

The new electronic media law explained



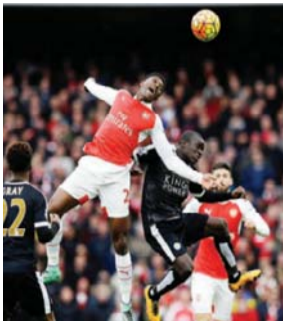
Refusing to sit on lead, Trump gets bitter in GOP debate



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## PREMIER TO SACK MINISTERS WHO FAIL TO CURB SPENDING

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### 20 NATIONS JOIN MAJOR MILITARY DRILLS IN SAUDI

**RIYADH:** Armed forces from around 20 countries were gathering in northern Saudi Arabia Sunday for "the most important" military maneuver ever staged in the region, the official news agency SPA reported. The "Thunder of the North" exercise involving ground, air, and naval forces sends a "clear message" that Riyadh and its allies "stand united in confronting all challenges and preserving peace and stability in the region", SPA said.

Saudi Arabia is currently leading a military campaign against Iran-backed rebels in its southern neighbor Yemen. Last December, it also formed a new 35-member coalition to fight "terrorism" in Islamic countries. Yesterday's announcement also comes as the kingdom, a member of the US-led coalition targeting the jihadist Islamic State group, said it has deployed warplanes to a Turkish air base in order to "intensify" its operations against IS in Syria.

SPA did not specify when the military exercise will begin or how long it will last. However, the agency called it the "most important and largest in the region's history" in terms of the number of nations

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**KUWAIT:** National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, ministers and lawmakers attend a key meeting of the National Assembly's financial affairs committee yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** The government will submit a detailed program of economic reforms including proposed cuts to subsidies on petrol and electricity to the National Assembly on Saturday, Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem said yesterday. Ghanem said that the government will commit to a specific program with specific dates of implementation and the prime minister warned that ministers who fail to deliver should leave.

The announcements came following a key meeting held by the Assembly's financial affairs committee and attended by the prime minister, the speaker, several ministers and a large number of lawmakers. Prime Minister HH Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah warned during the meeting to dismiss any official who cannot apply rationalization in spending, "regardless of how senior he is", according to KUNA. "Anyone who cannot achieve our policy of rationalization will have no place amongst us and should leave," the premier said.

"We can't have reforms as long as there is a government body failing to achieve the government's policy," Sheikh Jaber added, urging all officials to begin taking steps in this regard without affecting the rights of citizens and future generations. He called on all MPs to take the country's interest into consideration, saying "we only want to implement spending rationalization".

The meeting took place although the Assembly failed to vote on recommendations following a two-day debate on the issue last week, but still forwarded the matter to its financial affairs committee.

Continued on page 13

### TURKEY SHELLS KURDS AS US URGES RUSSIA TO STOP RAIDS

SAUDI JETS IN TURKEY • TRUCE HOPES DIM

**BEIRUT:** Hopes for a ceasefire taking hold this week in Syria dimmed yesterday as Turkey renewed its shelling of Kurdish militants and Washington demanded Moscow end air strikes on rebels. Tensions over Syria have continued to mount despite the proposal from international powers in Munich on Friday for a "cessation of hostilities" within a week. Defying US and French calls, Turkey on Sunday carried out a second day of shelling on a Kurdish-Arab alliance advancing in northern Aleppo province, prompting condemnation from Syria's government.

Turkey says it is targeting Kurdish forces it accuses of

links to the banned Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) which has waged a decades-long insurgency against the Turkish state. Washington has been working closely with Kurdish forces in northern Syria and the Turkish attacks highlighted tensions within the US-led coalition that is battling the Islamic State group in Syria and Iraq. Differences were also clear between Washington and Moscow, which is backing international diplomatic efforts to resolve the Syria conflict but has also launched air strikes in support of President Bashar Al-Assad, a key ally.

Continued on Page 13

### Life of Antonin Scalia

The conservative Supreme Court justice died Saturday in Texas. Some highlights of his life:

<b>March 11, 1936:</b> Scalia is born in Trenton, New Jersey to an Italian father and Italian-American mother. Raised in New York borough of Queens.	<b>1960:</b> Earns law degree from Harvard, marries, joins a private practice in Cleveland.	<b>1982:</b> Named to U.S. Court of Appeals for District of Columbia.	<b>2000:</b> Sides with majority in <i>Bush v. Gore</i> , giving White House to George W. Bush.	<b>2008:</b> Writes majority opinion in landmark <i>Heller</i> decision affirming gun rights.
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<b>1957:</b> Earns bachelor's degree from Georgetown University.	<b>1967-71:</b> Teaches law at University of Virginia.	<b>1971-77:</b> Serves Ford and Nixon administrations in variety of jobs, including assistant attorney general.	<b>1986:</b> Named to Supreme Court by President Ronald Reagan.	<b>2016:</b> Dies in Texas.
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SOURCES: AP Reports; Supreme Court

AP

### US SUPREME COURT JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA DEAD AT 79

OBAMA VOWS TO APPOINT SUCCESSOR

**WASHINGTON:** Justice Antonin Scalia, a towering conservative voice on the US Supreme Court, has died at the age of 79, triggering a political showdown over his succession in the run-up to the presidential election. President Barack Obama ordered flags to fly at half-staff across the United States until the long-serving justice, first appointed by Ronald Reagan in 1986, is laid to rest. Scalia's death after three decades on the Supreme Court bench has profound ramifications, and could potentially tip the balance of the highest court in the land from its current 5-4 conservative majority to a liberal one.

Obama led the chorus of tributes pouring in for the

stalwart conservative, who died in his sleep at a private residence in the Big Bend area of West Texas, according to the US Marshals Service. "For almost 30 years, Justice Antonin Scalia was a larger than life presence on the bench, a brilliant legal mind with an energetic style," Obama told reporters in Rancho Mirage, California. "Tonight we honor his extraordinary service to our nation and remember one of the towering legal figures of our time." Obama also spoke with Scalia's son Eugene "to pass along condolences to the entire Scalia family," the White House said.

Continued on Page 13

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KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. —KUNA photos



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Bader Hamad Al-Essa.

## AMIR, CROWN PRINCE RECEIVE SENIOR OFFICIALS

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah at Seif Palace yesterday. His Highness the Amir also

received National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, as well as First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign

Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince received Ghanem, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, Deputy Prime Minister

and Minister of Interior Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, as well as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah. His Highness the Crown Prince also

received Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Sabah, as well as Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Bader Hamad Al-Essa. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council Justice Yusuf Al-Mutawaah (third from left) and Minister of Justice, Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Yaqoub Al-Sane (center) are seen during a tour at the Farwaniya Court Complex in Al-Riggae. — Amiri Diwan photos

## CHIEF JUDGE TOUTS AMIR AS 'PERMANENT PATRON OF JUDICIARY'

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is the permanent patron of judiciary and justice, Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council Justice Yusuf Al-Mutawaah said yesterday. Mutawah during an inspection tour of the Farwaniya Court Complex in Al-Riggae, accompanied by Minister of Justice, Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Yaqoub Al-Sane and Chairman of the Amiri Diwan's Financial and Administrative Affairs Abdulaziz Isahaq.

He highly commended His Highness the Amir's unlimited support and attention to judicial facilities and the role of justice, particularly pointing to his initiatives for setting up Al-Jahra and Al-Riggae court complexes. The tour came ahead of the official opening of the court complex, which has been provided with high-tech, technical and engineering facilities, he said.

### Major edifice

Meanwhile, Minister Sane hailed the Al-Riggae court complex project as a "major judicial edifice that is a source of pride to the Justice Ministry". "It is no wonder that His Highness the Amir patronizes this juridical edifice, since His Highness the Amir is the backer of judiciary, judicial authority, judicial staff and prompt justice," the minister said to KUNA and Kuwait TV.

Hailing the execution of this project in record time; only 20 months, Sane said it will actually start operating in three months' time with the ministry's departments being relocated from the old building to the new court complex.

### Maximum transparency

Isahaq said meanwhile that the tour aimed to ensure maximum media transparency and to promote urban development in the country. "This can be achieved through concerted efforts and cooperation among competent agencies and bodies," he said, thanking everybody who has contributed to this successful initiative.

The Farwaniya Court Complex is located in Al-Riggae, which is home to several governmental and service bodies and main utilities. It covers 94,760 meters and consists of 16 floors and three basements. The environment-friendly complex uses solar energy and encompasses 80 well-equipped court halls, along with party and lecture chambers, cages and service offices.—KUNA



Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council Justice Yusuf Al-Mutawaah and Minister of Justice, Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Yaqoub Al-Sane are seen during the tour.



Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council Justice Yusuf Al-Mutawaah and Minister of Justice, Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Yaqoub Al-Sane enter a court room.



The Farwaniya Court Complex.



A meeting room.



A view of a court room's interior.



KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with KUNA's Board Chairman and Director General Sheikh Mubarak Al-Duaij Al-Ibrahim Al-Sabah.—KUNA

## FM STRESSES MEDIA'S KEY ROLE AMID 'CRITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES'

KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah underlined the important role of different media outlets amid 'exceptional and critical circumstances' facing the region which needs concerted efforts to overcome these circumstances.

He made his statements yesterday during a meeting with KUNA's Board Chairman and Director General Sheikh Mubarak Al-Duaij Al-Ibrahim Al-Sabah, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors Adnan Khalifa Al-Rashed and members of the Board of Directors Mohammad Abdulmohsen Al-Awwash, Ambassador Saleh Salem Al-Loughani and Kholoud Redha Al-Falili at the headquarters of the ministry.

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled stressed the key role of media people in addressing issues pertaining to local affairs and how to deal with them professionally, and also their role in preventing any body trying to incite sectarianism and hatred through media. He underscored the significance of coping with the latest technology in media, as a result of growing electronic revolution which plays the main role in transmitting and publishing information.

The minister said new media requires implementing an optimal use of the latest technology to compete with other inter-

national news agencies in this regard. He called for exerting further efforts to formulate an integrated strategy for promoting cooperation among GCC member states' media bodies to cope with accelerated events affecting the region, underlining the importance of delivering the message of moderation of Kuwait, which has become a main pillar of its policy.

During the meeting, the minister reviewed the current political situations, and their regional and international repercussions, and major challenges facing the region amid continued international and regional changes. "Media has a complementary role of diplomacy," he said.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Mubarak Al-Duaij lauded efforts of Foreign Ministry and its constant keenness on communicating with KUNA and its overseas offices, saying KUNA and its offices are an arm of the ministry. The meeting was attended by assistant foreign minister for first deputy premier and foreign minister's office ambassador Sheikh Dr. Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, Deputy Director General of Editorial Sector Affairs of KUNA Saad Al-Ali, Deputy Director General for Financial, Administrative and Communications Affairs Abdulhamid Malak and a number of senior officials of Foreign Ministry.— KUNA

## MINISTER ASSERTS KEENNESS TO ENSURE DOCTORS' EFFICIENCY

KUWAIT: Minister of Health Dr Ali Al-Obaidi asserted yesterday keenness of the Ministry of Health represented by Kuwait Institute for Medical Specialties to provide all the means that will ensure efficient vocational training of doctors enrolled in the specialized training programs.

Obaidi said during the opening of the second conference of medical education for trainee physicians that the Institute seeks since its inception to develop basic training programs and specialized training to keep pace with the latest developments in medical education where training and its specialized programs have become codified with clear-cut criteria that is consistent with international standards.

He added that the development in the field of professional medical practice is no longer limited to medical expertise but extends to multiple skills which must be owned by doctors to be qualified to practice their profession such as communicating with the patient, the foundations of the practice of

patient safety, vocational and continuing education, development of skills of medical education and research.

He explained that the themes of this conference are concerned with consolidating and refining these perceptions with the trainee doctors and interns to best serve their patients, calling on doctors to continue their efforts to make these concepts a key part of the evaluation of the trainee doctor and the development activities of the conference in the future.

Meanwhile, Secretary General of the Kuwait Institute for Medical Specialties, Dr Ibrahim Hadi said the modern medical training enables the trainee physician during the years of training to master the medical and professional skills that qualify him to carry out his responsibilities in a modern health system. He noted that the conference includes lectures and workshops to find solutions to patient safety and communication skills related to that.— KUNA



Minister of Health Dr Ali Al-Obaidi (right) is seen during the opening of the second conference of medical education for trainee physicians.— KUNA



KUWAIT: Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs Maj Gen Abdullah Al-Muhanna speaks to reporters at the event. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



An officer demonstrates motorbike training techniques at Kuwait Motoring Company's new testing area.

## MOTORING COMPANY LAUNCHES NEW MOTORBIKE TESTING AREA

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: Kuwait Motoring Company (KMC), a driving school, yesterday launched a new motorbike testing area at its premises in Shuwaikh near the Capital traffic department. Those aiming to obtain a motorcycle license will highly appreciate this new addition, as earlier there was only one place to do the test and only on two days a week at the Capital traffic department.

According to statistics from the Ministry of Interior, around 1,800 licenses for motorbikes were issued in 2014. "This number is increasing annually by about 300-400 applications. This new testing area is a great relief for the long waiting time at the traffic department. Today was the first day of operation and we received 32 applicants who were shifted here from the traffic department," said Saqer Al-Rashoud, Public Relations Manager, KMC.

The launch ceremony was held under the patronage of Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs Maj Gen Abdullah Al-Muhanna and was attended by Maj Gen Fahd Al-Shuwaye, Assistant General Director for Traffic Affairs, Col Jamal Al-Lahou, Acting Assistant General Director for Planning and Traffic Research, and other officials of the traffic department. Following the inauguration, the guests were offered a tour around the modern facilities of KMC.

### Added value

At the inauguration, Rashoud stated

that the new testing area for motorbike learners represented a great added value that aimed at enhancing the experience for KMC customers and provided them with safety awareness and convenience. "Our partnership with the General Traffic Department clearly shows our commitment to provide customers with convenient solutions. The demand for motorbike licenses is increasing as most restaurants are replacing vehicles with motorcycles for delivery, as the cost is less and delivery is faster," he noted. KMC will provide the test on two days - Sunday and Tuesday - while the Capital traffic department will do so on Mondays and Thursdays. "Soon after getting the approval of the traffic department, we will provide the service on even more days. The idea of this project is to have a one-stop shop. The applicant submits his application, registers for a riding course, gets training, takes the test, and is issued his license, all in one place," Rashoud explained. KMC was established in 1987 as the first driving education school in Kuwait. Since 1987, it has been operating continuously across Kuwait, providing consultancy services, educating young drivers and training professional drivers to meet the requirements of private and corporate clients. Today, KMC is a world-class driving training institution that incorporates modern theoretical classes and advanced practical lessons on vast training grounds. KMC has three branches, strategically located all over Kuwait in Shuwaikh, Farwaniya and Sabahiya.



Kuwait Motoring Company officials.

### Theory education

KMC provides driving theory education in state-of-the-art facilities which include modern, specially equipped classrooms and simulators. "The theoretical training covers the following subjects: Traffic laws, driving behavior, traffic signs, car mechanics and first aid. The company offers pre-license training for light vehicles, motorbikes, heavy vehicles (truck and buses), construction vehicles as well as manual car driving, SUV driving and drifting. In addition, we also have courses for various professionals such as firemen

and ambulance drivers. Soon we will launch a branch for vision tests, which is currently available only in two areas - Jahra and Qurtuba," stressed Rashoud.

KMC has an in-house MoI traffic department to process police test appointments and driving licenses. In line with its motto "Better Training, Better Driving", KMC strives to reduce traffic accidents and related injuries through the provision of high-quality training which encourages clients to adopt attitudes and behaviors focused on safety and hazard awareness.



A heavy duty truck pictured following a collision reported yesterday.

## MOTORISTS HURT IN TWO-VEHICLE CRASH

By Hanan Al-Saadoun and Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Two people were injured in a two-vehicle collision reported near Adan yesterday. Quraan Fire Station men arrived to the scene in response to an emergency call, and helped free the motorists from their wrecked vehicles. The two were handed over to paramedics who rushed them to the nearest medical facility.

### Municipality campaign

Jahra Municipality's emergency team carried out a campaign to remove animal pens built illegally on state property in Erhaiya. The campaign comes after the municipality received a complaint from the Ministry of Public Works. Ten pens were removed during the campaign.

### No injuries in fires

A fire broke out in trees in Qusoor, so Quraan fire center responded. Firemen isolated the fire and kept it from spreading, then put the flames out. No injuries were reported. Meanwhile, a fire broke out at a chalet in Zoor. Firefighters successfully tackled the flames after making sure nobody was inside the chalets. No injuries were reported. Also yesterday, a fire broke out in a Sulaibkhat house, prompting Sulaibkhat fire center to respond. The house was evacuated, and the flames were extinguished after firefighters disconnected power. No injuries were reported. Separately, Mangaf firemen responded to a call about a malfunctioning elevator in Fintas area. The elevator was lowered to the ground floor and a number of people who were trapped inside were freed.

### Workers trapped

A heavy duty truck collided with a bridge opposite Sabah Al-Nasser area, and several workers were trapped inside. Firemen dealt with the accident and freed them.

### Parliament's storming case

The Appeals Court yesterday adjourned the National Assembly's storming case in which 74 citizens including 11 former MPs face charges, and set the next hearing for May 1. Former MP Musallam Al-Barak attended the court session, and was seen in the defendant's cage as he stood as one of the suspects. Meanwhile, the court freed a ruling family member who is being tried on a drugs case, only for him to be arrested on other charges.

## KIA TO INVEST IN DISTRESSED INDIAN POWER ASSETS

By Sarah Ahmed

KUWAIT: Kuwait's sovereign wealth fund is teaming up with group of investors to target failing power assets in India. The Kuwait Investment Authority, along with Canadian pension fund, Caisse de depot et placement du Quebec, the State General Reserve Fund of Oman, Tata Power and ICIC Venture will create a joint venture funded specifically with the aim of buying up troubled power assets.

The KIA, along with the Canadian

and Omani funds will invest around \$650 million of equity to create a dedicated pool of \$850 million, the Economic Times of India reported yesterday. The joint venture will eventually amass a pool of a reported \$4 billion to \$5 billion to use to buyout financially troubled power assets. A formal announcement is expected by end February.

KIA investments are seldom made public. In a February note, Standard and Poor's said that "Kuwait had increased its annual contributions to the RFFG from 10 percent to 25 per-

cent of total revenues in the last two fiscal years including in fiscal 2014/15, because higher oil prices had produced very strong revenues. Now that oil prices are sharply lower, transfers to the fund from 2015/16 onward have reverted back to 10 percent. The fund will still continue to grow on reinvested earnings and the continued, albeit lower, contributions. Disclosure about the size and structure of the fund and KIA's assets is limited but we estimate them at about \$535 billion at end-2015."

## MINISTER SAYS MANAGER TO OVERSEE HOUSING PROJECTS NOT DISCUSSED

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: State Minister for Housing Affairs Yasser Abul said the State Audit Bureau did not discuss the idea of assigning a project manager to take over issues and supervise companies that are executing residential projects in the country, including the south Mutlaa City. He said the number of residential units to be distributed each year according to the development plan is 12,000 and cannot be increased. Abul spoke after a ceremony to honor Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) officials.

"We are celebrating a group of PAHW officials to thank them for their loyalty and honesty which produced plans you put in order to provide housing care for citizens, and you paved the road, and we are moving on it to serve Kuwait and Kuwaitis," he said.



KUWAIT: Housing Minister Yasser Abul speaks at a ceremony to honor Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) officials. — Photo by Fouad Al-Shaikh

## THURSDAY, SATURDAY OFF FOR SCHOOLS HOSTING BY-ELECTIONS

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Education announced yesterday that next Thursday will be a holiday for students, educational and administrative staff in the schools which will host the by-elections 2016. Education Ministry's Undersecretary Dr Haytham Al-Athari said in a statement that next Sunday will be a holiday for students only, adding that the ministry's decision only concerns the schools in which the by-elections 2016 will take place for the 3rd constituency on Saturday February 20.

Meanwhile, Minister of Information Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah stressed that upon the directives of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh

Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, all ministry's sectors are ready for covering the National Assembly's by-elections of the third constituency.

The coverage will be carried out through a plan showing Kuwait's democratic march and its media's ability to cover all national events and occasions professionally, Sheikh Salman, also Minister of State for Youth Affairs, said in a statement yesterday. Democracy is established in hearts and lives of the Kuwaiti citizens so as to maintain the country's security, stability and prosperity, and provide a secure future of the coming generations, he added.

Ministry of Information harnessed

all its human and technical capabilities to transmit elections to be held on Saturday through the news sector and political programs based on transparency, fairness and impartiality towards all candidates, he noted.

All Radio and TV sectors will take part in the coverage to show the "honorable" image of democracy in Kuwait through some programs prepared for following up the voting, the minister said. He stressed the key role of MPs in achieving the country's supreme interest under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — KUNA

Legalese

## TERMINATION Q&AS

By Attorney Fajer Ahmed

Kuwaiti oil prices have dropped significantly in the past year, and it is no secret that Kuwait's economy depends on oil. An issue that I have been receiving multiple emails about in the past few weeks is the termination of a work relationship and other employee rights and obligations that come along with it. I have previously spoken about termination, but the cases I recently have been getting are different because there seems to be group terminations caused by companies going through financial difficulties and losing on projects they have won.

So before I get into the legalities of termination indemnity, I just want to be clear that I am not using legally correct language, but instead using the words that are understood by the general public as I am simplifying the legal issues, because the aim of my column is for my readers to understand.

### New company

**Question (Part 1):** Our company hired me in 2012 when they won a project's contract with an oil company. Two years later in 2014, another company won the project's contract and we were transferred or I guess re-hired by the new company. We got paid all of our termination indemnity rights, and we had to sign new contracts, even though we were literally working in the same place. Is this legally correct? I would like to know for the future.

**Fajer:** Well, this is not an easy question to answer because it depends on a few things, let us take it step-by-step. From experience with contractors, it seems like some foreign companies are being subcontracted to do the actual work. Now these companies usually use Kuwaiti companies to bring in or to hire their employees.

In order to save money, foreign companies now ask employees to resign and then rehire the employees through the new sponsor that has won the government contract. They are saving money because usually the more years you work with a certain employer, the more your termination indemnity is. Also, if you are resigning yourself before the end of your contract, you will not be entitled to any end of service benefits.

### Asked to resign

**Question (Part 2):** In 2016, another company came in and won the governmental contract but did not rehire us. Our current company asked us to resign. I do not understand why I have to resign if my contract ends anyways?

**Fajer:** Although I generally do not give legal advice concerning an employment relationship without reviewing the contract because the answer to this question may depend on clauses in the contract, but it is safe to say that they are asking employees to resign in order to save money by not being obliged to pay end of service benefits. I can also say from experience that a lot of companies will try to get their employees to sign a document stating that they no longer owe them any amounts even if that is not true.

### Suggestions

**Question (Part 3):** Is there any advice you can provide to my colleagues that may be laid off in the near future?

**Fajer:** I think all employees should consider being precautionary regardless of how stable their job might be. To make our jobs easier in the future should a dispute arise, my team suggests the following:

1. For contractors specifically that are working with private foreign companies to ask for their full salary to be deposited in their Kuwaiti bank accounts.
2. Always save important emails by forwarding them to your personal email, you never know when you will be denied access to your work email.
3. Keep important dates like the day you started your employment relationship, date you received a promotion, date you went on holidays and so on.
4. Always ask for things in writing, if you leave a meeting and something important was discussed or decided, then email 'Minutes of meeting' to the attendees of the said meeting, mentioning the important topics discussed.
5. Never sign a document unless you can fully understand the information in it and, this goes without saying, it is in a language that you can personally read and understand. Also no matter how much pressure you receive, do not sign a document unless you agree to what is written in it.
6. Check your work permit and make sure it states your exact salary amount, not less or more.

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



KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem left for Ankara yesterday at an official invitation from his Turkish counterpart Ismail Kahraman. Ghanem is leading a delegation that includes MP Kamel Al-Awadhi and Ahmad Al-Qedheebi. He is set to hold talks with Kahraman and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. — KUNA

# LAW NO. 8 OF 2016 REGARDING THE REGULATION OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA

**KUWAIT:** The National Assembly passed by an overwhelming majority during a January 13, 2016 session a new law to regulate all web-based publications including electronic news services, bulletins, websites of newspapers and televisions and the likes. Under the legislation, all these services must obtain a license from the government before they can operate. Those in existence have one year to comply with the law. Violations committed by these services will be looked in court under the press and publications law, which stipulates hefty jail terms for several offences. The following is the complete transcript of the law, which was published in the 'Kuwait Al-Youm' national gazette's February 7, 2016 issue:

In accordance with the constitution;

And the penal law issued by law no. 16 of 1960 and its amended laws;

And the law of procedures and penal trials issued by law no. 17 of 1960;

And law no. 40 of 1972 with regards to the cases of contestation in cassation, its procedures and its amended laws;

And the civil law issued by decree no. 67 of 1980 and its amended laws;

And decreed law no. 20 of 1981 to create a circuit at the comprehensive court to look

**Electronic media is considered one of the components of the information system in the country, and the freedom of its use is guaranteed.**

into administrative disputes, amended by law no. 61 of 1982;

And law no. 51 of 1984 with regards to personal affairs and its amended laws;

And the judicial organization law issued by decree law no. 23 of 1990 its amended laws;

And law no. 64 of 1999 with regards to copyright;

And law no. 3 of 2006 with regards to print and publication;

And law no. 61 of 2007 with regards to audiovisual media;

And decreed law no. 19 of 2012 with regards to protecting national unity;

And the companies law issued by decree law no. 25 of 2012 and its amended laws;

And law no. 20 of 2014 with regards to electronic transactions;

And law no. 37 of 2014 with regards to creating communications and information technology, amended by law no. 98 of 2015;

And law no. 63 of 2015 with regards to fighting information technology crimes;

The National Assembly approved, ratified and issued the following law:

## Article 1

With regards to implementing the rules of this law, the following words and terms will have the meaning shown next to it:

**Minister:** Information Minister

**Ministry:** Information Ministry

**Electronic Media:** Activity that includes publishing or broadcasting items and forms of a media service of electronic content that is produced, developed, upgraded, dealt with,

**No prior censorship on what is circulated of content via electronic sites and facilities.**

broadcast, published or reached through the Internet or any other communications network.

**Electronic Publication:** Copying, broadcasting, sending, or receiving electronic media activities through the Internet or any other communications network by using systems or electronic applications, whatever their nature is, and other means of modern technology for general use.

**Electronic Domain:** It is the domain registered on the Internet or any other communications network, and electronic sites are entered through it.

**The site or electronic media facility:** The page, link or electronic application that is issued within a certain time, and has a certain electronic address and domain, and issued or hosted or extends through the Internet or any other communications network.

**Electronic content:** Text, audio or fixed, moving or multimedia content which includes of any mentioned structure, which is developed, produced, upgraded or dealt with by electronic means or any type of content that is turned into electronic form, which is published and reached through the Internet or any other communications network.

**Electronic paper:** A site or electronic means through which electronic content that includes news, topics, columns and multimedia of journalistic or information nature is published, regularly or not.

**Information or electronic commercial advertisement services:** Content that includes promotion of works, services, products or individuals through the Internet or any other communications network.

**Owner of the site or the electronic**

**information media tool:** The natural or juristic person to whom the site or the electronic information media facility is proven to belong to.

**Responsible manager:** The natural person appointed by the site owner or the electronic information portal, and he is responsible in front of administrative and judicial fields about the site's or the electronic information facility's content.

**Blocking:** Disallowing reaching the site or the electronic information facility.

## Article 2

The electronic media is considered one of the components of the information system in the country, and the freedom of its use is guaranteed for all according to the rules of this law, and there is no prior censorship on what is circulated of content via electronic sites and facilities.

## Article 3

The state cares for electronic information sites and facilities that are under this law, and those working in them, and provides the necessary facilities to go along with the continued technological development of electronic media according to the organization of the executive rules of this law.

## Article 4

A list of licensed websites and electronic media facilities is published at the ministry's website, providing details for the licensee, the responsible manager, employees, and purpose of the website. The executive regulations of this law shall control polls carried out by licensed websites and electronic media facilities.

## Article 5

This law is applicable to the following electronic sites and electronic information media:

- 1- Electronic publication houses
- 2- Electronic news agencies
- 3- Electronic journalism
- 4- News services
- 5- Electronic sites, information service facilities and commercial advertisements
- 6- Electronic sites of paper newspapers

**Law covers news websites and services, papers and TV channels' sites, commercial advertisements.**

and audio-video satellite channels

The rules of this law do not apply on the domain or facility or a personal electronic account, whose user is not characterized to be of specialized professionalism.

## Article 6

With consideration of rules of any other law, anyone who wants to establish or operate any sites or electronic information facilities mentioned in the previous article must obtain a license from the ministry, and the validity of the license is 10 renewable years at the request of the licensee and the ministry's approval.

## Article 7

It is enough for electronic information sites and facilities that belong to the state authorities, its establishments, public authorities and any other government department, declared non-governmental societies, unions and associations established according to the rules of the law, to inform the ministry about the establishment of the site of the electronic information facility and name the responsible manager within 60 days from the date of starting working with executive rules with regards to established sites, and 60 days before establishment of the site or the facility, according to what the executive rules organize.

## Article 8

The application to get a license should be submitted to the ministry according to the form prepared for this, the applicant must meet the following condition:

- 1- Be a Kuwaiti, not less than 21 years of age.
- 2- Be of good repute, and not previously sentenced for a felony or a crime that violates honor or trust, unless his status was restored.
- 3- To name the site or electronic information facility, and it must not be in violation of public order or general or public decency or identical to the name of another site.
- 4- Must have a known premises specialized in the activity mentioned in the license.

Kuwaiti judicial persons can ask for the license to practice one of the activities mentioned in Article 5 of this law, provided that all capital be Kuwaiti with regards to the application for a license to carry out activities mentioned in items 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the same article.

Newspapers, audio and video satellite stations licensed by the ministry that wish to create a site or any electronic information facility can submit a copy of the license issued to them with the application.

## Article 9

The license applicant must appoint a responsible manager to represent him at the ministry, government departments or oth-



ers, for the site or the electronic information facility. He shall be responsible for the content published in it, be it by him or others, and the responsible manager must meet the following conditions:

- 1- Be a Kuwaiti of not less than 21 years of age, totally qualified.
  - 2- Must have at least a general secondary certificate or its equivalent.
  - 3- Must be of good repute, and not been convicted for a felony or an honor violating crime, unless his status was restored.
  - 4- Must not be a manager of another licensed site or electronic information facility.
- If the license applicant is an individual, or a one-person company, he can be the responsible manager of the site or the facility if he meets the above conditions.

## Article 10

In case the post of the responsible manager becomes vacant, or he loses one of the conditions that he should have, the licensed person must appoint a replacement that meets the conditions within six months.

The licensee will be responsible for the site or the electronic information facility until the replacement is appointed during the designated period in the previous paragraph.

## Article 11

The minister issues a decision with regards to the license application within 30 days from the date of submitting the application that meets the legally requested conditions. If this period elapses without issuing a decision, the application will be considered rejected, and those concerned can appeal the rejection to the minister within

## Article 12

The licensee for any of the activities that are under the rules of the law must practice the activity within six months from receiving the license, and the ministry can extend this period by a maximum of an additional six months at the request of the licensee.

## Article 13

Any license rental will be null and void, and cannot be sold or waived without prior approval from the ministry, and the buyer or the person who receives the waiver must meet the conditions mentioned in this law to issue the license. The heirs of the licensee can ask for transfer of the license to them within one year from the date of death or to another person if the conditions are met.

## Article 14

Any license rental will be null and void, and cannot be sold or waived without prior approval from the ministry, and the buyer or the person who receives the waiver must meet the conditions mentioned in this law to issue the license. The heirs of the licensee can ask for transfer of the license to them within one year from the date of death or to another person if the conditions are met.

## Article 15

The executive rules explain the data the license must have and the documents that must be attached to the license application, renewal and ownership transfer. The licensee must inform the ministry about any change in the data related to the site or electronic information facility or the responsible manager or its workers within three months from the change date.

## Article 16

The license will be revoked, without violating any other legislative text, under the following conditions:

## Article 17

The responsible manager for the site or electronic information facility is responsible for the violations of the rules of this law by the content, and he must seek accuracy and credibility in all what he publishes concerning news, information and data. He must publish, free of charge, any reply, correction or denial he receives directly or indirectly from the ministry or other government entities, or from any judicial or natural person, or who represents him legally, whose name is mentioned or indicated in writing, drawing or symbol, published in the site or the electronic media facility, on the date the concerned party or those concerned decide, in the same place and same method, language and size the material in question was published.

## Article 18

The sites and electronic media sites governed by the rules of this law, cannot publish, broadcast, rebroadcast, send or quote any content that contains any of the forbidden material mentioned in articles (19, 20, 21) of law no. 3 of 2006, and article 11 of law no. 61 of 2007, and punishments are mentioned in those two laws in case of violations.

## Article 19

Without violating the rules of the above article, the concerned court will fine everyone who practices any of the activities mentioned in this law without a license or violates any of the rules in it with a minimum of KD 500 and a maximum KD 5,000, and it is allowed to rule for blocking the site permanently.

## Article 20

Without violating the rules of the above article, the concerned court will fine everyone who practices any of the activities mentioned in this law without a license or violates any of the rules in it with a minimum of KD 500 and a maximum KD 5,000, and it is allowed to rule for blocking the site permanently.

## Article 21

Without violating the rules of the above article, the concerned court will fine everyone who practices any of the activities mentioned in this law without a license or violates any of the rules in it with a minimum of KD 500 and a maximum KD 5,000, and it is allowed to rule for blocking the site permanently.

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Without violating the rules of the above article, the concerned court will fine everyone who practices any of the activities mentioned in this law without a license or violates any of the rules in it with a minimum of KD 500 and a maximum KD 5,000, and it is allowed to rule for blocking the site permanently.

## Article 23

Without violating the rules of the above article, the concerned court will fine everyone who practices any of the activities mentioned in this law without a license or violates any of the rules in it with a minimum of KD 500 and a maximum KD 5,000, and it is allowed to rule for blocking the site permanently.

60 days from the date of rejection. If this period elapses without a decision, the appeal will be considered.

## Article 12

The license applicant for a site or electronic information facility must deposit a KD 500 guarantee at the ministry's treasury within 60 days from the date he gets informed of approval of the license.

He can submit an unconditional bank guarantee in the name of the ministry, instead of the cash guarantee.

The ministry has the right to deduct from the financial guarantee what the licensed person or the responsible manager is committed to or fined financially or compensations for the ministry based on this law. The licensee must replace the shortage in the guarantee within six days from the date he is informed of this.

## Article 13

The licensee for any of the activities that are under the rules of the law must practice the activity within six months from receiving the license, and the ministry can extend this period by a maximum of an additional six months at the request of the licensee.

## Article 14

Any license rental will be null and void, and cannot be sold or waived without prior approval from the ministry, and the buyer or the person who receives the waiver must meet the conditions mentioned in this law to issue the license. The heirs of the licensee can ask for transfer of the license to them within one year from the date of death or to another person if the conditions are met.

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## Article 21

Without violating the rules of the above article, the concerned court will fine everyone who practices any of the activities mentioned in this law without a license or violates any of the rules in it with a minimum of KD 500 and a maximum KD 5,000, and it is allowed to rule for blocking the site permanently.

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## LAW MET WITH MIXED REACTIONS

**KUWAIT:** Prior to its ratification in parliament, the electronic media law was met with mixed reactions mainly between two groups; one that sees the law as a necessary medium to regulate a field that remains uncovered by existing laws, and another which fears it might introduce further restrictions on freedom of speech. Last October, MP Saleh Hour said the bill, which was still a draft law at the time, "aims at silencing people and suppressing freedom."

After the law was passed, MP Jamal Al-Omar, who voted against the law, said this is yet another legislation like others that will be used by the government to curb freedoms, adding that it can be easily challenged in the constitutional court. Information Minister Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah however insisted the law is aimed at regulating electronic media and it will not apply to personal accounts like those of bloggers.

On January 11, 2016, Amnesty International denounced a "repressive" cybercrimes law in Kuwait, warning that it would further muzzle free speech. The law, which took effect the same day, criminalizes online expression including criticism of the government, religious figureheads or foreign leaders. Dozens of people in Kuwait have already been arrested and prosecuted - some jailed - under other legislation for

comments made on social media sites such as Twitter.

Journalist and prisoner of conscience Ayad Khaled Al-Harbi, 26, has been in prison since October 2014 in connection with, among other things, tweets deemed critical of His Highness Amir and government and echoing the words of prominent government critic, Musallam al-Barrak, as well as verses of poetry criticizing Arab rulers.

Blogger Hamad Al-Naqi is currently serving a 10-year prison term for posting comments on Twitter that were considered critical of the leaders of Bahrain and Saudi Arabia and other messages deemed "insulting" to Islam. He is a prisoner of conscience.

Prisoner of conscience, Abdullah Fairouz, a human rights defender and political activist, is serving a five-year jail term because he posted tweets saying that those who lived in royal palaces should not be immune from prosecution.

On 28 July 2014, lawyer Khaled al-Shatti tweeted a thinly veiled condemnation of members of the armed group calling itself Islamic State. He was sentenced to one year in prison with immediate implementation by a Misdemeanours Court on 17 December for insult to religion. However the Appeals Court halted the implementation of this sentence until it issued its verdict. If Khaled Al-Shatti is jailed, he will be a prisoner of conscience.

Continued on Page 5

## LAW NO. 8 OF 2016 REGARDING THE REGULATION OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Continued from Page 4

The chairman of the felonies circuit, when necessary, and at the request of the public prosecution, can issue a decision to block the site or electronic information facility for a minimum of two renewable weeks during investigations or trial.

### Article 20

The minister issues a decision to determine authorized employees to check the violations of this law and explain the procedures followed in this regard.

### Article 21

The public prosecution - and none other - is concerned with investigating, conductance and contention of all crimes mentioned in this law.

### Article 22

The felonies circuit in the comprehensive court is the concerned court in considering all penal cases mentioned in this law, and its ruling can be appealed at the appeals court, and in exception of article 8 of law no. 40 for 1972, rules issued by the appeals court can be contested by cassation.

### Article 23

The penal case for the crimes mentioned in this law will be dropped if the public prosecution is not informed about them within three months from the date of its occurrence. The com-

penation case will be dropped if it is not submitted within one year from this date unless the penal case is ongoing, then the period starts from the date of its end or a final ruling on it.

### Article 24

All sites and electronic media facilities mentioned in article 5 of this law and list, when working under it, must reconcile their status according to its rules within one year from the date of issuing the implementation rules.

### Article 25

The text of the final court ruling and decisions to revoke licenses issued according to the rules of this law shall be published in the official gazette and the ministry's electronic site.

### Article 26

The concerned minister issues the executive rules of this law within six months from the start of its implementation.

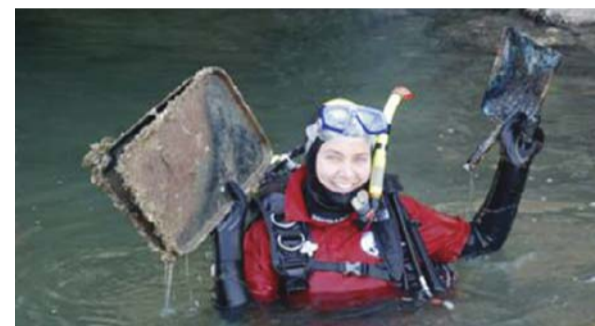
### Article 27

This law shall be published in the official gazette, and becomes effective on the next day from its publication.

