loves other kids so he'd definitely enjoy it. "For him to grow up with a sibling close in age to him would be lovely, so yes fingers crossed." And Kimberley even claims Bobby has been hinting at wanting a new baby in the family. She said: "Bobby has started rocking his arms like a cradle and saying, 'Baaaaybee.'" However, Justin insists the gesture has been prompted by his wife. He laughed to Britain's HELLO! magazine: "Only because you've taught him to. She prompts him, saying, 'Wouldn't you like a little baby to hold.'" Kimberley's best friend, Cheryl Fernandez-Versini would be thrilled if the couple do have another child. She said: "Kimberley and Justin are a team and all I hope now is that their love, friendship - and team - continues to grow if you know what I mean. Hint, hint."



Perry has invited Taylor Swift to her Grammys party



Although the pair's feud was first revealed in 2014, with reports that Taylor's 'Bad Blood' was inspired by her rivalry with Katy, the 'Firework' hitmaker has asked Taylor to attend her Spotify party in Los Angeles. Revealing that she has also invited Adele, who like Taylor has withheld her music from Spotify's streaming service, Katy said: "It's just up to their schedules." Katy also revealed that her party, which she referred to as the "Met Ball of music", is only for "creators" and no managers, journalists or publicists are allowed. She told the New York Times: "They are not creators. They're important to the creation, but it's only artists, producers and songwriters. There's a press opportunity in the front, like a red carpet, but if you want to be more low-key you can

arrive via garage. I'm trying to keep it as pure as possible because in the eight years that I've been going to these things, I am just always so exhausted. "You have to be a creator - it's artists, producers and songwriters. And it's a mixture of new and familiar artists, a combination of the past two years' Grammy nominees and also [acts] from the Spotify Discover playlist. It's Kacey Musgraves, Karen O, Miguel, Tove Lo, Shirley Manson, Max Martin. Then up-and-coming songwriters like Blood Pop and Bonnie McKee all under the same roof as Diane Warren. In some ways, I'm trying to start the Met Ball of music."

Lawrence has donated \$2 million to a children's hospital

The 'Hunger Games' actress' foundation has gifted the large sum to the Kosair Children's Hospital in her native Kentucky in order to establish the Jennifer Lawrence Foundation Cardiac Intensive Care Unit. In a video message announcing her donation, she said: "As part of my effort to help these children and caregivers, I challenge the entire community to get behind this cause and help match my gift by raising an additional \$2 million to support all of these brave and inspiring children." During a trip home for Christmas, Jennifer delighted the patients by visiting the hospital. Veronica Tracie, whose daughter Bria, met Jennifer during the visit, said: "She was very sweet, genuine, and I could sense the beauty of her soul. You know how some people just light up the room, or you just feel comfortable in their presence." She stopped by the same hospital during Christmas 2014 too and also took a break from filming 'X-Men: Apocalypse' in Montreal, Canada, in August to spend time with the patients at Shriners Hospital for Children. Shriners Hospital wrote on Facebook: "A very special visitor stopped by our Canada hospital today. Jennifer Lawrence is in Montreal filming a new movie and she made time to visit some of our #?ShrinersCanada kids and staff. Everyone had a great time!"



Karlie Kloss has a digital detox every week

The 23-year-old model - who has been dating digital entrepreneur Joshua Kushner for four years - thinks it is very important to "totally shut off" from technology on a regular basis in order to connect with both herself and those around her. She said: "I will totally shut off and not post Instagrams or answer my emails. I think it's important to step away for a minute and actually reconnect with people and reconnect with yourself. "We live at a very fast pace and sometimes you can lose priorities and perspectives." But Karlie insists she and Joshua don't have a 'no phones in the bedroom' rule. She said: "I keep my phone pretty close to me." Despite being a prolific user of social media, Karlie insists she is "kind of old-fashioned" in her choice of communication methods as she would rather interact face-to-face. She told Britain's ELLE magazine: "I prefer to sit and have a conversation and feel present. As transformative and wonderful as technology is, at times I think being so absorbed in these online personas can make it hard to exist in the actual moment."