- Ministers, each in his capacity, shall implement its rules.
- Deputy Amir of Kuwait Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah
- Issued at Seif Palace on 23 Rabee Al-Akher, 1437 AH
- Corresponding to 2 February, 2016 AD



## KUWAIT DIVE TEAM COMPLETES 2ND PHASE OF KOUT MARINA CLEANING



**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Dive Team announced the completion of the second phase of an effort to clean Kout Marina, a subsidiary of Tamdeen Real Estate on the Fahaheel Coast, by lifting one ton of waste from the marina's seabed.

Mahmoud Ashkanani, Kuwait Dive Team official, said that the project's first phase includes lifting sunken boats. During the second phase, divers removed plastic waste and other debris from the bottom of the marina. The seabed's nature and littered silt made visibility difficult during the

clean-up, but the Team thankfully carried out the operation successfully and competently. The third phase will be completed within a few days.

Ashkanani noted that plastic waste, especially in semi-closed areas with stagnant water, pose a threat to marine organisms and change the chemical composition of the surrounding environment, negatively contributing to the cohesion of clay layers. In turn, these impacts disturb the hydrosphere and fish breeding.

Khalid Al-Balushi, marina official, thanked the Kuwait Dive Team for

their efforts toward serving the marine environment and the State of Kuwait. He added that Tamdeen Real Estate has been happy to cooperate with the Kuwait Dive Team for several years and that the urbanization company has always sought to serve boaters while preserving the marine environment. Balushi called for all coastal and marina users to remember the need to care for the environment and to avoid polluting or throwing waste that negatively affects the beautiful aesthetic of the Kout Marina Complex.

## ARTICLES (19, 20, 21) OF LAW NO. 3 OF 2006 ON PRESS AND PUBLICATIONS

Matters prohibited from publishing in the print or the newspaper and the penalties:

### Article (19)

It shall be prohibited to meddle in matters related to God, the Holy Quran, Prophets, the Noble Companions of Prophet Muhammad, Wives of the Prophet, peace be upon him, or persons who are part of the Prophet's family, peace be upon them, by meddling, defamation, slander, or mocking in any forms of expression that are stipulated under Article (29) of the Law No (31) for the year 1970 on Amendment of Some of the Provisions of the Penalty Law No (16) for the year 1960.

### Article (20)

No challenge may be made to the person of the Country's Emir of the State of Kuwait by criticism, and no statement shall be attributed to him except by a special written permission from the Amiri Diwan.

### Article (21)

It shall be prohibited to publish anything that would:

- 1- Disdain or contempt the Constitution of the State.
- 2- Disdain or insult jurists or members of the public prosecution or to state something that is considered as a disparagement of the integrity and impartiality of the judicial system or to publish something which the courts or the investigating parties decide to maintain in secret.
- 3- Insulting the public morals or instigating to violate the public order or to violate the laws or to commit crimes, even if the crime did not occur.
- 4- News regarding official secret communications and publishing of agreements and treaties which the government of Kuwait concludes, before publishing them in the

official gazette, except by a special permission from the concerned Ministry.

5- Influencing the value of the national currency or what would lead to worries about the economic status of the country or publishing news about the bankruptcy of businessmen or the commercial companies or banks or the money exchangers, except by a special permission from the competent court.

6- Revealing what goes on in any meeting or what is written in the papers or documents or decrees, or any papers or prints which the Constitution or any law decided that they are to be kept in secret or not to publish them, even if the published topic was true, and the publishing was limited to the official statements that are issued in that regard.

7- Infringement on the dignity of the persons or their lives or religious beliefs, and instigating hatred or disdain of any of the society's strata or to publish information about their financial statuses or to reveal a secret which would harm their reputation or wealth or their trade names.

8- Encroachment into the private life of an employee or a person who is charged in a public service, or attributing statements or acts not true to him which would cause harm or insult to his person. 9- Causing harm to the relationships between Kuwait and other Arab or friendly countries if that is done through the press campaigns. 10- If the specialized newspaper went beyond the purpose of the license which is granted to it.

*NOTE: An amendment to law no. 3 of 2006 on press and publications was published in 'Kuwait Al-Youm' national gazette's February 7, 2016 issue, which adds material published online under publications covered by the law.*

# "HEINZ MAKES ME FLAVOURFUL"

Wrap



الجريدة

Al-Jarida

## 'ASSASSINATIONS' SINCE 2008

By Thaar Al-Rasheedi

Many Kuwaiti political figures have been subjected to systematic political assassinations since 2008. I mean the assassination of their personalities by attacking any targeted person through spreading rumors or making fun of them on social media networks with the aim of undermining people's trust in them, or at least make people take them less seriously. Those assassinations succeeded in alienating some figures after defaming and disfiguring them before the media and the public. Some have been even portrayed as war criminals who deserve public and political assassinations.

Those campaigns started to take systematic forms by the end of 2008 and did not originate from one source. They involved more than one body and looked like a multiparty war victimizing lawmakers, ministers, political and non-political dignitaries with lies and rumors. They sometimes affected ordinary citizens, leading many of them to quit politics and media forever.

Unfortunately, the spread of the use of Internet, social media, e-media, blogs and unidentified news websites have contributed to executing such assassinations quickly in view of the chaotic use of these tools in the absence of binding laws. People got charged for simply resending rumors, misusing mobile phones and slander in the absence of a legislation to regulate the matter, and this was utilized to assassinate some political figures' characters.

As things showed later, some of those assassinations were committed by politicians against their opponents, against whom they managed to stir public opinion. Many public figures were subject to suspicions and skepticism. The parliamentary vacuum between 2009 and 2011 and the absence of a law to regulate e-media and incriminate cybercrimes have contributed to those political assassinations on a daily basis.

The e-crimes law is now in effect and the e-media one will follow soon, and both are necessary and integral, though many voices have been skeptical about them. However, this is better than having a parliamentary vacuum or no law at all.

— Translated by Kuwait Times



القباس

Al-Qabas

## CULTURE OF FREEDOM

By Dina Al-Tarrah

What I will write today is not for local consumption or is repeated or mummified, as in the month of February we must live the culture of freedom for which we got our country back, and bring in the culture of democratic life that accommodates women and man. Justice, progress, creativity... words we should practice away from zealotry, extremism and hate of life, which is something that calls for true partnership between the government and civil society in facing reform issues and its burdens.

Development of people requires the presence of an outcome of collective awareness which is reflected in activities of state and private establishments together, in addition to granting effectiveness to pioneering competencies and use of brains in drawing new plans for the

future that enables us to fulfill the dream of civilized communications with the world and its countries of which we are an indivisible part of existence.

Effective dialogue calls for officials and people in the civil society for intellectual activity, cultural and political activity that is built on knowledge, organized information directed to public opinion, and carrying out reform steps without procrastination or retreat, and a true wish in organizing the society's priorities and developing it in the short, intermediate and long terms, instead of keeping the current situation as is.

The state's and nation's general benefit will only be achieved by its people, and the political reform card must be written by those of living conscience and not by other hands.

— Translated by Kuwait Times

*Justice, progress, creativity... words we should practice away from zealotry, extremism and hate of life*

## ICE SKATING RINK CLOSED

KUWAIT: The Touristic Enterprises Company (TEC) announced that the Ice Skating Rink was completely closed starting from Sunday, February 14, 2016 until further notice for maintenance works. The reopening date will be announced once maintained works are finished, said Saqer Al-Bader, Acting Manager, Public Relations and Marketing.



Saqer Al-Bader

## GULF BANK CONGRATULATES BAYAN BILINGUAL SCHOOL STUDENTS

COMPETING AT HARVARD SPEECH AND DEBATE SHOWCASE

KUWAIT: A group of Bayan Bilingual School (BBS) high-school students will be taking part in the 42nd Annual Harvard Speech and Debate Showcase tournament taking place this month in Boston, Massachusetts. Gulf Bank extends its congratulations and best wishes to the students participating in the tournament.

This group of 17 BBS students are the only Middle Eastern and Kuwaiti team to participate in this year's event (Annual Harvard National Forensics Tournament). There are six competitions at the event: Lincoln Douglas Debate; Dramatic Interpretation; Humorous Interpretation; International Extemporaneous Speaking; Duo Interpretation; and Original Oratory. Speech and debate is an academic activity typically available to students in middle school, high school, and/or college. Speech and debate activities are challenging, competitive in nature, and require regular practice, coaching, dedication, and hard work.

The speech and debate team was founded in the fall of 2013 by Christina McDade, Francine Camerini and Candice Warzecha with less than 10 students. Since then, BBS has hosted three local tournaments and competed in two, one taking place at the University Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco in March 2015. This tournament takes place under the umbrella of the National Speech and Debate Association in the US. It is the largest inter-school speech and debate organization serving middle and high school students, as well as university students.

Gulf Bank remains strongly committed to supporting youth and educational initiatives, and doing its part to help empower the next generation. To find out more about Gulf Bank, please see the bank's bilingual website at [www.e-gulfbank.com](http://www.e-gulfbank.com), call the Customer Contact Center on 1805805, visit one of Gulf Bank's 56 branches in Kuwait, or see its social media channel on Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube.

## TEN TEAMS TO DIAGNOSE DEMOGRAPHIC IMBALANCE

KUWAIT: While Social Affairs and Labor Minister and State Minister for Planning and Development Hind Al-Subaih said "reform procedures related to dealing with demographic imbalance are going on in a methodological manner," she said that there are 10 technical teams that are conducting a comprehensive and accurate diagnosis of the current situation and prepare an integrated view to restore the population structure balance, in order to issue some decisions related to this matter. "You will see these decisions being issued consecutively," she said.

"These technical teams belong to the government committee that is dealing with population structure imbalance that was formed under my chairpersonship and has a large number of government entities as members, including the interior, health and foreign ministries in addition to some independent authorities such as the

Manpower Public Authority, Central Statistical Department, Public Authority for Civil Information and the Secretariat General of the Supreme Planning Council," Subaih said.

She said that restoring balance in the population structure must come out of the national component interest to preserve the country's assets and its cultural identity. "The decisions to be issued with regards to population structure imbalance must have legal basis and should care for all that is related to development projects," she added. Meanwhile, a source at the Manpower Public Authority said that "residences for 80,000 workers out of 140,000 are ready for those who will come to the country at the start of summer to build development projects," adding that "many problems related to this issue were resolved in a way that will not negatively affect the population



Hind Al-Subaih

structure". He said 80,000 workers will be housed near the projects they will work in, and that those sites will include all necessary services that guarantee workers' rights. — Al-Rai

## AUB SPONSORS 9TH KUWAITI PROJECT FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

KUWAIT: As part of its Corporate Social Responsibility strategy that aims to support community initiatives, Ahli United Bank (AUB) announced its participation and sponsorship of the 9th Kuwaiti Project for Special Needs which was held on February 4th, 2016 in Sheraton Kuwait Hotel.

As per the directions of HH the Amir of Kuwait and under the patronage of Honorary Chairman of Kuwait Sports Club for Handicapped, Sheikhha Sheikhha Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, AUB took part in this exhibition and conference driven by its active role in supporting the community and especially people with special needs.

AUB was represented by a number of Kuwaiti employees headed by the CEO, Richard Groves and Moataz El-Rafie, Senior Deputy CEO of the Business Banking Group, whom were available to interact with the guests to offer advice, guidance and special promotions offered by the Bank to its customers. In addition, they responded to any questions asked by the guests. The team also collected important information from the audience in order to help understand the most important requirements for people with special needs.

Richard Groves commented on this participation: "Ahli United Bank intends to provide greater support for such initiatives especially people with special needs to whom the Bank pays great attention."

He added, "This year we will witness strategic changes and thoughtful steps to provide more support for this segment, which is an integral part of the society and as we do our duty as a lead-

ing financial institution."

It is worth mentioning that the 9th Kuwaiti Project for Persons with Special Needs comes in line with the country's legislative and executive vision to support people with special needs, which arises from the authentic Arab and Islamic traditions and promotes the giving spirit between people. Especially that this segment is considered an essential part of the Kuwaiti society that is encouraged to be more involved and productive, in addition to spreading awareness about the organizations that serve this segment, it is beneficial to help increase their performance and strengthen the integration between them and public organizations.



KUWAIT: Honorary Chairman of Kuwait Sports Club for Handicapped, Sheikhha Sheikhha Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah honors Richard Groves, AUB CEO and Moataz El-Rafie, Senior Deputy CEO of the Business Banking Group.



KUWAIT: Sheikhha Intisar Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Chairperson of the Al-Lulua Production Company (center), announced during a press conference yesterday that Habeeb Al-Ardh (Lover of the Land), a locally-produced patriotic motion picture, will be displayed at Cinescape theaters around Kuwait from February 18th to 24th, in celebration of Kuwait's National Holidays. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## Crime

Report

### Multiple injuries in Fintas fight

KUWAIT: Policemen in Fintas broke up a fight between a number of Asian nationals who used sharp objects including a saw, causing a few injuries in the process. Six of the fighters were arrested with possession of sharp objects including the saw used in the fight. Some of the fighters were taken to Adan Hospital for treatment, while others were detained at the police station for further action. Separately, several youngsters were involved in a bloody fight in front of a cafe in Salmiya as they competed for a girl and a man described as a 'transsexual' who was with her. Policemen stopped the fight and sent them to the police station.

### Murder threat

A security source said an Egyptian man in his forties told Khaitan police that he was a victim of a crime that may cost him his savings and threatens his future in Kuwait and in his country. He said that he had a joint business with two other Egyptians to bring fruits and vegetables and sell them in Kuwait. He said the two asked him to see them to agree on a new deal, but he was surprised by them pulling a knife and sword, threatening to kill him if he does not sign a promissory note. The case went to detectives, and the two were arrested. They confessed to forcing him to sign a promissory note, but not under threat, because he had taken KD 10,000 to buy things but refused to return the money.

### Camp thieves caught

Jahra detectives arrested three persons in Abdday for robberies in camps. They had interior ministry vests which they used during thefts. The trio, a Kuwaiti, a bedoon and a Saudi, themselves had a camp, which was raided, and detectives found power generators, electric appliances, drugs and weapons. They were taken to Jahra detectives department. — Al-Rai and Al-Anbaa

### 0.5 PERCENT MEDS EXPIRE AT MINISTRY'S WAREHOUSES

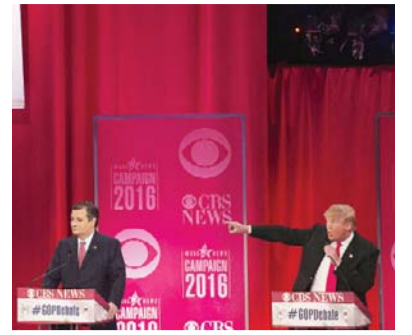
KUWAIT: Health Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Medicine and Medical Supplies Affairs Dr Omar Al-Sayed Omar said the percentage of medicines that expire at central medical stores do not exceed 0.5 percent of total medicines that enter the warehouses each year. He said this percentage is not considered a waste, but rather natural and may exceed that in some countries for various reasons. He said the small percentage mentioned are of strategic medicines which include vaccines for epidemics such as H1N1 and emergency medicines and supplies in the event of any catastrophes or radioactive leak. — Al-Rai

## COUNTRIES PRESENT OFFERS TO RESOLVE BEDOONS' ISSUE

KUWAIT: Chairman of the Central System for the Remedy of Status of Illegal Residents (CSRSIR) Saleh Al-Fadhlah denied any differences of views between CSRSIR and Interior Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Nationality and Residency Affairs Sheikh Mazen Al-Jarrah over resolving the issue.

Fadhlah answered a question about media reports claiming that there are differences in views following comments by Fadhlah on Sheikh Mazen's proposals during the meeting that took place with Human Rights Watch. "Sheikh Mazen is a distinguished patriotic personality and a competent leader. He has valued ideas and views on many issues, including on illegal residents," he said.

Fadhlah said the central system is ready to deal with concerned authorities in and outside Kuwait, and that he has received offers to help from several countries in order to resolve bedoons' issues. — Al-Rai



**Republican slugfest overshadows policy talk**

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## LOVE IN THE TIME OF CIVIL STRIFE

SYRIAN LOVERS TORN APART BY WAR ON VALENTINE'S DAY



**QAMISHLI:** A Syrian girl arranges flowers at a shop displaying Valentine's Day gifts. —AFP

**DAMASCUS:** Syrian Amir Al-Halabi is once again alone this Valentine's Day, separated from his sweetheart by the war that has left the lovers on opposite sides of the divided city of Aleppo. Halabi, 20, is a photojournalist living in the rebel-held east of Aleppo city, a once-thriving economic hub that has been devastated by Syria's conflict that began in March 2011. His sweetheart Ranim lives in the government-controlled west of the city, which has been divided between regime and opposition control since mid-2012. "We've been in love for six years," he said. "We celebrated Valentine's Day together in 2010 and 2011 before the city was divided. "Since then, we communicate via Skype but we haven't been able to see each other in person or to celebrate Valentine's together." The city and the rebel-held area north of Aleppo province have recently been the target of a major government offensive backed by Russian airpower and allied militias. The fighting has seen government troops virtually encircle the east of the city, and seize key territory to the north, displacing tens of thousands of people. The operation is just the latest chapter in Syria's bloody conflict, which began with anti-government protests but spiraled into a war that has killed more than 260,000 people and displaced more than half the population. Despite the turmoil, Halabi's mind is still on Ranim. "This year I decided to prepare a simple surprise for her and send it with a friend who was able to travel to the west a few days ago," he said, keeping the surprise a secret. "I hope the Internet connection will be good," he added sadly, "so I can at least contact her via Skype to celebrate Valentine's Day."

Damascus. He has carved the name of his wife Hiyam into the wooden part of his firearm and plans to send her a photo of it for his Valentine's Day gift. "I never celebrated Valentine's in the past, but being away from my wife makes me feel the beauty of this holiday," he said. "All I can do is try to find a way to make her happy, so I'm going to take this picture and send it to her."

In an adjacent room at the outpost, 24-year-old soldier Abdel Rahman has set aside the casing of a mortar shell that landed outside Douma, which he plans to turn into a present for his girlfriend. "I saw a foreign film once in which the hero filled a mortar shell with flowers and gave it to his lover like a vase and I'm planning to do the same," he said.

Unlike most of his colleagues, Abdel Rahman will be able to present his gift in person, having arranged to take leave this Valentine's Day after spending the last two on the frontline. "I'm going to surprise her by going back to Homs" in central Syria, he said.

**A devastating injury**

While the war has torn many couples apart, it was while training as a field paramedic in the rebel-held eastern part of Aleppo city that 21-year-old Nureddin Othman met his love, Yasmine. But the new couple was unable to celebrate Valentine's Day together last year, after Othman was wounded by a government helicopter raid, forcing him to go to Turkey for treatment.

He had to have his foot amputated, but was eventually able to return to Syria, where he hoped to be reunited with Yasmine. "I came back three months ago, and I was hoping that we would be together this Valentine's Day, but her family rejected me," he said. "I know very well that it's because I'm now permanently disabled." He is still holding out hope that the pair will eventually be together. "I won't be able to celebrate Valentine's with her this year, but I won't give in to despair, and I'll continue trying to convince her family." —AFP

**Mortar shell vase**

Elsewhere in the country, Syrian government soldier Jihad al-Ashqar said he will spend the holiday manning an army post outside the besieged rebel stronghold of Douma in Eastern Ghouta near







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## MCCAIN CRITICIZES SYRIA TRUCE DEAL, SEES RUSSIA AMBITIONS

**MUNICH:** Senior Republican Sen John McCain sharply criticized the deal to seek a temporary truce in Syria, arguing yesterday that Russia is engaging in "diplomacy in the service of military aggression." Diplomats from a group of countries that have interests in Syria's five-year civil war, including the US, Russia, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Iran, agreed on Friday to seek a temporary "cessation of hostilities" within a week. They also agreed to "accelerate and expand" deliveries of humanitarian aid to besieged Syrian communities beginning this week.

It remains unclear whether those commitments can be made to stick on the ground and whether deep differences regarding the truce and which groups would be eligible for it - between the US

and Russia among others - can be overcome. The truce deal in Munich comes as Syrian government forces, aided by a Russian bombing campaign, are trying to encircle rebels in Aleppo, the country's largest city, and cut off their supply route to Turkey.

### Bombing terrorists

"I wish I could share the views of some of my friends who see this agreement as a potential breakthrough but unfortunately I do not," McCain, who chairs the Senate Armed Services Committee, said at the Munich Security Conference. "Let's be clear about what this agreement does: it permits the assault on Aleppo to continue for another week. It requires opposition groups to stop fighting, but it

allows Russia to continue bombing terrorists - which it insists is everyone, even civilians," he said.

"If Russia or the (President Bashar) Assad regime violates this agreement, what are the consequences?" he asked. "I don't see any," McCain said that Russian President Vladimir Putin "is not interested in being our partner. He wants to shore up the Assad regime. He wants to re-establish Russia as a major power in the Middle East."

"This is diplomacy in the service of military aggression and it's working because we are letting it," he said. The head of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council, which includes key rebel backers Saudi Arabia and Qatar, offered a more upbeat assessment. He said the agree-

ment to cease hostilities is a "signal of hope" and was optimistic that it could be achieved.

"It is an opportunity for us to turn our undivided attention on Daesh, which is probably the single most challenging global threat," said GCC Secretary General Abdullah Al-Zayani, using the Arabic acronym for the Islamic State group. "This is a chance to work together on an issue that unites and doesn't divide."

He added that it was also an opportunity to deliver humanitarian aid desperately needed by Syrian civilians. McCain and Al-Zayani were speaking on the final day of the three-day Munich conference, an annual gathering of foreign and security policy leaders.

Earlier yesterday, Somalia's president

said military forces have made inroads in their fight against Al-Shabab militants but the key to defeating them lies in providing better opportunities for the country's youth. President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud said 70 percent of his country's population is under 35 and have grown up in the chaos of a lawless state after the government collapsed in 1991. That, he said, has left them "very, very vulnerable to be recruited by the evil forces" like Al-Qaida-linked Al-Shabab.

Mohamud said many of those fighting for Al-Shabab "are not there for ideological reasons, they are there for economic reasons ... to feed their families." Somalia faces regular Al-Shabab attacks even after driving them from the capital, Mogadishu, in 2011.



**QAMISHLI:** A Kurdish teacher teaches during a class at the Musa Bin Nusayr school in the northeastern Syrian city. — AFP

## FOR KURDS, NEW CURRICULUM IN ONCE-BANNED LANGUAGE

'LANGUAGE IS PART OF THE SURVIVAL OF A PEOPLE'

**QAMISHLI:** Lined up in a chilly schoolyard in northeast Syria, primary school students say good morning to their teachers in the Kurdish language before rushing inside for class: "Roj bas, mamuste!" The Kurdish language was once banned by the government in Damascus, but now the local semi-autonomous government has rolled out an entire curriculum for primary school students in Kurdish in parts of the territory under its control.

The curriculum is currently being taught alongside the government's Arabic-language program at institutions like the Musa Bin Nasir School in the city of Qamishli. "I'm learning and writing the Kurdish alphabet in my notebook," said six-year-old Brefa Hussein proudly. "Our teachers tell us stories and teach us the names of animals and flowers," said Brefa, whose parents were forbidden from learning Kurdish.

The new curriculum has been developed by the autonomous Kurdish administration, which runs its own government institutions, security forces and now schools in parts of northern and northeast Syria. The administration took over when government forces withdrew from Kurdish areas in 2012, a year after Syria's popular uprising erupted.

There were around three million Kurds in Syria before the war, though not all identified primarily as Kurdish. The minority was heavily discriminated against prior to Syria's uprising, with their language banned in official contexts and hundreds of thousands denied passports and banned from public sector jobs. But with the withdrawal of government forces from majority Kurdish areas, the minority has begun to assert itself, including reviving its language.

Bundled in coats and hats to stay warm, children

sprint into different classrooms at the school. While Arab students will follow the existing Arabic program developed by Syria's government, Kurdish students now study a Kurdish curriculum that their own administration began implementing in the 2015-2016 academic year.

### 86,000 students

More than 86,000 students are being taught by about 3,830 instructors in schools run by the autonomous administration, says deputy head of education Samira Haj Ali. The new curriculum has already been rolled out for primary school students, though older pupils are still studying the government's curriculum until an alternative is developed.

Haj Ali says the autonomous administration eventually plans to also implement its own Arabic- and Syriac-language curricula next year. It has set up teaching institutes to train instructors on the Kurdish curriculum and is planning to open similar centers once its Arabic and Syriac programs are ready.

The administration's move has been controversial: Syria's government has shuttered its schools in the affected areas and refused to pay teachers using the Kurdish curriculum. And even some Kurdish parents have pulled their children out of the new independent schools. Amina Berro, an English language teacher and a Kurd, transferred her children to a government-run school in protest at the new Kurdish program.

Her children were studying the Arabic curriculum, but she said she was uncomfortable having the new programs side-by-side. "The Kurdish curricula is not recognized and the teachers are not capable enough," she told AFP. Berro said she supports teaching the

Kurdish language as a subject matter, but not an entire curriculum being taught in the language. Some of the students in Qamishli's schools are Arabs displaced from elsewhere in the country. Nine-year-old Riham Al-Ahmad and her family sought safety there after fleeing clashes in Syria's second city Aleppo.

### 'Language is survival'

After trying the Kurdish curriculum, she moved to the Arabic section at Musa Bin Nasir. "I'm really happy when I'm with my classmates. In the beginning, it was hard to get used to them. Qamishli is a foreign city for me and people speak a language I don't understand," she said. "But now things are easier because I understand very well," she added excitedly.

For Kurdish families, learning the native language represents the realization of a childhood dream. Jana Musa, a 21-year-old Kurdish language teacher, said she hopes "that all students will learn their mother tongue." "We're teaching them the alphabet and the subject of social issues," Musa said, wearing a thick green coat as she corrected students' assignments.

Jamil Murad, a 44-year-old director, learned the Kurdish language in secret while growing up. He is thrilled that his eight-year-old son, Raman, can now do the same in the open. "Language is part of the survival of a people," he said. In a candle-lit room in northeast Syria, Murad was helping Raman complete his homework. For Murad, teaching the Kurdish language is an investment in his people's future. "The biggest achievement by the autonomous administration... was in teaching tens of thousands of its children their mother tongue," he said. "They are our future, even if the scales are tipped against us." — AFP

## THREE PALESTINIAN TEENAGERS KILLED IN SEPARATE INCIDENTS

**JERUSALEM:** Three Palestinian teenagers were shot and killed while attempting to attack Israeli security forces in two separate incidents in the West Bank on Sunday, the Israeli military and police said.

In the first incident, the military said two Palestinians were throwing rocks at passing vehicles near the West Bank city of Jenin and when forces arrived at the scene the Palestinians opened fire at them. The soldiers fired back and killed two Palestinians, the military said, adding that no soldiers were wounded in the exchange.

The Palestinian Health Ministry identified the two Palestinians as Nihad Waked and Fouad Waked, both 15 years old. They were from the same extended family in the West Bank village of al-Araka, near Jenin, but were not close relatives.

Later, at a West Bank security checkpoint on the outskirts of Jerusalem, a Palestinian gripping a knife ran at Israeli paramilitary border police officers, and an officer shot and killed him, Israeli police said. No Israeli officers were wounded. The Palestinian Health Ministry identified the Palestinian as 17-year-old Naim Safi of Abadiya village near Bethlehem.

In the last five months, Palestinian stabbings, shootings and vehicular assaults

have killed 27 Israelis. At least 160 Palestinians, the majority of whom Israel says were attackers, have been killed by Israeli fire. Israel says the ongoing violence is fueled by a campaign of incitement by Palestinian leaders that is compounded on social media sites that glorify attacks. Palestinians say it stems from frustration at nearly five decades of Israeli rule and dwindling hopes for gaining independence.

Also Sunday, a watchdog group said Israel began building 1,800 new settlement homes in the West Bank in 2015. Peace Now, a dovish Israeli group that tracks settlement construction, said most of the building has taken place in isolated settlements in areas of the West Bank that Israel would likely evacuate in the event of a peace agreement with the Palestinians.

Israel captured the West Bank, Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem in the 1967 Mideast War and built settlements there. Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005, but nearly 600,000 Israeli settlers remain in east Jerusalem and the West Bank. The Palestinians claim these areas as parts of a future state, a position that has wide global support. They view Israeli settlement construction as a major obstacle to resolving the conflict. — AP



**JENIN:** Palestinian mourners cry over the body of Nihad Waked, 15, who was shot dead by Israeli troops with Fouad Waked, 15, during their funeral in the village of Aeraqh near the West Bank city. — AP

## FOUR EMIRATIS SENTENCED TO DEATH FOR JOINING IS

**ABU DHABI:** A top court in the United Arab Emirates yesterday sentenced four Emiratis to death after convicting them of joining the Islamic State jihadist group in Syria, local media reported. The four, who were tried in absentia, are part of a group of 11 defendants accused of "joining the terrorist Daesh group in an Arab country", the official WAM news agency said, using an Arabic acronym for IS.

Local newspapers said that the group had travelled to Syria. They were also charged with "promoting" IS online, helping to finance the group and insulting UAE leaders, WAM said. Three other Emiratis, a Bahraini, a Mauritanian and a Syrian were handed jail sentences of between three and 10 years, the local Gulf News daily reported. Another Emirati was acquitted.

Abu Dhabi's Federal Supreme Court does not allow international media access to such trials. The UAE is a member of the US-led coalition that has been bombing IS

jihadists in Iraq and Syria since September 2014. UAE authorities have enacted tougher anti-terror legislation, including harsher jail terms and even introducing the death penalty for crimes linked to religious hatred and extremist groups.

In July, the UAE executed an Emirati woman for the jihadist-inspired 2014 murder of an American school teacher in an Abu Dhabi shopping mall. Her husband is accused of seeking to carry out attacks on targets including Abu Dhabi's Formula 1 circuit and has reportedly claimed to be the local leader of IS. He is currently on trial.

In another case, the same court jailed three Arabs for 10 years each after convicting them of ties to the Shiite Houthi rebels in Yemen, WAM said yesterday. It acquitted three others for lack of evidence against them, it added. The UAE is also playing a key role in a Saudi-led coalition that has been battling the Houthis and their allies in Yemen since March last year. — AFP

## TWO KILLED IN SAUDI-LED AIR STRIKE ON YEMEN WORKSHOP

**SANAA:** A Saudi-led coalition air strike on a sewing workshop killed at least two people and wounded 15 in the rebel-held Yemeni capital yesterday, the owner said. "Two employees, including a 14-year-old boy, were killed and 15

others wounded in the overnight air raid," Faisal Al-Musaabi said.

A search was underway for another employee still buried under the rubble of the building in the east of Sanaa, he added. The coalition has been carrying

out air strikes against Iran-backed rebels across Yemen since March. The rebels, who have controlled Sanaa since September 2014, reported a higher death toll of 11 employees killed and four others wounded in the strike on

the workshop, according to their saba-news.net website. The United Nations says more than 6,100 people have been killed in Yemen's conflict since the coalition began its raids, about half of them civilians.

Yesterday, Human Rights Watch accused the Saudi-led coalition of using US-supplied cluster bombs in Yemen, causing civilian casualties. "Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners, as well as their US supplier, are blatantly disregarding the global standard that says cluster munitions should never be used under any circumstances," said HRW's arms director Steve Goose.

One type of air-dropped cluster munition used by the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen, the US-manufactured CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapon, has "harmed civilians in at least two attacks," Goose said. "The evidence raises serious questions about compliance with US cluster munition policy and export rules," he added.

"The Saudi-led coalition should investigate evidence that civilians are being harmed in these attacks and immediately stop using them," said Goose. The coalition last month announced that an independent inquiry would examine charges of possible abuses against civilians in the conflict. — AFP



**SANAA:** Yemenis inspect the damage at a sewing workshop that was hit by a Saudi-led coalition air strike. — AFP

## EGYPT RETRY POLICEMAN JAILED OVER PROTESTER'S SHOOTING

**CAIRO:** Egypt's top court yesterday annulled a 15-year jail sentence for a policeman accused of the fatal shooting of a female protester and ordered his retrial, a court official said. Shaima Al-Sabbagh was struck by birdshot in January 2015 as police dispersed a small march on the eve of the fourth anniversary of the uprising that toppled President Hosni Mubarak.

A lower court sentenced Lieutenant Yassin Mohamed Hatem, 23, to 15 years in prison after convicting him of "battery that led to death". Hatem's trial was a rare legal proceeding against policemen charged over protester deaths since the army's ouster of Islamist president Mohamed Morsi in 2013.

Yesterday, the Court of Cassation annulled the lower court's order after accepting an appeal filed by Hatem and ordered a retrial, a court official said. His lawyer Gamil Sayid confirmed yesterday's decision. "It just proves that my client was innocent from the start," Sayid said, adding that Hatem, who is currently in jail, would soon be freed.

The Court of Cassation did not immediately give its reason for annulling the previous judgment and a new trial date has yet to be fixed. Sabbagh's death triggered outrage in Egypt and abroad. Part of the incident that led to her death was captured on film, prompting President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi to publicly demand that the perpetrator be brought to justice.

Sabbagh was hit on January 24, 2015 on the eve of the fourth anniversary of the anti-Mubarak uprising when police dispersed a peaceful protest that had been organized by her Socialist Popular Alliance, a small leftist party. Marchers had been carrying a wreath to a monument in Cairo's Tahrir Square to commemorate the deaths of protesters during the 2011 revolt.

Tahrir Square was the epicentre of that uprising and the scene of violent confrontations between police and protesters. Dozens of policemen were tried for protester deaths after the revolt against Mubarak, which had been partly fuelled by police abuses. But most were acquitted. — AFP



# GOP SLUGFEST OVERSHADOWS POLICY TALK

## CRUZ, BUSH AND TRUMP GET NASTY; VERBAL BLOWS EXCHANGED

**GREENVILLE:** The Republican presidential race veered into vicious personal attacks Saturday as White House hopefuls brawled in their latest debate, with frontrunner Donald Trump and Jeb Bush locking horns in some of the campaign's most pointed clashes to date.

The showdown, the ninth of the months-long battle for the Republican nomination, began with a respectful moment of silence for iconic conservative US Supreme Court justice Antonin Scalia who died suddenly earlier in the day.

But with a primary just one week away in South Carolina, a state where national politics often gets dragged into the mud, the debate in Greenville quickly turned nasty and divisive, with billionaire Trump, former Florida governor Bush, and Senator Ted Cruz exchanging heated verbal blows. "You are the single biggest liar," Trump told Cruz when the Texas senator challenged him on his previous support for liberal policies.

### 'Big fat mistake'

Trump, visibly irritated, repeatedly interrupted his rivals, especially Bush, whose momentum he is seeking to blunt in a state where his dynastic family remains popular. He went after Bush on foreign policy and immigration, and lambasted Jeb's brother president George W Bush's war in Iraq as "a big fat mistake."

He even said Jeb's mother should have been the 2016 Bush candidate instead of her son. "Jeb is so wrong," Trump sneered, to loud boos from the audience. Bush parried back, hitting Trump's suggestion he could work with Russia to combat the Islamic State jihadist group in Syria and Iraq,

and saying the real estate magnate gets his foreign policy advice from "the shows," referring to weekly Sunday morning talk shows.

"While Donald Trump was building a reality TV show, my brother was building a security apparatus to keep us safe. And I'm proud of what he did," Bush fumed. "The World Trade Center came down during your brother's reign," Trump shot back. "Remember that." It was an extraordinary back and forth on the national stage, with candidates often ignoring the moderators and going after each other in perhaps the most aggressive exchanges of the nine Republican debates to date. "We're in danger of driving this into the dirt," one of the CBS debate moderators said at one point.

### 'Sick of negative campaigning'

With the first two nomination contests in Iowa and New Hampshire under their collective belt, the candidates vying to be their party's standard bearer are blanketing the so-called Palmetto State known for its bare-knuckle politics. Cruz won Iowa, with Trump finishing an embarrassing second after proclaiming for weeks he would win. But The Donald bounced back to win New Hampshire, and holds a substantial lead in South Carolina. The state holds its Republican primary February 20, the same day Democrats vote in Nevada for either Hillary Clinton or Bernie Sanders.

Trump, whose insurgent campaign has turned the presidential race on its head, on Friday made legal threats against his nearest rival Cruz, who was born in Canada, claiming the latter is not a "natural born citizen" and therefore

unqualified to run for president. But the most memorable clashes Saturday were between Trump and Bush, who has stepped up his aggressive campaigning and criticism of Trump.

John Kasich, who placed an impressive second in New Hampshire, has sought to keep his head above water in the more conservative, more evangelical South Carolina. On the debate stage he steered clear of the daggers. "I don't want to get into all this fighting tonight because people are frankly sick of the negative campaigning," he said. The broad Republican field has narrowed to six candidates, including retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson.

Meanwhile, campaigns and their supporters have saturated South Carolina's airwaves with negative advertising, including a harsh take-down of Trump by a pro-Bush group that criticized Trump for denigrating women, associating with the Clintons and for insulting decorated war heroes. Despite the feuding, the Republican hopefuls came together as one to oppose President Barack Obama nominating a successor to Scalia on the Supreme Court.

To a man, they said it was vital that Obama not be allowed to fill Scalia's vacant seat, arguing it was too close to the November 2016 election for him to exert that authority. Rubio, seeking a breakout moment after fizzling in New Hampshire, said Obama should not move to fill Scalia's seat, noting lame duck presidents in their final year in office have not had a Supreme Court nominee confirmed for decades. If he did, he would "ram down our throat a liberal justice, like the ones Barack Obama has imposed on us already," he said. —AFP



**GREENVILLE:** Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump gestures towards fellow candidate Jeb Bush (left) as they argue through candidate Ted Cruz (center) during the CBS News Republican Presidential Debate. — AFP

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## UKRAINE'S GRAFT PROBLEM TESTS WESTERN PATIENCE AND RESOLVE

**KIEV:** Ukraine's failure to fight state graft is testing the patience of its Western allies and threatening renewed economic and political chaos in a country still healing the wounds of war. The latest and perhaps sternest warning to the pro-EU team of President Petro Poroshenko came Wednesday from IMF chief Christine Lagarde, the architect and one of the most ardent supporters of Ukraine's huge financial rescue plan.

"I am concerned about Ukraine's slow progress in improving governance and fighting corruption," the International Monetary Fund's managing director said in an unusually strongly-worded statement. "Ukraine risks a return to the pattern of failed economic policies that has plagued its recent history."

Lagarde's message struck at the heart of concerns of Ukrainians who joined three months of enthusiastic but ultimately bloody protests that brought down the ex-Soviet republic's Russian-backed leadership in February 2014. Polls show public frustration with Poroshenko and Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk mounting and hopes ebbing away

that Ukraine was finally ridding itself of mind-numbing bureaucracy and bribe-taking.

That angst was encapsulated by this month's resignation of reform-minded Aivaras Abromavicius as economy minister in protest at alleged influence-peddling by one of the most senior members of the president's inner circle. Abromavicius said he could no longer withstand pressure from shadowy business interests that were trying to seize the cash flows of the vast but opaque defence and energy industries.

US State Department spokesman John Kirby called Abromavicius "one of those leaders who put Ukraine's interests above any personal interests of his own." Kirby's statement appeared to signal Washington's worry that the new breed of Kiev leaders it had put its trust in were reverting to old habits of standing up for their respective business clans.

"The current crisis in Ukrainian politics is, first of all, a crisis of no confidence," experts from the George Soros-founded International Renaissance Foundation and 18

other Ukrainian research centres wrote in a letter to the president. "For the consistent pursuit of reforms, there are only two ways out of this political crisis: a government cleanup and creation of a technocratic and professional government, or early elections—probably not only parliamentary but also presidential ones."

### 'Apocalyptic alternatives'

That prospect may have been one of the factors prompting Poroshenko to vow in a subsequent phone conversation with Lagarde to draw up "a roadmap of top-priority reforms that will give a boost to Ukraine-IMF relations." The IMF chief had said bluntly that it was "hard to see how the (\$40-billion, 35-billion-euro) IMF-supported program can continue" without Ukraine making good on its promise to take radical streamlining steps ignored in the past.

But both Yatsenyuk and Poroshenko know they cannot survive without foreign assistance and that early legislative polls could return to power Russian-backed

deputies who just might be enticed into warming Kiev's frozen relations with Moscow. Ukraine's central bank chief further also warned that the mounting uncertainty was putting renewed pressure on the hryvnia just as it was starting to find its footing from a 68-percent slide against the dollar since the start of 2014. "Without IMF support, we should expect devaluation and social instability," said Anatoliy Otkysyuk of Kiev's International Centre for Policy Studies. "The alternatives (to IMF support) are not even currently being considered because they are all apocalyptic," Otkysyuk said.

### Forfeiting modest gains

Yatsenyuk will have all these unsavory prospects in mind when he accounts for his performance before Ukraine's increasingly agitated parliament on Tuesday. He foreshadowed his performance on Thursday by promising foreign audits and new independent directors for Ukraine's top 50 state-held firms. But many lawmakers have been sharpening their knives in advance of Yatsenyuk's

appearance as they consider a possible vote of no confidence in the government. They had already shown their resolve by blocking a constitutional change pushed by Poroshenko that the West hoped would end Ukraine's 21-month separatist conflict by giving rebel-run parts of the status to pro-Russian rebel-run parts of the east.

Analysts believe that deputies' instinctive desire to keep their jobs and avoid snap elections will keep Yatsenyuk in place and lead only to a minor government shakeup aimed primarily at preserving the current coalition intact. "If the government fails in Kiev, it will have a direct effect on political and economic support from the West. Ukraine's many skeptics will gain the upper hand, and its few friends will face a steep uphill struggle," said Joerg Forbrig of the US-based German Marshall Fund policy research institute. "Reduced assistance—whether political, financial, administrative or military—will eventually forfeit the modest gains Ukraine has made and expose the country's many vulnerabilities," Forbrig said. — AFP

## MERKEL ISOLATED AS EUROPEAN ALLIES SLAM DOOR ON REFUGEES

### LONE FIGURE FOR 'SOLIDARITY' ON REFUGEE CRISIS

**MUNICH:** Abandoned by France, defied by Eastern Europe, German Chancellor Angela Merkel cuts a lonely figure in her struggle for EU "solidarity" on the refugee crisis ahead of a Brussels summit. Merkel is battling for a deal that will see refugees more evenly spread around the European Union after Germany welcomed 1.1 million asylum seekers last year.

But instead, eastern European countries are planning new razor wire fences, and even Paris traditionally Berlin's closest EU ally has shown little enthusiasm for Merkel's welcome policy. French Prime Minister Manuel Valls said Saturday that the mood in France was "not favorable" to Merkel's call for a permanent quota system.

"Europe cannot take in all the migrants from Syria, Iraq or Africa," Valls told German media. "It has to regain control over its borders, over its migration or asylum policies." US Secretary of State John Kerry praised Merkel for showing "great courage in helping so many that need so

much" amid "the gravest humanitarian crisis in Europe since World War II". But he also told the Munich Security Conference that the mass influx spells a "near existential... threat to the politics and fabric of life in Europe".

### 'Total failure'

Another guest in Munich, Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, took a far darker view, charging that "it's quite simply stupid to open Europe's doors wide and invite in everyone who wants to come to your country".

"European migration policy is a total failure, all that is absolutely frightening," he told the Handelsblatt daily.

A number of EU nations that were once in Russia's Cold War orbit seem to agree. Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia plan to meet Monday to discuss how to close down the main refugee route through the Balkans, reported Germany's Spiegel news weekly. "As long as there is no common European strategy, it is

legitimate that the nations along the Balkans route protect their borders," Slovak Foreign Minister Miroslav Lajcak told the magazine.

He also opposed Merkel's plan for an EU quota system, saying "quotas only increase the incentives for migration". At the other end of the route, Austria's foreign minister warned Macedonia on Friday that it should be ready to close its border to migrants coming up from Greece. Vienna also plans to impose a cap on refugees and may start turning them away in the coming months.

### 'Coalition of willing'

Merkel, long dubbed the "Queen of Europe", has seen poll numbers drop at home, coalition members rebel and EU allies duck away as the refugee crisis has sparked deep discord and threatened the bloc's system of open borders. She has pledged to reduce arrivals by more quickly turning away "economic refugees" and combating traffickers, including through a new NATO surveillance mission in the Aegean Sea.

Meanwhile, her government has urged fellow Europeans to remember their core humanitarian values. "How can a continent of 500 million citizens see its foundations shaken... by 1.5 million or 2 million refugees?" said Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen in Munich. Merkel said Friday there was "a group of countries" that may voluntarily accept more refugees in exchange for redoubled efforts from Turkey to tackle illegal immigration.

She did not name the members, but at a EU summit in December, Germany gathered officials from Austria, Belgium, Finland, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Sweden. Merkel is planning to bring together what the media have dubbed a "coalition of the willing" on the margins of a two-day EU summit in Brussels starting Thursday.

She suggested its members could help Turkey's refugee effort beyond the three billion euros (\$3.3 billion) already committed by the EU. Turkey, which is hosting over 2.7 million mostly Syrian refugees, has voiced deep frustration with the EU as a fresh wave of Syrian refugees mass on its border. Angry over calls that Turkey should do more, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said last week that his nation could throw out its existing refugees, threatening to fly and bus them to Europe. "We do not have the word 'idiot' written on our foreheads," he said. "We will be patient, but we will do what we have to. Don't think that the planes and the buses are there for nothing." — AFP



**NICOSIA:** Cameroonian Ibrahim Yonga (left), 18-years-old, speaks to a woman about escaping the Boko Haram group in Cameroon and spending months at sea in a bid to reach Europe, during an event titled "Human Library" organized by a Cypriot NGO at a café. — AFP

## MIGRANTS SHARE THEIR TALES AT CYPRUS 'HUMAN LIBRARY'

**NICOSIA:** Inside a vintage-style Cypriot cafe, 18-year-old Ibrahim Yonga recounts to a stranger how he escaped the Boko Haram group in Cameroon and spent months at sea to reach Europe. Seated at tables nearby, a Palestinian, a Congolese and a Sudanese also share their tales with members of the public, against a soothing background of light acoustic music.

A Cypriot non-governmental organization had invited them to the cafe in Nicosia's old town to become "human books" for the evening. To add a human touch to an often complex and troubling news story, it invited eight people from the Mediterranean island's around 6,000 refugees and 2,500 asylum seekers to tell their stories.

Founded in Denmark in 2000, the Human Library's motto is "to build a positive framework for conversations that can challenge stereotypes and prejudices through dialogue." The Human Library is a place where real people are on loan to readers," it says. Cyprus has since 2009 hosted events at which participants can consult not a book but a fellow human being with an experience to share.

The library aims to add a new perspective, said Cypriot volunteer Margarita Kapsou, who shuffled between tables to make sure guests rotate every half an hour. On a chart on the wall, green bits of cardboard showed which human books had become available, as volunteer translators offered to be "human dictionaries".

### 'Really intense'

After Yonga escaped his Boko Haram cap-

tors—whom he describes as "brutal" he fled Cameroon by fishing boat, leaving his family behind, before boarding a larger ship. "The captain took care of us and we didn't pay anything," he said. "Some were working on the ship. They gave me first aid." "One day, the captain put us in touch with another ship that took us to Cyprus."

He now lives at the Kofinou refugee camp, home to almost 400 asylum seekers in the Greek Cypriot south of the divided island. "The showers are broken, the water's freezing and the rooms are dirty," he said, looking down at the cafe's tiled floor. "But we don't have any choice." "I thought my life was over but the Cypriot government welcomed me," he said.

Theano Stellaki, a local in her sixties, said she was "very moved" by Yonga's story. "We hear about this every day on television but it's different to be confronted with it directly," she said. Jeremy, a French tennis teacher living in Cyprus, said he was "swept up by the force of the stories". But "the stories are really intense so, after two 'books', I need a break," he said. On arrival, guests receive a code of conduct asking them to "treat the 'books' with respect." "They share personal things so it's important that they feel comfortable and safe," Kapsou explained. In a corner of the room, 42-year-old Kamal lifted his woolly hat in the dimmed light to show a scar where a bullet had grazed his skull as he fled the war in Sudan some 16 years ago. He had felt "almost nothing". Some of the evening's "readers" said they had feared the experience would be voyeuristic, but were surprised by how uninhibited most of the storytellers were. — AFP



**MAGDEBURG:** German Chancellor Angela Merkel speaks during the launch of the election campaign of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) party for state elections. — AFP

## HAITI ELECTS SENATE CHIEF AS PROVISIONAL PRESIDENT

**PORT-AU-PRINCE:** A majority of Haitian lawmakers yesterday chose the country's Senate chief to lead a caretaker government that will fill the void left by last week's departure of former President Michel Martelly and perhaps ease lingering tensions that recently pushed the deeply polarized nation into political crisis.

In the early hours yesterday, Jocelerme Privert was elected as provisional president and sworn in after a lengthy session by Haiti's bicameral legislature. He was one of three candidates vying to lead an interim government that's only supposed to last 120 days.

His new position will be that of a power-broker who hopefully carries enough weight to smooth political divisions that have left Haiti without an elected president or a completed Parliament. Prime Minister Evans Paul remains in office for now, but Privert and lawmakers are expected to confirm a No. 2 official in coming days. During a speech to lawmakers hours before the final vote, Privert vowed to lead a caretaker administration that would "foster confidence within all sectors of society," ensure stability and see that suspended elections are held "as soon as possible." He became president of a caretaker government after 3 am EDT following a second round of voting that put him over the top with 13 votes from senators and 64 votes from lower house deputies.

### Closed-door negotiations

There was a lengthy period of closed-door negotiations after an initial round gave Privert just two votes more than candidate Edgard Leblanc, a former Senate president who was being backed by Martelly's political faction.

Martelly, who was barred by Haiti's constitution from seeking a consecutive term as president, departed office a week ago without a new elected leader in place. A runoff presidential election was delayed for a second time last month amid violent opposition protests and deep public suspicions about vote rigging in favor of his chosen successor. Less than 24 hours before Martelly was set to step down, top Haitian leaders cobbled together plans for a short-term provisional government and a roadmap to hold the postponed presidential and legislative runoff. As Senate chief, Privert was a central figure in those talks. Privert, who is scheduled to be formally installed later yesterday, faces an uphill battle in bringing the troubled country together. In recent days, some demonstrators took to the capital's streets to protest against Privert's inclusion as a candidate for provisional president, while his supporters marched to support him.

It's a dramatic transformation for Privert, who was imprisoned for over two years during Haiti's last provisional government in 2004. Charges that were eventually dismissed alleged the former Cabinet minister orchestrated a massacre of former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's opponents during the buildup to an armed rebellion, but Privert always maintained he was a political prisoner and had no involvement in any killings.

Privert recently told The Associated Press that a new electoral council will be created soon to ensure that the postponed runoff is fair and transparent. That vote is tentatively scheduled for April 24, but Privert has stressed that the council is responsible for setting the date and all other electoral matters. — AP

## CAR VOTERS SEEK LEADER TO END CHAOS, SOLIDIFY PEACE

**BANGUI:** Central African Republic went ahead with a presidential runoff vote yesterday that many hope will solidify the country's tentative peace after more than two years of sectarian fighting left thousands dead and nearly 1 million people displaced including most of the capital's Muslim population.

Armored UN personnel carriers roamed the streets of Bangui as residents headed to the polls not long after sunrise. Some 2,000 UN peacekeepers are deployed in the capital while 8,000 others were working to secure the vote in the largely anarchic provinces.

Residents said they planned to set aside painful memories of the chaos that intensified in late 2013 when Christian militia fighters known as the anti-Balaka attacked Bangui, unleashing cycles of retaliatory violence with mostly Muslim Seleka fighters. At the height of the violence people were killed and dismembered by mobs in the capital's streets. More than 460,000 people fled for their lives to neighboring countries, many aboard trucks that came under attack even as refugees tried to leave.

### Political dispute

The conflict at the time was a political dispute over who would lead Central African Republic, but it divided communities among religious fault lines: Hundreds of mosques and churches were destroyed, interreligious marriages unraveled. A new spasm of violence late last year effectively barricaded most of Bangui's remaining Muslims inside the PK5 neighborhood for several months.

Now voters are being given a choice of two former prime ministers - both promising to unite the country and bring the peace people here desperately want. Front-runner Anicet Georges Dologuele received about 24 percent in the first round and also

was endorsed by the third-place finisher. However, Faustin Archange Touadera has strong grassroots support after placing second in the December ballot.

Noel Poutou, 74, is a lifelong resident of the PK5 neighborhood, never venturing outside it over the last two years. Even when bloody stones on the ground marked where fellow Muslims had been beaten to death by mobs, he stayed.

"Everything has a beginning and an end," he said with his wooden cane at his side, dressed in a deep

green traditional Muslim tunic and white prayer hat. "For me, this is the end of the crisis. Everyone here has lost loved ones and friends. I ask God to bring peace so that people can forget and become a family here again." Voters lining up at 6 am in the Fatima district of the capital said they too hoped the vote would bring a definitive end to the violence. Tensions, though, were high as some were momentarily blocked from voting because they did not have photo identification along with their voting cards. — AP



**BANGUI:** French Sangar forces patrol in muslim district of PK 5 in Bangui as people go to the polls to take part in the Central African Republic second round of the presidential and legislative elections. — AFP

## PROTESTS IN INDIA OVER STUDENT LEADER ARREST

**NEW DELHI:** Students and teachers staged a fresh protest in New Delhi yesterday over a union leader's arrest at a top Indian university for sedition, accusing the government of cracking down on dissent. Police on Friday arrested student union leader Kanhaiya Kumar at Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University over a campus rally days earlier to mark the anniversary of a Kashmiri separatist's execution.

Mohammed Afzal Guru was hanged in 2013 following his conviction over an attack on the Indian parliament in 2001 that left 10 people dead. Kumar has been accused of "anti-Indian" behaviour at Tuesday's rally, during which some protesters allegedly shouted support for Guru and for India's arch-rival Pakistan.

India and Pakistan each administer part of Kashmir but claim the Himalayan territory in full and have fought two of their three wars over it. Students and the opposition have accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist government of misusing British-era anti-sedition

laws to quell dissent.

"The government and police can't just shut down voices that don't agree with them. Everyone in this country has a right to his opinion and that must be respected," Delhi University student Arzoo Sahani said at a protest that drew more than 100 in the city centre, one of several since Friday. Home Minister Rajnath Singh reiterated yesterday that "anyone who raises anti-India slogans or tries to question national unity will not be spared by this government".

Kumar, who remains in police custody has denied any wrongdoing. Sedition is punishable by imprisonment. The arrest is the latest incident to fuel claims of religious and cultural intolerance under Modi. Last month a young scholar from India's lowest Dalit caste committed suicide, sparking protests over social discrimination after he was suspended from Hyderabad University for allegedly assaulting the head of the student wing of Modi's party. —AFP



**NEW DELHI:** Indian students hold placards during a protest against the arrest of the president of Jawaharlal Nehru University's Student Union (JNU) Kanhaiya Kumar. —AFP

## INDIA DISAPPOINTED BY F-16 SALE TO PAKISTAN

**NEW DELHI:** India said that it is disappointed with the United States' decision to sell eight nuclear-capable F-16 fighter jets to Pakistan and that it does not believe such an arms transfer will help combat terrorism.

The US government said Friday that it had approved the sale of the F-16 fighter aircraft, radar and electronic warfare equipment to Pakistan in a deal worth nearly \$700 million. The US ambassador to India, Richard Verma, was summoned Saturday to the External Affairs Ministry, where Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar conveyed India's displeasure with the deal.

The External Affairs Ministry said in a statement that India was disappointed with the decision of the Obama administration to sell the fighter jets to Pakistan and its justification that it will help efforts to fight terrorism. "We disagree with their rationale that such arms transfers help combat terrorism," the statement said. "The record of the last many years in this regard speaks for itself."

### Regional balance

India is worried that arming Pakistan with advanced fighters jets will tilt the military balance in the region. Washington believes Pakistan's strategic location next to

Afghanistan makes it a useful ally in the war against global terrorism despite Pakistan allowing many militant groups to operate out of its territory.

During the Cold War, relations between India and the United States were strained as America tilted toward Pakistan and India had to turn to the Soviet Union for support. Relations have thawed since then. India and the United States have forged closer economic and defense ties in the past decade, although New Delhi has often protested continuing U.S. military sales to Pakistan.

Pakistan's close ties with China have always been a source of worry for India. China has been one of Pakistan's biggest suppliers of weapons, and Islamabad has built its arsenal of nuclear weapons with Beijing's help.

India now has another reason to worry. Russia, India's main arms supplier, has been warming up to Pakistan in the past few years. In 2014, Russia lifted its embargo on arms exports to Pakistan and followed that up last year with an agreement to supply four Mi-35 attack helicopters to Islamabad. The decision on US fighter sales to Pakistan also comes at a time when India is pushing its rival to crack down on Islamic militant groups operating out of its territory. —AP



**KANDAHAR:** A file picture taken on July 1, 2015 shows a wounded Afghan child being brought to a hospital after being injured in a mortar explosion on July 1, 2015. —AFP

## 2015 SAW OVER 3,500 CIVILIAN CASUALTIES IN AFGHAN WAR: UN

WOMEN, CHILDREN BEAR BLUNT OF VIOLENCE

**KABUL:** Civilian injuries in Afghanistan's long war with the Taliban rose last year, with women and children again bearing the brunt of the violence, the United Nations said in a report yesterday. A total of 3,545 civilians were killed in 2015 as a result of the war, the UN report said, with another 7,457 wounded. The figures mark a 4-percent drop in civilian deaths, but a 9-percent rise in civilian injuries, compared to 2014.

The UN's Assistance Mission in Afghanistan said 2015 had the "highest number of total civilian casualties recorded by UNAMA since 2009." It also said that 10 percent of civilian casualties were women, up 37 percent from the year before. It says 25 percent were children, up 14 percent. "The most important finding in the report is that 11,002 Afghans - civilians, noncombatants - have died or been injured in 2015; this figure surpasses by 4 percent the same figure for 2014," said UNAMA head Nicholas Haysom. "The truth is the figures in themselves are awful - over 11,000 Afghans died or were injured last year as a result of this conflict," he said.

The report found that most of the dead and injured were caught in crossfire. The annual report, titled Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, is based on on-site investigations where possible. It attributed 62 percent of all civilian

casualties to anti-government elements, which includes the Taliban who have been fighting to overthrow the Kabul government for 15 years.

### 'Force protection'

Another 17 percent were blamed on pro-government forces and 2 percent on international military forces. The US-NATO combat mission ended in 2014, with troops reduced to around 13,000. While they officially have a "train, advice, assist" mandate, the US forces regularly conduct air strikes to back up Afghan forces, and are empowered for "force protection," which can see them engage in self-defensive combat.

The UNAMA report highlighted large-scale attacks in the capital Kabul, particularly two suicide attacks on Aug. 7 that it said caused 355 civilian casualties, including 43 dead and 312 wounded. "This was the highest number of civilians killed and injured in one day since UNAMA began systematically recording civilian casualties in 2009," it said.

The Taliban's assault on the northern city of Kunduz, on Sept 28, also caused significant civilian casualties, it said, with 493 civilian deaths and 1,392 injured during weeks of fighting after the insurgents took control. The vast majority of the casualties were the result of ground engage-

ments between the government forces and insurgents between Sept 28 and Oct 13, it said.

"Ground engagements between parties to the conflict caused 1,116 deaths and 3,021 wounded, up 15 percent on 2014 and the leading cause of civilian casualties in Afghanistan," UNAMA said. It added that improvised explosive devices, such as roadside bombs, caused 713 deaths and wounded 1,655 people. "While this represents a 20-percent decrease it is still the second leading cause of civilian casualties in Afghanistan," it said.

Afghanistan's Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah said the UNAMA report did not comprehensively cover violent incidents across the whole country, covering instead "high-conflict areas in 12 provinces." In a statement, Abdullah said the Afghan government's own data showed attacks in more than 24 of the country's 34 provinces which were not included in the UNAMA report.

He said that unattributed civilian casualties - which UNAMA puts at 17 percent - should mostly be blamed on the Taliban. "UNAMA's decision to not attribute such a large number of civilian deaths misrepresents reality and could help the Taliban and other terrorist groups avoid accountability and escape justice," his statement said. —AP

## ETHNIC REBELS' HIGHLIGHTS SUU KYI'S PEACE CHALLENGE

**LOI TAI LENG:** Speaking to 1,000 of his soldiers at a mountain base on Myanmar's border with Thailand, the leader of a powerful ethnic armed group called on other rebels to join government-led peace talks and appealed for unity among the country's minorities.

"Stop shooting and come to the negotiation table," said Yawd Serk, who leads the 6,000-strong Shan State Army-South (SSA-S). "Whether it is trustwor-

thy or not, we should grab the chance to talk." Ending decades of ethnic conflict is one of the biggest challenges for the incoming government of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, who has made it her first priority. But although Yawd Serk signed a government-brokered ceasefire deal last October, in a much-needed boost to the peace process of outgoing President Thein Sein, over the winter some of his

troops have been fighting another ethnic group for control of remote swathes of eastern Myanmar. That a contingent of Yawd Serk's soldiers could travel unchallenged some 300 km (190 miles) north to fight the Ta'ang National Liberation Army near the border with China shows how little control Suu Kyi's government will have over Myanmar's wild hinterlands at the start of its five-year term on April 1.

It also highlights the shifting loyalties and complexities that have made peace so elusive in the ethnic conflicts that have plagued the former Burma since World War Two. Yawd Serk has courted international businesses since signing the ceasefire and recently joined a study trip to Switzerland. He is not willing to lay down his arms, however, or give up influence over a region rich in gold, timber and gemstones. —Reuters

## KABUL CHIDES PAK AMBASSADOR OVER GOVERNOR'S KIDNAPPING

**KABUL:** Afghanistan yesterday summoned Pakistan's ambassador to the foreign ministry in Kabul to express "serious concerns" over the kidnapping of a former Afghan governor in Islamabad, the ministry said in a statement. Sayed Fazlullah Wahidi, a former governor of Herat province, was snatched by unidentified men in an upscale district of the Pakistani capital on Friday, police have confirmed. Afghanistan has fraught relations with Pakistan, which it blames for sponsoring Taliban militants fighting an ongoing bloody insurgency. Yesterday the foreign ministry expressed concern to ambassador Sayed Ibrar Hussain and urged Islamabad to throw all its resources into finding Wahidi, described as one of the "big personalities" of the war-torn country.

"The Afghan government calls upon the Pakistani government to use all tools and possibilities in identifying the group behind the kidnapping and immediately secure the release of Mr Wahidi," the statement said. Pakistan is in the grip of a homegrown Taliban insurgency but the tightly-guarded capital has a very low crime rate in general, and the F-7/2 sector where Wahidi was seized is a high security area that houses politicians, bureaucrats and expats. —AFP

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## INDONESIAN OFFICIALS, CLERICS BAN ANY VALENTINE'S DAY OBSERVANCE

**JAKARTA:** Officials and clerics in the world's most populous Muslim nation have banned young Indonesian Muslims from celebrating Valentine's Day, arguing that the observance runs against Islamic teachings.

In Banda Aceh, the capital of the devout Muslim province of Aceh, thousands of high school students held rallies rejecting the celebration of Valentine's Day. Banda Aceh's mayor, Illiza Sa'aduddin Djamal, and Shariah officials joined Saturday's rallies, held

in four locations in the city's downtown area. "The Valentine's Day celebration has become a culture," Illiza said. She added that the rallies were aimed at making young people aware that Valentine's Day is not part of Islamic culture.

The bans were imposed in many Indonesian cities. A similar rally by junior high school students was held in Surabaya, Indonesia's second-largest city. In Makassar, the capital of South Sulawesi province, a noted Muslim youth group,

Pemuda Muslimin Indonesia, called on Muslims in the province to stay away from the celebration.

The influential Indonesian Council of Clerics has repeatedly declared the Feb 14 celebration as an observance stemming from another faith, saying that celebrating it would be the same as promoting faiths other than Islam. Nearly 90 percent of Indonesia's 265 million people are Muslims, with most practicing a moderate form of the faith. — AP



**BANDA ACEH:** Muslim students display a banner during a protest against Valentine's Day. — AP



**KUALA LUMPUR:** In this Nov 22, 2015 file photo, US President Barack Obama shakes hands with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, (second left) while Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak, (second right) and Laotian Prime Minister Thongsing Thammavong look on during the 10th East Asia Summit at the 27th ASEAN Summit. — AP

## OBAMA'S CHALLENGE: FORGING FRONT VS CHINA SEA ACTIONS

### STEPPING UP PRESSURE AGAINST CHINA'S WORRISOME BEHAVIOR

**MANILA:** With the symbolic handshakes and unity photo-op, President Barack Obama's high-profile summit with Southeast Asian leaders in California this week aims to step up pressure against China's increasingly worrisome behavior in disputed waters.

Forging a common front and encouraging bolder rhetoric against Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea, however, will be a challenge among the diverse collection of VIP guests, who did not criticize China by name in past joint summit statements as the disputes flared on and off in recent years.

Decisions by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the bloc they lead, can easily be stalled. ASEAN includes governments aligned either with Washington or Beijing. Only four of its 10 member states are locked in the disputes with China and Taiwan, leading to sometimes conflicting views on handling the long-simmering rifts.

#### Disputed territories

The regional bloc decides by consensus, meaning just one member can effectively shoot down any statement detrimental to China. In recent years, summit statements have expressed concern over the escalating conflicts and called for freedom of navigation and overflight in the disputed territories, but they have rarely gone to specifics.

"I think it will be hard for the US to convince the 10 ASEAN states to adopt any language on the South China Sea disputes that go beyond what ASEAN statements have said in the past," said Dr. Malcolm Cook of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore. With Obama in his last year in office, certain ASEAN member states would probably not concede on any security or economic issue that might antagonize China, an economic lifeline to them, Cook said.

A Southeast Asian diplomat told The Associated Press that government envoys in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta, where the ASEAN secretariat is located, have been negotiating the text of a possible joint statement to be issued by Obama and his Southeast Asian counterparts at the end of the two-day summit, which opens today at the sprawling Sunnylands estate.

There have been initial differences among the governments on the wordings of the statement, said the diplomat, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of a lack of authority to discuss details of the negotiations with reporters.

Vietnam and the Philippines, whose disputes with China have intensified in recent years, prefer a more detailed reference to the territorial disputes, including mention of international arbitration as an option to resolve the conflicts. Cambodia and Laos, which have close ties with China, have asked the reference to arbitration to be deleted, the diplomat said.

In 2012, Cambodia refused to mention discussions in an ASEAN foreign ministerial summit statement about a shoal disputed by China and the Philippines. An ensuing argument caused the summit to end without a joint statement for the first time since the bloc was founded in 1967. While the statement can be restrained, the diplomat said any leader can speak freely at the informal talks in Sunnylands.

#### Brokered deal

The Philippines brought its territorial conflicts with China to international arbitration in early 2013 after Beijing refused to withdraw its ships from a disputed shoal under a US-brokered deal. China has refused to participate, but an arbitration tribunal based in The Hague has proceeded to hear the case

and plans to hand down a decision this year.

The US summit will showcase Obama's yearslong effort to reassert American leadership in Asia, where China has risen as a security and economic powerhouse. Although it's not a claimant state, the US has declared that it has a national interest in the peaceful resolution of the disputes and maintenance of freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea, a major passageway for global trade. Obama will emphasize US resolve to promote the rule of law and give assurances that America is a stabilizing presence in the region, US Deputy National Security Adviser Ben Rhodes told reporters last week.

"The US will be underscoring the importance of resolving any territorial disputes consistent with international norms and international law ... and not through bigger nations bullying smaller ones," Rhodes said in a veiled reference to China and smaller neighboring countries along the South China Sea rim.

Tensions have escalated in recent years after China transformed seven disputed reefs into islands, some with runways, that could be used to project China's military might into the heartland of the disputed region. China has claimed it has the right to undertake the massive construction in what it calls its territory, but the US Navy deployed a guided-missile destroyer near one of the islands last year in defiance of China's territorial claims.

China has been accused of delaying the start of negotiations for a legally binding code of conduct that can deter aggressive actions such as its island construction work. U.S. and ASEAN leaders have sought the early conclusion of such a pact for several years, and those calls are likely to be repeated in this week's summit. — AP

## AUSTRALIAN HOSPITAL REFUSES TO RETURN ASYLUM BABY TO NAURU

**SYDNEY:** An Australian hospital has refused to return an asylum-seeker baby to detention in Nauru, as momentum built across the country yesterday against offshore Pacific camps for processing refugees. Under the government's tough immigration policy, asylum-seekers who try to reach Australia by boat are sent to detention camps in the Pacific island nations of Papua New Guinea and Nauru.

They are blocked from being resettled in Australia even if found to be refugees. The hospital's move came as state governments, churches and activists stepped up their efforts to stop the return of some 267 refugees to Nauru following a High Court ruling.

Yesterday, campaigners from ActionAid, Amnesty International, GetUp! and Greenpeace unfurled a #LetThemStay banner on Sydney's iconic harbour calling for the asylum-seekers, who are set to be deported after being brought to Australia for medical treatment, to be allowed to stay. The #LetThemStay campaign, which has been trending on Twitter, has also seen hundreds of people maintain a vigil now in its third day outside the Brisbane hospital where the baby is being cared for.

The 12-month-old infant, who is called Asha and the child of Nepalese asylum-seekers, was brought to the eastern city of Brisbane for treatment in late January after being scalded with hot water at the remote Nauru facility.

Following the High Court's ruling earlier this month in favor of the government's policies, Asha and 36 other babies born in Australia are among the asylum-seekers facing removal. But a spokesman for Brisbane's Lady Cilento Children's Hospital said Asha "will only be discharged once a suitable home environment is identified".

#### Growing support

Their stance was supported by Queensland state's Health Minister

Cameron Dick, who said in a statement yesterday that he "strongly support(s) doctors in our hospitals to make the right clinical decisions".

"Doctors must expect to advocate for their patients," Doctors For Refugees co-founder Richard Kidd, who has joined the vigil outside the hospital said. "We have... overwhelming evidence over many years now that detention does terrible harm to babies and children, particularly their mental health but also physical health."

Australian church leaders in early February vowed to defy the federal government, offering sanctuary to the asylum-seekers. Several state government premiers have said they would help settle in their communities those facing deportation if they were allowed to stay. There have also been numerous community-led protests. Thirty-seven cots-one for each of the Australia-born babies-were set up on Sydney's Bondi Beach, while two campaigners abseiled from a Melbourne bridge with a "Let Them Stay" banner.

"I think the case of the 267 people has just really spoken to the hearts of the people across Australia," GetUp! organiser Sally Rugg said. "It's people from all walks of life. We are seeing churches and hospitals and teachers and premiers, it's a whole movement." Canberra has long defended its policy, saying it has prevented the deaths of asylum-seekers at sea and secured its borders.

But rights groups have criticised the measures and detention conditions, while the government-funded Human Rights Commission has found that children who lived in the Nauru centre had high levels of mental illness. "This offshore detention policy is being operated by the Australian government in secrecy and there's a severe lack of transparency and that's obviously not how people of Australia want their taxpayers' money being spent," Amnesty's Ming Yu Hah said. — AFP



**SYDNEY:** Members of the environmental group Greenpeace hold up a sign that reads "#LET THEM STAY" in front of the Opera House. — AFP

## CHINA PINS HK RIOT ON 'RADICAL SEPARATISTS'

**HONG KONG:** A senior Beijing official yesterday blamed "radical separatists" for a riot that erupted in Hong Kong last week, the worst clashes the city has seen since mass pro-democracy protests. In unusually blunt remarks on a local Hong Kong matter, Zhang Xiaoming, Beijing's top representative in the semi-autonomous city, told reporters the violence that left dozens of police officers hurt also showed elements of "terror".

"After the riot in Mong Kok, we are feeling very much shocked and saddened," Zhang told reporters. "We strongly condemn those radical separatists who have become increasingly violent, even (carrying out) activities that showed terror tendencies," the director of China's Liaison Office in Hong Kong said in Chinese. The clashes erupted when protesters gathered following official attempts to remove illegal hawkers from the busy commercial neighborhood of Mong Kok during Lunar New Year celebrations late Monday night. Police fired warning shots in the air, while demonstrators hurled bricks levered up from pavements, charged police lines with homemade shields and set rubbish on fire.

#### Over 100 injured

About 100 people were injured, includ-

ing police officers, journalists and protesters, and 65 were arrested in the rare outbreak of violence. Some 30 have been charged with rioting. Hong Kong leader Leung Chun-ying said yesterday most of the protesters were unemployed and did not reflect mainstream views. "The majority of them are jobless. Quite many of them belong to radical political groups. Their political demands... cannot reflect the majority of society," the chief executive said. The battles have been dubbed the "fishball revolution" after a favorite Hong Kong street snack and reflect underlying tensions over the erosion of the city's traditions.

Demonstrators included "localist" activists who want to restrict Beijing's influence on the city. Mong Kok, on the city's Kowloon peninsula, was the scene of some of the worst violence during the 79-day "Occupy" pro-democracy street protests in late 2014. The mass rallies seeking fully free leadership elections in the city blocked some major streets for more than two months. But the rallies failed to win concessions from the authorities. Pro-democracy activist Joseph Cheng said weighing in on the protest was a tactic by Beijing to justify its headline approach to the pro-democracy movement. — AFP

## SEOUL: PYONGYANG USED MONEY FROM JOINT WEAPON FACTORIES

**SEOUL:** North Korea channeled about 70 percent of the money it received for workers at the now-shuttered Kaesong industrial park into its weapons programs and to buy luxury goods for the impoverished nation's tiny elite, South Korea said yesterday.

The jointly run park, just outside the North Korean city of Kaesong and about 50 kilometers from Seoul, employed some 54,000 North Koreans who worked for over 120 South Korean companies, most of them small and medium-sized manufacturers. Seoul closed the park last week in retaliation for Pyongyang's recent rocket launch.

In a statement issued yesterday, South Korea's Unification Ministry said that about 70 percent of the 616 billion won (\$560 million) paid to the North since the park was established in 2004 was used to develop nuclear weapons, missiles and for the luxury goods. It did not detail how it arrived at that percentage.

Pyongyang was able to divert the money because the workers in Kaesong were not paid indirectly. Instead, US dollars were paid to the North Korean government, which siphoned off most of the money

and paid only what it wanted to the employees in North Korean currency and store vouchers, the statement said.

Pyongyang responded to Seoul's closure by announcing a military

takeover of the complex and seizing everything that the companies' South Korean managers were forced to leave behind. The last major symbol of inter-Korean cooperation began during an era of relatively good cross-border relations, combining cheap North Korean labor with the capital and technology of wealthy South Korea.

But Seoul is desperate to pressure Pyongyang after its nuclear test earlier this year, followed weeks later by a Feb. 7 rocket launch, which was condemned by the rest of the world as a test of banned missile technology. While the Kaesong closure will hurt North Korea, it is not critical to that nation's economy. Pyongyang gets the vast majority of its earnings from trade with China. The last time the park closed was in 2013, when North Korea withdrew its workers amid escalating tension in the wake of North Korea's third nuclear test. The park reopened after about five months. — AP



**PYONGYANG:** A man walks past portraits of the late North Korean leaders Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il, at the Kim Il Sung Square. — AP

## TURKEY SHELLS KURDS AS US URGES RUSSIA...

Continued from Page 1

The White House said yesterday that President Barack Obama had urged Moscow end the strikes in a phone call with Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin. "President Obama emphasized the importance now of Russia playing a constructive role by ceasing its air campaign against moderate opposition forces in Syria," the White House said. Russia has long insisted it is only targeting "terrorist" groups in Syria.

Echoing Obama's concerns, a senior figure in the Syrian opposition yesterday criticized the truce deal as unworkable without an end to Russian strikes. "What we need is action, and the action I see is that Russia is killing Syrian civilians," Riad Hijab told the Munich Security Conference. US Senator John McCain also slammed the deal in Munich, saying it would only empower Moscow's "military aggression".

The Turkish shelling in northern Syria has added to an already complicated situation in Aleppo province, where regime forces have been making significant advances with backing from Russian air strikes. The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), a US-backed Kurdish-Arab militia alliance, has also advanced in recent days, seizing the Minnigh airbase and battling to take control of Tal Rifaat, a town held by mostly Islamist opposition fighters that is only 20 km from the Turkish border.

Kurdish forces already control large parts of Syria along the border and Ankara is concerned the SDF will gain new ground. Turkey's state-run Anatolia news agency said the shelling had resumed for a second day yesterday, with the Turkish army using howitzers on the border to strike Kurdish targets around the Syrian town of Azaz. It said the shelling was in response to incoming fire and targeted the Kurdish Democratic Union Party, whose People's Protection Units (YPG) is a key component of the SDF.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based monitor, reported Turkish shelling in at least two parts of Aleppo province, including on the Kurdish village of Maryamin, where it said a woman was killed and seven civilians injured, including three children. It said much of the shelling was focused on the Minnigh base and nearby towns, with at least two SDF fighters killed and seven wounded.

The US State Department had on Saturday urged Ankara to cease the strikes and for the Kurds to stand down. France joined that call yesterday, with its foreign ministry urging

"an immediate halt to the bombing, both that of the regime and its allies throughout the country and that of Turkey in the Kurdish zones". Damascus said the Turkish strikes were a violation of its territory and urged UN Security Council action to "put an end to the crimes of the Turkish regime".

It also accused Ankara of allowing some 100 gunmen to cross into Syria from Turkey. The Observatory said some 350 Islamist fighters had been allowed to travel through Turkish territory on Saturday to reinforce Islamist rebels in Azaz and Tal Rifaat. There was fierce fighting between the SDF and Islamist rebels in the western part of Tal Rifaat yesterday, it said, with at least 17 rebels killed.

The SDF advances came as Syria's regime piled pressure on rebels throughout northern Aleppo province in a major Russian-backed operation that has displaced tens of thousands of civilians. The operation has virtually encircled rebel-held eastern Aleppo city and raised concerns among opposition backers including Turkey and Saudi Arabia. Both are members of the US-led coalition carrying out air strikes in Syria, and Riyadh has now deployed warplanes to the Turkish base of Incirlik, a hub already being used by American, British and French coalition planes.

Turkey's Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said Saturday that Ankara and Saudi Arabia could launch a ground operation against IS. Senior Saudi defense official Brigadier General Ahmed Al-Assiri also said Saturday that there was consensus within the coalition on "the need for group operations". He said military experts would meet shortly to decide "the role to be played by each country".