Waleed Al-Shami



A look at **Febbrayer Al Kuwait festival** weekend concerts



By Nawara Fattahova

The first musical concert of the Febbrayer Al Kuwait 2016 Festival organized by Rotana was held on Thursday night at Crowne Plaza Hotel. This is the first time the festival held such a concert in a hotel, and it was great challenge, especially when it came to arranging parking spaces for the 1,500 attendees.

The first concert commenced with young Kuwaiti singer Mutref Al-Mutref. He played mainly on an oud (lute), which his father, the popular late singer Yousef Al-Mutref, was known for. He sang one of his songs along with a song of Kuwaiti veteran singer Abdulkareem Abdulkader. The organizers prepared a surprise for him, which was a video recording of Abdulkader thanking Mutref for singing his song.

The second star of this concert was the Iraqi singer Waleed Al-Shami. By this time, the theatre was completely full. This came as no surprise as the tickets for this concert were sold out a week in advance. Shami was warmly welcomed by the huge audience, who were singing his songs.

This concert concluded with popular Saudi singer Rabih Saqer. Saudis made up about half of the attendees, if not more. Saqer started his career in 1982 when he released his first album. With the boom of satellite channels in the 1990s, he became popular outside the kingdom and today he has a huge number of fans.

The second concert was held on Friday on the same stage but with a reduced lineup of only two singers. At 10:25 pm, popular Egyptian singer Angham came on stage to deny rumors spread on social media about her being arrested by local police on arrival. There was another rumor about her trying to flee the country due to a case filed against her by her stepmother for not allowing her ex-husband, who is a Kuwaiti composer, to see his son. She welcomed her fans and expressed her great honor and happiness to be singing in Kuwait.

When she came on stage, just about the half of the theatre was full, and people were still coming in. Yet many of her fans were shouting for songs they wanted her to sing. She started her career in the early 1980s and has released many albums since. She has performed in Kuwait many times in the past.

At 12:55 am, the long-awaited veteran and oldest Saudi singer Mohammed Abdu came on stage. Although most of the audience stood up for him when he came on stage, he only welcomed them by waving by hand and didn't say a word. He directly started singing, and his first song was more than 15 minutes long. Angham then came on stage and sang a song with him. Abdu is known as 'The Singer of Arabs' due to his popularity. He started his career in 1961 when he was still in school. He concluded at 3:30 am.



Mutref Al-Mutref



Rabih Saqer



Angham



Mohammed Abdu



Eagles of Death Metal return to Paris

As Eagles of Death Metal return to Paris tomorrow to finish their fateful November rock concert that ended with jihadi gunmen killing 90 of their fans, survivors are torn over whether to go to the gig. Many fans who lived through the carnage will be there, including some still being treated for their injuries. But one told AFP he was unsure if he could bear to go, even though he has tickets to see the American band.

"I want to go," said Guillaume Munier, who escaped the gunmen with a friend by hiding in a tiny upstairs toilet for two hours. "I'm going to at least go to the Olympia, but I really don't know if I'll be able to go inside," he added. "I don't know if I'll have the strength."

Another survivor, Helene, said she is not at all worried and hopes it will help bring her closure. "It will allow me to finish the concert," she said, referring to the fateful gig at the Bataclan on November 13. Jihadists killed 130 people and injured hundreds more in a series of coordinated gun and suicide bomb attacks across Paris that night. Most died at the Bataclan after the Californian band had begun their set.

'We could hear them'

Munier, 29, will never forget the moment when the gunmen came in shooting at he and a friend stood on the balcony watching the band play. "When the shooting started, we looked for a way out," he said. "We started down the stairs but then we saw that people were falling below so we ran back upstairs. I couldn't see an exit there, so I thought we should go on the roof but I couldn't find a way to get there either," he added. "Then as I was running around, I happened upon the bathrooms—they were too small to be toilets for the public so they must have been for the employees."