"The Saudi kingdom now has a presence at Incirlik airbase in Turkey," Assiri was quoted as saying by Al-Arabiya television late on Saturday. "Saudi warplanes are present with their crews to intensify aerial operations along with missions launched from bases in Saudi Arabia," Assiri said, without providing further details. Assiri said the decision to deploy an unspecified number of jets to Turkey followed a meeting in Brussels of US-led anti-IS coalition members, who decided step up their fight against the jihadists in Syria and Iraq. He stressed that Saudi Arabia had made its decision in coordination with the coalition and said that a ground operation was being planned. Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir also told reporters yesterday that his country was ready to send special forces to Syria to take part in ground operations against IS, without giving further details. — Agencies

## PREMIER TO SACK MINISTERS WHO FAIL...

Continued from Page 1

Ghanem told reporters that the government's plan is not only about cuts to subsidies but a comprehensive economic program to tackle imbalances in the Kuwaiti economy which heavily relies on oil as the only source of income. Ghanem reiterated that the solutions will not be at the expense of the people but insisted that the continuity of the current situation will certainly harm them more. He said the meeting discussed a roadmap of technical and economic plans which will eventually be debated by the Assembly. The plan consists of a comprehensive package to deal with economic imbalances and rationalizing spending, Ghanem said, adding that if things continued without corrective measures, it would result in a catastrophe.

Ghanem said the meeting on Saturday will be held at 10 in the morning and all MPs will be invited to attend, adding that the measures will not be approved before the

participation of civil society organizations. The results of the meetings and consultations will be taken to the Assembly session on March 1, the speaker said. During the meeting, MPs asked the government to provide details about various types of subsidies worth KD 2.9 billion included in the next year's budget, which include around KD 1.3 billion in energy subsidies. MP Faisal Al-Kandari said the meeting discussed the broad outlines of the government proposals and the details will be discussed on Saturday. He added that the government and MPs are in agreement that any measures should not harm citizens.

Meanwhile, the Assembly's legal and legislative committee discussed yesterday draft laws for the independence of the judiciary submitted by the government and MPs. Rapporteur of the committee MP Ahmad Al-Qudhaibi said the ministry of justice informed them that the government will submit amendments to its proposed draft law next week after consulting the Supreme Judicial Council.

## US SUPREME COURT JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA...

Continued from Page 1

But the US leader also fired the first shot in a tense battle over Scalia's succession. Obama said he fully intended to nominate a successor, in accordance with his "constitutional responsibilities," after leading Republicans - including all six conservative White House contenders - argued that the outgoing president should not be allowed to fill Scalia's vacant seat. He called for the Republican-controlled Senate to give his nominee a "fair hearing and a timely vote." "These are responsibilities that I take seriously as should everyone," Obama said. "They're bigger than any one party. They are about our democracy." The president nominates a Supreme Court candidate, who requires Senate approval before taking up the lifetime post.

For three decades, Scalia's outsized personality gave voice to the values of conservative America on the Supreme Court bench, on matters of religion, family, patriotism and law enforcement. A staunch defender of gun rights and the death penalty, the Roman Catholic justice was also openly opposed to abortion, gay marriage and affirmative action. The Supreme Court's conservative majority had recently stalled key efforts by Obama's administration on climate change and immigration, and replacing Scalia with a Democratic appointee could significantly alter the court balance.

Republicans immediately drew battles lines over the implications of the vacancy. "The American people should have a voice in the selection of their next Supreme Court Justice," said Senate Republican Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. "Therefore, this vacancy should not be filled until we have a new president." Senator Chuck Grassley, Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, also called for a delay. "It's been standard practice over the last 80 years to not confirm Supreme Court nominees during a presidential election year," he claimed. This is incorrect, as Justice Anthony Kennedy, a Reagan nominee, was con-



HATTIESBURG, Mississippi: In this April 7, 2004 file photo, US Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia speaks to Presbyterian Christian High School students. — AP

firmed by the senate in 1988, an election year.

The Republican calls met with a sharp rebuttal from the Democratic camp. McConnell's Democratic counterpart Harry Reid pressed for Obama to send a nominee to the Senate "right away," stressing that a yearlong vacancy - raising the prospect of 4 to 4 splits on major issues - would be "unprecedented." "Failing to fill this vacancy would be a shameful abdication of one of the Senate's most essential Constitutional responsibilities," Reid said.

Democratic White House hopeful Hillary Clinton said Republicans calling for a delay "dishonor our Constitution." The often belligerent Scalia, the first Italian-American to serve on the Supreme Court, was known for his brash demeanor and sharp tongue. His biting opinions made him a conservative hero, and gave his liberal foes dyspepsia. "War is war and it has never been the case that when you capture a combatant, you have to give them a jury trial in your civil courts," he once said, referring to prisoners at the US

military prison at Guantanamo Bay. "It's a crazy idea to me."

Scalia championed originalism, a theory that views the meaning of the Constitution as fixed at the time it was ratified in 1788. In this view, the validity of the death penalty and the right to bear arms is unquestionable. Scalia's affable personality and portly physique contrasted with his sometimes radical ideas - and he was often the only justice on the otherwise stern bench to trigger a laugh in highly technical debates. On the debate stage in South Carolina Saturday night, all six Republican presidential contenders bowed their heads in silence to honor the late justice - and united to oppose Obama nominating his successor.

Senator Marco Rubio warned Obama would seek to "ram down our throat a liberal justice". "This is a tremendous blow to conservatism," Republican frontrunner Donald Trump warned. He said he fully expects Obama to nominate a justice - and said it was up to Senate Republicans to "delay, delay, delay." — AFP

## 20 NATIONS JOIN MAJOR MILITARY DRILLS IN SAUDI

Continued from Page 1

taking part and the weaponry being used. Twenty countries will be taking take part, SPA said. Among them are Saudi Arabia's five partners in the Gulf Cooperation Council, as well as Chad, Egypt, Jordan, Malaysia,

Morocco, Pakistan, Senegal and Tunisia, it added. A Saudi source said on Thursday that members of the new "anti-terrorism" coalition will gather in Saudi Arabia next month for its first publicly announced meeting. Riyadh has said the alliance would share intelligence, combat violent ideology and deploy troops if necessary. — AFP

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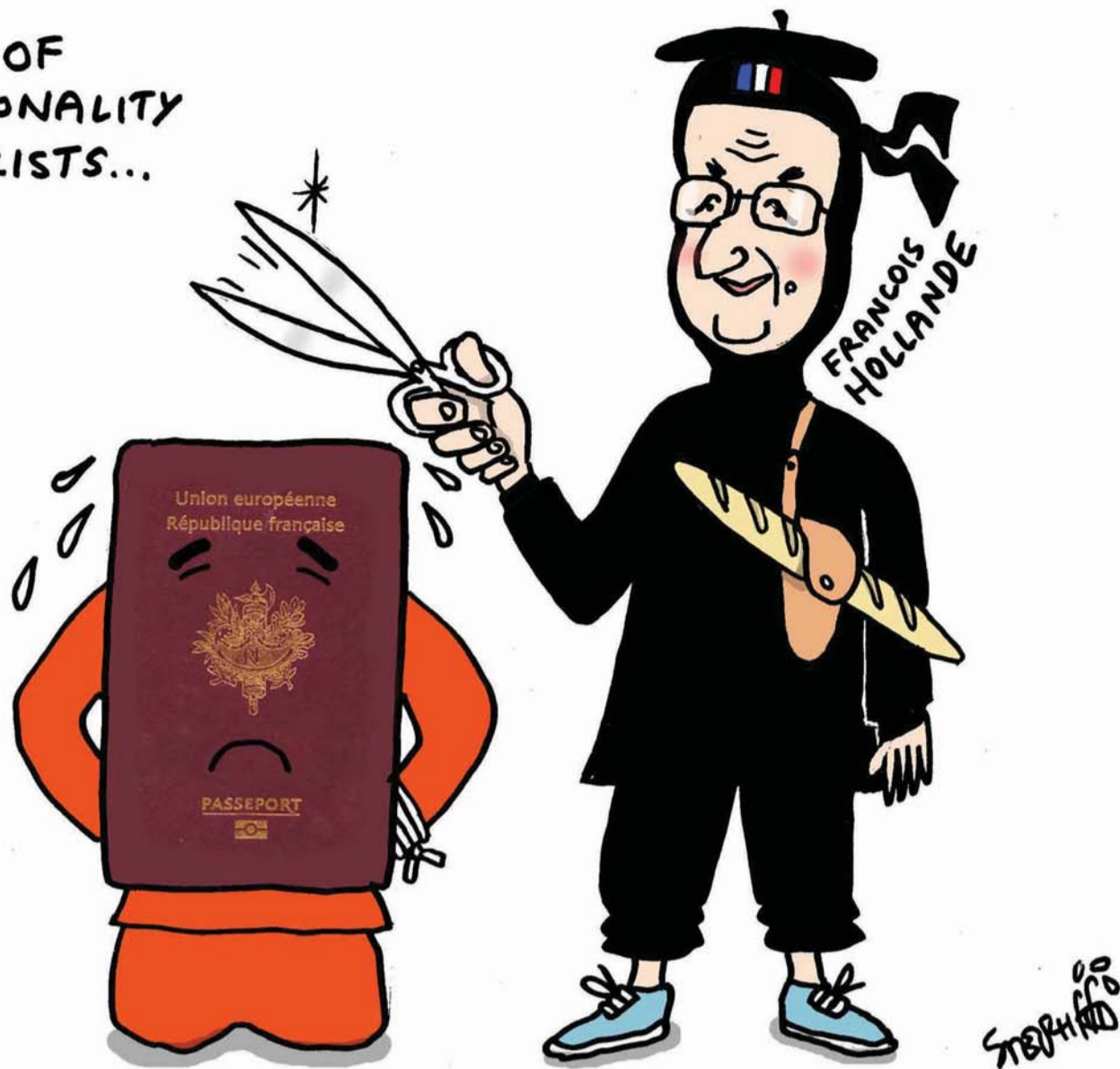
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## STRIPPING OF FRENCH NATIONALITY FOR TERRORISTS...



## CUBA, FROM ANTAGONIST TO DIPLOMATIC PLAYER

By Hector Velasco

**S**urned for decades by Western powers, Cuba is now taking an ever bigger role in international relations. Havana hosted a historic meeting between the heads of the Catholic and Russian Orthodox churches on Friday. Cuba's President Raul Castro, 84, witnessed their kiss and embrace. Those talks were significant in the context of tension between Cuba's old ally Russia and the West over the conflicts in Syria and Ukraine. The communist state's neutral status under its atheist leader Raul Castro was seen as key to it hosting those talks.

Meanwhile for three years Cuba has been hosting peace negotiations to end Latin America's last armed conflict, between the Colombian government and the leftist FARC rebels. Both sides have vowed to sign a peace deal by March 23 to end half a century of conflict. Cuba restored diplomatic relations with the United States last year, and foreign businessmen have been flocking to Cuba since. The 1962 US trade embargo on the island has yet to be lifted, but Cuba's international profile has already risen.

Raul Castro received state honors this month on a visit to France. "From being a state isolated in the western hemisphere, focused on revolutionizing the international system, Cuba has come to enjoy the image of a country in transformation, in cooperation and dialogue with world powers," said Arturo Lopez-Levy, a Cuban political scientist at the University of Texas - Rio Grande Valley. "Various established powers such as the Colombian government and the Vatican want to take advantage of Cuba's credentials with their opponents, such as the FARC or the Kremlin."

### Cuba 'Capital of Unity'

Raul Castro took over the leadership from his brother Fidel in 2006 and was formally made president in 2008. The Castros are traditional allies of fellow Latin

American rebel movements that date back to the 1960s, such as the FARC. Now those ties could pay off for Cuba's image if it plays midwife to a historic peace deal this year. More globally, the encounter between Pope Francis and Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill was the first meeting between the heads of their two branches of the church in nearly a thousand years, following the great schism of 1054.

The two church leaders in their joint declaration hailed the host country as "a crossroads between north and south, east and west." "If it carries on like this, Cuba will become the capital of unity," said Francis. He himself played a key role in Havana's rapprochement with Washington. International affairs analyst Brian Fonseca of the Jack Gordon Institute in Florida, said Cuba has thus become "the scene of two events of enormous global importance". This will "probably legitimize even more the role of Raul Castro as an intermediary in global affairs."

Castro is a self-confessed atheist, and Cuba was an officially atheist state from 1976 before becoming secular in 1992. But Friday's meeting revealed its quiet role in religious affairs that in turn influences global politics. "That is one of the best-kept secrets about the changes in Cuba. The country is no longer the same, and not only economically," said Lopez-Levy. "Its openness has allowed the country to be visited by three popes, the Russian Orthodox Patriarch, top-level Protestant and Muslim leaders and even the chief rabbi of Israel."

Ordinary Cubans only wish their country's growing clout in the world would bring them better economic fortunes, said Sebastian Arcos, director of a Cuban studies institute at Florida International University. "We have seen over the past year that as the regime in Havana wins diplomatic successes, the internal reforms get delayed or even go backwards," he said. —AFP

## 'COWORKING' GROWS IN NEW OFFICE LIFESTYLE

By Rob Lever

**W**hen Lance Macon started his real estate consulting firm, he did not want a traditional office. But he wasn't going to work out of his home or a coffee shop either. Macon instead signed on with the "coworking" space Cove, where he gets an available desk and conference room, along with coffee, Wi-Fi, copier access, soft drinks and a professional work environment. "I have to be in the field every day, so it doesn't make sense for me to have a regular office," Macon said at the workplace in the Columbia Heights neighborhood in Washington, a short walk from his home. "Here, I have the comfort of the office, but I don't have the expense and hassle of being trapped in the office."

In Washington and in communities around the world, growing numbers are turning to this new kind of work environment, sharing office space with people from various fields and using their smartphones and laptops as portable offices. A survey by the website Deskmag, which tracks the trend, found 7,800 coworking spaces worldwide as of Oct 2015, up from 3,400 in 2013 and just 75 in 2007. These workspaces had more than 500,000 members, tenfold growth since 2011.

The survey projected the number of coworking spaces to grow to more than 10,000 in 2016, in dozens of counties, with a strong growth trajectory in Canada, Italy, France, Thailand, Australia and India. While informal office sharing has always existed, the emergence of coworking spaces with low-cost memberships has become appealing to new startups as well as individual entrepreneurs, consultants and others who want a flexible but professional work environment. "These spaces fill a need for people seeking a work community who don't necessarily have a work organization," said Gretchen Spreitzer, a University of Michigan professor of management who leads the school's coworking research project.

Spreitzer said the coworking movement is a natural extension of the "sharing economy" which draws on unused resources like

vehicles or apartments. "People are used to the idea of sharing a car, or sharing tools, so it makes sense to be part of a coworking community," she said. Spreitzer said coworking helps provide "a sense of belonging" that allows independent workers to thrive, while also making more efficient use of real estate. She sees ongoing growth in coworking because "we have more people freely choosing independent careers and more people working remotely, helped by collaborative technologies like cloud computing and strong Wi-Fi."

### 'Evolution of the Workspace'

Coworking spaces offer plans similar to gym memberships without a long-term commitment - some as low as \$60 a month for part-time use of a desk, while others offer dedicated or locked offices. "We view this as an evolution of the workspace," said Adam Segal, a co-founder of Cove, which has nine locations in the US capital and two in Boston, with plans to expand to other American cities. "This is part of a decoupling of the organization and the individual. It's a lifestyle change."

The culture change is reflected in a "coworking manifesto" signed by nearly 2,000 members of these workplaces, stating "We envision a new economic engine composed of collaboration and community, in contrast to the silos and secrecy of the 19th/20th century economy." Amid the rapid expansion, some coworking spaces are focusing on scale, like New York-based WeWork, which has 58 locations in the United States, Britain, Netherlands and Israel. A broad network enables participants to use multiple locations when they are in different parts of a city or traveling. WeWork last year announced it had raised \$400 million from investors, boosting its valuation to \$10 billion, to fuel expansion in the US and abroad.

### Sheetrock and Facebook

"Having a nice office is not just something for cool tech companies like Google," said Miguel McKelvey, co-founder and chief cre-

ative officer of WeWork. "People like to connect with other people, there is a loneliness sitting in a sheetrock box on Facebook." The origin of the new coworking trend is debatable. Some trace it to a "hacker space" which opened in Berlin in 1995 or the 1999 opening of a collaborative workspace in New York.

The first "official" coworking space opened in 2005 in San Francisco, according to Deskmag, followed by hubs in London and Berlin, and the field has been on an upward trajectory ever since. Coworking has been a staple for tech-focused startups but has grown to attract independent professionals such as lawyers and consultants, as well as employees who work away from their headquarters.

"Coworking isn't just for startup teams and millennials anymore," says John Arenas of Serendipity Labs, which has eight locations in the eastern United States. "Although 20 percent of our members are start-ups, 35 percent are independent and about 45 percent are trusted employees of established companies." Jacqueline Sloane, an executive coach and consultant who works out of Creative Coworking outside Chicago, said using the space is better than a coffeehouse. "It's a pleasant environment, and you meet other professionals, and they sometimes send business to me or I send business to them, so it works out well," she said.

Moving to a coworking space has advantages over coffee shops, many of which are becoming less welcoming to those who want to park their computers for the day to use free Wi-Fi. "You get the conversations around the water cooler, but it's nice to feel you have an office where you can come and go as you please," said Laura Doody, who works out of Cove for the District Communications Group. WeWork, McKelvey points out, helps members find health insurance or connect with legal professionals as well as find experts or partners for projects. This is a global shift, and we hope the real estate market shifts to be more thoughtful about human beings," he said. "It would be great if every building in the world becomes more like WeWork." —AFP

### Focus

## US FRONTRUNNERS RISE ABOVE 'DARK MONEY' CLOUD

By Jeremy Tordjman

**A** self-proclaimed socialist, a high-powered capitalist: The distance seems huge between Democrat Bernie Sanders and Republican Donald Trump, whose sweeping primary victories have galvanized the race for the White House. But Sanders and Trump have something in common, and they are proud of it. Their campaigns have succeeded so far without the help of "Super PACs," the outside groups, or political action committees, that can raise unlimited amounts of money from individuals, corporations and unions.

These groups are supporting their rivals, playing into the public's perception of massive donations making candidates beholden to the interests of big companies and the wealthy. Sanders and Trump do not want money from Super PACs, both saying so-called "dark money" hurts US politics. It is "a corrupt campaign finance system undermining American democracy, where billionaire, Wall Street, corporate America can contribute unlimited sums of money into Super PACs and into candidates," Sanders said. The Vermont senator says his \$75 million campaign chest has been built largely by individual donations averaging \$27 each.

Sanders's rival in the race for the Democratic party's presidential nomination, Hillary Clinton, has also raised millions from individuals under the legal limit of \$2,700 per person. But she is still battling suspicions that she is in Wall Street's pocket, due to the Super PAC supporting her campaign, which has raised about \$41 million. More than a third of it comes from the financial sector, notably billionaire investor George Soros, who gave \$7 million, according to data from the Center for Responsive Politics.

### Trump's Wealth Trumps

On the Republican side, Trump, the real estate mogul, also slams the financial political system which he, with a personal fortune estimated at \$4.5 billion, says he can afford to ignore. "I am self-funding my campaign and therefore I will not be controlled by the donors, special interests and lobbyists who have corrupted our politics and politicians for far too long," Trump said. His Republican rivals all benefit from Super PACs, whose spending cannot be directly coordinated with a candidate's campaign. Right to Rise, the group supporting Jeb Bush, has raised \$118 million to buy advertising and voter mailings. But Bush has had poor results in the first two primaries of the election season this month. "Money can't make up for a bad candidate, but it can help them to stay in the race even if they should have already dropped out," said Lawrence Noble of the Campaign Legal Center. "In that sense the Super PACs are distorting the race," added Noble, a former US Federal Election Commission official.

Their influence can make or break an election. "When the race is very tight and when you need every vote, that's when the Super PAC money can make a difference," Norman Eisen, a former ethics adviser to President Barack Obama, told AFP. Businesses usually do not directly contribute to the Super PACs. "They don't want to be seen as really aggressive in the political progress out of fear that it could upset their customers and their shareholders," said Bob Biersack of the Center for Responsive Politics.

### Business Chiefs Donate

But business leaders and those close to them dig into their own wallets. The chairman of software giant Oracle, Larry Ellison, has given \$3 million to a committee supporting Republican Marco Rubio, while Texas oil magnates the Wilks brothers have pumped \$15 million into a Super PAC for Ted Cruz. Some donate for purely ideological reasons but others are hoping for a return on their investment: Privileged access to the potential future president of the United States. "A candidate is often very well aware of how much money was given to him by executives. They often spend time with them and all of that leads to a relationship," said Biersack.

Such proximity, however, can come at a political cost. "You're undermining your credibility when you accept so much money from corporate executives," said Noble. "Your decisions, even when they're solidly fact-based, will always be regarded with suspicion." It is this cloud that overhangs Clinton. "Name anything they've influenced me on," she said in response to questions about her ties to Wall Street bankers, whose greed is blamed largely for the 2008 financial crisis and Great Recession. "I'm going to jail them if they should be jailed." "Dark money" also gathers elsewhere in the political system. Companies can directly finance nongovernmental organizations such as Americans for Prosperity and Crossroads GPS, which in turn can finance campaigns without having to identify their contributors. "The Super PACs are already bad enough, but the non-profits are even worse," Eisen said. None of these organizations responded to requests for comment. —AFP

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### AURIER IN HOT WATER AFTER BLANC SOCIAL MEDIA JIBE

PARIS: Paris Saint-Germain defender Serge Aurier could find himself in hot water after insulting manager Laurent Blanc and many of his team-mates in a live video he and a friend recorded with the online app Periscope on Saturday night. The Ivorian at one stage appeared to describe Blanc as a "faggot", although he was not actually in shot at the time. When his friend asks him whether or not "Blanc sucks off Zlatan (Ibrahimovic)?", Aurier answers: "Yes, he takes everything, even his balls." The French champions have their most important match of the season on Tuesday with a Champions League last 16, first-leg tie against Chelsea at the Parc des Princes. Aurier did not turn up for training on Sunday morning, according to TF1 television, making it seemingly more likely that he will be left out for the clash with the London club. He would have been expected to start that game after being rested for Saturday's league draw with Lille, before his social media outburst. There has been no official comment on the matter from the club or from Aurier himself. — AFP

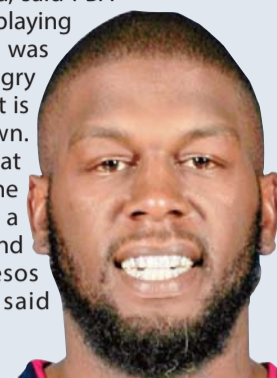


### PAKISTANI WOMEN BOXERS MAKE HISTORY

SHILLONG: Three Pakistani women are making history this weekend as they step into the boxing ring at the South Asian Games in India, the first time the conservative Muslim nation has fielded women boxers internationally. Khoushlem Bano, Rukhsana Parveen and Sofia Javed say to achieve their dream of competing they had to battle conservative groups in Pakistan who believe women should not participate in the sport. "It was not an easy path for us when we shared our idea of women taking up the macho sport in a conservative country like Pakistan. There were a lot of anti-groups who didn't accept us," 23-year-old Bano said in the northeast Indian city of Shillong. Bano's hopes of winning a medal were cut short on Saturday night when she lost her first fight to Nepal's Minu Gurung in the fly-weight (51kg) category. "It was a good experience for me. I will come back stronger next time," Bano told AFP. Javed will take to the ring for the first time later Sunday against India's Pooja Rani in the 75kg category, while Parveen will glove up against Sri Lanka's M. Vidushika Prabadhi in the evening. — AFP

### EX-NBA PLAYER JOHNSON BANNED IN PHILIPPINES

MANILA: The Philippines' professional basketball league has banned former NBA player Ivan Johnson for life after he cursed at its commissioner during a game, a spokesman said yesterday. Johnson, who plays with local team Talk 'N Text Tropang Texters, was banned mid-game after he used "the F-word" in an argument with Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) commissioner Chito Narvasa, said PBA media officer Willie Marcial. Talk 'N Text were playing the Meralco Bolts on Saturday when Johnson was ejected for two technical fouls. However an angry Johnson contested this, Marcial told AFP. "That is when he stood up. He was told to calm down. But that was when he said the F-word and that is to a commissioner, the highest official of the PBA," Marcial recalled. Narvasa then convened a technical committee at the game's halftime and had Johnson banned and fined 250,000 pesos (\$5,600) even before the game was over, said Marcial. — AFP



LOS ANGELES: Galen Rupp reacts after crossing the finish line to win US Olympic Team Marathon Trials, Saturday, in Los Angeles. The 29-year-old Rupp completed his marathon debut in 2 hours, 11 minutes, 10 seconds, earning a berth to the Rio Games. — AP

### OLYMPIC RUNNERS-UP RUPP, KEFLEZIGHI REACH RIO

LOS ANGELES: London Olympic 10,000-meter runner-up Galen Rupp won his marathon debut Saturday to book a Rio Olympics berth while 40-year-old Meb Keflezighi qualified for his fourth Olympic trip. Rupp won the US Olympic Marathon Trials in Los Angeles in an unofficial time of 2hrs 11mins 13secs, becoming the first American since 1968 to qualify for the Olympics in his debut at the 26.2-mile distance.

"I was very happy with the way it went," Rupp said. "It was a big change running the marathon but there is no bigger honor than representing your country at the Olympics." Eritrean-born Keflezighi, the 2004 Athens Olympic silver medalist who turns 41 in May, was second in 2:12:21 with Jared Ward third in 2:13:00 to qualify for his first Olympics.

On the women's side, Amy Cragg bounced back after being the fastest finisher not to qualify for the 2012 Olympics by winning the trials in 2:28:20. Desiree Linden was second, 34 seconds adrift, with Shalane Flanagan, who collapsed just after crossing the finish line, third in 2:29:19 to take the last Rio spot.

"Finishing fourth, looking back on it, was something that was so good for me," Cragg said. "It made me so determined as an athlete. I'm just so thrilled to be going to Rio." Rupp, who turns 30 in May, finished second to Britain's Mo Farah at the 2012 Olympics at 10,000m for the first US medal in the event since Billy Mills won in 1964.

OLYMPIC DOUBLE BID FOR RUPP? Rupp was also seventh at 5,000m at

London but this time he spoke confidently of an Olympic marathon-10,000m double in Brazil next August. "I think it's definitely a do-able double," Rupp said. "There's plenty of time to recover in between. I think it's possible."

The men's marathon is August 21, the last day of the Olympics, while the men's 10,000 is August 13. Rupp would have to qualify for the 10,000 at the US Olympic athletics trials on July 1.

Keflezighi, who became a US citizen in 1998, became the oldest American Olympic marathoner and the first to reach the Games three times in the event.

The 2009 New York Marathon and 2014 Boston Marathon winner made his Olympic debut in 2000 at Sydney in the 10,000, took second in the marathon four years later and placed fourth in 2012.

"As a 40-year-old to make it, I've been blessed more than I could ever think possible," Keflezighi said. Cragg, 32, and Flanagan are training partners, and helped each other through difficult moments in Saturday's race.

"She was instrumental," said the 34-year-old Flanagan, the 2008 Games 10,000m bronze medalist who booked a fourth Olympics berth. "There was a point I thought, 'I'm dying. I can't do it,' and she talked me through it." Linden, 32, failed to finish in the London Olympic women's marathon due to a leg stress fracture. "I feel like it has been this Sisyphean task where every time the rock comes down," Linden said of her fight for a second Olympic chance. "When I get to the finish line in Rio, it's going to be great." — AFP

## AUSTRALIA BEAT S AFRICA IN WORLD BASEBALL CLASSIC

SYDNEY: Australia booked its place in next year's World Baseball Classic by beating South Africa 12-5 in yesterday's final of a qualifying tournament, securing victory with a six-run eighth inning that was helped by a two-run throwing error on a bunt.

In a game where the lead changed hands four times, Mitch Denning and Trent Oeltjen hit run-scoring singles in the bottom of the seventh inning to break a 4-4 tie and give Australia a decisive 6-4 lead.

"I knew from the start that this wasn't going to be an easy competition," Australian manager Jon Deebie said on the MLB website.

"People said it would be a walk in the park, and I said, 'This is going to be tough.' They proved that. 12-5, they sort of lacked a bit of depth in their bullpen, but a couple more arms in the bullpen and it might be a one-run game."

South Africa shortstop Gift Ngoepe led off the game with a long homer to left field off Australian starter Travis Blackley. But the Australians tied it in the bottom of the first on Oeltjen's RBI double off South Africa starter Kyle Gaddin.

Australia's second baseman Brad Harman and catcher Allan de San Miguel hit consecutive solo home runs in bottom of fifth, both off South Africa reliever Carl Michaels, to give Australia a 3-1 lead.

Catcher Kyle Botha's three-run homer in the top of sixth off Blackley put South Africa up 4-3 but Australia, which outlast South Africa 17-7, tied it in the sixth on Trent D'Antonio's run-scoring double, before Denning and Oeltjen made it 6-4. South Africa scored a run off Australian Baseball League save leader Ryan Searle in the top of the eighth to close to within 6-5, before Australia's six unearned runs in the bottom of the inning.

Former Atlanta Braves pitcher Peter Moylan (1-0) threw 1 1-3 scoreless innings for the win and Searle picked up his second save of the tournament. "The pitching started to get tired, and then once we got beyond the guys we were comfortable with, we had to go to some rookies who have not been exposed to this level of baseball," said South Africa manager Alan Phillips. "It is difficult to play this level if you are not exposed ... on a regular basis."

Every Australian starter had at least one hit. Oeltjen, who came out of retirement to play, finished 3-for-4 with two doubles and two RBIs. Denning had two hits and two steals and D'Antonio added three RBIs.

The WBC qualifying tournament also included the Philippines and New Zealand. South Africa beat New Zealand 9-2 in a semifinal Saturday, while the Philippines lost both

games. The Sydney tournament was the first of four WBC qualifiers. Others will be held from March 17-20 in Mexicali, Mexico (featuring Czech Republic, Germany, Mexico and Nicaragua), and Panama City, Panama (Colombia, France, Panama and Spain); and from Sept. 22-25 in Brooklyn, New York (Brazil, Britain, Israel and Pakistan). Australia and the

other three qualifiers will join Canada, China, Cuba, defending champion Dominican Republic, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Puerto Rico, South Korea, Taiwan, the United States and Venezuela in next year's tournament. It is expected to be held in March 2017 although a host country or countries have not been announced. — AP

### KUWAIT WINS IN UAE JET SKI CHAMPIONSHIP

DUBAI: Kuwait Speed Racing (KSR) team won two trophies in the 4th leg of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) 2016 championship, which came to an end on Saturday evening. Kuwait racer Ahmad Al-Dawwas, speaking to KUNA after the conclusion of the 4th leg, said he was satisfied for finishing the race fourth in the senior GP category.

He said KSR was proud of the achievement of 10-year-old Shaheen Ramadhan, who came fifth in the junior stand-up category. Al-Dawwas said the team suffered some setbacks, foremost sudden technical failures. He thanked Dubai water sport club for the organization of the championship. — KUNA



KARLSTAD: Co-driver to Sebastien Ogier of France, Julien Ingrassia gestures during a press conference at the end of Rally Sweden, second round of the FIA World Rally Championship yesterday in Karlstad, Sweden. — AFP

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## KSC DEFEAT SALMIYA CLUB IN KUWAIT TENNIS FEDERATION CUP

By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Tennis Federation Cup for under 14 conducted earlier in the week in the presence of Assistant Treasurer Ahmad Al-Qallaf, and Technical Director Abbas Al-Busairi.

Kuwait Sports Club defeated Salmiya Club with the score of 2-1, as Salmiya player Mushin Jamal defeated

Kuwait's Abdallah Khalid by a score of 6-2, 6-0.

Kuwait player Hussein Al-Sarraf tied the score when he defeated Salmiya player Rashid Al-Jaafar 6-1, 6-0, then in the doubles Kuwait's Talal Saad and Mohammad Taqi, defeated Salmiya's Mohammad Al-Jaafar and Mohammad Salmeen 6-1, 6-1.

Meanwhile, Yarmouk defeated

Kheitan 3-0 as Yarmouk's Ahmad Khamees defeated Kheitan's Fahad Al-Dousary 6-1, 6-1. Yarmouk's Essa Qabazard defeated Kheitan's Paramshaaleesh by a score of 6-1, 6-1.

In the doubles Bader Antar and Ali Al-Shatti from Yarmouk, defeated Kheitan's Saeed Al-Dousary and Talal Al-Quthaifi 6-4, 6-2.

This placed Yarmouk in first place,



Rafael Nadal

## NADAL CRASHES OUT TO THIEM IN BUENOS AIRES

**BUENOS AIRES:** Defending champion Rafael Nadal suffered another setback Saturday when he squandered a match point before losing 6-4, 4-6, 7-6 (7/4) to Austria's Dominic Thiem in the Argentina Open semi-finals.

Top seed Nadal, playing on his favourite clay surface, finally wilted in the 32-degree heat in Buenos Aires after two hours and 50 minutes on court against Thiem, the world number 19, who goes on to face Nicolas Almagro in Sunday's final.

"It was a tough match. I had a chance to win and missed it but Thiem played well," said Nadal, whose claycourt title total remains on 47.

"I'm not worried. I just lacked consistency and need to make fewer unforced errors, but that's nothing." Nadal now heads for Rio next week where he will again be top seed and where he was champion in 2014.

He is expecting similarly gruelling conditions in the Olympic host city. "I struggled a bit to adapt to the extreme conditions here. I felt more tired than usual. I know that in Rio de Janeiro it's not going to be better, so I must continue to adapt." On Saturday, Nadal, in his first tournament since his shock first round exit at the Australian Open, dropped serve in the ninth game of the opener to allow 22-year-old Thiem to serve out for a one-set lead.

The 29-year-old Spaniard fought off a break point in the seventh game of the second as the big-hitting Thiem, the youngest member of the world top 20, threatened to run away with the contest.

But the 14-time major winner, who won the pair's only other meeting against at Roland Garros in 2014, made the most of his lifeline to break in the 10th game to level the semi-final.

Thiem, who once trained for his matches by carrying tree trunks on his back to beef up his physique, nipped ahead for 2-0 in the decider. But back came Nadal to level at 2-2 before Thiem saved a match point in the 10th game.

In the tiebreak, however, it was Thiem who proved the stronger, stretching to a 6/1 lead. Nadal saved three match points but the fifth-seeded Austrian held his nerve to give himself a shot at a fourth career title on Sunday in what will be his fifth final, all of which have been on clay.

Almagro, who put out third seeded Jo-Wilfried Tsonga in the quarter-finals, went one better in the semi-finals by defeating second seeded Spanish compatriot David Ferrer 6-4, 7-5.

Ferrer had to complete his rain-delayed quarter-final earlier Saturday, seeing off Uruguay's Pablo Cuevas, the eighth seed, 6-4, 1-6, 6-3. — AFP

## VINCI WINS SAINT PETERSBURG TITLE

**SAINT PETERSBURG:** Second seed Roberta Vinci won the inaugural WTA St Petersburg tournament yesterday by beating top-seeded Belinda Bencic in straight sets in the final.

The Italian toppled the 18-year-old Swiss, ranked 11th in the world, 6-4, 6-3 in one hour and 19 minutes to claim her 10th WTA singles title and first since 2013.

"It was much tougher than the scoreline suggests," Vinci said. "I had to stay focused on every single point, but I think I served really well today and that was probably the key."

"Belinda is a great player and today she just missed a few important balls." Vinci had previously decided to hang up her racket after the 2016 season. However, she has not ruled out delaying her retirement a little longer. Asked if she planned to play on for a few years, Vinci said: "No, two, three years, no. One more, but maybe. Why not?" World number 16 Vinci looked in good form from the start, keeping her teenage opponent under pressure.

The 32-year-old doubles specialist broke twice in the opening set but Bencic, who will break into the world's top 10 for the first time on Monday, hit back on both occasions to level at 4-4.

But last season's US Open runner-up Vinci grabbed the deciding break in the 10th game to claim the first set in 44 minutes. In the second set just one break in game four was enough to seal victory in the first ever meeting between the two.

"Roberta played amazing today and throughout this tournament," Bencic said at the award ceremony. "I gave everything I could but today she was much better!" Earlier yesterday, Martina Hingis and Sania Mirza extended their



**ST PETERSBURG:** Roberta Vinci of Italy celebrates with her trophy after winning the St Petersburg Ladies Trophy-2016 tennis tournament final match against Belinda Bencic of Switzerland in St Petersburg, Russia, yesterday. — AP

winning streak to 40 consecutive matches as they beat Vera Dushevina and Barbara Krejckikova 6-3, 6-1 in the event's doubles final. The world's number one pair of Swiss Hingis and India's Mirza dropped just one set in four matches at Saint Petersburg.

They are currently on course to matching

the record victory series of Jana Novotna and Helena Sukova, who managed 44 consecutive matches. "We're obviously very happy to win another title but now that we're coming closer and closer to the next target of 44, we can't help but think about it," Mirza said after the final. — AFP

## NISHIKORI TO FACE US TEEN IN MEMPHIS FINAL

**WASHINGTON:** Three-time defending champion Kei Nishikori advanced to the ATP Memphis final Saturday by beating US fourth seed Sam Querrey, setting up a title showdown with history-making teen prodigy Taylor Fritz.

Top seed Nishikori rallied to beat Querrey 3-6, 6-3, 6-3 for his 16th consecutive Memphis victory over four years while Fritz, an 18-year-old American wildcard in only his third tour-level event, ousted Lithuania's Ricardas Berankis 2-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Fritz fired 17 aces in becoming the youngest American in an ATP final since a 17-year-old Michael Chang won at Wembley in 1989.

And he shattered the US mark for fewest tour-level events needed to reach a final, the 10 tournaments taken by Jimmy Connors and Andy Roddick. After starting the week 1-2 in ATP play, 145th-ranked Fritz has won four matches and would crack the top 100 by taking the title.

"It feels incredible," Fritz said. "It's crazy what winning four tennis matches can achieve. I'm so happy."

Seventh-ranked Nishikori downed Querrey for the fourth meeting in a row, improving to 5-3 in their career rivalry by eliminating him in the semis as he did last year.

"It was a tough start for me," Nishikori said. "He was playing really good tennis, especially with his serve. He was hitting deep and flat and I was on defense all the time. I found my rhythm in the second set, was hitting balls deep and the tactics were working."

After splitting the first two sets with only one service break for each, Nishikori broke again for a 2-1 lead in the third set when Querrey netted a backhand.

Querrey had a break point in the eighth game, but Nishikori blasted a backhand winner to save it and start a run of six points in a row that took him to triple match point. Querrey rescued the first two break points but Nishikori hit a forehand winner for the triumph.

Fritz, last year's US Open junior champion, made his ATP debut last year at Nottingham, beating Carreno Busta before a second-round exit. He lost to compatriot Jack Sock in five sets in the first round of last month's Australian Open.

A double fault by 102nd-ranked Berankis handed Fritz a 2-1 edge in the last set. The European broke back for 4-4 with a service return winner only to double fault on break point again in the ninth game.

Fritz held to take the match in a wild final game that saw him squander four match points, then deny two break chances before Berankis netted a backhand to finally end matters after one hour and 40 minutes.

"It's incredible," Fritz said. "After the first set it wasn't looking too good. I was getting beaten every way possible. But I was able to turn it around and that makes it twice as good." — AFP



**MEMPHIS:** Kei Nishikori of Japan returns a shot to Sam Querrey of the United States during their semi-final singles match on Day 6 of the Memphis Open at the Racquet Club of Memphis in Memphis, Tennessee. — AFP

## VENUS VANQUISHES DOI TO CLAIM INAUGURAL TAIWAN TITLE

**TAIPEI:** American multiple grand slam champion Venus Williams collected the 49th title of her illustrious career by defeating Japan's Misaki Doi 6-4 6-2 in the final of the inaugural Taiwan Open yesterday.

The 35-year-old Californian, who was beaten in the first rounds of the Auckland Classic and Australian Open last month, won the \$500,000 hard court tournament in Kaohsiung without dropping a set.

"It's wonderful to have women's tennis here. It's been too long, it's the first time in 22 years," the top seed and world number 12 said in a courtside interview.