Munier and his friend wedged themselves inside and turned off the lights. In the toilet next to them was a father and his son, he said. They stayed there for the next two hours until they were rescued by a French SWAT team. "My only fear was that they would open the door," Munier said. "We could hear them as they walked in front of us, but they never shot directly at the doors. We knew they would be looking for survivors to shoot so we told ourselves to stay put," he said. "We're lucky we did because when we were rescued, we saw bodies in front of the doors."

'I won't risk fainting'

Munier, a radio producer, had been at the Bataclan for gigs many times before. But it was the first time he had seen Eagles of Death Metal, one of his favorite bands. Although he has been able to go out to bars and restaurants with friends, he is still worried about being confined in one room with thousands of people.

The attack has left him fearing loud noises, and now, wherever he goes, he looks to make sure he can see an exit. "The Olympia will be my first concert since the Bataclan, if I am able to go," Munier said. "At the same time, the goal is to go so that I can go back to my life. I like the symbolism of going but I will not risk fainting just to say I was there. It's not about whether we go or don't go—it's not going to lessen the tribute we pay to the victims," he insisted. "They'll be a lot of people who won't go to the concert because it'll be too soon," Munier added. "And they'll be others who will never be ready. Everybody has to go at their own pace," he said. — AFP



This file photo taken on Nov 13, 2015 shows US rock group Eagles of Death Metal performing onstage on Nov 13, 2015 at the Bataclan concert hall in Paris, a few moments before four men armed with assault rifles stormed into the venue. — AFP



This image released by Twentieth Century Fox shows Ryan Reynolds in a scene from the film, "Deadpool." (Joe Lederer/Twentieth Century Fox Film Corp. — AP)

'Deadpool' heading for massive \$100m holiday weekend

Ryan Reynolds' "Deadpool" is heading into record territory with \$100 million at the US box office over the Presidents' Day weekend, topping the record set by "Fifty Shades of Grey." Estimates showed an opening day of \$35 million on Friday, which includes \$12.7 million from Thursday night screenings that set a record for an R-rated film. Fox's "Deadpool," a comic book adaptation about a wise-cracking mercenary, topped the consensus forecast of \$70 million over the four-day weekend at 3,558 locations. Fox had been pegging a debut between \$60 million and \$65 million.

"Deadpool" should set the record for the biggest Presidents' Weekend launch in history, eclipsing "Fifty Shades of Grey's" \$93 million debut a year ago, which was also timed to Valentine's Day. Fox produced the movie under its licensing deal with Marvel Enterprises, which allows it to use the X-Men characters. The studio has run what appears to be a masterful marketing campaign starting last summer at Comic-Con and stressing the humor delivered by the profanely profane superhero-whose key power is the ability to recover quickly from injuries.

Ironic taglines such as "Wait Til You Get a Load of Me" proliferated. The film, directed by Tim Miller with a modest \$58 million budget, also stars Morena Baccarin, Ed Skrein, TJ Miller and Gina Carano. "Deadpool" represents a major redemption for Reynolds, who had campaigned for years to get the film made—even after his "Green Lantern" superhero movie underperformed in 2011. Critics have shown plenty of affection for "Deadpool" with an impressive 84% rating on Rotten Tomatoes.

"Deadpool" looks to be a money-maker for Fox already. It generated a solid \$14 million in seven international markets in its first two days of screenings. Two other new comedies are expected to finish the four days in the \$20 million to \$25 million range—Paramount's "Zoolander 2," which brings back Ben Stiller as Derek Zoolander 15 years after the original at 3,394 locations, and New Line-MGM's "How to Be Single," starring Dakota Johnson and Rebel Wilson, across 3,343 theaters. — Reuters

Death penalty on trial at Berlin Film fest

Is it possible to discuss an emotive topic like the death penalty with both passion and reason? Steve Coogan hopes so. The British actor-comedian plays a lawyer battling to keep his client from the gallows in Berlin

Film Festival entry "Shepherds and Butchers," set in South Africa in the last years of apartheid. Adding to the ethical complexity, the defendant is a white death-row prison guard, who has killed seven black men in an apparent road rage incident. Coogan says director Oliver Schmitz's film, which has its world premiere at the festival on Saturday, is "a powerful indictment of capital punishment" but not "sanctimonious or preachy."