"It's my first time in Taiwan, so thank you

for making me feel so welcome and thank you for making me feel at home," Williams added after defeating the tournament second seed.

Williams's 49 career titles, including seven grand slam singles championships, leave her seventh on the all time list as she closes in on Monica Seles (53) and Lindsay Davenport (55).

Martina Navratilova leads the way on 167 titles, while Williams' younger sister and current world number one Serena, who pulled out of the Dubai Championships this week with flu, has 69. — Reuters





# SILVER EYES ALL-STAR GAME IN EUROPE BUT NOT SOON

**MONTREAL:** NBA commissioner Adam Silver likes the idea of playing a future NBA All-Star Game in Europe, but emphasized Saturday such a move was at least five years away.

On the eve of the 65th NBA All-Star Game in Toronto, the first to be staged beyond US borders, Silver said the extra distance to Asia compared to Europe would have him looking across the Atlantic Ocean for an overseas host rather than the Pacific.

"It's something we would love to do one day," Silver said. "It's not going to happen in the next two, three, four years but it's something that down the road could be really exciting for the NBA."

"We're always talking about it. It's logistically more difficult than it seems." A week-long break for the All-Star

Game would have to be stretched for an overseas event so players could recover from the extra travel and time zone issues. "Players will need additional time to readjust their sleep patterns and get reacquainted when they come back to the States," Stern said. "If we leave the country for All-Star, it puts pressure on the rest of the schedule."

Silver dashed hopes China or Japan would play host before areas such as Britain or Germany. "I think getting to Asia during an All-Star break would be that much more difficult than getting to Europe," Silver said. "Absolutely due to the additional number of miles we would have to travel to get to Asia. That would be the only reason."

The NBA played some regular-season games in Japan as recently as 2003 and

staged six games since 2011 in London, most recently last month. Two months ago, Mexico City hosted its third NBA regular-season game.

"Mexico City is a market we're particularly focused on," Silver said. "Mexico City is a market in the short term we'll be looking to do more in." Retired Chinese NBA star Yao Ming and retiring Los Angeles Lakers star guard Kobe Bryant were both cited by Silver for their off-court contributions to the NBA's global growth.

"He has punched way above his weight in the impact he has had on the global expansion of the NBA," Silver said, citing Bryant's blogs to fans in China and social media outreach. "Kobe has been at the center of that."

Yao, an eight-time All-Star forced to

retire in 2011 after severe foot injuries, was at the All-Star Game for youth clinics and coached handicapped children in a game where victories were measured in smiles. "He is truly a global basketball icon," Silver said. "His career was cut short. He didn't achieve everything he wanted on the court, but over a long life he's going to have as great an impact on the game as anyone who ever played."

## STARS ALIGN FOR SALARY CAP?

Rich new television deals will send team salary caps soaring next season, a move that could lead to superstar players clustering on certain clubs once free agency starts in July to better compete for a title. "Whether that will happen this summer is unclear to me," Silver said. "We would prefer our All-Stars be distributed

around the league but we will see what happens. There will be unintended consequences from all this extra cap room. I just don't know what those unintended consequences will be."

Silver said he expects a memo next week will be sent to discourage players from jumping on rivals for fouls to save time on the clock at the end of games.

He also said the league is strongly considering a rule change regarding players deliberately fouling poor free throw shooters after such instances jumped 5.5 percent so far this season compared to last season. No change would come before next season.

"I'm beginning to feel a change needs to be made," Silver said. "It's early days. We're just beginning to formulate what an alternative would look like." — AFP

## BADSTUBER'S LATEST BLOW HURTS BAYERN AND GERMANY

**BERLIN:** Holger Badstuber's latest injury is not just a cruel blow for the centre-back, but also impacts Bayern Munich's plans to win this season's treble and Germany's aspirations for Euro 2016. The 26-year-old fractured his left ankle by mistiming a sliding tackle on his Bayern team-mate David Alaba in a training session ahead of today's league game at Augsburg.

He underwent surgery in Munich on Saturday and is expected to be out for at least three months after suffering his fourth serious injury since December 2012. From Bayern's perspective, the timing is terrible, given their Champions League last 16, first-leg, match away to Juventus is in just ten days time, leaving head coach Pep Guardiola perilously low on centre-backs.

Jerome Boateng and Javi Martinez are already out for the coming months with groin and knee injuries respectively.

Medhi Benatia in only just back from missing the last seven games with a leg injury, while new signing Serdar Tasci was concussed in his first training session last week after signing on loan from Spartak Moscow. The injury crisis in central defence is a hit to Bayern's plans to give Guardiola the perfect send-off, before his summer departure to Manchester City, by repeating the 2013 treble.

Germany's top club is hunting a record fourth straight Bundesliga title, their 18th German Cup crown and want to win the Champions League after exiting the semi-finals in their two previous attempts under Guardiola.

But Badstuber's injury is also a blow for Germany head coach Joachim Loew with the European championships in France now four months away. Badstuber missed Germany's 2014 World Cup win with injury.

With Boateng already out of Germany's home friendlies against England and Italy in March, Badstuber was busy playing his way into Loew's plans having only returned in November after seven months out with a torn thigh muscle.

"It's unbelievable that it's always Holger who is affected," said Loew. "It's very bitter news. He was on his way back to full form and all of us in the national team wish him a speedy recovery and an early return to the pitch. "I'm certain that with his morale and top attitude, he'll manage it."

Badstuber showed plenty of fighting spirit despite his latest set-back. "Once a fighter, always a fighter! Think positive. Now more than ever," he wrote on Twitter on Saturday.

But his Bayern and Germany team-mates struggled to get their heads around how their colleague could have such bad luck. "Don't let your head go down, you'll do it!" tweeted World Cup winner Mario Goetze, while Germany's captain Bastian Schweinsteiger wrote: "such a skilled footballer, a great friend and so much bad luck!" Alaba, who Badstuber had attempted to tackle when injury struck, wrote "Horrible news for us today. @Badstuber, you will #comebackstronger again, my friend. #GetWellSoonHolger."

Even Borussia Dortmund, Bayern's arch rivals in Germany, offered an encouraging: "A Badstuber always gets up again!"

## PATH WELL WORN

Few professionals have trod the long path of rehabilitation from injury as often as Badstuber. He has been limited to 31 appearances for Germany, since his debut before the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, by an injury list which would be bad for an entire squad, let alone a single player.

He first tore the cruciate ligament in his right knee in December 2012, only to repeat the injury in the same leg the following May, which ultimately saw him miss the 2014 World Cup.

He was out for a total of 642 days and only returned in January 2015, but then tore his left thigh in April last year which saw him miss another seven months until his return last November.—AFP



**DALLAS:** Tyler Seguin #91 of the Dallas Stars skates the puck against Brooks Laich #21 of the Washington Capitals in the third period at American Airlines Center on Saturday in Dallas, Texas. — AFP

# STARS EDGE CAPITALS TO GO TO TOP OF WEST STANDINGS

**DALLAS:** Tyler Seguin scored twice during a four-goal second period and the Dallas Stars held off the Washington Capitals 4-3 in a battle between two of the NHL's top teams on Saturday night. Washington leads the Eastern Conference, and Dallas began the night one point behind Chicago for the Western Conference lead. Seguin has 30 goals this season. Jamie Benn scored his 29th, and rookie Mattias Janmark started the scoring with his 11th. Alex Ovechkin, Justin Williams and Andre Burakovsky scored for Washington in the third period. Ovechkin's league-leading 35th came on the power play. Capitals goalie Braden Holtby lost in regulation for just the second time since Nov. 12. Philipp Grubauer replaced Holtby in the third period and made 10 saves. Stars goalie Kari Lehtonen stopped 20 shots. Holtby had 21 saves.

## DUCKS 3, BLACKHAWKS 2, OT

Ryan Getzlaf scored a power-play goal at 2:16 of overtime, lifting Anaheim over Chicago. Cam Fowler's shot was stopped by Corey Crawford, but Getzlaf poked the rebound under the sliding goaltender. Getzlaf's sixth goal of the season came with Andrew Shaw serving a bench minor for too many men on the ice. Jakob Silfverberg and David Perron scored in the third period for Anaheim, which dropped the first two games of the season series against Chicago in overtime. Frederik Anderson made five saves after John Gibson departed after two periods with an upper-body injury. Blackhawks forward Marian Hossa left with a left leg injury in the second period of Chicago's third consecutive loss. The defending Stanley Cup champions dropped to 4-6 since their franchise-record 12-game win streak. Defenseman Brent Seabrook had two goals for Chicago, which has dropped three in a row.

## BRUINS 4, WILD 2

David Krejci broke a tie in the second period and Jonas Gustavsson made 31 saves to help Boston beat Minnesota. Minnesota fired coach Mike Yeo after the game and promoted John Tortorella from their Iowa affiliate in the American Hockey League as interim coach. The Wild have lost seven in a row and 13 of 14. They tied the longest home winless streak in franchise history at eight games (0-5-3). Krejci added an assist in Boston's sixth straight road victory. The Bruins are second in the NHL with 39 road points. Brad Marchand, Loui Eriksson and Zdeno Chara also scored for Boston. Marchand has scored in six straight games and has 12 goals in his last 12 games. Thomas Vanek and Mike Reilly scored for Minnesota, and Darcy Kuemper made 15 saves.

## PREDATORS 5, PANTHERS 0

Backup goaltender Carter Hutton made 22 saves and Calle Jarnkrok scored twice to lead Nashville over Florida. Miikka Salomaki, James Neal and Shea Weber also scored for Nashville. Playing in just his ninth game in place of starter Pekka Rinne, Hutton ran his record to 6-2-1 and picked up his second shutout. Florida dropped the first two games of its six-game

homestand, which it continues Monday against Pittsburgh. Panthers goaltender Roberto Luongo made 23 saves in his second straight loss. Both teams were coming off losses Friday night. Mike Ribeiro and Roman Josi had two assists each, and Neal, Austin Watson, Anthony Bitetto, Ryan Johansen and Roman Josi had one each.

## SHARKS 4, COYOTES 1

Matt Tenney and Chris Tierney scored in the first period and San Jose hung on to beat Arizona. Tomas Hertl and Joonas Donskoi also scored for the Sharks, who improved to 6-0-3 at home since a 2-8 mark in their previous 10 contests. Martin Jones stopped 22 of 23 shots for his second straight win. He's 10-2-2 over his past 14 games. Melker Karlsson and Brent Burns each had two assists for San Jose. Martin Hanzal scored for the Coyotes, who lost their fifth in six games against San Jose. Louis Domingue saved 24 of 27 shots but fell to 1-4-1 in his last six games.

## DEVILS 2, FLYERS 1, OT

Adam Henrique scored on a power play 2:58 into overtime to lift New Jersey past Philadelphia. Joseph Blandisi scored in regulation, and Cory Schneider made 31 saves for the Devils. They snapped a three-game road losing streak to improve to 7-2-2 in their last 11 games. Shayne Gostisbehere scored for the Flyers to set a club record for rookies with a point in 11 straight games.

## HURRICANES 6, ISLANDERS 3

Victor Rask scored twice to cap Carolina's five-goal second period and the Hurricanes beat New York. Riley Nash, Noah Hanifin, Kris Versteeg, and Andrej Nestrasil also scored for Carolina, which was celebrating the 10-year anniversary of its 2006 Stanley Cup season. Jordan Staal and Phillip Di Giuseppe each had two assists. John Tavares got New York on the scoreboard with his team-leading 21st goal

with 6:14 left in the middle period, and Nick Leddy's power-play score made it 4-2 a little more than 90 seconds later. Matt Martin scored in the third period for the Islanders, who snapped a three-game winning streak.

## MAPLE LEAFS 5, CANUCKS 2

Mark Arcobello scored his first two goals of the season 17 seconds apart, Brendan Leipsic got his first NHL goal in his first game and Toronto beat Vancouver to end a three-game skid. James Reimer made 17 saves and Jake Gardiner added two assists for Toronto. Brad Boyes and Leo Komarov added empty-netters. Daniel Sedin and Sven Baertschi scored for Vancouver, which had won two in a row to get back in the Western Conference playoff race after dropping four straight. Ryan Miller made 33 saves.

## JETS 2, OILERS 1, SO

Andrew Ladd scored the winner in the shootout to lift Winnipeg over Edmonton. Blake Wheeler scored in regulation and again in the shootout for the Jets, who have won three of their last four. Ondrej Pavelec stopped 21 shots in his first start since Nov. 2 after missing 33 games with a knee injury. Matt Hendricks had the tying short-handed goal in the third period for the Oilers, who have lost four of their last five games. Edmonton goalie Laurent Brossoit had 32 saves in his second NHL start.

## BLUE JACKETS 4, SENATORS 2

Boone Jenner scored twice, Cam Atkinson and Brandon Saad each had goals and Columbus beat Ottawa. Seth Jones had two assists and Joonas Korhonen made 33 saves for Columbus. Atkinson also had an assist while the last-place Blue Jackets won for the fourth time in five games. Cody Ceci and Bobby Ryan scored for Ottawa, and Craig Anderson stopped 36 of 39 shots. The Senators have lost three straight. —AP

## LAVINE WINS ALL-STAR SLAM DUNK CONTEST

**MONTREAL:** Minnesota Timberwolves forward Zach LaVine earned a second straight NBA All-Star Slam Dunk title in Toronto on Saturday in a scintillating showdown with Orlando's Aaron Gordon.

LaVine, fresh from earning Most Valuable Player honors in Friday's Rising Stars Challenge exhibition game, earned his fifth maximum score of 50 on the night with a through the legs dunk from just within the free-throw line to seal the win.

He became the fourth player to win back-to-back dunk titles, after Michael Jordan (1987-88), Jason Richardson (2002-03) and Nate Robinson (2009-10).

But Gordon didn't make it easy, as the two traded spectacular soaring dunks in the final round.

"We should share the trophy, because (Gordon) did some stuff I've never seen before," LaVine said.

Gordon launched the final round with an incredible display of timing, grabbing the ball from the Orlando Magic mascot who was spinning on a hoverboard. He twisting through the air himself to throw down a one-handed dunk.

LaVine responded by throwing himself an alley-oop pass and soaring for a one-handed finish.

Gordon then again used the mascot, vaulting over the costumed creature, pluck-

ing the ball from its head and passing it from one hand to another beneath his body on his way to the rim.

LaVine answered with a classic windmill dunk that also received maximum points.

In the first dunk-off, Gordon had teammate Elfrid Payton bounce an alley-oop softly off the backboard. He caught it and completed a reverse dunk.

LaVine responded by throwing an alley-oop to himself from the baseline, catching the ball and passing it through his legs for a reverse.

On the second dunk-off, Gordon ran along the baseline and did a two-handed reverse that garnered 47 points, opening the door for LaVine to seal it.

The dunk contest was the highlight of the All-Star Saturday night festivities-curtain raiser to Sunday's All-Star Game.

Klay Thompson won the three-point shooting contest, making his final eight shots to edge Golden State Warriors teammate and defending three-point champ Stephen Curry.

The Skills Challenge was won by Timberwolves rookie center Karl-Anthony Towns, who beat Boston Celtics guard Isaiah Thomas in the final round. Towns, a 7-footer (2.13m) was an unlikely winner over the 5-foot, 9-inch (1.75 m) Thomas in the competition testing agility. — AFP



**TORONTO:** Minnesota Timberwolves' Zach LaVine holds the trophy after winning the slam dunk contest during the NBA All-Star weekend in Toronto, Saturday. — AP

## NHL Results/Standings

New Jersey 2, Philadelphia 1 (OT); Boston 4, Minnesota 2; Nashville 5, Florida 0; Carolina 6, NY Islanders 3; Columbus 4, Ottawa 2; Toronto 5, Vancouver 2; Dallas 4, Washington 3; Anaheim 3, Chicago 2 (OT); Winnipeg 2, Edmonton 1 (SO); San Jose 4, Arizona 1.

Western Conference							Eastern Conference						
Central Division							Atlantic Division						
	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS							
Dallas	36	15	5	184	152	77	Boston	30	19	6	167	151	66
Chicago	36	18	5	163	137	77	Detroit	28	18	9	139	138	65
St. Louis	31	17	9	141	137	71	Tampa Bay	30	20	4	146	133	64
Colorado	29	25	4	157	160	62	Montreal	27	25	4	155	152	58
Nashville	26	21	9	149	149	61	Ottawa	25	26	6	163	181	56
Minnesota	23	22	10	135	140	56	Buffalo	22	28	6	132	159	50
Winnipeg	25	27	3	142	160	53	Toronto	20	25	9	132	156	49
<b>Pacific Division</b>							<b>Metropolitan Division</b>						
Los Angeles	33	18	3	153	130	69	Washington	40	10	4	181	125	84
San Jose	29	20	5	160	146	63	NY Rangers	31	18	6	160	142	68
Anaheim	27	19	8	125	130	62	NY Islanders	29	19	6	157	140	64
Arizona	25	24	6	145	169	56	Pittsburgh	28	19	7	141	139	63
Vancouver	22	21	12	131	152	56	New Jersey	28	21	7	126	130	63
Calgary	25	26	3	146	162	53	Carolina	25	21	10	137	149	60
Edmonton	22	29	6	143	171	50	Philadelphia	24	20	10	130	145	58
<b>Eastern Conference</b>							Columbus						
Atlantic Division							23 28 6 148 178 52						
Florida	32	18	6	158	133	70	Note: Overtime losses (OTL) are worth one point in the standings and are not included in the loss column (L).						

Soccer League results/standings

Arsenal 2, Leicester City 1; Aston Villa 0, Liverpool 6; AFC Bournemouth 1, Stoke City 3; Chelsea 5, Newcastle United 1; Crystal Palace 1, Watford 2; Everton 0, West Bromwich Albion 1; Norwich City 2, West Ham United 2; Sunderland 2, Manchester United 1; Swansea City 0, Southampton 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leicester City	26	15	8	3	48	29	53
Arsenal	26	15	6	5	41	23	51
Tottenham Hotspur	25	13	9	3	45	19	48
Manchester City	25	14	5	6	47	26	47
Manchester United	26	11	8	7	33	24	41
Southampton	26	11	7	8	34	24	40
West Ham United	26	10	10	6	40	31	40
Liverpool	26	10	8	8	38	36	38
Watford	26	10	6	10	29	28	36
Stoke City	26	10	6	10	27	32	36
Everton	26	8	11	7	46	35	35
Chelsea	26	8	9	9	38	36	33
Crystal Palace	26	9	5	12	27	32	32
West Bromwich	26	8	8	10	24	32	32
AFC Bournemouth	26	7	7	12	30	44	28
Swansea City	26	6	9	11	24	34	27
Norwich City	26	6	6	14	30	50	24
Newcastle United	26	6	6	14	27	49	24
Sunderland	26	6	5	15	32	50	23
Aston Villa	26	3	7	16	20	46	16

Italy Serie A results/standings

AC Milan 2, Genoa 1; Palermo 1, Torino 3; Sampdoria 0, Atalanta Bergamo 0; Udinese 0, Bologna 1; Chievo Verona 1 Sassuolo 1; Empoli 1 Frosinone 2; Juventus 1 Napoli 0.

Juventus	25	18	3	4	46	15	57
Napoli	25	17	5	3	53	20	56
AS Roma	25	13	8	4	47	27	47
Fiorentina	24	14	4	6	42	23	46
Inter Milan	24	13	6	5	30	20	45
AC Milan	25	12	7	6	37	27	43
Lazio	25	10	6	9	34	34	36
Sassuolo	25	8	11	6	29	29	35
Empoli	25	9	7	9	30	34	34
Bologna	25	10	3	12	29	31	33
Chievo Verona	25	8	7	10	30	33	31
Torino	25	8	7	10	33	33	31
Atalanta Bergamo	25	7	8	10	23	27	29
Udinese	25	7	6	12	21	38	27
Palermo	25	7	5	13	27	42	26
Genoa	25	6	7	12	25	30	25
Sampdoria	25	6	7	12	36	43	25
Frosinone	25	6	4	15	26	51	22
Carpi	25	4	7	14	23	43	19
Verona	25	1	12	12	21	42	15

French Ligue 1 results/standings

Olympique Lyon 4, Caen 1; En Avant Guingamp 2, Girondins Bordeaux 4; Nantes 2, FC Lorient 1; GFC Ajaccio 2, ES Troyes AC 3; Montpellier HSC 2, Toulouse 0; Paris St Germain 0, Lille 0; Stade de Reims 0, Bastia 1.

Paris St Germain	26	22	4	0	63	12	70
Monaco	25	12	9	4	36	28	45
Olympique Lyon	26	11	6	9	38	28	39
Nice	25	11	6	8	38	29	39
St Etienne	25	12	3	10	30	28	39
Nantes	26	10	9	7	26	24	39
Stade Rennes	26	9	11	6	34	31	38
Angers SCO	26	10	7	9	25	24	37
Girondins Bordeaux	26	9	9	8	36	39	36
Caen	26	11	3	12	27	35	36
Olympique Marseille	25	8	10	7	35	26	34
Bastia	26	10	4	12	25	29	34
Lille	26	6	13	7	20	20	31
FC Lorient	26	7	10	9	35	38	31
En Avant Guingamp	26	8	7	11	28	34	31
Montpellier HSC	26	8	5	13	30	31	29
Stade de Reims	26	7	8	11	27	34	29
GFC Ajaccio	26	6	9	11	27	37	27
Toulouse	26	4	9	13	25	44	21
ES Troyes AC	26	2	8	16	19	53	14

Spanish La Liga results/standings

Real Sociedad 3, Granada CF 0; Sevilla 2, Las Palmas 0; Deportivo Coruna 2, Real Betis 2; Real Madrid 4, Athletic Club 2; Valencia 2, Espanyol 1; Villarreal 1, Malaga 0.

Barcelona	22	17	3	2	56	17	54
Real Madrid	24	16	5	3	70	23	53
Athletic Club	23	16	3	4	34	11	51
Villarreal	24	14	6	4	30	18	48
Sevilla	24	11	7	6	34	24	40
Athletic Club	24	10	5	9	35	34	35
Celta Vigo	23	10	5	8	34	36	35
Eibar	23	9	6	8	36	31	33
Deportivo Coruna	24	6	14	4	33	30	32
Real Sociedad	24	8	6	10	34	34	30
Malaga	24	8	6	10	21	21	30
Valencia	24	6	10	8	28	25	28
Getafe	23	7	5	11	26	35	26
Real Betis	24	6	8	10	18	33	26
Rayo Vallecano	24	6	6	12	32	49	24
Sporting Gijon	23	6	5	12	26	38	23
Espanyol	24	6	4	14	21	48	22
Las Palmas	24	5	6	13	23	38	21
Granada CF	24	5	5	14	25	49	20
Levante	23	4	5	14	21	43	17



HAMBURG: Hamburg's Matthias Ostrzolek, left, and Moenchengladbach's Ibrahima Traore compete for the ball during the German Bundesliga soccer match between Hamburger SV and Borussia Moenchengladbach in Hamburg, Germany, yesterday. Hamburg won by 3-2. — AP

# HAMBURG SHOCK GLAD TO BREAK WINLESS STREAK

**BERLIN:** Hamburg pulled clear of the Bundesliga's relegation battle yesterday with a shock 3-2 comeback win at home to Borussia Moenchengladbach to end their six-game winless streak. Bruno Labbadia's Hamburg won for the first time since the end of November to climb from 13th to 11th, but more importantly, are now six points above the relegation zone.

Gladbach took the lead through US international Fabian Johnson on 14 minutes, but hosts Hamburg bludgeoned their way back. Lewis Holtby squandered a golden chance on 18 minutes when the Hamburg midfielder opted to pass with the goal at his mercy. Then Gladbach defender Martin Hinteregger stabbed the ball into his own net from a corner on 38 minutes to put Hamburg 1-0 up. And just three minutes later, Artjoms Rudnevs landed another blow by gathering Rene Adler's long-ball from the Hamburg goal and beating Oscar Wendt to make it 2-1 at the break.

Midfielder Ivo Ilicic extended Hamburg's lead when he headed home from a corner with ten minutes to go. But Gladbach's Brazilian striker Raffael gave his side brief hope by netting a late goal to make it 3-2 on 88 minutes.

With Bayern Munich at Augsburg on Sunday,

Henrikh Mkhitaryan's second-half goal sealed Borussia Dortmund's 1-0 win over Hanover 96 on Saturday to trim the champions' lead to five points.

Dortmund were without injured star striker Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, who missed his first league match of the season after netting 20 goals in as many Bundesliga games.

Wolfsburg warmed up for Wednesday's Champions League, last 16, first leg at Gent with a 2-0 win at home to Ingolstadt. It was their first victory since knocking Manchester United out of the Champions League in December.

Dieter Hecking's Wolfsburg won for the first time in six games but stay eighth after first-half goals by Germany midfielder Julian Draxler and defender Robin Knoche.

Bayer Leverkusen moved up from seventh to third as they bounced back from their shock German Cup exit at the hands of Werder Bremen in mid-week with a 2-1 comeback win at Darmstadt.

On a heavy pitch, Sandro Wagner stabbed the ball home to give Darmstadt an early lead, despite Leverkusen goalkeeper Bernd Leno catching him around the throat with his forearm.

Leverkusen drew level when Darmstadt defender Aytac Sulu headed into his own net on 62 minutes before Julian Brandt started the move he finished by tapping in the winner on 77 minutes.

VfB Stuttgart's impressive form continued as they picked up their fifth straight league win to go 10th with a 2-0 win at home to Hertha Berlin. A long-range strike from Ivory Coast defensive midfielder Serey Die and a second-half goal from left winger Filip Kostic sealed the hosts' win. Hertha suffered their first defeat in nine games since losing 2-0 at Bayern in November to drop to fourth.

The youngest manager in Bundesliga history made his debut when Julian Nagelsmann, 28, was on Hoffenheim's bench for their 1-1 draw at Werder Bremen in a basement battle. Nagelsmann took over after predecessor Huub Stevens resigned on Wednesday due to heart problems. The result leaves both teams in the bottom three. Eintracht Frankfurt remain just above the relegation places after their 3-1 defeat at Cologne.

Midfielder Yannick Gerhardt, defender Dominique Heintz and striker Anthony Modeste scored the hosts' goals. — AFP

## LLOYD'S LATE GOAL GIVES US 1-0 WIN OVER MEXICO

**FRISCO:** Carli Lloyd scored off a rebound of her own penalty kick in the 86th minute and the United States beat Mexico 1-0 on Saturday to clinch a spot in the CONCACAF Olympic qualifying semifinals.

Lloyd's penalty shot, following a Mexico hand ball in the penalty area, went to the middle of the goal and was blocked by Cecilia Santiago. Lloyd buried the rebound, with Santiago still on the ground for her 84th career goal.

The winners of the semifinals - set for Houston on Feb. 19 - will qualify for the Rio Olympics. The Americans will conclude group play Monday night against Puerto Rico. The other match Monday between Mexico and Costa Rica will determine Group A's other semifinalist. Costa Rica won the opener Saturday at Toyota Stadium, beating Puerto Rico 9-0.

The United States remained unbeaten CONCACAF qualifying play at 15-0-1, having scored 81 goals and allowing four. Mexico nearly tied it a minute after Lloyd goal when Monica Ocampo's left-footed shot from outside the 18-yard box was batted over the crossbar by Hope Solo to preserve her 93rd career shutout.

The tournament is the Americans' first competitive play since winning

last summer's World Cup in Canada. They have won three straight Olympic titles and four of the five in women's soccer.

This US roster features only 13 of the 20 players who were on the World Cup team. Christie Rampone and Megan Rapinoe are injured, and Amy Rodriguez and Sydney Leroux are pregnant and will miss the Olympics.

The Americans dominated possession during the scoreless first half, taking all five shots and all five corner kicks against a Mexican side that kept five players across its back line. Their best scoring chance came in the 16th minute when a corner by Morgan Brian made it in to goalkeeper Cecilia Santiago, who couldn't maintain control. Julie Johnston tried to score on the rebound but shot wide.

Lloyd had a free kick from about 35 yards out in the 44th minute and shot just wide of the near post. The United States had two second-half opportunities strike the post - Christen Press in the 52nd minute and Lindsey Horan in the 76th minute.

Alex Morgan had two scoring chances from close range that went over the crossbar midway through the second half with a left-footed shot in the 67th minute and a header two minutes. —AP

## NEVILLE SEEKS MOMENTUM FROM FIRST VALENCIA WIN

**MADRID:** Valencia boss Gary Neville is hopeful his first win in 10 La Liga games in charge of Los Che will be the confidence boost his young side needed to turn their season around. The hosts came from behind to beat Espanyol 2-1 on Saturday thanks to goals in the final 20 minutes from Alvaro Negredo and Denis Cheryshev to ease Valencia's fears of being dragged into a relegation battle and the pressure on Neville's job.

"Hopefully we'll push on from this. That is what I want, what I hope for," said Neville. "It's not a night for any celebration whatsoever, not a night to get carried away. We need to gain some confidence from the result. "There is a good feeling in the dressing room and we need to take that forward."

Neville has been severely criticised by some quarters of the Spanish media with many suggesting his friendship with Valencia's Singaporean owner Peter Lim as the only reason he hadn't been sacked before this weekend. However, he thanked the club's famously demanding fans for sticking with the side after they fell behind for the 10th time in as many

league games since he took over early in the second-half to Oscar Duarte's header. "The most incredible bit was the fans stayed with us, every single player stayed with me," he added.

"It's not down to tactics, it's not down to the coach, it's down to the fans and the way they responded after the goal. "We've had to come back so many times in league games: Getafe, Rayo (Vallecano), (Real) Madrid, Deportivo (La Coruna). "It's not new for them to come back. They've showed spirit many times and tonight they showed it again."

Neville also announced that former Liverpool assistant manager Pako Ayestaran will join his coaching staff from next week. And despite the relief of a first league win, Neville acknowledged he still has a long way to go to prove he is worthy of staying on at the Mestalla beyond the end of the season.

"The media and fans are well within their rights to say what they want, I'd be saying them as a journalist or as a fan. "I'm not expecting to be shielded or protected, I thrive on it. From my point of view I know I'm in a fight" — AFP



AJACCIO: Ajaccio's Tunisian midfielder Mohamed Larbi (L) vies for the ball with Troyes' French midfielder Benjamin Nivet during the French L1 football match between Gazelec Ajaccio (GFC) and Troyes (ESTAC) Sunday, at the Ange Casanova stadium in Ajaccio, on the French Mediterranean island of Corsica. — AFP

# Sports

**KSC defeat Salmiya Club in Kuwait Tennis Federation Cup**



**4-wicket Ashwin helps India clinch T20 series**



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LAVINE WINS ALL-STAR SLAM DUNK CONTEST Page 18



LONDON: Arsenal's English midfielder Theo Walcott (R) celebrates scoring his team's first goal during the English Premier League football match between Arsenal and Leicester at the Emirates Stadium in London yesterday. — AFP

## WELBECK LATE SHOW BREAKS LEICESTER HEARTS



**LONDON:** Substitute Danny Welbeck scored a dramatic stoppage-time winner as Arsenal resurrected their Premier League title challenge with a heart-stopping 2-1 Valentine's Day victory over leaders Leicester City yesterday. Down to 10 men following Danny Simpson's 54th-minute dismissal, Leicester were clinging on at a tension-bound Emirates Stadium when Welbeck headed in a 95th-minute winner from Mesut Ozil's free-kick on his return after 10 months out with a serious knee injury.

The England striker's goal lifted Arsenal to within two points of Leicester and also gave hope to Tottenham Hotspur and Manchester City, five and six points off the pace respectively, ahead of their meeting at the Etihad Stadium later in the day.

"It was a pivotal moment today because the mathematics meant it could be eight points or it could be two points. That is a great change," said Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger.

"Everyone is extremely happy for him (Welbeck) because he's been out for 10 months. That's an eternity for a player."

Welbeck told Sky Sports: "It has been a rollercoaster for me, a difficult moment, and my family and friends know what I have been through." Welbeck's goal, after fellow substitute Theo Walcott had cancelled out Jamie Vardy's first-half penalty, saw Wenger's men complete a league double over Leicester following their 5-2 away win in September.

While Arsenal must now prepare for contests with Hull City and Barcelona, Claudio Ranieri's Leicester have two weeks to regain their strength before resuming their improbable title bid at home to Norwich City. "I think the referee was too severe to us for the sending-off. 11 v 11, I'm sure we win the match," Ranieri said. "But we are still top of the table. We must carry on and smile." Manchester City never recovered from falling behind to Leicester in their 3-1 defeat last weekend and Arsenal seemed determined to avoid the same fate on a chilly north London afternoon, quickly pushing the visitors back.

### VARDY STRIKES

With less than two minutes gone, Alexis Sanchez threw himself at Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain's corner and headed wide, with N'Golo Kante surviving a penalty-box handball appeal shortly after.

Leicester goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel

then raced out boldly to prevent Aaron Ramsey reaching Ozil's pass and within seconds Vardy had forced Petr Cech to save with a downward header at the other end.

It proved the pattern of the first half. Arsenal attacked Wes Morgan blocking from Olivier Giroud and Sanchez, Giroud twice heading off-target at corners and Leicester countered, Kante obliging Cech to claw the ball away from his top-left corner with a curling shot. As half-time drew near Leicester went ahead, Vardy luring Nacho Monreal into a challenge and then tumbling to the ground before picking himself up and drilling his 19th goal of the campaign past Cech.

The Leicester end erupted. Arsenal's fans, convinced that referee Martin Atkinson had been hoodwinked by Vardy, booed the officials off at the interval. There was a further blow for the hosts at half-time as Laurent Koscielny was forced off with a dead leg, which brought Calum Chambers into the fray.

But after Ramsey had drilled wide and Giroud had headed another chance over, their luck changed when Simpson was shown a second yellow card for tugging Giroud back, five minutes after his first for tripping Sanchez. The two managers rearranged their teams for the final half hour, Ranieri sending on Marcin Wasilewski and Demarai Gray in place of Riyadh Mahrez and Shinji Okazaki, Wenger throwing on Walcott for Francis Coquelin. It was the Arsenal change that was to prove telling, Walcott equalising in the 70th minute by side-footing home after Giroud masterfully nodded Hector Bellerin's cross into his path.

Per Mertesacker glanced a header just wide and Schmeichel pulled off a pair of brilliant one-handed saves to thwart Giroud and Sanchez. But with full-time beckoning, Welbeck rushed in to meet Ozil's free-kick with an unerring downward header, eclipsing Leicester's fairytale with one of his own. — AFP

## ERIKSEN IGNITES SPURS' TITLE BID



**MANCHESTER:** Christian Eriksen marked his 24th birthday with a late goal as Tottenham Hotspur won 2-1 at Manchester City yesterday to climb to within two points of the Premier League summit.

Harry Kane put Spurs ahead with a controversial penalty early in the second half, the England international claiming his 15th goal in his last 17 league games. City, yet to beat a top-six side this season, equalised through teenage substitute Kelechi Iheanacho.

But City were consigned to consecutive home defeats for the first time since December 2008 when Eriksen beat Joe Hart in the 83rd minute to celebrate his milestone with his sixth goal of the season.

City, beaten for the first time in the league this season with fit-again captain Vincent Kompany in the side, are now six points behind league leaders Leicester City, while Tottenham's fifth successive league win has raised their hopes of a first league title since 1961.

Arsenal's last-gasp 2-1 win over Leicester earlier in the day had opened the way for both of

these sides to reinforce their title credentials. But it also meant a share of the points would not be a disaster and the result was a cagey opening in which neither side was prepared to gamble too soon. Tottenham's record at the Etihad Stadium, where they had lost on their previous five visits, may also have made them wary of over-committing, although there was no shortage of confidence in the way in which Mauricio Pochettino's side looked to keep possession.

Tottenham have the best defensive record in the league and were rarely troubled at the back in the first half, with City's best moments coming either from counter-attacks or when the visitors over-played. The combination of David Silva and Raheem Sterling looked City's best bet to open up Tottenham's back line, with Sergio Aguero, scorer of 10 goals in eight Premier League appearances against Tottenham, also constantly looking to exploit any gap.

But City's only two real sights of goal before the break came via set-pieces, with Aguero volleying over and Sterling seeing a shot blocked by Danny Rose.

Left-back Rose was heavily involved in a lot of Spurs' best moments, but for all the Londoners' composure they managed only one shot on target in the first 45 minutes, a swerving strike from Eriksen that Hart beat away. And it was Rose who was instrumental in Tottenham taking



MANCHESTER: Manchester City's Kelechi Iheanacho, center, scores his side's first goal past Tottenham's goalkeeper Hugo Lloris, right, during the English Premier League soccer match between Manchester City and Tottenham Hotspur's at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester, England, yesterday. — AP

the lead eight minutes into the second half.

City had just missed the best chance of the game, Aguero clinching an effort wide from the corner of the six-yard box after a deflected Yaya Toure cross had looped into his path, when the visitors were awarded a penalty after Rose's cross hit the jumping Sterling.

It was a big call from referee Mark Clattenburg, as replays suggested the ball had struck Sterling's side, but Kane kept his composure to score from the spot and claim his 19th goal of the season. City's response was instant as Toure curled a free-kick against the crossbar from 25 yards out.

They were unable to build on that and frustration was beginning to show on the pitch and amongst the home supporters when Iheanacho struck to make it 1-1 with 16 minutes left. The 19-year-old had only been on the pitch for eight minutes when he met a low cross from Gael Clichy with a thumping left-foot finish from 10 yards out to claim his ninth goal of a breakthrough season. City pressed for the winner, but instead it was Tottenham who gained a potentially crucial victory. Substitute Erik Lamela released Eriksen to slide the ball past Hart with seven minutes to go and edge his side closer to an increasingly feasible title triumph. — AFP

## LIVERPOOL THRASH LAST-PLACE VILLA 6-0



**BIRMINGHAM:** Liverpool ran riot in a 6-0 hammering of Aston Villa at Villa Park yesterday as the Premier League's bottom club went into meltdown.

Daniel Sturridge made a dream return to the visitors' starting line-up after injury with a 16th-minute opener that set Liverpool on course for a crushing victory.

And Villa then wilted as they slumped to their heaviest home defeat of the post-1992 Premier League era to slide closer to relegation, ending the day eight points adrift of the safety line.

Jürgen Klopp's Liverpool produced a slick display to claim a first win in six games in all competitions.

There were six different goalscorers as James Milner, Emre Can, Divock Origi, Nathaniel Clyne and Kolo Toure added to Sturridge's effort. However, the home side helped with a feeble display that saw thousands of fans head for the exits with less than an hour played as four goals in 14 second-half minutes set Liverpool on course for a huge win. Those that remained turned on owner Randy Lerner with chants against the American, while Liverpool's comprehensive win took them eighth in the table, just three points behind Manchester United in the Europa League place. For Sturridge, who played for Villa as a schoolboy, it was the perfect way to mark his first league start since October following a series of injury setbacks.

Villa had enjoyed the better of the opening exchanges, passing the ball neatly and crisply. But they failed to create even a half-chance to test Simon Mignolet in the Liverpool goal and paid the price when Sturridge opened the scoring. The forward ghosted between Villa defenders Joleon Lescott and Aly Cissokho, who failed to track his run.

That left him with the simple task of heading home Philippe Coutinho's delicious cross from around six yards out.

Villa's approach play remained encouraging, but Mignolet made a simple catch from a Jores Okore header before Ashley Westwood tried his luck from distance with a shot that flew well wide.

Liverpool, however, continued to pose the greater threat in possession and a set-piece brought the second goal on 25 minutes. Okore was guilty of conceding a needless free-kick on the Villa right and Milner's delivery evaded everyone, including goalkeeper Mark Bunn, and nestled inside the far post.