"No one is demonized in this film, apart from the system itself," Coogan said over the phone from New York, where he's filming taut domestic drama "The Dinner" alongside Laura Linney and Richard Gere. "It's about the brutalizing effect on those who carry out executions and the dehumanizing effect on all those involved."

There's no doubt where Coogan stands on the issue; he thinks capital punishment is "repellent and morally objectionable." But he said Schmitz's film, which also stars Andrea Riseborough and young South African actor Garion Dowds, approaches the topic without "hand-wringing or pious pontification."

"The film is very honest in its presentation of literally what happens, and sometimes it's hard to watch," Coogan said. "It's a literal representation of the minutiae of what happens when the state kills people. It lets the actions do the talking for themselves."

Chance to get serious

Like many comedians, 50-year-old Coogan relishes the chance to get serious. He has worked hard to expand his career beyond

its comic origins - a particularly difficult task in Britain, where his best-known creation, pompous radio personality Alan Partridge, is a comedy icon. He has given his comic skills free rein in road series "The Trip" and "The Trip to Italy," in which he drives, eats and banters with Welsh comedian Rob Brydon.

But he also co-wrote and helped produce 2013 feature "Philomena," in which he starred alongside Judi Dench as a jaded journalist who helps an Irishwoman search for the son taken from her decades earlier by Catholic church officials. The film, based on an actual case, was nominated for four Oscars, including best picture.

"I think a film is interesting if the subject matter is divisive or has some tension within it," Coogan said. "If you try to make films all things to all men you end up with some kind of nondescript soup, which may tick all the boxes in terms of the bottom line, but I don't think it makes for very interesting art. "With 'Philomena,' one of the most gratifying things about it was that people left the theatre talking animatedly about forgiveness and whether it was appropriate. To provoke discussion is a good thing."

Coogan will soon return to comedy, playing Stan Laurel alongside John C. Reilly's Oliver Hardy in a BBC movie about the slapstick duo. He says the story is set "after their fame, in the autumn of their lives." The actor says he feels well equipped to play Laurel, another northern English funnyman made good in America. "I've just got to lose a few pounds," he said - and Reilly may have to gain a few. "He can have my lunch," Coogan said. — AP



In this Saturday, Aug 31, 2013 file photo, British actor-comedian Steve Coogan poses for photographers during a photo call to promote the film Philomena at the 70th edition of the Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy. — AP



Gaga readies experimental Grammy tribute to Bowie

Lady Gaga is promising a technologically ambitious, "multisensory" David Bowie tribute at the Grammy Awards she hopes will befit the famously experimental rock legend. The music industry's biggest night takes place today barely a month after the shocking death of Bowie, who over his half-century career became one of the most influential figures in pop culture.

Lady Gaga, known for her brash outfits and sexual openness, is among the contemporary artists who is most obviously inspired by Bowie, the pioneer of glam rock. Grammy producers have raised expectations for Lady Gaga's tribute, saying it will be groundbreaking. "I don't know that we've ever done anything quite as elaborate as this," said Eric Cook, the supervising producer of the Grammys. "This is obviously an ambitious performance and we're all really excited about it," he said in a video preview.

Chip-maker Intel said it developed effects for the performance at the Grammys, which will be broadcast live from Los Angeles. "We've used technology to almost be an extension of Gaga. As she moves, the environment around her is responding to her, and that's because of the real-time technologies that we've incorporated into it," said Paul Tapp, Intel's director of technology.

The Recording Academy, which stages the awards, said in a statement that Lady Gaga would offer "a multisensory testament to the icon's incredible artistry and limitless creativity." She will team up with Nile Rodgers of Chic fame, a friend of Bowie who worked with the British singer on his disco-themed 1983 "Let's Dance" album.

New image for Gaga

A headline-grabbing performance would mark a return to form for the singer born as Stefani Germanotta, who since her rise to stardom nearly a decade ago has delighted in provocative gestures and outfits, most notoriously a dress made of meat she wore to the MTV Video Music Awards in 2010.

Much like the chameleonic Bowie, Gaga has reinvented herself. In the past two years she has refashioned herself as a classic crooner, teaming up with the 89-year-old Tony Bennett for an album and concert tour of pop standards.

The Grammys come one week after Lady Gaga, who turns 30 next month, won wide praise for an emotionally intense delivery of the national anthem at the Super Bowl, the most watched US television broadcast of the year.

Lady Gaga, who plans a new album this year but has released few details about it, has said that she "fell in love" with Bowie's music when she was a struggling artist on New York's bustling Lower East Side.

"I always felt that his glamour was something he was using to express a message to people that was very healing for their souls," she told The Hollywood Reporter days before Bowie died. Bowie died on January 10 from a publicly undisclosed battle with cancer, two days after he released his final album, "Blackstar," on his 69th birthday.

Despite the all-out effort behind the tribute, Bowie in his life won only one Grammy besides a lifetime achievement award. He lived in New York for the final two decades of his life but always enjoyed greater mainstream success in Britain and several other European countries, with "Blackstar" his first, albeit posthumous, US number one album.

Many tributes

Bowie's death has triggered a flurry of tributes with fresh cover albums already coming out. Amanda Palmer, the outspoken neo-punk artist, recently released an EP of Bowie covers, "Strung Out in Heaven," that features acclaimed English singer Anna Calvi performing "Blackstar."

A British tabloid reported that prolific rapper Kanye West was planning his own Bowie tribute, leading fans to start a petition against the prospect. Bowie is one of a number of prominent musicians to have died recently. The Grammys also plans a performance by the surviving Eagles to honor late guitarist Glenn Frey and a tribute to late "King of the Blues" BB King. Living members of funk legends Earth, Wind & Fire, whose founder Maurice White died last week, will present the Grammy for Record of the Year. — AFP

Pure Gold Jewellers introduces special edition Valentine's Day diamond pendant collections

Celebrating the love and togetherness that Valentine's Day stands for, Pure Gold Jewellers has launched a collection of Double Heart and Infinity Heart Key diamond pendants. The award winning jewellery retailer and the only World Diamond Mark certified retailer in the GCC, has crafted the exquisite jewellery in 18K white and yellow gold with the finest diamonds.

With two hearts interlocked, one with beautifully studded diamonds and other in vibrant yellow gold with a larger solitaire in the center, the Double Heart pendant is priced at KD119. The Infinity Heart Key pendant features a heart in a heart with a key to unlock the loved one's affections. Sparkling in a heart shaped array of 20 cents diamonds ensconced in a yellow gold heart, the stunning pendant is available for KD139. Apart from the special collection,

shoppers will receive a solitaire diamond as a gift.

Karim Merchant, CEO & MD of Pure Gold Jewellers, says: "Our designs of interlocked hearts and keys are a symbol of eternal love and affection, true to the spirit of Valentine's Day. Also, to ensure a memorable Valentine's Day, we will gift our customers a solitaire." This offer is valid until the 16th of February 2016 from select Pure Gold Jewellers stores. With Pure Gold Jewellers' Genuine Price Promise (GPP) on diamond jewellery, all purchases are entitled to a unique lifetime repair and exchange warranty and assured 70% cash-back.



New York Fashion Week

Rihanna puts the sexy into sweats in NY runway debut

Barbadian superstar Rihanna, feted as much for her daring style as her vocal chords, closed out day two of New York Fashion Week by unveiling a debut collection for Puma that put the sexy into sweatpants.

Following in the footsteps of music star Kanye West, who on Friday booked out Madison Square Garden to parade his Yeezy Season 3, "RiRi's" first catwalk collaboration with the German brand has been one of the most hotly anticipated celebrity-link up of fashion week.

It was a high-energy catwalk presentation that blended the singer's love of sportswear with sexy: thigh-high black boots, hoodies, thongs and sports jackets turned into strapless dresses zipped down the front. The palette was monochrome: black and white and the music backdrop relatively restrained giving pride of place to the clothes-marketed as "Fenty X Puma."