It owed much to fortune, but from that moment Villa caved in. The Merseysiders ought to have added to their lead on the half-hour when Villa's shell-shocked defenders gifted them another chance. Milner was given time and space for a cushioned header from a cross by Roberto Firmino, but Jordan Henderson saw his low drive deflected wide off Okore.

Liverpool began to take control with Bunn saving a shot by Firmino and then, a minute before half-time, diving to his right to pull off a better save from a curling effort by Sturridge.

Early in the second half Leandro Bacuna cut in from the flank for Villa, but his tame shot was held at the second attempt by Mignolet. Villa imploded again in the 58th minute when Can started and finished the move for Liverpool's third goal. — AFP

# Kuwait Times BUSINESS

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NBK diamond sponsor of the  
Kuwait Investment Forum

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Britain's bank workers  
buckle under pressure

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Gulf Bank recognized  
'Best Cash Management  
Provider in Kuwait'

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## EXTREME RISK AVERSION DOMINATES GLOBAL MARKETS

Page 25



SINGAPORE: South Korea's Black Eagles aerobatics team performs an aerial display during a preview at the Singapore Airshow at Changi exhibition center in Singapore yesterday. (Inset) An Airbus A350 XWB flies past during a preview at the Singapore Airshow at Changi exhibition center yesterday. —AFP (See also page 23)

## GLOBAL SLOWDOWN FEARS CLOUD AVIATION SHOW

AIRLINES EXECUTIVES TO DEBATE ECONOMY AT SINGAPORE AIRSHOW

**SINGAPORE:** Aerospace leaders gathering for this week's Singapore Airshow face conflicting pressures as they juggle growing concerns over jetliner demand while keeping record production plans on track. Worries about the effects of a faltering global economy and tensions in the South China Sea overshadow the two-yearly event in Singapore, which is both a major commercial travel hub and home to Southeast Asia's most potent and best-trained air force.

For now, airline traffic continues to grow rapidly, spurred by continued growth in Asian household incomes, while airline profits also benefit from low oil prices.

But as aerospace industry shares fall in step with tumbling global markets, analysts increasingly question the durability of an aerospace

expansion cycle now in an unprecedented eighth year.

After a lacklustre show in Dubai in November, the industry's expo bandwagon rolls into the crucial Southeast Asian region without the carnival atmosphere of previous years.

"All the thoughts that this is no longer a cyclical industry have disappeared. We are due for a down-cycle," said aerospace consultant Jerrold Lundquist, managing director of The Lundquist Group.

"(But) I don't think there will be any impact in the next 18-24 months. It is when you get beyond 24 months that you might see some softening." Southeast Asia is one of the industry's major drivers and has placed record orders

in recent years, leading to speculation of over-capacity. Some carriers, including Philippine Airlines, are expected to acquire new aircraft this week.

But rather than counting up new orders, analysts say investors' main concern this week will be to check for signs of waning travel or jetliner demand and whether an overloaded supply chain is in danger of breaking as manufacturers work to turn a record backlog of orders into a smooth flow of deliveries. "We will be keeping a close eye on traffic this year to see if we can detect emerging signs of weakness," said Rob Morris, head of consultancy at UK-based Flightglobal Ascend.

Doubts over economic conditions have not stopped Airbus and Boeing pursuing a battle of

wits over new designs.

Airbus, anxious to close the gap between its new 369-seat A350-1000 and the 406-seat Boeing 777X, is seeking an influential champion such as Singapore Airlines for a potential bigger version of its A350 series, industry sources said. Boeing has said it will decide soon on a potential new "mid-market" jet with about 240 seats to retrieve lost market share for relatively small jets - a project that could lead to a small twin-aisle jet with an unusual, oval-shaped cross-section.

Industry experts will scour comments out of Singapore from both manufacturers for clues to what products they intend to launch ahead of July's premier aviation event at Farnborough, southwest of London, coinciding with Boeing's

centenary. Defence remains at the forefront of the Singapore show, amid growing tensions over Chinese maritime and territorial claims that compete with those of several Southeast Asian nations.

A number of regional states are looking into ways to beef up their fighter fleets and to boost their intelligence gathering, surveillance and reconnaissance capability.

Intense competition to provide maritime surveillance equipment may also characterise the event, along with a significant presence of Western and Asian unmanned aircraft.

At a pre-show gathering today, airline executives will debate the economy, threats to airliner safety from drones, and efforts to cut jet emissions after the Paris climate summit.—Reuters

## MODI URGED TO MAKE REALITY MATCH 'MAKE IN INDIA' HYPE

**MUMBAI:** Thousands of people and mascots of lions swarmed the weekend opening of a "Make in India" drive to attract foreign direct investment, pitched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi as "the biggest brand that India has ever created".

The week-long event, the boldest since Modi launched the initiative to emulate China's export miracle back in 2014, seeks to "spark a renewed sense of pride in India's manufacturing", its marketing blurb says. But even as the Make in India hype scales new heights, some bosses question Modi's delivery on promises to make it easier to do business, while marketing experts caution against creating unrealistic expectations.

"When you over-communicate and you under-deliver, the biggest risk is that you begin to lose trust," said Chandramouli Nilakantan, CEO of Blue Lotus Communications, a branding and public relations consultancy.

On buzz alone the effort got off to a great start, with the prime ministers of Sweden and Finland attending Saturday's gala opening hosted by Modi.

Yesterday, delegates thronged the 10 pavilions erected for the event in Mumbai, India's financial capital. Around 2,500 foreign companies and 8,000 domestic companies were expected to attend, organizers said. Yet on the ground, the experience of businesses is more prosaic: Twenty months after Modi swept to power with a promise of growth and jobs for

India's 1.3 billion people, executives say more needs to be done, including improving infrastructure.

More pressingly, key legislation such as a goods and services tax and land acquisition bill are stuck in parliament, just as global competitors such as Vietnam step up their own reform

efforts. "Make in India is a great initiative and has created a lot of positive sentiments," Vikas Agarwal, general manager of mobile phone maker OnePlus in India, told Reuters.

"Now the government needs to follow up with policies. That includes providing custom duty and export incentives, tax rationalisation

and removal of ambiguous land acquisition policies."

### MAJOR WINS

Make In India has scored major wins, including a pledge by Taiwan's Foxconn to invest \$5 billion in a new electronics manufacturing facility. That has helped foreign direct investment to nearly double to \$59 billion last year, the seventh most in the world, according to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

Yet in critical aspects, India remains far behind its goals. The proportion of manufacturing to gross domestic product has been stuck at around 17 percent for five years, below the government's goal to ramp it up to 25 percent, according to the Boston Consulting Group.

India has only created 4 million manufacturing jobs since 2010, according to Boston Consulting. At the current rate, India may only create 8 million jobs by 2022, well below the government's goal of 100 million. Professor Ravi Aron, a US-based expert in manufacturing, said India was ill-suited for a Chinese-style export boom, because it lacked the infrastructure and the skills for its exports to compete internationally.

"It should not be called 'Make in India' but 'Make In Spite of India,'" said Aron, of Johns Hopkins University, advising the Indian government to scale back its ambitions and focus on its growing domestic market.—Reuters



MUMBAI: A visitor takes in the sights at the 'Make in India' exhibition in Mumbai yesterday. 'Make in India' is an initiative launched last year to encourage international companies to manufacture their goods in India. — AP

## 'ABENOMICS' ON THE ROPES AS YEN SOARS, MARKETS PLUNGE

**TOKYO:** Japan's bid to revive its once-soaring economy is on the ropes as an equity market bloodbath and resurgent yen threaten to knock Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's growth plan to the canvas.

Abe met with his hand-picked central bank chief Haruhiko Kuroda for an emergency meeting Friday amid huge volatility on global markets, which is wiping out the gains Abenomics has achieved since the premier swept to power in late 2012. All eyes will be on Japan's fourth-quarter GDP data on Monday with many economists expecting a contraction of about 0.7 percent in the world's number three economy. That could deal a near fatal blow to Abe's easy money policies, which he hailed as the answer to beating the deflation blamed for holding back growth in the fast-ageing nation, analysts warned.

"The risk is not that Japan faces an imminent financial crisis or that the Abe administration could collapse, but rather that the government's economic program simply fails to achieve its goals," said Tobias Harris, political risk analyst at consultancy Teneo. That would leave Japan no more capable of reckoning with the implications of demographic decline than before Abe took power. Abe's plan-big government spending, central bank monetary easing and reforms to the highly regulated economy appeared to bear fruit at first.

The yen weakened sharply, which boosted Japanese exporters' profits and sparked a huge stock market rally that bolstered Abe's claim that "Japan is back".

But sustained growth in the economy has been elusive and Abe's efforts to overhaul the economy have been widely criticized as half-hearted. "(The plan) actually worked, but now it is moving in reverse," said Takuji Okubo, director of Japan Macro Advisors in Tokyo. "Policymakers are not really helping to make Japan robust enough so that the economy can actually sustain growth... They have basically failed and need to bear the blame". —AFP

## NBK DIAMOND SPONSOR OF THE KUWAIT INVESTMENT FORUM

**KUWAIT:** National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) is the Diamond Sponsor for the "Kuwait Investment Forum" that will take place on Tuesday 8th and Wednesday 9th of March 2016 at Arraya Ballroom, Courtyard Marriott, Kuwait.

The Forum is organized by Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) in cooperation with Al Iktissad Wal Aamal Group and held under the patronage of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah.

The forum will receive ministers, renowned international experts, and other officials, in addition to inviting leading

local and international investors, bankers, financial and investment executives.

This forum intends to highlight Kuwait's investment location, investment opportunities and introduces the distinctiveness of the country's investment climate, shedding the light on the economic developments Kuwait is witnessing embedding in the new five year development plan. NBK's participation in this forum comes in line with its commitment to deploy all its potentials and expertise to support Kuwait's economy. NBK continues to play a key role in financing the major projects in the government development plan.

NBK is the largest financial institution in Kuwait and has been consistently awarded the highest credit rating in the region from Moody's, Standard & Poor's, and Fitch Ratings. NBK also stands out in terms of its local and international network, which includes branches, subsidiaries and representative offices in China, Geneva, London, Paris, New York, and Singapore alongside its regional presence in Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Turkey, and the UAE. NBK was founded in 1952 as the first indigenous bank and the first joint stock company in Kuwait and the Gulf Region.



# POST-SANCTIONS, IRAN OFFERS MINING RICHES

### INVESTORS LOOK AT POTENTIAL, CURBED BY SLUMP IN SECTOR

**LONDON:** Iran's rich deposits of zinc, copper, gold and other minerals are tempting international investors after the lifting of Western sanctions, but development of the sector will take time and problems will have to be overcome.

A slump in metals prices and uncertainty about working with the Tehran government, which controls virtually all the country's mines, means that many foreign mining firms are not scrambling to sign deals. Nevertheless, some agreements have already been struck and other foreign firms have been looking at Iran's mining and metals sector in the weeks following the scrapping of sanctions as part of a nuclear deal, which went into force last month.

Iran, which boasts one of the world's largest undeveloped zinc projects and myriad other mines, has been trying to lure investors since it became clear that sanctions would be lifted under last year's deal signed by Tehran and six world powers.

Iran's state-owned mines and metal holding company IMIDRO told an Australian mining conference in November that its mining sector

needed \$20 billion of investment by 2025.

"Iran absolutely has world class mining assets, which have hitherto been shrouded from investors, but we're in the depths of one of the darkest, worst downturns in mining for some time," said Neil Passmore, chief executive of Hannam & Partners boutique merchant bank in London.

The slump in commodity prices has hit international mining firms, forcing them to sell assets, cut dividends and slash capital spending to preserve cash, but some deals with Iran are still being done.

"During the six to 12 months that it's looked likely sanctions would be lifted, people have been starting to do some work and now that things have opened up, they're increasing the pace," Passmore added. In India, national aluminium company NALCO said last month it planned to send a team to Iran to explore setting up a smelter worth about \$2 billion and state-run IOCL is considering building an iron ore pellet complex. Other companies from Italy and China to South Korea have either signed

deals or are looking into possibilities.

#### UNCERTAINTY

But highlighting the uncertainty among potential investors, NALCO said it was also looking at Oman and Qatar as possible sites for its aluminium smelter.

A spokesman for global miner Rio Tinto, which was previously involved in the Sara Gunay gold project in Iran, said there was no work being done by their exploration team regarding the country. Chief Executive Mark Bristow of Randgold Resources, which has experience of mining in risky areas of Africa, told Reuters the firm was not interested in Iran.

Dealing with Iran, which is beset by political infighting between pragmatic and hardline factions, can be complex and time consuming. Foreign energy executives hoping to invest in oil and gas fields there complain Tehran has still not revealed contract terms, abruptly cancelling a conference due to be held this month when they had expected it to do so. Although minerals development may take years, Iran's bounty

and low energy costs will eventually build it into a substantial player in the global metals industry, analysts say. Iran's Mehdiabad project is one of the world's largest zinc deposits, which was previously due to be developed by Australian's Union Resources, with annual output of 300,000 tonnes a year. Iran says it has 68 types of minerals, including iron ore, coal, gold and copper with total reserves of 43 billion tons.

Besides growing as a producer, the country of 80 million people is also set to help boost global demand for metals since it is the biggest economy to rejoin the global trading system since Russia, following the breakup of the Soviet Union over two decades ago.

"As they get more oil revenue, there's no reason why they shouldn't look to diversify the economy and drive metals exports," said Robin Bhar, head of metals research at Societe Generale in London. "It plays both ways, as they're welcomed back into the international fold, hopefully they'll also contribute to the demand side of the ledger, as they've got a young and rising population." — Reuters



**NEW DELHI:** A balloon vendor pushes his bike through a street in New Delhi, India said its economy grew 7.3 percent in the last three months of 2015, a rate of expansion that puts the South Asian nation ahead of China's 6.8 percent growth during the same period. — AP

## KSE WITNESSES FLUCTUATION AMID SELLING PRESSURES

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE) saw yesterday fluctuations in performance with a weak trading on major operational shares and small-cap stocks, closing indices in the red zone.

Yesterday's session witnessed prominent profit-taking operations particularly on stocks which have a rise in their values, while trading dominated popular stocks like MAYADEEN and ADNC, and shares of medium-size listed companies. Financial portfolios failed to stimulate trading on large-cap stocks, while trading dominated stocks ranging between 10 fils and 100 fils, including YIACO and CABLETV. Several dealers focused on shares which revealed new news concerning deals and contracts. The KSE benchmark, upon closing, read 5,131, inching down 0.51 points. Weighted index followed suit, moving down by 1.46 points, as well as Kuwait-15 index, which lost 5.43. — KUNA

## GOLD PRICE AT \$1,264

**KUWAIT:** Gold price reached \$1,264 per ounce last week with a rise of five percent, recording its highest weekly rate since October 2011, according to Sabaek Al-Kuwait company. Gold ended last week's session at \$1,239 per ounce in New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX), recording a rise of about 16 percent since the beginning of 2016, the company said yesterday. Investors are turning to gold as a safe haven which rises as the price of the US dollar drops, while banks are set to get back to quantitative easing plans. Meanwhile, low oil prices and unstable regional conditions are affecting economies. Silver prices also rose to reach \$15.79 per ounce last week, with a rise of five percent, while platinum rose by \$49 reaching \$958 per ounce and palladium rose by \$29 reaching \$527 per ounce, it added. As for the local markets, the company said performance was slow as it was affected by the drop in oil prices and currency rates. However, there was a rise in buying on gold ore, manufactured gold and gold bars amidst a strong rise in prices, where one kilo of gold reached KD 12,000. — KUNA

## News

in brief

### US dollar stable against Kuwaiti dinar

**KUWAIT:** The US dollar rate remained steady against the Kuwaiti dinar yesterday reaching KD 0.298 but the euro went down to KD 0.335 as compared to Thursday's rates, the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) said. The CBK said in its daily bulletin on its website that Sterling pound meanwhile fell to KD 0.432, the Swiss franc rose to KD 0.302 while the Japanese yen steadied at KD 0.002. The US dollar was up against other major currencies in the weekend trading, after four sessions of witnessing a decrease as result of incoming data of retail sales during the past month. The dollar reached its lowest level in fourth months against other main currencies, amid expectation of more decline due to increasing demand in financial markets.

### ADIB Q4 profit rises 16.6%, raises dividend

**ABU DHABI:** Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank yesterday posted a 16.6 percent rise in fourth-quarter net profit, and marginally increased its dividend for 2015. The emirate's largest sharia-compliant bank made a net profit of 477.4 million dirhams (\$130 million) in the three months ending Dec 31, compared to 409.6 million dirhams in the same period a year ago, it said in a bourse statement. Beltone Financial forecast the bank would make a profit attributable to shareholders of 399 million dirhams in the quarter. ADIB's board has proposed paying a cash dividend of 24.27 percent for 2015, the statement added, equivalent to 0.2427 dirhams per share. The bank paid a dividend of 0.2334 dirhams per share for 2014.

### Dana Gas swings to Q4 profit on one-time gains

**DUBAI:** United Arab Emirates-based energy firm Dana Gas swung to a huge profit in the fourth quarter helped by one-time contributions from an arbitration process and the sale of a stake in an separate oil firm. Dana made a net profit of \$134.2 million in the three months to Dec 31, compared to a loss of \$4 million in the prior-year period, Reuters calculated based on the firm's full-year earnings statement in lieu of a quarterly breakdown. Dana Gas reported falling profits in the first and second quarters and a loss in the third quarter of 2015, hit by a slump in oil prices. Crude prices have dropped substantially since a June 2014 peak. The company reported a profit for 2015 of \$144 million, up from \$125 million in the previous year, it said in a bourse filing.

### UAE telecom du Q4 net profit falls 10.1%

**DUBAI:** Du, the United Arab Emirates' No 2 telecom operator, reported yesterday a 10.1 percent fall in fourth-quarter net profit. The firm, which ended rival Etisalat's domestic monopoly in 2007, had reported declining profits in the preceding four quarters according to Reuters data. Du made a net profit of 461.0 million dirhams (\$125.5 million) in the three months to Dec. 31, down from 512.7 million dirhams in the year-earlier period, according to Reuters' calculations based on previous financial statements. Beltone Financial forecast du would make a quarterly profit of 584.5 million dirhams. Du's annual profit for 2015 was 1.94 billion dirhams, down from 2.11 billion dirhams in 2014, according to a bourse statement. The firm's 2015 annual revenue was 12.34 billion dirhams. This compares with 12.24 billion dirhams a year ago.

## EXCHANGE RATES

### AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.644
Indian Rupees	4.400
Pakistani Rupees	2.863
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.081
Nepali Rupees	2.742
Singapore Dollar	215.750
Hongkong Dollar	38.420
Bangladesh Taka	3.807
Philippine Peso	6.293
Thai Baht	8.447

GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	79.843
Qatari Riyal	82.245
Omani Riyal	777.677
Bahraini Dinar	795.140
UAE Dirham	81.517

ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	36.750
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	38.282
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.397
Tunisian Dinar	150.530
Jordanian Dinar	421.980
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.134
Syrian Lira	2.134
Morocco Dirham	31.335

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	299.250
Euro	339.950
Sterling Pound	437.350
Canadian dollar	217.720
Turkish lira	102.240
Swiss Franc	309.620
Australian Dollar	216.060
US Dollar Buying	298.050

GOLD	
20 Gram	247.810
10 Gram	126.830
5 Gram	64.260

### UAE EXCHANGE CENTRE WLL

CURRENCIES	TELEX TRANSFER PER 1000
Australian Dollar	203.04
Canadian Dollar	219.60
Swiss Franc	310.87
Euro	339.98
US Dollar	299.45
Sterling Pound	437.08
Japanese Yen	2.68
Bangladesh Taka	3.812
Indian Rupee	4.390
Sri Lankan Rupee	2.080
Nepali Rupee	2.743
Pakistani Rupee	2.857
UAE Dirhams	0.08149
Bahraini Dinar	0.7958
Egyptian Pound	0.03813
Jordanian Dinar	0.4259
Omani Riyal	0.7776
Qatari Riyal	0.08256
Saudi Riyal	0.07982

### 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
Japanese Yen	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	0.428092	0.437092
Czech Korune	0.004526	0.016526
Danish Krone	0.041332	0.046332
Euro	0.331914	0.339914
Norwegian Krone	0.030988	0.036188
Romanian Leu	0.085840	0.085840
Slovakia	0.008860	0.018860
Swedish Krona	0.031719	0.036719
Swiss Franc	0.300362	0.310563
Turkish Lira	0.096443	0.106743
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.204717	0.216217
New Zealand Dollar	0.192386	0.201886
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.210949	0.219449
US Dollars	0.295150	0.299650

US Dollars Mint	0.295650	0.299650
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Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003426	0.004026
Chinese Yuan	0.044080	0.047580
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036510	0.039260
Indian Rupee	0.004133	0.004523
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002557	0.002737
Kenyan Shilling	0.003110	0.003110
Korean Won	0.000238	0.000253
Malaysian Ringgit	0.068288	0.074288
Nepalese Rupee	0.002836	0.003006
Pakistan Rupee	0.002666	0.002946
Philippine Peso	0.006249	0.006529
Sierra Leone	0.000066	0.000072
Singapore Dollar	0.212094	0.218094
South African Rand	0.012984	0.021484
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001728	0.002308
Taiwan	0.008920	0.009100
Thai Baht	0.008109	0.008659

Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.785885	0.794885
Egyptian Pound	0.034076	0.038412
Iranian Riyal	0.000083	0.000084
Iraqi Dinar	0.000196	0.000256
Jordanian Dinar	0.418045	0.425545
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000149	0.000249
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020276	0.044276
Nigerian Naira	0.001227	0.001862
Omani Riyal	0.770854	0.776534
Qatar Riyal	0.081485	0.082698
Saudi Riyal	0.078913	0.079863
Syrian Pound	0.001267	0.001487
Tunisian Dinar	0.147127	0.155127
Turkish Lira	0.096443	0.106743
UAE Dirhams	0.080493	0.081642
Yemeni Riyal	0.001352	0.001432

# BRITAIN'S BANK WORKERS BUCKLE UNDER PRESSURE

## STRESS AND THE CITY

**LONDON:** Dwindling job security, heavier workloads, regulatory upheaval and the poor public image of the banking sector are taking a toll on the mental health of Britain's bank workers.

Eight years after the global financial crisis, stress in the industry has pushed up demand for insurance to protect revenues against the cost of paying staff too sick to work, insurance data show.

"The problem has gone into a new stratosphere since the financial crisis... Those who still have a job are vilified," said Jagdev Kenth, director of risk and regulatory strategy in the financial institutions group at Willis Towers Watson.

"Most haven't had anything to do with the scandals. They're working longer hours, doing two to three jobs, under greater pressure. Something has to give." Once havens for prestigious, highly-paid and lifelong careers, banks have undergone rapid cultural and structural change at the behest of regulators tasked with reining them in. Tougher capital rules, hefty misconduct fines, and the closure of riskier business lines have forced banks to slash staff.

Ten of Europe's largest lenders have axed 130,000 jobs since June, Reuters data shows.

The impact of stress has reached all the way up to the higher echelons of the banking industry. In 2011, Lloyds Chief Executive Antonio Horta-Osorio took two months off after suffering sleep deprivation and exhaustion. Two years later senior British banker Hector Sants, at the time head of compliance at Barclays, was signed off on medical after suffering stress. Sants subsequently resigned.

As risks of a global recession mount, investors want banks to slim down further. Almost three out of four bank employees admitted to workplace stress manifested by anxiety attacks, insomnia, headaches and depression, a survey conducted by trade union Unite between September and December showed.

Some 85 percent of respondents, mainly working in retail and back office roles at Lloyds Banking Group, Royal Bank of Scotland, HSBC and TSB, said they worked additional unpaid hours last year.

Lloyds, RBS and TSB referred requests for comments to trade body the British Bankers' Association, which represents all the banks covered by the Unite

survey. Around two-thirds of respondents cited heavier workloads and around a fifth blamed pressure to perform. Seventy-two percent said they were considering quitting their jobs as a result.

"Work-related stress is a very serious and increasing problem," said Dominic Hook, the union's National Officer for Finance, responsible for 130,000 members in financial services.

"We are working with employers to tackle the issues that cause stress, such as long working hours and the effect of long-term staffing reductions," he said, adding that a separate survey covering staff at Barclays was under way.

### PREVENTION BETTER THAN CURE

The British Bankers' Association said protecting staff's physical and mental wellbeing was "a top priority" for its members, who are devising more innovative ways to prevent problems occurring.

These include in-house counsellors, mental health 'first aid' courses, yoga sessions for traders, and more comprehensive mental healthcare plans. HSBC said it had a number of initiatives to reduce stress-related illnesses. "These include providing a healthcare plan to all employees with a comprehensive mental health benefit for employees and their family," it said.

Several UK lenders have teamed up with the Bank Workers Charity to provide training for line managers on supporting stressed staff more sensitively.

"Banks are conscious that there are trends that make life stressful for their employees... they are focusing on wellbeing in a way that they weren't 10 years ago," Paul Barrett, head of wellbeing at the Bank Workers Charity, told Reuters.

"There is some way to go, but they are being more proactive." Health and Safety Executive statistics show jobs in financial services are 44 percent more likely to lead to stress-related illnesses than the average UK job, meaning employers are also taking steps to control the hit to their finances caused by staff absences. Demand for special insurance products known as Group Income Protection (GIP) policies is rising steadily among financial sector employers, according to global insurer MetLife.

Tom Gaynor, Employee Benefits Director at MetLife UK, said the average employer paid the equivalent of 1 to 1.5 percent of annual payroll to insure themselves against the cost of staff sick leave.

"In the UK, about 12-13 percent of companies take up GIP. In banking that figure is close to 100 percent. I don't know an investment bank that doesn't do it," he said.

Data from MetLife's core US market showed investment banks are up to 30 percent more likely to make claims for staff suffering mental and psychological conditions than other policyholders on its books.

### HUMAN COST OF CRISIS

Suicide mortality rates per 100,000 of population in the City of London, home to the historic Square Mile financial district, have consistently outnumbered any other London borough since 2009, government data accurate to end-2013 shows. "Part of the problem is that we are an industry that downsizes all the time," said one banker who has been made redundant several times in a career spanning more than three decades.

"London is also the first place people cut. There's a constant threat of being axed in London," he said, speaking on condition of anonymity as he is still seeking work in the sector.

Those suffering from stress in the workplace were reluctant to talk on the record to Reuters given the sensitive nature of the topic. This may also mean many cases go unreported as employees fear telling their line managers or colleagues.

New patient assessments at a specialist wellbeing clinic operated in the City by private mental healthcare firm The Priory are up 106 percent in the year to Jan. 31, with more than 70 new patients registering on average each month.

"People are feeling overwhelmed with the vast change in this business and in their careers," said consultant adult psychiatrist Dr Paul McLaren.

"Some people may thrive on that but many more struggle and this increases the chances of them developing a mental illness, particularly if they have a vulnerability." — Reuters

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## KFH NAMES 7 WINNERS OF BANKING CARDS CAMPAIGN FOURTH DRAW

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Finance House (KFH) named 7 winners of the fourth draw of the new banking cards promotional campaign themed "Shop and Win Back Up to KD 50,000 with KFH Cards" that had been launched in an attempt to encourage clients to use KFH credit, prepaid and debit cards while making purchases in Kuwait and overseas.

For every KD 10 spent on their KFH cards, clients will get a chance to enter a draw and win back up to KD 500 of their daily spends for 100 days ending April 19th 2016. KFH Credit and Prepaid cards used in domestic and international retail spends and KFH Debit cards used in international retail spends are eligible for the daily draw.

The winners are: Eman Hussain, Afrah Almajidi, Khaled Altawari, Bushra Alwaqiyani, Reem Alhabashi, Mai Almehallani and Sundus Alsharida.

KFH strives to continuously offer its clients new promotions and discounts in order to distinguish them among peers, not to mention to further bolster bank's leading position in the field

of banking cards.

KFH marketing campaigns play a significant role in underlining KFH's principles that include boosting sales, and benefitting clients and merchants.

This new campaign is part of KFH's efforts to reward its clients and grant them additional value; thus achieving customer satisfaction and boosting their confidence. The campaign also aims at enhancing the bank's presence especially that it dominates the largest market share in the field of banking cards.

It is worth noting that KFH has won several awards in the field of banking cards which reiterates its success and efficiency in banking cards market.

KFH enjoys high confidence and leadership in the market in addition to high quality products which have enabled it to achieve growth in cards market and increase the number of customers. KFH occupies the leading position as the issuer of banking cards and one of leading banks at the GCC level.

## AL-TIJARI ANNOUNCES THE WINNERS OF NAJMA ACCOUNT

**KUWAIT:** Commercial Bank of Kuwait held the Al-Najma Account draw on 14th February, 2016.

The draw was held under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry represented by Mr. Abdulaziz Ashkanani. The winners of the Al Najma daily draw are:

Gurijala Masthanaiah — KD 7000, Fahaid Abdalla Al-Mutairi — KD 7000, Waleed Mohammad Al-Faillkawi — KD 7000, Naser Meshal Al-Rasheedi — KD 7000, Fotouh Abdulaziz Al-

Munais — KD 7000.

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

The new prizes scheme for Al-Najma account.

Daily draw to win KD 7000  
Quarterly draws to win great

prizes that would start from KD 100,000 to KD 250,000

1st quarter KD 100 000  
2nd quarter KD 150 000  
3rd quarter KD 200 000  
4th quarter KD 250 000

With Al Najma you have more chance to win greater prizes

- \* Each KD 25 kept in your account gives you one chance to win
- \* Each KD 25 kept in your account for one week will give you a chance to enter the daily draw.
- \* Each KD 25 kept in your account for 3 months will give you chance to enter the quarterly draw.
- Additional features
- \* ATM card
- \* Issue a credit card against your account
- \* Obtain all CBK banking services
- You deserve to win! Open an account now with just KD 500 and you will enter all draws.

Amazing news from Al-Tijari...  
Al-Najma account gives you the biggest daily prize in Kuwait!

## EASYJET EYES 'MASSIVE OPPORTUNITIES' IN EUROPE

**LUTON, United Kingdom:** Europe's airline sector is on course for further consolidation, while the region offers "massive opportunities" for growth, according to Carolyn McCall, chief executive of British budget airline EasyJet. "I definitely think there will be consolidation in Europe," McCall told AFP in a recent interview held in EasyJet's headquarters at Luton airport, north of London.

And she believes the company can build on its exceptionally strong growth during her almost six years in charge. "If you actually look at the whole of Europe, we still see massive opportunities for growth."

"That is competing with some low cost carriers, but it is still mainly competing with the legacy carriers," she said from a hangar painted in the carrier's famous orange and transformed to house EasyJet's control centre and top management team.

Since McCall's appointment in 2010, EasyJet has grown pre-tax profits from around £50 million to almost £700 million (\$1.0 billion, 891 million euros) in its last financial year. It's an enormous profit growth and we need to reinvest some of our money.... Our aim is to continue to grow profit and particularly to grow returns for shareholders," said McCall, who is one of only six women heading a company trading on London's benchmark FTSE 100 stock index.

McCall sees opportunity for further growth especially in France, where EasyJet has a 15-percent market share and is second only to dominant player Air France. But the 54-year-old boss doesn't see her airline joining peer Norwegian Air Shuttle in become a long-haul operator and entering for example the US market, despite the low oil-price environment.



**LONDON:** EasyJet CEO Carolyn McCall gestures during an interview at the airline's headquarters at Luton airport, north of London. — AFP

"Long-haul for us is not on our agenda. We think it's a different model, we think it's a high risk model. We await with interest how Norwegian does and of course if they make it a great success I'm sure others will follow but it's not for now," said McCall.

### Consolidation on horizon

EasyJet's boss does however foresee a coming together of airlines, with Europe mirroring consolidation experienced in the United States. "In the US... it happened much more quickly and now there are four big airline groups," she noted.

"There are many other considerations when you look at airlines in Europe, including political considerations. So it is a different landscape but consolidation will happen and I think we will be part of driving some of that consolidation." McCall said that the low oil price environment was "making it easier for legacy carriers to

stay alive with their capacity in Europe". She added: "They're allowing some capacity that would not exist at a higher price of fuel."

Although McCall stressed that no airline enjoys oil-price volatility, as has been the case for many months, she insisted that "EasyJet performs well regardless of" the cost of crude used to make jet fuel.

She explained: "When oil is low we obviously get the benefit on the cost but it doesn't help us grow. You pass on quite a lot in fares... Consumers benefit a great deal.

"As oil price increases, the capacity environment shakes out quite a lot. The weaker players take out a lot of capacity and we continue to grow... It's probably easier for us when oil is stable and higher."

McCall told AFP that ticket prices have come down also following last year's Paris terror attacks and the fatal airliner incident in Sharm el-Sheikh. — AFP

## 'THIN' PROFITS FOR SEASIAN CARRIERS AMID TOUGHER COMPETITION: IATA

**SINGAPORE:** Southeast Asian airlines are likely to see "thin" profits for some time to come as competition from budget carriers and Middle East rivals squeezes earnings, the IATA chief said yesterday.

The recent global stock market turmoil is also expected to take a toll on air travel, particularly in business class where full-service airlines earn most of their profits, said Tony Tyler, director general of the International Air Transport Association.

"Airlines in this region are finding profitability quite thin because of the pressure of strong competition, and there's a lot of capacity in the market," Tyler told reporters ahead of the Singapore Airshow on Tuesday. "When you take the strong competition from low-cost carriers in the region... and you take the very strong competition for long-haul traffic from the Gulf carriers, profitability for airlines in this region is not strong at all."

IATA in December estimated global airlines' net profit for 2016 at \$36.3 billion, up 10 percent from its estimate of \$33 billion for 2015. But Tyler said more than half of this year's profit would come from North America, with earnings by Southeast Asian carriers likely to come under heavy pressure. Underscoring the challenge, Tyler said no-frills carriers now account for 54 percent of capacity in Southeast Asia, up from around 38 percent in 2009.

Comparably, budget airlines account for 31 percent of capacity in the United States and 39 percent in Europe. The global average is 26 percent.

Budget carriers like Malaysia's AirAsia, Indonesia's Lion Air, Singapore-based Jetstar, Thailand's Nok Air, Cebu Pacific of the Philippines and Vietnam's Vietjet are giving regional industry mainstays like Singapore Airlines a tough challenge.

Gulf carriers like Qatar Airways, Etihad and Emirates have eaten into their Southeast Asian rivals' long-haul premium markets by offering top-notch in-flight services and the latest aircraft.



**SINGAPORE:** South Korea's Black Eagles aerobatics team performs an aerial display during a preview at the Singapore Airshow at Changi exhibition center in Singapore yesterday. — AFP

Tyler said Southeast Asian legacy airlines "can play to their particular strengths" to compete, leveraging on their strong

brands and service quality. They must also keep cutting costs and investing in modern fuel-efficient planes, he said. — AFP

## CHINA CB BOSS SAYS NO REASON FOR YUAN TO FALL FURTHER

**SHANGHAI:** China's central bank chief has blamed foreign speculators in part for volatility in the yuan and said there is no basis for further depreciation, according to an interview in Caixin magazine.

The Chinese economy grew 6.9 percent in 2015 — the slowest rate since 1990 and capital has been flowing out of the country due to worries over flagging growth, causing the currency to weaken.

"International speculative forces have recently focused on shorting China," People's Bank of China governor Zhou Xiaochuan said, according to a transcript of the interview posted on the bank's website Saturday. "They are eager to manufacture public opinion to try to force an outcome as soon as possible," he

said, but did not identify them.

Chinese state media has taken aim at investor George Soros for saying at the recent World Economic Forum in Davos that a hard landing for the world's second largest economy is "practically unavoidable". In early January China guided the yuan-also known as the renminbi — down by setting its daily fix lower for eight consecutive sessions, representing a 1.4 percent fall, before it returned to stability. The falls raised fears of a creeping devaluation, as it echoed moves in mid-August when China adjusted the yuan down nearly five percent over a week. Zhou vowed China would use its massive foreign exchange holdings to defend the yuan. — AFP

## JOYALUKKAS INAUGURATED THEIR BIG SHOWROOM IN NEW DELHI AT PUSA ROAD



The world's favourite jeweller, Joyalukkas inaugurated their showroom in New Delhi at Pusa Road by Vijender Garg (Parliamentary Secretary, Minister of PWD, Govt. of Delhi) in the presence of PD Jose (Executive Director), PD Francis (DGM Retail).

# DESPERATELY SEEKING SIGNS OF INFLATION

## GLOBAL ECONOMY WEEKAHEAD

**LONDON:** Now that markets have delivered their verdict on inflation - it's not picking up any time soon - economic data due next week will show whether price pressures are rising meaningfully or falling back in some of the world's major economies. A global rout in stock markets, currencies, commodities and bond yields has so far defined 2016. Investors seem to have lost faith in central banks' abilities to boost inflation, with signs the world economy is stalling.

Five-year inflation-linked swaps in the eurozone, for example, suggest annual price growth will be just 1.4 percent even as far out as 2021. "Most people don't understand what has spooked markets. It's up to economic data now to demonstrate that markets have gone overboard in projecting very low inflation," said Jeavon Loyal, head of economics at Lloyds Banking Group. "One reason is probably that markets don't believe the response from policymakers is

adequate."

The Bank of Japan surprised markets late last month by cutting its deposit rate to negative. But the impact seems limited to some knee-jerk weakening in the Japanese yen. Sweden's Riksbank also slashed its repo rate to -0.50 percent on Thursday, partly as insurance against expectations that the European Central Bank would ease policy in March.

Inflation data from Britain, Canada, China and

the United States next week may set the tone for the global economy. Reuters polls suggest at best tepid price rises, but market watchers will still look at the underlying trends in inflation to gauge whether another round of policy easing and stimulus is warranted.

Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen hinted this week the path to higher interest rates in the United States may be less steep than previously thought, given the broad market sell-off.

It's not that the outlook for inflation in developed economies has changed dramatically in the past three months in polls conducted by Reuters. But a 75 percent crash in oil prices since mid-2014, and weak global demand, led by China's slowing economy, have dragged down market inflation gauges like swaps and sovereign bond yields, with vast swathes now showing negative yields.

The yield of Germany's benchmark bunds has fallen over 40 basis points since January to its lowest in nearly a year. Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index and the S&P 500 in the U.S. have fallen over 20 percent and 10 percent respectively.

### CHINA REOPENS

The start of the week will probably set the tone for markets. Trade data out of China, due on Monday, are predicted to show exports slumped at a faster rate in January.

"The trade figures out of China will probably be diced by markets for (their) impact on commodity prices and global growth," Loyal said. Inflation data for January due later in the week are likely to show a slight uptick, although producer prices are still expected to have fallen more than 5 percent from a year ago. China's markets will reopen today after a week's holiday to mark the Lunar New Year. That gave its stock markets a break from the turbulence triggered by

Beijing's currency devaluation.

Policymakers have tried to instill confidence among investors regarding their policy intentions by setting higher trading guidance on the Chinese yuan in the last couple of weeks.

Still, strategists in Reuters polls predict the yuan will fall to a multi-year low in the coming 12 months.

### FED TALKS

Financial market turmoil, the weakness in China's economy and risks to growth and inflation were among the concerns highlighted by Fed Chair Janet Yellen earlier this week in her semi-annual testimony to Congress. While the path of US monetary policy this year is unclear at best, scheduled speeches of various presidents of regional Federal Reserve banks, among them Philadelphia, Minneapolis, San Francisco and Cleveland, over the week could throw some light on the thinking among policymakers.