Los Angeles model of the moment Gigi Hadid was transformed into a vampish vision in black, draped in an oversized black textured hoodie as she stomped down the mirrored set adorned with tree trunks. Hoodies were re-imagined as shearling, with oversized baggy boots and shearling backpacks. There was a Gothic twist and at the end, Rihanna appeared for a brief wave.

The catwalk was broadcast simultaneously on her Facebook page, where it was viewed more than half a million times in just two hours. It was a more refined affair over at Jason Wu, the wunderkind best known for dressing Michelle Obama, who presented a sophisticated collection designed to cultivate loyalty from illustrious clients.

The Canadian-Taiwanese designer entitled "immaculate" the collection of his eponymous label at Fashion Week, where he is also making an appearance as artistic director of womenswear at Hugo Boss. There was an impeccably cut navy dress with a round neck, a black dress with plunging decolletage embellished with a blue fur collar and a long-sleeve knit dress with bare shoulders and a plunging neckline. "The idea is about these immaculately dressed women. I wanted to address the idea of the wardrobe and thinking about what she wants and what she covets, and that's really important for me," Wu said.

"It's not about a seasonal trend particularly, it's not about day or evening, it's just beautiful clothes that fill her wardrobe." With an unusual nod to, if not austerity then at least sensible purchases, the designer said the Wu woman of fall/winter 2016 did not want to splurge thousands of dollars on a one-season wonder.

"She wants things that can stand the test of time," Wu said backstage after the show. "I think she wants quality, and she wants to be sexy and feminine and sophisticated, but she wants that refinement." Wu shot to global prominence aged 26 when he dressed Obama in a stunning white creation for her husband's first inaugural ball in January 2009 — as feat he matched at the couple's second in 2013. — AFP



FENTY PUMA by Rihanna is modeled during New York Fashion Week.



Rihanna attends the FENTY PUMA by Rihanna fashion show at 23 Wall Street.



A model displays fashions during the Fenty PUMA by Rihanna show during the Fall 2016 New York Fashion Week. — AP/AFP photos



Gigi Hadid walks in the FENTY PUMA by Rihanna show during New York Fashion Week.



Rihanna greets the audience after FENTY PUMA by Rihanna show.

HOME CENTRE ROLLS OUT 'THE SEASON'S LATEST' COLLECTION HANDPICKED BY NANCY AJRAM



Home Centre, the largest home retailer in the Middle east, brought to life their latest brand campaign 'The Season's Latest' this February. The vibrant collection is handpicked by their brand ambassador and Arabic superstar Nancy Ajram. Featuring a wide range of furniture and home accessories, the collection offers a revitalizing spectrum of the latest trends and colors, comprising of classic and contemporary styles.

Through 'The Season's Latest' campaign, Home Centre reflects the brand's principal message of 'making people love coming back home'. The stylish selections by Nancy Ajram mirror the themes - 'Avant Pop' and 'New Classic', both of which guarantee to bring a splash of color and novelty to homes across the region.

An ultra-contemporary and quirky theme, 'Avant Pop' brings a colorful and fun, summery feel to the home and is characterized by abstract shapes, bold colors, polka dots and small geometrics. New Classical on the other hand, sees a blend of the past and future on a classic European style. Opulent decor with a modern twist is what comprises this collection.

Mederic Payne, CEO of Home Centre, said: "Home Centre strategizes ahead in order to meet the expectations of the global audience shopping in the region, who seek to refresh their homes. We are excited about this campaign and especially delighted by the selections made by Nancy Ajram, as they not only reflect Nancy's exceptional style, but Home Centre's as well".

Commenting on the brand campaign, Nancy Ajram said: "I'm happy to be associated with a brand such as Home Centre because of what they represent. Being a house-proud individual myself, I take special care in regularly decorating my home. With new styles, colors and designs, Home Centre's latest collection is a breath of fresh air. I look forward to sharing my favorite choices from their newest collection with customers across the region to enjoy and introduce into their homes".

Home Centre's collection is available now across all Home Centre stores, and those looking to rejuvenate their homes can choose from pristine choices to uplift their rooms with the season's joyful colours and trends.