Cleveland Fed President Loretta Mester, currently a voting member on US monetary policy, and considered relatively hawkish, may also give some indication of how far off she sees the next interest rate increase. Inflation data due next Friday are unlikely to make the picture any clearer, although economists predict higher annual price growth in January compared with December.

"It was striking how frequently Yellen used the prepared line 'monetary policy is not on a preset course' whenever she was asked whether recent developments had changed the outlook," said Jim O'Sullivan of High Frequency Economics, the most accurate forecaster in Reuters polls last year.

"The comments further lessen the already very low likelihood that the Fed will be tightening again as soon as the next meeting in March." —Reuters

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report						
Sunday 14 February 2016						
Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low	
Price index	-0.51	5,131.05	5,131.56	5,148.61	5,118.55	
Weighted Index	-1.46	348.90	350.36	352.36	348.88	
KXS 15	-5.43	821.74	827.17	832.71	821.74	

Volume	102,118,463
Value (KWD)	7,118,516
Number of Trades	2,637

Security	Trades		Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
	High	Low					
MARIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	114	-0.0
IKARUS	83	81	5,000	407	2	83	-1.0
IPG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	320	-0.0
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	600	-0.0
ENERGYH	32.0	32.0	500	16	1	32.0	+0.5
GPI	44.0	43.0	1,401,788	61,155	27	43.5	+0.5
ARAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	116	-0.0
<b>Oil &amp; Gas</b>			<b>1,407,280</b>	<b>61,578</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>766.75</b>	<b>+0.91</b>
KFOUC	212	210	63,965	13,461	8	210	-4.0
BPC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	455	-0.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	610	-0.0
ALQURAIN	170	160	180,179	31,235	13	168	-0.0
<b>Basic Materials</b>			<b>250,145</b>	<b>44,696</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>883.22</b>	<b>-4.93</b>
KCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	365	-0.0
REFRI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	320	-0.0
CABLE	345	345	90	31	1	345	+10.0
SHIP	146	138	183	26	2	146	+4.0
PCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,000	-0.0
PAPER	400	400	1,970	788	1	400	+20.0
MRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	57	-0.0
ACICO	280	270	3,115	842	4	270	-10.0
GGMC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	470	-0.0
HCC	132	132	2,012	266	1	132	-0.0
KPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	340	-0.0
KBMMK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	250	-0.0
NICBM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	228	-0.0
EQUIPMENT	53	51	490,121	25,481	23	51	-2.0
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	99	-0.0
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	102	-0.0
SALDOOKH	63	61	97,950	6,096	16	62	+1.0
AGLTY	430	420	313,300	133,133	17	425	+5.0
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	206	-0.0
CLEANING	38.0	37.0	135,010	5,033	9	37.0	-0.0
CITYGROUP	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	500	-0.0
KGL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	42.0	-0.0
KGPC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	210	-0.0
HUMANSOFT	910	810	50	43	4	860	-0.0
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	120	-0.0
SAFWAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	300	-0.0
GFC	31.0	31.0	500	16	1	31.0	+0.5
MAYADEEN	18.5	17.5	2,623,856	47,200	32	18.0	-0.0
CGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	790	-0.0
MITCC	71	70	350,020	24,501	11	70	-0.0
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	600	-0.0
ALAFCO	182	182	23,017	4,189	2	182	+4.0
MUBARRAD	63	60	2,208,320	134,434	81	60	-0.0
LOGISTICS	69	66	1,089,000	62,301	30	66	-1.0
SCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	83	-0.0
GCEM	78	76	30,000	2,300	5	76	-3.0
QCEM	70	70	32,500	2,275	2	70	-0.0
FCEM	74	71	12,010	859	4	72	-0.0
RKWC	95	95	880	84	1	95	-5.0
SPEC	87	82	51,151	4,195	8	86	-1.0
<b>Industrials</b>			<b>7,465,955</b>	<b>454,092</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>965.41</b>	<b>+0.71</b>
KSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	204	-0.0
NSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	82	-0.0
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	102	-0.0
CATTL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	124	-0.0
DANAH	72	69	121,000	8,409	6	72	+1.0
POULT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	188	-0.0
FOOD	2,380	2,340	411,317	971,466	46	2,340	-40.0
<b>Consumer Goods</b>			<b>532,317</b>	<b>979,876</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>1066.80</b>	<b>-2.50</b>
MHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200	-0.0
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	920	-0.0
YIACO	148	128	124,006	17,703	11	148	+10
<b>Health Care</b>			<b>124,006</b>	<b>17,703</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>943.65</b>	<b>+7.18</b>
KCIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,120	-0.0
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	210	-0.0
SULTAN	62	58	78,500	4,836	7	62	+2
CABLETV	26.5	26.5	3,000	80	1	26.5	+2
EYAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	385	-0.0
IFAHR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	192	-0.0
QULAFUEL	112	112	60,043	6,725	13	112	+2
MUNTAZAHAT	89	85	122,927	10,709	10	85	-1
JAZERA	810	810	2,847	2,306	1	810	-0.0
SOOR	114	112	27,635	3,096	10	112	-0.0
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	110	-0.0
ALNAVADI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	84	-0.0
ALRAI	136	134	41,095	5,555	16	134	-2
ZIMAH	100	98	595,660	58,701	54	98	-0.0
UFIG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	96	-0.0
KOUJFOOD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	650	-0.0
Mezzan	1,080	1,080	169,492	183,051	31	1,080	-0.0
<b>Consumer Services</b>			<b>1,101,599</b>	<b>275,058</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>966.79</b>	<b>+1.06</b>
ZAIN	350	340	715,589	246,496	66	340	-0.0
ODREDOO	1,080	1,060	1,478	1,572	4	1,060	-20
HITSTELEG	26.0	26.0	209,403	5,446	6	26.0	-0.0
VIVA	870	870	89,553	77,911	87	870	-10
<b>Telecommunications</b>			<b>1,016,063</b>	<b>331,425</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>546.31</b>	<b>-5.15</b>
NBK	720	710	934,725	671,443	29	710	-10
GDK	206	204	75,000	15,350	4	204	-2
CBK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	510	-0.0
ABK	350	350	25,000	8,750	1	350	-0.0
ALMUTAHED	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	440	-0.0
KIB	194	192	350,097	69,657	9	192	-0.0
BURG	335	325	433,276	142,682	16	325	-0.0
KFIN	480	475	1,449,896	694,600	64	475	-0.0
DOUBYAN	390	380	169,944	65,760	18	380	-0.0
AUB	200	196	570,150	112,460	14	198	+2
ITHMR	30.5	29.5	2,253,022	67,540	40	29.5	-1
WARBANK	180	176	1,441,098	257,439	118	178	+2
<b>Banks</b>			<b>7,712,768</b>	<b>2,105,680</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>789.28</b>	<b>-0.54</b>
KINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	320	-0.0
GIN5	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	750	-0.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	455	-0.0
WINS	106	106	30,143	3,195	4	106	+2.0
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200	-0.0
FTI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	52	-0.0
WETHAQ	30.5	30.0	1,150	35	2	30.5	-0.0
IKIKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	-0.0
<b>Insurance</b>			<b>31,293</b>	<b>3,230</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1060.70</b>	<b>+2.17</b>

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
SOKOUK	33.5	33.0	1980761	65,925	32	33.5	+0.5
KRE	46.0	45.0	1,207,500	55,032	28	45.5	+0.5
URC	92	91	40,010	3,681	2	91	-1.0
NRE	80	80	185,000	16,465	10	89	+1.0
SRE	340	340	5,000	1,700	1	340	-10.0
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	590	-0.0
AREEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	138	-0.0
MASGALIH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	59	-0.0
ARABREC	25.5	24.5	37,920	948	6	24.5	-1.0
ERESCO	54	53	45,001	2,390	6	54	-0.0
MADANEC	910	890	171,037	153,868	24	890	-30.0
INJAZZAT	79	79	200	16</			



## EXTREME RISK AVERSION DOMINATES GLOBAL MARKETS

## NBK MONEY MARKETS REPORT

**KUWAIT:** Last week, Janet Yellen failed to calm the markets as she indicated that further rate hikes could be delayed. In her testimony, she stated that there are good reasons to believe that the US will stay on a path of moderate growth that will allow the Fed to pursue "gradual" adjustments to monetary policy. However, she also acknowledged risks facing the US economy from tightening financial conditions driven by falling stock prices and uncertainty over China. When the debate on whether central banks should adopt negative interest rates was raised, Yellen stated that while she is "not aware" of any restrictions that would prevent the Fed from offering rates below zero, she does not expect that it will be forced to cut rates anytime soon.

Europe's major banking stocks fell heavily after Sweden's Central Bank unexpectedly lowered its repo rate deeper into negative territory on Thursday. The move fueled concerns that other central banks in the euro zone could follow suit, amid low employment, weak economic growth and stubbornly low inflation. The move follows the Bank of Japan's surprising decision to implement a negative interest rate policy for the first time in the central bank's history. With the European Central Bank's deposit rate already in negative territory.

On the foreign exchange side, the Dollar dropped as global growth concerns combined with Yellen's remarks dampened expectations that the Fed will continue to follow its path to raise interest rates this year. Meanwhile, the sell-off in global equity markets continued, currencies such as the Japanese Yen and the Swiss Franc gained as US treasury yields dropped on the back of the risk-off trade. The US Dollar Index opened the week at 97.031 and dropped to a low of 95.236, and closed the week at 95.966.

The euro rose considerably last week, extending its previous week's gains, as continued concerns in global financial markets pushed investors to unwind their carry-trades. The euro has recently acquired a funding currency status, whereas investors borrow in the single currency to invest in other higher yielding currencies/assets. The Euro opened

the week at 1.1158 and reached a high of 1.1376. Finally the single currency closed at 1.1256.

The sterling traded in a wide range against the US dollar as gains were limited by disappointing economic data. The Pound opened the week at 1.4503 and dropped to a low of 1.4352. Meanwhile, weakness in the greenback helped push the currency higher to 1.4550. However, disappointing data kept gains subdued. The currency closed the week at 1.4503 unchanged.

The Japanese yen gained dramatically last week as investors flew to safety. The US dollar opened the week at 116.87 against the Yen only to drop dramatically and reach a 15-month low at 110.99. The greenback's steep decline against the yen was amplified by thin trading conditions, with markets in Japan and China closed for public holidays. The US dollar managed to close slightly higher on the back of speculation that the BoJ might step in to curb the Yen's appreciation. The USD/JPY closed at 113.24.

Similarly, taking advantage of the risk-off trade, the Swiss franc gained against the US dollar. The greenback opened the week at 0.9910 against the franc and reached a low of 0.9661. The pair closed the week at 0.9771.

The Australian dollar traded in a wide range last week, but managed to gain some strength on Friday despite dovish comments from the RBA Governor indicating the possibility of further interest rate cuts. The Aussie opened the week at 0.7067 and traded below the 0.7000 level twice in the week. The currency also reached a high of 0.7153 and closed the week at 0.7106.

On the commodities side, gold gained as the market continues to deal with severe risk aversion. The commodity opened the week at 1173.40 and reached a high of 1263.48. Gold then closed the week at 1237.89. Meanwhile, WTI crude oil continued to suffer and dropped almost 12 percent on the week. Oil opened the week at 30.89 and dropped to a low of 26.05. However, prices of crude oil gained after news that OPEC members might be preparing a coordinated effort on possible production cuts. Crude closed the week at 29.44.

## Positive retail sales

Retail sales increased 0.2 percent in January carried by car, clothing and online merchandise purchases. This marks the third straight month retail sales have increased showing that greater job security, improving wage growth and falling gasoline prices have boosted consumer purchasing habits. Furthermore, core retail sales, which exclude the unpredictability of automobile sales, also increased by 0.1 percent. Despite promising retail sales, con-

sumers expected claims to drop to 281,000.

## Eurozone expands

The eurozone grew quarterly at a meager rate of 0.3 percent in the final three months of 2015 despite cheap energy, an export-boosting drop in the currency and monetary stimulus. The figure was in line with market expectations after earlier reports showed Germany, Europe's biggest economy, grew at the same 0.3 percent rate and France, the region's number 2, expanded by 0.2 per-



cent. Over the whole of 2015, the Eurozone grew 1.5 percent. While that's the highest level since 2011, growth remains way below levels that would markedly reduce the region's unemployment rate, which is still above 10 percent.

Following the turmoil in global financial markets this year, there are worries that growth may weaken this year and that's prompted renewed pressure on the European Central Bank to do more to boost the Eurozone economy at its next policy meeting on March 10.

## UK trade deficit narrows

The UK's goods trade deficit narrowed to a three-month low in December, as imports fell sharply, official data showed

## Asia

The Reserve Bank of Australia is assessing global and local data to determine where recent global market volatility and damp commodity prices are taking the economy, Governor Glenn Stevens said Friday. "We will be examining new information over the months ahead as we try to discern the answers to these and other questions," Stevens said in a statement before the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Economics. He later added that the cash rate is unlikely to go higher anytime soon and then suggested the question is whether it would go lower than the current record low 2 percent. "With inflation unlikely to cause a problem by being too high over the next year or two the statement after the recent meeting indicated that the board retains the flexibility to ease further should that be helpful," Stevens said.

## Kuwait

Kuwaiti dinar at 0.29840  
The USDKWD opened at 0.29840 yesterday morning.

## GOLD NO LONGER A SAFE HAVEN ASSET

By Hayder Tawfik

Yet again panicky investors are rushing to buy gold at a time of global financial turmoil. It seems



that most of the buying of gold is done by ordinary people who are not fully aware of what is actually happening in the global financial markets or the world economy. The rush to buy gold has pushed its price up sharply this year ignoring the rout in global commodity markets. Just for a reminder that price of gold has been falling for the past six years. I believe that some of the rally in gold price has something to do with the Indian seasonal festivals and the Chinese New Year. There is this recent argument that has been pushed around by the gold bulls. Because gold offers no yield so the ever-increasing chance of negative interest rates in the developed economies and the dramatic fall in government bond yields makes gold attractive investment. This argument does not have a chance if inflation continues to fall and deflation becomes a reality. Gold supposed to be a hedge against inflation not deflation.

Over the past 6 years gold has underperformed massively against most other asset classes. It has underperformed against, government bonds, equities, real estates and also cash. It has failed as an indicator of rising global inflation at a time when central banks around the world printing unlimited supply of money but that money has not fed through to the system. I expect gold to continue the underperformances and will continue to decline in the coming months as the global financial markets has withstood the crisis in the Eurozone, the geopolitical unrest in the Middle east, Africa and lately the North Korean threat to its neighbor and to the US.

I don't think gold should be treated as another asset class by investors. May be just as hedge against the global financial turmoil. Since the start of the financial crisis back in 2007, analysts and commentators have aggressively

recommended that Gold should be treated as an asset class on its own. These arguments contradict the historical case of holding Gold. Historically Gold is seen as a store of value against inflation and it should be treated as such nothing else. If an investor wants to hold Gold in a portfolio of a diversified asset then my advice is to hold as little as are permitted without adding any elements of speculation to the portfolio. The only good forecast for future trend of the price of Gold is inflation. This probably should be the correct argument for investing in Gold as a future hedge against inflation. Back in 1980 when the Soviet Union invaded and occupied Afghanistan and the Islamic revolution started in Iran, Gold price hit a high of \$800. Then it continued a two decades of correction till it reached a low of \$300 in 2001. During that period average global inflation continued to fall and it reached around 4 percent by the end of the nineties. So, the correction in Gold price was accompanied by a global fall in inflation but it did not protect investors against inflation and it lost investors nearly 60 percent of its value.

So we can argue that historically gold acted as a hedge against inflation but not over the last few decades. The lesson for investors is that the price of gold tends to rise when there is an easy monetary policy in place and tend to fall when there is a tighter monetary policy. The recent rise in gold prices may be related to the latest rise in US rates and future expectation of further increases. But even this could be misleading in the face of weak global economic growth and threat of recession.

A recent study shows that the cost of producing an ounce of Gold is around \$760, which is about 65 percent lower than the spot price of gold. As long as there is such a huge profit margin on Gold then production will continue to increase and the selling pressure will remain. Investors should be aware that all the Gold produced around the world are still in existence are ready to be sold at a certain price and there is no reason to hold on to them. My biggest fear is that gold price has peaked few years ago and it has been in decline since then. May be a price correction is overdue. How far it can correct depends on the supply and demand. Producers are happy to keep producing as long as they can have a big profit margin. There is the possibility that producers might start selling Gold forward to capture the high price and by doing so will continue the high production.

My advice is if you are investing in Gold because of your concern about the global economic and political environment then you should think again!  
—Rasameel Structured Finance Company.

## LONDON HOUSING CRISIS COMING TO A CRUNCH

**LONDON:** Londoners are getting desperate over rising rents, with residents and students taking to the streets and social media over the cramped conditions tenants are forced to accept. With house-building lagging well behind the population increase in western Europe's biggest city, prices are soaring beyond anything affordable. "The situation is becoming untenable," said retired teacher John Ford, 60, who joined a 2,000-strong protest this month against the government's new housing bill, which would radically alter public housing and the rights of its tenants.

"My nephew is a young surgeon. He cannot afford, on his salary, to buy a house in London. So this crisis is beginning to eat into the middle class," he said. Latest figures show the average London house price was £514,097 (\$740,400, 678,500 euros) in December, up 12.4 percent in 12 months, compared to a 6.4-percent increase to £188,270 across England and Wales. The London-wide median rent is £122 a week for a room in a shared home; £276 for a one-bedroom property and £402 for a three-bedroom home. Many "generation rent" young professionals, whose parents bought comfortable homes in their early 20s, have given up on their dream of ever affording a property in London. Students are also feeling the crisis bite.

At University College London, more than 150 students have gone on a rent

strike. One UCL block has rooms costing as much as £262 a week. At this month's protest outside Downing Street, two UCL students carried a symbolic home-made housing ladder, with all but the very top rungs knocked out.

"I don't see any prospect of owning a home—certainly not in London," said its co-creator, doctorate student Liam Shaw, 24.



**LONDON:** Demonstrators as they take part in a protest opposing the British government's Housing and Planning Bill, in central London. Londoners are getting desperate over rising rents, with residents taking to the streets, students on pay strikes and social media outrage over the cramped conditions tenants are forced into to save money. —AFP

## Matchbox flats, closet bedrooms

London's population is at a record high of 8.6 million and growing at around 100,000 a year. Some 25,994 new homes were built in London in 2015, down nine percent on the previous year. "People in the lowest-paid jobs have to live on the outskirts of London," Green Party leader Natalie Bennett told AFP. "We're now hear-

ing of junior doctors, nurses and teachers having to commute from outside." Commuting from outer London is not without cost in time and stress, let alone money. An annual travel pass from the city limits costs £2,364.

Part of the problem is wealthy foreign buyers snapping up high-end new developments as a safe investment and leaving them empty while they accrue value. "Buy-to-leave is dreadful. But the real issue is what's being built: homes designed for just that," said Bennett.

"Let's provide genuinely affordable, secure homes for people!" Some are proposing innovative solutions to the situation. Rupert Hunt, founder of flatshare website SpareRoom.com, is opening up his own plush home in trendy Shoreditch to lodgers paying whatever they can afford, in a bid to encourage others. "Demand has increased massively. It's not unusual to see 10 or 12 people for every room especially in some parts of London," he told AFP. "In England there's something like 19 million spare rooms, empty rooms and if we just convinced three percent of that to take a lodger that's the size of a small city in extra housing!" The outrage over rising rent is fed with regular stories in local papers about tenants being offered bedrooms in closets under stairs or in corners of living rooms, or matchbox-size houses selling for astronomical amounts. —AFP

## IN HARD TIMES, AFRICA'S BIG CITIES OFFER INVESTORS HOPE

**JOHANNESBURG:** Africa's biggest economies have been hammered by the collapse in commodity prices over the past 18 months but there are still investment bright spots to be found. In cities such as Lagos, Nairobi, Accra, Kinshasa and Johannesburg, growth remains robust and investors are prospering in the retail, financial services, technology and construction sectors.

This means investors can now re-adjust their strategy for Africa. Instead of taking a view on the continent as a whole, or choosing one country over another, they can seize opportunities city by city.

Sub-Saharan Africa is urbanizing faster than anywhere else in the world and city dwellers have more money to spend. "In the current economic environment, investors want areas where success is proven, growth is strong and will remain strong. Big African cities give you that," said Jacob Kholi, a partner at Abraaj, a private equity firm with \$9 billion under management. "It has become even more important to focus on these key cities than before," Kholi added. Nairobi is the most attractive destination for foreign investment, according to a 2015 report by PricewaterhouseCoopers, followed by Accra, with Lagos and Johannesburg equal third.

Consumption per capita in Accra is 1.6 times greater than the average in Ghana, 2.3 times bigger in Lagos than the average in Nigeria, and 2.7 times larger in Nairobi than nationally in Kenya, Abraaj estimates. Lagos, one of the world's fastest growing cities and with a population of 20 million, expects economic growth of 7 percent this year, twice the pace of the country as a whole.

Even South Africa, which is grappling with youth unemployment of over 40 percent and could slip into recession this year, has areas where industry is

booming. "Looking around here, you wouldn't know things were so bad," construction worker Sifiso Zwane told Reuters in Johannesburg's wealthy Sandton business district. "Rich people will always find a way to make more money," said Zwane, with cranes filling the skyline behind him and billboards advertising new retailers like Krispy Kreme doughnuts and Hennes & Mauritz.

There are similar stories elsewhere. This year, Kenya is set to unveil the Two River malls in Nairobi, the continent's largest shopping centre outside South Africa, with brands like Porsche, Hugo Boss and France's Carrefour already booking space. "The economy still has opportunities," said Gabriel Modest, a jeweller who says demand for the gold necklaces and bracelets he sells remains strong. "Sometimes you have to treat yourself," he added, ordering a bowl of muesli and yoghurt at an upmarket Nairobi coffee shop. In Lagos, plans are in place to develop the vast multi-billion-dollar Eko Atlantic city, a Dubai-style gated community that will boast chrome skyscrapers, business parks, palm trees and a marina.

## "MEGA-CITY"

By 2025, McKinsey estimates that more than 80 cities in sub-Saharan Africa will have populations of more than one million, accounting for 58 percent of the region's growth.

This rapid urbanization means Africa's big cities will need more roads, hospital and power stations, while growing numbers of new inhabitants will be buying consumer goods like instant noodles, washing powder and mobile phone cards.

Though some big companies like Massmart, Barclays and Nestle have slowed expansion plans in

Africa in the last two years they are still making healthy profits in the big urban centres, according to banking sources. "Our investment is focused on cities where we see the best opportunities even if the investment environment in the rest of the country isn't as robust," said Louis Deppe, partner at Actis, an emerging market-focused investment company.

"The 'mega-city' trend is still very much on the cards." The share of Africans living in urban areas is expected to grow from 36 percent in 2010 to 50 percent by 2030, with cities expected to be home to 85 percent of the national population in some countries, according to the World Bank.

The rapid urbanization of mostly the young and unemployed is placing a huge strain on infrastructure and will put pressure on politicians to direct more resources towards cities. Inequality in African cities is already among the highest in the world.

African governments with stretched public finances will need to improve housing and social safety nets in cities and diversify their economies to support rural areas in order to avoid an increase in inequality that could stir up discontent.

"In a more risk-averse world, 'urban bias' - where there are proven returns - is likely to be reinforced. Investors will look at urban areas," said Razia Khan, head of Africa research at Standard Chartered.

"This trend runs the risk of the rural electorate being marginalized - in especially unequal regions, it may raise political risks, and the potential for unrest." Back in Lagos, business is still expanding for cab-owner Cyril Ugochukwu, whose earnings are running well above the target he set for his business, which has contracts with online firm Easy Taxi. "Individuals must make trips whether times are good or bad," he told Reuters. —Reuters

# GULF BANK RECOGNIZED 'BEST CASH MANAGEMENT PROVIDER IN KUWAIT'

## GLOBAL FINANCE MAGAZINE

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Bank is pleased to announce it has been named 'Best Cash Management Provider in Kuwait' by Global Finance magazine. This award recognizes providers that offer sophisticated domestic, regional and/or global solutions with an innovative technology backbone and a client-centric front end. Global Finance uses a multi-tiered assessment process which includes input from industry analysts, corporate executives, technology experts, independent research, and a reader's poll to select the best providers of cash management and treasury services. A variety of subjective and objective criteria are considered including: profitability, market share and reach, customer service, competitive pricing, product innovation



and the extent to which both cash management and treasury providers have successfully differentiated themselves from their competitors around core service provision. Cesar Gonzalez-Bueno, Gulf Bank Chief Executive Officer said: "Gulf Bank is pleased to have received this award as it recognizes the Bank's excellence in cash management, a key product within our Transaction Banking department. At the Bank we are committed to offering products that are innovative and easy to use. Our cash management and payment solutions for corporate clients have state-of-the-art features and we will continue expanding services in this area." Global Finance has readers in 188 countries and targets international port-

folio investors responsible for more than 80 percent of all global assets. It is also a valuable source of their awards are a trusted standard of excellence for the global financial community. A full report on the awards for the 52 best cash management providers and treasury services will be published in March 2016. Gulf Bank seeks to continually raise its standards and set the benchmark for banking excellence in the region. In 2015, Gulf Bank's success was recognized with over 20 awards. These awards were

extending for its retail banking; customer service; products and performance; wholesale banking products; bank-wide operational excellence, human resources and staff development; as well as its advertising creativity and impact. In the specific area of cash management, during 2015, Gulf Bank won 'Best Cash Management' from Banker Middle East - Product Awards and the 'Best Cash Management Bank in Kuwait' from The Asian Banker. To learn more about Gulf Bank, please visit one of its 56 branches, call the Customer Contact Center at 1805805, log on to its bilingual website at [www.gulfbank.com](http://www.gulfbank.com), or see its social media channels on Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube.



# SUPPLY GLUT KEEPS OIL UNDER PRESSURE

## KAMCO Oil Market Monthly Report

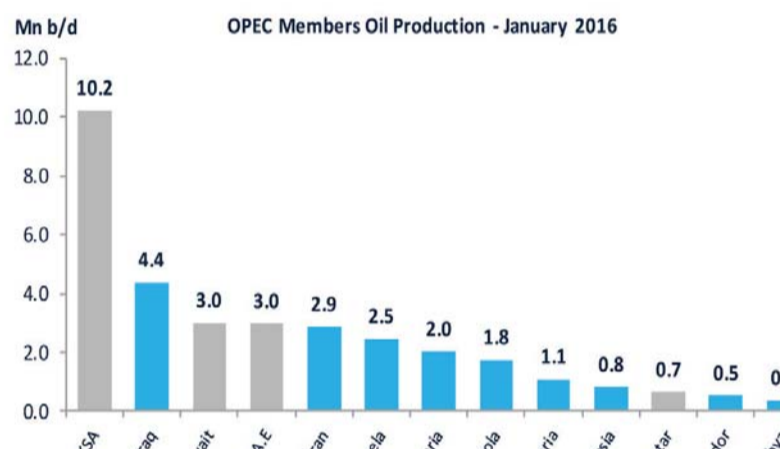
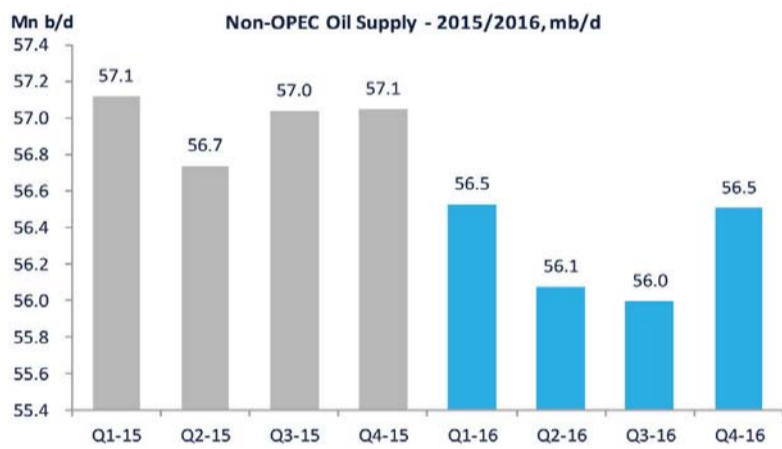
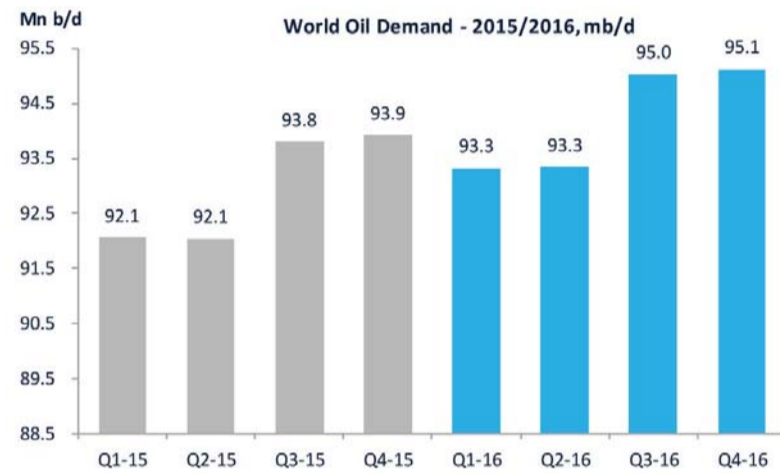
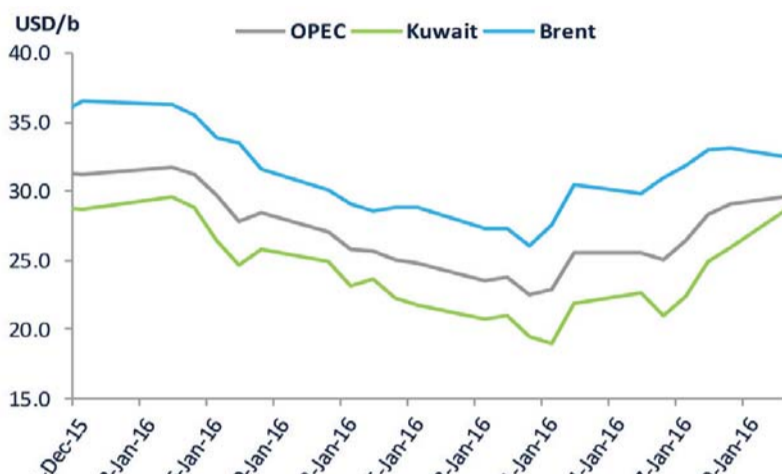
**KUWAIT:** Oil prices continued to slide during January-16 on the back of the ongoing oversupply concerns. Expectations of a slowdown in global growth also affected prices pushing the average monthly OPEC oil price to below \$30/b for the first time since March-04. On the demand side, an extremely mild start to winter in the northern hemisphere led to a fall in seasonal demand for heating oil, although the temporary severe weather conditions in the US East Coast and continental Europe helped in stemming some decline.

Oil prices had fallen more than 13 percent until 11-February-16 after reports pointed to a larger surplus in 2016; however, prices surged more than 12 percent the following day after a WSJ article quoted UAE's energy minister saying that OPEC members are ready to cooperate on production cuts provided there is a total cooperation even from non-OPEC producers. Nevertheless, analysts termed the price surge as merely a knee-jerk reaction as seen in the past.

During January-16, the slide in oil price was severe during the first half of the month when OPEC oil price declined by almost 28 percent to \$22.48/b taking cues from depressing manufacturing numbers from China and IMF's announcement regarding slowdown in global growth. However, prices started surging after speculations of a possible meeting between OPEC and Russia to discuss oil production started doing rounds. These speculations were laid to rest when the oil minister of Russia said that no such talks are scheduled and that any output cut is possible only if all crude-exporting nations are in agreement. On the other hand, a meeting between Venezuela, which is pitching for efforts to curb oil price decline, and Saudi Arabia was reportedly said to be positive although no concrete plan for curbing production was announced. On the production side at least, there remains very little sign of any coordination on production cuts among big oil producers. Oil price got further support when Schlumberger said in its earnings report that it expects the balance of supply and demand to tighten in the medium term.

Average monthly OPEC oil price declined by a steep 21.2 percent to \$26.5/b during January-16, the lowest monthly average price since September-03. Moreover, the initial gains during the first week of February-16 started dwindling during the second week as OPEC said in its monthly report that supply would outpace demand by a higher margin during 2016 than previous expectations.

We expect oil price to see further pressure in the near term with Iraq reportedly pumping oil at record level, Iran planning to boost its production and Saudi Arabia increasing shipments. Moreover, a move to safer bets by investors amid growth concerns could further boost \$ that would ultimately make oil payments dearer.



Source for the above charts : OPEC and Bloomberg

### IEA report

According to IEA's monthly report, OPEC oil producers continued to pump oil at record pace during the month led by higher production by Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Iran. However, non-OPEC supply dropped at a relatively faster pace offsetting the rise in OPEC production during January-16. The agency warned that 2016 will continue to see higher supply of oil and higher inventories as it will take time for US shale oil production to decline considerably to affect overall oil supply/demand situation. The agency analyzed the factors that could push oil prices up in the near term namely, production cuts, demand growth and the dollar. On oil production, the agency said that the likelihood of a coordinated cut in oil production by OPEC and non-OPEC producers is very low. In a related argument, the IEA said that OPEC production is not going to fall anytime soon as Iran just ramped up production and Saudi Arabia has increased oil shipments. On non-OPEC production, the IEA said that the fall in output from US shale producers is taking longer than expected time, highlighting their resilience in maintaining oil production. Nevertheless, the full year results of oil producers and the fall in US oil rig count to 439, the lowest level since January 2010, does reflect pressure on shale producers to cut production. On the demand side, the IEA expects it to grow by 1.2 percent but sees no reason to upgrade it as the slow expected global growth and in the Emerging markets could play a dampener. Finally, \$ weakness that

could make oil cheaper to import and spur demand, is unlikely due to its safe haven status.

Average monthly OPEC oil price declined by a steep 21.2 percent to \$26.5/b during January-16, the lowest monthly average price since September-03. Moreover, the initial gains during the first week of February-16 started dwindling during the second week as OPEC said in its monthly report that supply would outpace demand by a higher margin during 2016 than previous expectations. Average monthly Kuwait oil prices fell by a steeper 24.1 percent during January-16 to \$23.9/b as compared to the previous month but saw a reversal trend in February recording a surge of 14.4 percent by 12-February-16. In a positive comment, the president of Kuwait Petroleum International said that oil market has bottomed and prices could reach \$50 - \$60/b by mid-2017 and to \$60 - \$80/b in three years' time.

### World oil demand

Total world oil demand growth for 2015 was kept unchanged from the last month at 1.54 mb/d to reach 92.96 mb/d although there were some changes within the regions. The demand growth for the full year was slightly less than IEA's estimates that pegged the number at 1.6 mb/d for 2015. In terms of quarterly growth in demand, non-OECD countries were primary contributors to demand as against OECD countries that had a declining trend during the four quarters of 2015. This trend is expected to continue in 2016 with non-OECD coun-

tries accounting for the bulk of the quarterly growth in oil demand. According to the latest oil demand data for November-15, US oil demand declined by approximately 0.16 mb/d or 1 percent year-on-year as the robust growth in gasoline (+2 percent) and jet fuel (+4 percent) was more than offset by steep decline in distillates due to the warm winter. In Europe, oil demand remained strong in November-15 after a muted October-15 led by higher demand in Turkey, Netherlands and Belgium. Nevertheless, preliminary data for December-15 indicated a decline in oil demand in Germany, France and the UK partly offset by higher demand in Italy. In the Middle East, Saudi Arabia recorded the steepest monthly demand decline during December-15 at 5 percent or 0.11 mb/d to reach 2.29 mb/d as the decline in residual fuel oil requirement was more than offset by growth in gasoline and diesel demand.

World oil demand growth for 2016 was revised slightly downward by 10 tb/d to 1.25 mb/d resulting in an annual global demand of 94.21 mb/d. On the other hand, the IEA expects demand growth in 2016 to be relatively slower at 1.2 mb/d primarily on the back of a slowdown in Europe, China and the US. The decline primarily reflects a slowdown in economic growth particularly in Latin America. Total demand in OECD Americas is expected to reach 24.78 mb/d in 2016, a growth of 0.29 mb/d or 1.2 percent primarily on the back of 0.25 mb/d growth expected in the US. Demand in

Europe is expected to decline marginally in 2016 due to a decline in economic growth rates in major European economies coupled with the high base effect seen in 2015. In the Asia Pacific region, Chinese oil demand growth is expected to shrink to 0.29 mb/d in 2016 as against a growth of 0.37 mb/d in 2015.

### World oil supply

Non-OPEC oil supply growth in 2015 was further revised upward by 0.12 mb/d as compared to the previous month's expectations and is now expected to grow by 1.32 mb/d to average at 56.99 mb/d. The growth revision from the previous month's report primarily reflects higher oil supply from the OECD, Developing Countries and FSU. OECD Americas witnessed the strongest increase in oil supply within the non-OPEC countries, primarily on the back of a growth of 0.98 mb/d in the US. Other countries that recorded significant supply growth during 2015 included Brazil, Russia, the UK, Canada, China, Norway, Malaysia and Oman, whereas Mexico, Yemen, Australia and Kazakhstan witnessed the biggest declines. Oil supply from the Middle East region declined by 80 tb/d during 2015 to average at 1.26 mb/d primarily due to the ongoing geopolitical issues in Yemen.

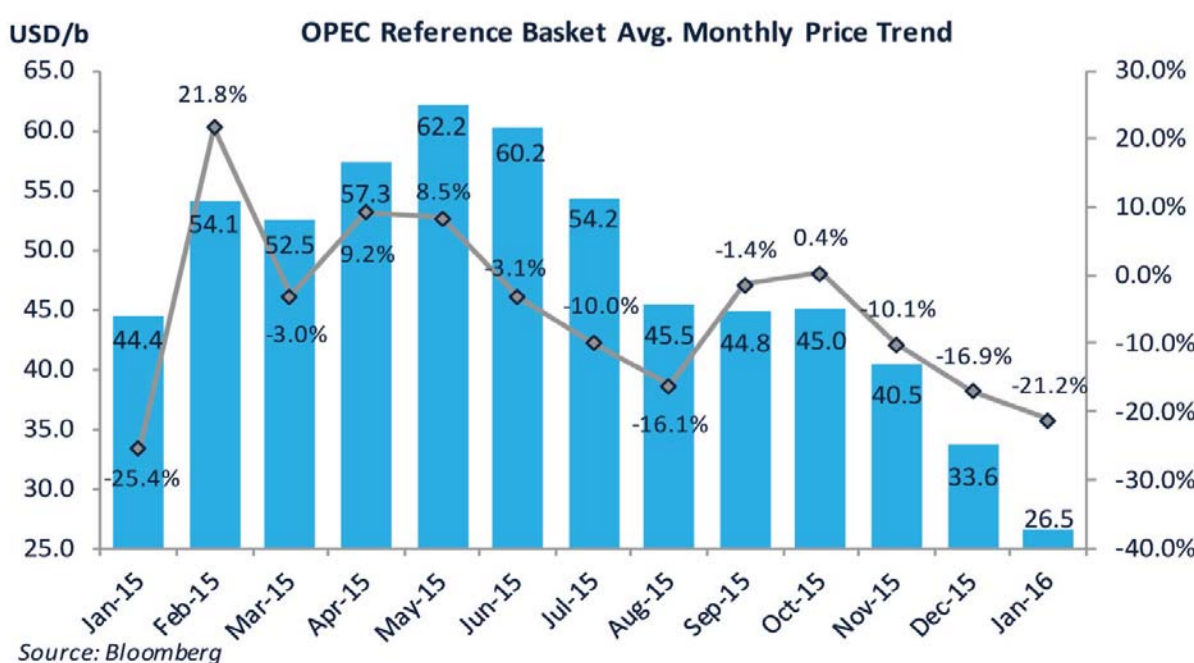
Non-OPEC oil supply in 2016 is expected to decline by 0.7 mb/d to average at 56.28 mb/d, an upward revision of 70 tb/d as compared to expectations during the previous month's report. The revised supply growth pri-

marily reflects an upward revision of 40 tb/d in OECD Americas, and approximately 20 tb/d upward revision each for Africa and FSU. Expectations of a decline in supply in 2016 primarily reflects capex cuts for 2016 by oil companies, a steep decline in active drilling rigs in the US and Canada as well as a steep decline in the world's brown-fields. According to the OPEC, oil companies have reduced investment and have deferred major new projects until oil prices stabilizes.