Lifestyle

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2016

Rihanna puts the sexy into sweats in NY runway debut

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A diver feeds red heart-shaped squid meat to a ray at a feeding session ahead of Valentine's Day at the Sunshine Aquarium in Tokyo yesterday. The publicity stunt runs until Valentine's Day. — AFP

Roses are red, elbows are blue:

Japanese women fight for their Valentines

Elbowing each other in the stampede to buy Valentine's Day chocolate for the men in their lives, Japanese women brought stores to a standstill yesterday. In Japan, the menfolk do sweet nothing on February 14 while the women do battle in heaving aisles, loading up on confectionery treats for the object of their desire.

If they are lucky, the guys will reciprocate on White Day in March, when traditionally they give a white gift, from sweets to lingerie. "My feet hurt, my arms hurt, and my head hurts!" winced Kana Shimizu, clutching two dainty bags of Belgian chocolate that cost more than 10,000 yen (\$90) at a plush store in Tokyo's Ginza district. "This one is for my boyfriend, the other one is for me. I don't want him having all the fun."

Having splurged on "honmei" (true love) chocolate, the 27-year-old hair stylist raced off to find somewhere less upmarket to buy "giri" (obligation) treats for her male work colleagues. "They can make do with cheap chocolate," she laughed. "No, seriously. It's such a pain every year."

Entire floors of Japan's cavernous department stores are dedicated to Valentine's Day, showcases brimming with

heart-shaped goodies by international chocolatiers. "I'm here with my wife," said 42-year-old architect Riki Taniguchi. "I've got my eye on the Belgian chocolate but I'm not sure she thinks I deserve it."

Valentine's Day first appeared in Japan in the late 1950s as the economy picked up steam after the devastation of World War II and Western products were highly prized as the country acquired a taste for sophistication and luxury.

Currency of romance

At the time, a firm called Mary Chocolate advertised February 14 as "the only day of the year a woman professes her love through presenting chocolate" — establishing it as Japan's currency of romance, to the chagrin of florists, jewellers and makers of skimpy lingerie.

Chocolate has been available in Japan since the late 18th century, when Dutch traders—the only Europeans allowed a foothold in an otherwise closed country—gave it to prostitutes as a form of payment.

These days, it seems, almost anything goes and couples can share a bowl of chocolate-drizzled ramen noodles, tuck

into McDonald's chocolate fries or even hop into a chocolate hot spring bath courtesy of some of the most bizarre recent marketing gimmicks.

Half of Japan's \$11 billion chocolate business, Asia's biggest, is spent in February, retailers say. It is not hard to see why: a department store in Osaka recently unveiled a chocolate cake topped with 125 diamonds that will set you back an eye-watering \$125,000. In Tokyo, chocolates released by British rockers The Rolling Stones decorated with the tongue-flapping Mick Jagger logo, to commemorate the 25th anniversary of their first Japan tour in 1990, were selling out fast.

"I rushed over on my lunch break to buy some, but they had sold out," said 45-year-old fan Mariko Imai. "No satisfaction," she deadpanned. Proving that, even in Japan, and even on Valentine's Day, you can't always get what you want. — AFP



A vendor recommends chocolates to customers at a chocolate counter at the Printemps department store in Tokyo on February 9, 2016, before Valentine's Day. — AFP

Valentine's Day from around the globe



LED light roses are lit up at the 'Light Rose Garden', against the backdrop of Central, the business district of Hong Kong.



Thai groom Kittinant Suwansirun holds the hand of his bride Jintara Promachat away from a giant flower ball as a part of an adventure-themed wedding ceremony in Ratchaburi Province, Thailand. — AP/AFP photos



A young Lebanese woman walks with a red umbrella as she shops for Valentine's day gifts in the predominantly Shiite Muslim southern suburbs of the capital Beirut.



A Pakistani vendor sells heart-shaped balloons at the roadside ahead of Valentine's Day in Islamabad.



Indonesian Muslim students campaign against the celebration of Valentine's Day in Banda Aceh.