### OPEC oil production & spare capacity

According to Bloomberg, OPEC oil production increased marginally by 48 tb/d during January-16 to 33.1 mb/d as compared to 33.06 mb/d during December-15. The increase in total production was primarily on the back of a growth of 109 tb/d in Nigeria followed by 100 tb/d growth in Kuwait and 60 tb/d growth in Iran. This growth was partially offset by 108 tb/d production decline in Angola, 70 tb/d decline in Iraq and marginal declines in Saudi Arabia and Qatar. It is pertinent to note that despite the growth, the production rate in Nigeria continues to be below average levels seen during 2014. Meanwhile, Kuwait, which produces at close to 3 mb/d aims to raise production to 3.15 mb/d by Q3-16. An official at Kuwait Petroleum Corp. said the company plans to boost production by 150,000 barrels per day by the third quarter of 2016. The company also aims to sign new export deals with European customers at reportedly good prices and large volumes. According to IEA, global oil supply dropped by 0.2 mb/d to 96.5 mb/d during January-16 as higher OPEC output could only partially offset lower production by non-OPEC producers. OPEC continued to produce at close to last month's production level of around 86.8 percent with Saudi Arabia, among the major producers, have the most buffer with a production rate of 82 percent of its capacity.

In the February-16 monthly report, OPEC said that it expects a larger oil supply surplus in 2016 as compared to previous expectations. This is largely because Saudi Arabia and other members continue to pump more oil in order to make up for the fall in production by non-OPEC members. According to the report, supply will exceed demand by 0.72 mb/d in 2016, up from 0.53 mb/d as expected in the January-16 monthly report. Moreover, OPEC also slashed its forecast for world economic growth in 2016 to 3.2 percent from 3.4 percent as per previous expectations. Economic growth in the OECD has been revised down to 2 percent, in line with the growth in 2015. On oil supply, OPEC now expects non-OPEC supply to decline by 0.7 mb/d in 2016 (as compared to 0.66 mb/d expected decline in the previous month's report) primarily led by expected decline in production by US shale players. On the contrary, a report from the US EIA said that although American drillers have idled more than two-thirds of their rigs since October-14, production continues to remain resilient due to new techniques.



Source: Bloomberg

Production ('000 b/d)	Dec-15	Jan-16	Change	Capacity	Spare Capacity	
<b>Total OPEC-12</b>	<b>33,065</b>	<b>33,113</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>36,643</b>	<b>3,530</b>
KSA	10,250	10,200	-50	-0.5%	12,500	2,300
Iraq	4,440	4,370	-70	-1.6%	4,450	80
<b>Kuwait</b>	<b>2,900</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>0</b>
U.A.E	2,940	2,970	30	1.0%	3,150	180
Iran	2,800	2,860	60	2.1%	2,900	40
Venezuela	2,476	2,466	-10	-0.4%	2,500	34
Nigeria	1,919	2,028	109	5.7%	2,200	172
Angola	1,859	1,751	-108	-5.8%	1,870	119
Algeria	1,100	1,100	0	0.0%	1,150	50
Indonesia	793	815	22	N/A	828	13
Qatar	680	650	-30	-4.4%	780	130
Ecuador	533	533	0	0.0%	535	2
Libya	375	370	-5	-1.3%	780	410
<b>Total OPEC-11</b>	<b>28,625</b>	<b>28,743</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>0.41%</b>	<b>32,193</b>	<b>3,450</b>

# SMART CITY: ALL FOR ONE, ONE FOR ALL

By Mohammed Amin



**DUBAI:** There was a time, not too long ago when smart phones were a work of fiction and wearable technology, unheard of, a time when the word 'smart' was used to describe 'people' not devices or style of living. Take a look around you, the world has drastically changed.

Whether we're working, learning, playing, purchasing or we're traveling, managing our finances, keeping fit or watching TV, we expect faster, more streamlined access to services, all-the-time, access on all our devices. We have all expect a more personalized digital experience... with no compromise.

In parallel, the world is urbanizing at an astonishing rate. As per the United Nations, by 2050, around 70% of the world's population will be concentrated in urban centers, as compared to 54% in 2014. The GCC countries are widely expected to have one of the highest urbanization rates in the world, ranging from 80% to 100%. Traffic congestion continues to accelerate, as does pollution. Essential supplies such as power and water are getting depleted and before we know it the number of people living in cities will well surpass the available resources and infrastructure. Governments

have to think of better ways to manage the cities and to allocate their resources. The Smart City is a survival necessity - an agile infrastructure, adaptive to the sudden swing in the supply-demand cycle.

Introducing... the Smart City, a way for governments to enable a better quality of life through efficient city management, better allocation of resources, economic development, sustainability and innovation

Smart grids, with smart meters and homes or just smart appliances allow the city to better manage their energy supply by optimizing the use of non-renewable sources of energy while enabling the conversion of waste to create renewable sources of energy. Smart roads and transportation with integrated sensors and CCTV lead to intelligent traffic management system, not just minimizing frustration on the roads but also improving safety and enabling faster response to emergencies. It also helps businesses cut back on pollution while reducing costs and improving time to market through multi-modal transport. CCTV surveillance combined with real time data analytics reduces, if not prevents, crimes leading to a much safer living environment. Connected, integrated wearables and intelligent Internet-connected devices transmit and analyze health and vital functions data in real time resulting in faster response, early and accurate diagnostic and preventive treatment leading to a healthier community and better healthcare costs.

## FUTURE-PROOF ROBUST SMART CITY

We are witnessing the emergence of data-driven

communities inhabited by Digital Citizens with information at their fingertips, who expect always-on personalized superior level of services. For an urban center to transform into future-proof robust Smart City it needs a strong ICT foundation that give it an agile, flexible and cost effective software-defined infrastructure for faster provisioning of additional on-demand citizen services. These cities need a Data Lake Layer that allows for faster aggregation, management and analysis of data that's transmitted and received from the Internet of Things so as to enable actionable and predictive insights that are required for happier, safer living and working environments. Above that, smart cities need the application layer for disseminating all the information and services that cities need to bring to fore for their citizens, residents and wider community... This allows for cities to develop, modify and scale their cloud native applications and services in a shorter period of time thus accelerating market innovation and growth.

Does this mean that cities should throw away every ICT investment made and start building their ICT foundation from scratch?

## Absolutely not!

A smart city is a long-term multi-phased IT project. It starts with putting a comprehensive strategy that involves all stakeholders and that has an ultimate objective. The implementations should start from the existing infrastructure and focused services moving gradually to the wider network of services

and full integration. This is by far a more sustainable and scalable model.

The strategy for a smart city must cover data security, accessibility, and privacy. Any breach in data security will impact the trust of citizen in their governments. Therefore, a smart city should ensure integration of security solutions such as data encryption and identity and access management, and security monitoring and analysis, to ensure the safety and integrity of city networks. There is also a strong need for cybercrime laws and data laws to govern the use of the vast amounts of data shared. We have definitely come a long way and are witnessing the start of a fantastic journey where we are all working towards the same goal - happiness. Smart cities are no longer just a vision, thanks to our government, it is a reality as they continue to introduce smart apps, innovative services across utilities and transportation departments to provide us with faster, more efficient services but it is not their work alone. In order to achieve this objective, we must all work as one, governments, city planners, utility providers, ICT and infrastructure suppliers together with the citizens and residents to ensure that the building blocks are being leveraged effectively and ultimately addressing the end goals of the city. As they say, all for one and one for all.

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# AFGHANS SKIRT STRICT RULES TO FIND LOVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

**KABUL:** Afghan civil activist Hadi Sadiqi had long been using social media to share news, commentary and his own musings on politics when he got into a heated exchange with another member of his Facebook forum.

Sadiqi and Maleka Yawari took their argument offline, and soon their exchanges grew more personal, with articles and opinion pieces giving way to photographs, love letters-and eventually wedding vows.

"Turns out we're both from the same district in Ghazni province, but we'd never met or even heard of each other," Sadiqi said. That's not unusual in Afghanistan, a deeply conservative country where women are still largely confined to the home and arranged marriages are the norm. Fifteen years after the overthrow of the Taliban, women are still killed by relatives over alleged sexual indiscretions - in what are known as "honor killings" - and unmarried lovers can be stoned to death by their neighbors.

But social media is allowing more and more young people to safely meet outside society's strict confines. Sadiqi says the families were surprised by the secret romance - conducted on Facebook as he was living in Kabul and Yawari was completing an economics degree in neighboring Kazakhstan. "But they agreed immediately, and a year ago we got married," he said.

The trend is mainly limited to the urban middle class. Only 10 to 20 percent of Afghans have access to the Internet, according to Roshan, the country's top telecom provider. But Afghanistan is currently rolling out a 3G network, and as smartphones become more affordable, Internet access is projected to rise, including in remote areas of the mostly rural country.

Although coverage is limited, there are no official restrictions on the Internet in Afghanistan, making it an outlier in a region where governments closely monitor and restrict access. Neighboring Pakistan recently lifted a three-year ban on YouTube after Google created a special version for the country. Beijing's draconian "great firewall of China" has been in place for more than a decade, and Iran blocks Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Facebook is widely used in Afghanistan, while WhatsApp, Viber, Skype and Instagram are also popular. Kabul-based media consultant Ben Bruges said Afghanistan has seen a "big generational change," with youth using technology their parents don't understand to "escape the traditional conservative confines."

"It might be possible for more young people to talk to each other online than would be possible in their daily lives, given the restrictions on the genders talking to each other in Afghanistan," he said. Maqsood Akbari, a doctor from the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif, agrees. He courted his wife secretly on



**KABUL:** Afghans access social media websites at a private internet cafe in Kabul, Afghanistan. Young Afghans are increasingly finding love on social media, which allows them to circumvent the strict segregation of the sexes in their deeply conservative society. — AP



**KABUL:** An Afghan shopkeeper shows a smartphone to a customer in Kabul, Afghanistan. Young Afghans are increasingly finding love on social media, which allows them to circumvent the strict segregation of the sexes in their deeply conservative society. Afghanistan is currently rolling out a 3G network, and as smartphones become more affordable, Internet access is projected to rise, including in remote areas of the mostly rural country. — AP

social media after meeting her in a library in 2008.

"Finding a suitable marriage partner in this conservative society is a real challenge," he said. "The

Internet provides a level of safety and security, protecting a couple's social dignity and providing a precious way for young people to meet each other." — AP

# HOW EYEFLUENCE AIMS TO CHANGE THE FUTURE OF VR

**NEW YORK:** Augmented and virtual reality headsets could be the future when it comes to computing, but right now, navigating virtual worlds and interacting with applications is often a clunky experience.

That's the problem Eyefluence aims to solve with a technology that tracks the movement of your eyes. Eyefluence isn't developing its own VR and AR headsets; it's leaving that to other companies and hopes to put eye tracking inside their devices.

The company is led by CEO Jim Marggraff, an entrepreneur best known as the mind behind the LiveScribe pen. So far, Eyefluence has raised \$21 million in funding from Intel, Motorola Solutions and others.

Marggraff argues that in the coming years, more companies will have to add eye tracking to their headsets - anything else, he says, would be missing a key method of interaction. After taking the company's technology for a spin, I'm inclined to agree.

Eyefluence isn't going public yet with exactly how its technology works, but what I can say is that it uses a set of eye gestures to control how users move through menus and interact with apps. It sounds a bit abstract until you try it, but the effect is impressive. During my first demo using a modified Oculus Rift headset, I picked the system up in about 5 minutes using a tutorial the company built. The second time, I felt right at home and sailed through the tutorial in no time.

## EASIER TO NAVIGATE

One demo allowed me to zoom and pan in a "Where's Waldo" scene, searching out the iconic character using my eyes. Instead of just zooming in on the center of the scene, Eyefluence's tech let me zoom to the spot where I was looking, making it easier to navigate where I wanted to go.

Marggraff also showed the technology added to a pair of ODG's R6 augmented reality glasses. He showed a "World Store" application that takes what a user is looking at, snaps a picture of it, passes it off to an outside service, and buys it on Amazon.

Eyefluence was naturally focused on its eye tracking technology, but I think headset makers will be best off combining eye tracking with head tracking and even physical and hand gesture controls. Using your eyes and head to navigate is fine for some tasks,



**Eyefluence CEO Jim Marggraff sports a modified version of Google Glass that includes his company's eye-tracking technology.**

but doing something like manipulating a 3D manufacturing model seems like it might be better with more granular physical input on top of that. But using a headset without eye tracking just feels like a lesser experience after knowing what it's capable of.

There's one other snazzy feature of Eyefluence's technology: it can be used to power foveated rendering, a technique that generates high-quality graphics only at the spot where someone is focused, and shows low-res imagery everywhere else.

## HANDS-FREE EYE INTERACTION

Headset makers want to get rid of the cables that tie their devices to computers, and one way to do that is to reduce the processing power required by using foveated rendering, which Marggraff said can allow big performance gains without users perceiving a difference. He loaded up a rendered scene for me in Unity, and switched on foveated rendering. Marggraff said the technology had reduced the load on the computer rendering the scene by 60 percent, yet I didn't notice any difference.

That may have had something to do with the fact that I'd removed my massive nerd glasses in order to fit my head inside the modified Rift to try out the technology, but even so, the effect was impressive. That gives Eyefluence multiple angles to try to sell its technology to headset makers.

# ADVANCES IN INTELLIGENT ROBOTS THREATEN TENS OF MILLIONS OF JOBS

**WASHINGTON:** Advances in artificial intelligence will soon lead to robots that are capable of nearly everything humans do, threatening tens of millions of jobs in the coming 30 years, experts warned Saturday.

"We are approaching a time when machines will be able to outperform humans at almost any task," said Moshe Vardi, director of the Institute for Information Technology at Rice University in Texas.

"I believe that society needs to confront this question before it is upon us: If machines are capable of doing almost any work humans can do, what will humans do?" he asked at a panel discussion on artificial intelligence at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Vardi said there will always be some need for human work in the future, but robot replacements could drastically change the landscape, with no profession safe, and men and women equally affected.

"Can the global economy adapt to greater than 50 percent unemployment?" he asked.

## TRANSFORM MANUFACTURING

Automation and robotization have already revolutionized the industrial sector over the last 40 years, raising productivity but cutting down on employment.

Job creation in manufacturing reached its peak in the United States in 1980 and has been on the decline ever since, accompanied by stagnating wages in the middle class, said Vardi.

Today there are more than 200,000 industrial robots in the country and their number continues to rise.

Today, research is focused on the reasoning abilities of machines, and progress in this realm over the past 20 years has been spectacular, said Vardi.

"And there is every reason to believe the progress in the next 25 years will be equally dramatic," he said.

By his calculation, 10 percent of jobs related to driving in the United States could disappear due to the rise of driverless cars in the coming 25 years.

According to Bart Selman, professor of computer science at Cornell University, "in the next two or three years, semi-autonomous or autonomous systems will march into our society."

He listed self-driving cars and trucks, autonomous drones for surveillance and fully automatic trading systems, along with house robots and other kinds of "intelligence assistance" which make decisions on behalf of humans.

"We will be in sort of symbiosis with those machines and we will start to trust them and work with them," he predicted.

"This is the concern because we don't know the rate of growth of machine intelligence, how clever those machines will become."

## CONTROL

Will the machines remain understandable for the humans? Will humans be able to

control them? Will they remain a benefit for humans, or pose harms?

These questions and more are being raised anew due to recent advances in robotic technology that allow machines to see and hear, almost like people.

Selman said investment in artificial intelligence in the United States was by far the highest ever in 2015, since the birth of the industry some 50 years ago.

Business giants like Google, Facebook, Microsoft and Tesla, run by billionaire Elon Musk, are at the head of the pack.

Also, the Pentagon has requested 19 billion for developing intelligent weapons systems.

What is concerning about these new technologies is their ability to analyze data and execute complex tasks.

This raises concerns about whether humans might one day lose control of the artificial intelligence they once built, said Selman.

It's a concern that some of the world's great minds have raised too, including British astrophysicist Stephen Hawking, who warned in a BBC interview in 2014 that the consequences could be dire.

"It would take off on its own, and re-design itself at an ever increasing rate," he said.

"Humans, who are limited by slow biological evolution, couldn't compete, and would be superseded," he added.

"The development of full artificial intelligence could spell the end of the human race."

These questions have led scientists to call for the establishment of an ethical framework



**Articulated welding robots used in a factory, a type of industrial robots.**

for the development of artificial intelligence, as well as safeguards for security in the years to come.

Last year Musk-the owner of SpaceX-donated 10 million to resolve such concerns, deeming artificial intelligence potentially more dangerous than nuclear weapons.

For Wendel Wallach, an ethicist at Yale University, such dangers require a global

response.

He also called for a presidential order declaring that lethal autonomous weapons systems are in violation of international humanitarian law.

"The basic idea is that there is a need for concerted action to keep technology a good servant and not let it become a dangerous master." — AFP

## ZIKA LIKELY TO SPREAD TO LARGE BRAZILIAN CITIES

**BRASOLIA:** The Zika virus, linked to a surge in infants born with abnormally small heads, is likely to spread this year to Brazil's densely populated cities where it has barely surfaced, a top health official told AFP. Zika has struck hard in hot and humid southeastern and central Brazil, but largely spared bigger cities like Sao Paulo or Rio de Janeiro, said Claudio Maierovitch, head of the communicable diseases surveillance department at the Ministry of Health. Since October, 462 cases of microcephaly have been confirmed in Brazil, which has a population of 204 million, and more than 3,800 cases are being studied as possibly being related to the virus, according to government figures.

While scientists are racing to develop a vaccine for Zika-not likely to be ready for at least three years-and with just six months to go before the opening of the Summer Olympics in Rio, the focus on fighting the virus has turned to exterminating its carrier,

the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito. Here is a summary of Maierovitch's interview with AFP.

**Question:** What is currently the most unsettling scenario?

**Answer:** This is the great fear of the immediate future-that densely populated states will experience an intense outbreak of the virus that cannot be controlled.

These states include Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Parana, Minas Gerais and Goias that have experienced vast dengue epidemics in the last years. This leads us to believe that the mosquitos will be present in a very generalized way, and that they could transmit other viruses.

**Q:** What is the plan until a vaccine is available?

**A:** The situation today is dramatic. Brazilians are extremely worried. The most important measure taken by the government has been ... to focus on fighting the mosquito. It is also possible that, after a first year in

which the Brazilian population has not been exposed to the Zika virus, part of the population may become immunized and after some time we can have a larger immune population, which would result in the virus circulating less.

**Q:** Has the link with microcephaly been proven?

**A:** We have established conclusively the relationship during pregnancy ... the times and locations coincide. In these same locations where there was an outbreak of the virus, between six and eight months later children were born with microcephaly. Many of the mothers who gave birth to infants with microcephaly remember having an infection that is like one described for Zika: rashes, hives and a low-level fever. Also, we identified the virus in the amniotic fluid of pregnant women whose babies had microcephaly, including within the uterus, and there were cases of children with microcephaly who died

soon after being born.

**Q:** Can the Zika virus be deadly?

**A:** We don't know if the Zika virus alone is capable of making people so gravely sick that it will result in their death, or if the infection appeared in people who already had other health problems and that this may have contributed to their death. The number of fatalities is very small when compared to the amount of people who die of dengue. Last year, there were more than 700 deaths (863 according to government figures) during a very large dengue epidemic totaling some 1.5 million cases. Our concern remains focused on the pregnant women.

**Q:** What guarantee does Brazil offer to the Olympic Games?

**A:** The state and the city of Rio de Janeiro have both invested a lot, and are focusing their mosquito eradication efforts on the places where the games will be played, in the neighborhoods around those areas, and in

zones where there are large mosquito infestations. We also have the natural factor that should help, which is that July and August (winter in the southern hemisphere) are part of a period in which the infestation of *Aedes aegypti* is very low. We practically have no cases of dengue starting in July across the country. Visitors coming for the Olympics will be staying at air conditioned hotels, will be in areas where the mosquito infestation is low, and that should allow spectators and athletes to relax.

**Q:** What do the models of the epidemic project?

**A:** Last year, Zika had a transmission curve similar to dengue but it lasted longer. The number of dengue cases dropped in June and July, while Zika continued for longer-until July, August. Eventually, we clearly saw the number of cases drop considerably. At the start of the year, with warmer weather, we already have reports that there is an increase in Zika cases. — AFP



**BRAZIL:** Lara, who is less than three months old and was born with microcephaly, is examined by a neurologist at the Pedro hospital in Campina Grande, Paraiba state. — AP photos

## BRAZIL'S ZIKA-RELATED ABORTION DEBATE SPARKS BACKLASH

'ABORTION IS NOT THE ANSWER TO THE ZIKA VIRUS'

**RIO DE JANEIRO:** Before her son was born, Danielle Alves didn't know Luiz Gustavo would have microcephaly, a condition that has left the 3-year-old so disabled he can't walk, talk or eat without help. Still, Alves says she would have gone ahead with the pregnancy even if she had known - and she thinks thousands of pregnant women caught up in Brazil's Zika virus outbreak should be required to do the same. "I know it's very difficult to have a special needs child, but I'm absolutely against abortion," said Alves, who lives in Vitoria da Conquista, a city in the impoverished northeastern region where Brazil's tandem Zika and microcephaly outbreaks have been centered.

Alarm in recent months over the Zika virus, which many researchers believe can cause microcephaly in the fetuses of pregnant women, has prompted calls, both inside and outside Brazil, to loosen a near-ban on abortion in the world's most populous Catholic country. But the pro-choice push is creating a backlash, particularly among the families of disabled children. Many have taken to social media apps like Facebook and Whatsapp, where more than half of Brazil's 200 million people are connected, to make their case. They argue that all babies, including those with severe forms of microcephaly, have a right to be born.

The Catholic Church and Pentecostal faiths, strong forces in this deeply religious country, have also been fighting back. "Abortion is not the answer to the Zika virus, we need to value life in whatever situation or condition it may be," Sergio da Rocha, the president of the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops, said earlier this week. Abortion is illegal except in cases of rape, danger to the mother's life or anencephaly, another birth defect involving the brain - although in practice wealthy women in urban areas have relatively



**BRAZIL:** Sophia, who is two weeks old and was born with microcephaly, sleeps before her physical therapy session at the Pedro I hospital in Campina Grande, Paraiba state.

easy access to safe abortions in private clinics, while the poor often rely on dicey back-alley procedures.

### Logical solution

The growing national debate is also spilling out into the courts, and will likely intensify in the months to come. A judge in the central city of Goiania has said he will authorize abortions in severe cases of microcephaly. Some of the nation's top newspapers have

also weighed in, running editorials urging abortion laws to be revisited. "The most logical solution would be to revise the penal code relating to abortion, decriminalizing the practice. The legislation is three-quarters of a century old," the daily *Folha de S. Paulo* said in a recent editorial.

A prominent group of attorneys and psychologists is preparing a lawsuit calling for women infected with Zika during their pregnancies to be allowed to get legal abortions. The group, which in 2012 won an eight-year legal battle that succeeded in adding anaphylaxis to justifications for obtaining a legal abortion, hopes to take the suit before Brazil's Supreme Court early this year. Before the outbreak, groups that support abortion groups were on the defensive following a proposal by the powerful Pentecostal lobby that would further restrict abortion access by adding additional hurdles for rape victims, such as getting an exam and filing a police report. The proposal has been approved by a House of Representatives committee, though its prospects in the full chamber are unclear.

When the first case of Zika was discovered in Brazil in the middle of last year, health officials here weren't unduly worried. First detected in a Ugandan forest in 1947, Zika has spread to parts of Asia and Oceania and is thought to have made the leap to Brazil through one or more infected tourists visiting the South American nation for the 2014 World Cup or perhaps an international canoeing tournament in Rio de Janeiro the same year. It's spread by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, a common household pest that also transmits dengue and chikungunya. Zika is generally much milder, with only one out of five patients developing symptoms such as red eyes, a splotchy rash and fever.

### Sex education

A link to microcephaly has yet to be proven, but the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has pointed to strong evidence of a connection and urged pregnant women to avoid travel to 22 countries with active Zika outbreaks. The World Health Organization has declared an international health emergency. Brazil and several other Latin American nations experiencing outbreaks have urged women to put off pregnancies. But critics say the recommendation is impractical in a region where access to sex education, contraception and pre-natal care is precarious and most pregnancies remain unplanned.

Sinara Gumieri, an attorney and legal counselor with the group that's preparing the lawsuit, said the abortion ban combined with the government's failure to eradicate the mosquito violate the right to health that's enshrined in Brazil's constitution. "If tests confirm the virus (in a pregnant woman), she should then be given the right to choose between going through a high-risk prenatal period and pregnancy and give birth to her child or abort without fear of breaking the law," said Gumieri, of the Brasilia-based ANIS Institute of Bioethics. Andressa Cristina dos Santos Cavanga, mother of a 3-year-old boy with a severe case of microcephaly, says abortion isn't the answer. "Just because he is different from so-called normal children doesn't mean that he shouldn't be born," she said. "People who say that don't have love in their hearts." — AP

## EXERCISE PROGRAMS MAY LOWER THE RISK OF SERIOUS FALLS FOR OLDER MEN

**NEW YORK:** Older men who do moderate exercise several times per week may experience fewer injuries and hospitalizations from falls, a new study suggests. For men and women combined, the exercise program did not significantly reduce fall injuries, but in men it was associated with reduced risks of serious fall injuries, broken bones. "We also found that men had greater improvements than women in their gait, balance and muscle strength, in response to the physical activity program," said lead author Dr. Thomas Gill, a professor of geriatric medicine at Yale School of Medicine in New Haven, Connecticut.

Each year, nearly a third of older people living in a community setting suffer a fall, with 20 to 30 percent of these falls resulting in moderate to severe injuries, the researchers write in *The BMJ*. "Serious fall injuries are one of the most dreaded and devastating conditions experienced by older persons," Gill told Reuters Health by email. The researchers used data from the Lifestyle Interventions and Independence for Elders (LIFE) study, the largest study to examine the benefits of physical activity in older people.

The 1,635 participants were sedentary adults, ages 70 to 89, with physical limitations. They all scored low on a test of physical performance but were able to walk a quarter mile. Half of the participants completed exercise programs twice a week in centers across the US. They also completed at-home exercises three to four times weekly including aerobic, strength, flexibility, and balance training activities.

The rest of the participants were assigned to a comparison group that completed a health education program and did upper body stretching. The study team checked on participants' rates of injuries from falls for up to 3.5 years, asking them every six months if they had fallen and broken a bone or gone to the hospital. Overall,

75 people in the physical activity group, or 9.2 percent, had a serious fall injury, compared with 84 people, or 10.3 percent, in the comparison group.

There was no significant difference between the two groups in serious fall injuries, broken bones, or hospital visits. After the fact, the researchers decided to look at sex differences and found that men in the physical training group had greater improvements on serious fall injuries, fractures and hospital admissions than women.

Dr. Mary Tinetti, who also studies falls in the elderly at Yale but wasn't involved in the new study, told Reuters Health by email that this work alone is not enough to prove that men benefit more than women from physical activity. Many previous studies have shown that exercise also reduces fall injuries in women, said Tinetti. Gill's team too had previously found that physical activity can help with mobility issues in older adults of both genders. "Hence, women and men should be advised that physical activity is beneficial," said Gill. He added, "Exercises that focus on improving balance, gait and muscle strength are most useful. Older persons often fall because they have problems with their balance and gait."

Tinetti noted that balance training is integral to preventing falls but may be safer to do in a supervised environment. She warned, "Balance training can be particularly tricky because to improve balance one needs to 'challenge' balance, which means to temporarily get off balance and then recover safely." "Serious fall injuries such as hip fractures and head injuries are comparable to strokes in clinical importance for older adults," said Tinetti. "Therefore, it is important to identify ways to prevent serious fall injuries, particularly as the population is rapidly aging." — Reuters

## COURT CASES CHALLENGE 'SHAKEN BABY' DIAGNOSIS

**SAN FRANCISCO:** A California jury convicted Alan Gimenez of killing his infant daughter Priscilla after medical testimony revealed what some doctors say is a tell-tale sign she had been shaken: Brain swelling and bleeding inside her skull and behind her eyes. More than 20 years later, Gimenez still maintains his innocence, and is now contesting his conviction in court on the grounds that the three symptoms his daughter showed are no longer considered a clear indication of abuse. "I never shook my daughter. I never abused her," said Gimenez, who was paroled in June after nearly 24 years in prison. The case before the 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals is among a spate of recent challenges to "shaken baby syndrome" diagnoses that, like Gimenez's case, include a similar trio of symptoms without evidence of neck injuries.

Many of the cases also have no additional signs of abuse such as bruising or fractures. Defense attorneys say new research discredits shaking as the most likely cause of bleeding inside the skull and behind the eyes and brain swelling. But medical experts are divided, with some still putting stock in the three symptoms as a strong indicator of shaking or other abusive head trauma even without other injuries. The court challenges have had some success. "There does seem to be a movement in the direction of greater skepticism on the part of the judiciary," said Deborah Tuerkheimer, a professor at Northwestern's Pritzker School of Law who has written a book about flawed "shaken baby" convictions.

### A proposition of science

An Illinois federal judge in 2014 freed a daycare worker who was convicted of killing an infant she was accused of shaking. The judge said recent research "arguably suggests that a claim of shaken baby syndrome is more an article of faith than a proposition of science." An Arizona judge in 2012 dismissed a murder

charge against Drayton Witt after the county medical examiner said developments in the understanding of shaken baby syndrome and some of the conditions that mimic its symptoms contributed to his decision to reclassify the death of Witt's girlfriend's infant son as natural, not a homicide. Witt had spent 10 years in prison in "blind rage" over being falsely accused of shaking the child to death, he said. While he remains angry, he said he's moved on. "I got a new deck of cards," said Witt, 34, who married his girlfriend and has a 2-year-old daughter with her. "I'm healthy. I'm alive. I'm breathing. I have a roof over my head. My bills are paid. My daughter's beautiful. My daughter's healthy. My marriage is great." Alma Calderaro is challenging her "shaken baby" conviction in New York on similar grounds as Gimenez. She was accused of shaking a 7-month-old girl while serving as a nanny, leaving the girl brain damaged, and convicted in 2009 of first-degree assault and endangering the welfare of a child.

Abusive head trauma, a condition that includes shaken baby syndrome, is often triggered by frustration from excessive crying, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Prosecutors file dozens of new cases alleging shaking each year, although Tuerkheimer said cases involving just the trio of symptoms appear to be rarer these days. Gimenez's attorneys say he took his daughter to the hospital on August 10, 1991 after she vomited and showed signs of a seizure. She died a few days later, just 49 days old. What the San Diego County jury that convicted Gimenez, now 47, didn't hear was that the girl had been in an out of the hospital and had a blood clotting problem, according to Gimenez's 2012 petition challenging his conviction. Doctors who have since reviewed her medical records for the defense conclude she likely had bleeding in her skull since birth, and died of a stroke-like blood clot, Gimenez's attorneys say. — AP



**SURPRISE, Arizona:** Drayton Witt pauses for a moment at his home in Surprise, Arizona. — AP

## 150,000 ANTARCTICA PENGUINS DIE AFTER ICEBERG GROUNDING

**SYDNEY:** Some 150,000 penguins died after a massive iceberg grounded near their colony in Antarctica, forcing them to make a lengthy trek to find food, scientists say in a newly-published study. The B09B iceberg, measuring some 100 square kilometers (38.6 square miles), grounded in Commonwealth Bay in East Antarctica in December 2010, the researchers from Australia and New Zealand wrote in the *Antarctic Science* journal. The Adelie penguin population at the bay's Cape Denison was measured to be about 160,000 in February 2011 but by December 2013 it had plunged to an estimated 10,000, they said.

The iceberg's grounding meant the penguins had to walk more than 60 kilometers (37 miles) to find food, impeding their breeding attempts, said the researchers from the University of New South Wales' (UNSW) Climate Change Research Centre and New Zealand's West Coast Penguin Trust. "The Cape Denison population could be extirpated within 20 years unless B09B relocates or the now perennial fast ice within the bay breaks out," they wrote in the research published in February. Fast ice is sea ice which forms and stays fast along the coast.

During their census in December 2013, the researchers said "hundreds of abandoned eggs were noted, and the ground was littered with the freeze-dried carcasses of previous season's chicks." "It's eerily silent now," UNSW's Chris Turney, who led the 2013 expedition, told the *Sydney Morning Herald* Friday. "The ones that we saw at Cape Denison were incredibly docile, lethargic, almost unaware of your existence."

"The ones that are surviving are clearly struggling. They can barely survive themselves, let alone hatch the next generation. We saw lots of dead birds on the ground... it's just heartbreaking to see." In contrast, penguins living on the eastern fringe of the bay just eight kilometers from the fast ice edge were thriving, the scientists said. The researchers said the study had "important implications" for the wider East Antarctic if the current trend of increasing sea ice continued. Sea ice around Antarctica is increasing, in contrast to the Arctic where global warming is causing ice to melt and glaciers to shrink. Scientists believe the growth in Antarctic sea ice is largely driven by changes in wind and local conditions. — AFP



AMULREE, United Kingdom : Irish entrepreneur Tam O'Braan walks among the cloche (plastic structures) checking for new growth on his White Tea plants. — AFP photos



AMULREE, United Kingdom : Tam O'Braan checks for new growth on his white tea plants.

# TEA IN THE HIGHLANDS? 'MAD' GROWER TENDS BLOOMING CROP

'IN FACT WE SHOULD ALL DIVERSIFY AND MAKE DIFFERENT TYPES OF TEA'

**AMULREE, United Kingdom:** Tam O'Braan has had several lives. Having been a soldier, an agronomist and an entrepreneur, he now grows tea in the foothills of the Scottish Highlands, and is the envy of those who once called him crazy. Four years since he began growing tea at Dalreoch, a former sheep farm close to the small Scottish village of Amulree, the Irishman saw his tea crowned a winner at the Salon de The awards in Paris last year. Now O'Braan sells his tea in luxury stores like Mariage Freres in Paris where it goes for 78 euros for 20 grams (\$87 for 0.7 ounce) and London's Fortnum & Mason, where it brings £40 (51 euros, \$57) for 20 grams, as well as to famous hotels like The Dorchester.

"My neighbors thought I was mad," O'Braan said. "We were told categorically by people who have been working in the tea industry for 30, 40 years, that it couldn't be done." Scottish 19th-century botanist Robert Fortune had already shown it was possible to grow tea in Scotland but his project failed due to having the wrong plants. Determined not to make the same mistake, O'Braan imported tea trees that grew in the foothills of the Himalayas (*Camellia sinensis sinensis*), before adapting them to the Scottish

climate. The plant seeds, which are similar to small nuts, are germinated outside before the plants are grown in a small unheated greenhouse. "Those plants who originally started on the foothills of the Himalayas, that can deal with snow, are even stronger," O'Braan said.

### Revolutionary tea?

Once the tea plants have adjusted, Scotland has proved to be an ideal place for them to grow, with its fog, high rainfall, hilly landscape and rich soil. "It's well accepted among tea experts that the finest teas in Darjeeling or Assam come from areas which are shrouded in clouds for the majority of the year," O'Braan said. "Also because the plants are in what many would consider to be an unnatural environment, we're producing a certain amount of chemical stress within the leaf. That's responsible for the rather sweet flavor that our tea produces." The harvest, which is currently beginning and will continue until September, collects the youngest leaves for white tea and rougher leaves for green and black tea.

Dalreoch Estate tea is the first white tea whose leaves are smoke-dried, making it "revolutionary and unique", according to Mariage Freres.



AMULREE, United Kingdom : Irish entrepreneur Tam O'Braan sits in his office with a cup of tea.

In the Habitat cafe in the village of Amulree close to Dalreoch, owner Mike Haggerton offers sceptical customers free samples of the teas. "We give a little bit to our clients and the reaction is never been anything other than 'this is incredible,'" Haggerton said. "There is the potential for so much more great tea to come out of Scotland."

### Scottish tea growers

In 2015 O'Braan produced 500 kilos (1,100 pounds) of tea from his 14,000 plants and founded the Scottish Tea Growers Association in a bid to be more recognized in a land better known for its whisky. Ten people have joined him, creating small tea plantations of about 1,000 plants each in places like the Isle of Mull and



AMULREE, United Kingdom : White tea plant seeds are left with egg shells to take advantage of their high calcium content.

the Lowlands. O'Braan hopes that there will be 28 tea growing sites in Scotland by 2017. "From the same tea plant you can make 300 different types of tea. So there's no reason why my neighbors should look to manufacture the same as I'm doing," O'Braan said.

"In fact we should all diversify and make different types of tea." "We're

not going to replant Scotland. It's always going to be boutique, artisan tea," he said. Members of the association can use a small tea processing plant that O'Braan is setting up on his farm. The production of Dalreoch itself is sold out for the next four years, according to O'Braan-meaning there should be plenty of business to go around. — AFP



AMULREE, United Kingdom : Tam O'Braan prepares to dry wet leaves from the tea plant.



AMULREE, United Kingdom : Tam O'Braan prepares to dry wet leaves from the tea plant.



AMULREE, United Kingdom : A picture shows the Dalreoch Farm Estate at Amulree in the foothills of the Scottish Highlands.

# CLINIC PAGE



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## TSC OPENS 22ND CONVENIENCE STORE AT BNEIDAR

Out of its commitment to reach customers across all areas of Kuwait, The Sultan Center opened its 22nd convenience store under the name "Sultan Express" at Bneidar area, located off of Highway 40, road 264 to provide area residents with an easy and quick shopping experience.

The "Sultan Express" store located at Bneidar is fully equipped and designed to provide a selected range of super-market, fresh food, snacks and beverages for the residents of Bneidar. The new store will shortly open a restaurant snack bar featuring a scaled down menu of Kuwait's favorite restaurants. In

addition, customers of Sultan Express will also be able to order a range of specialty meat and seafood items upon request having them delivered direct to their door, providing residents with added convenience.

Today, TSC has 22 convenience stores spread across Kuwait catering to

neighborhoods and on the go customers for an easy and quick shopping experience. Sultan Express is another milestone to be added to TSC achievements in providing unparalleled services and reaching customers across Kuwait making TSC the preferred shopping destination.



### Japan Cultural Workshop

Date : 17<sup>th</sup> Feb. (Wed.)  
6:30 – 8:30

Venue : Yarmouk Cultural Center  
Embassy of Japan  
Dar al-Athar Islamiyyah

Calligraphy Origami Tea Ceremony



### JAPAN EMBASSY HOSTS CULTURAL WORKSHOPS

The embassy of Japan will be holding workshops titled Japanese cultural workshops at Yarmouk cultural center on Wednesday Feb 17th from 6:30 pm to 8:30pm. It will include origami, Japanese calligraphy and tea ceremony of Japan. Kids of all ages are welcome to attend as well.

### WHAT'S ON - SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

All photos submitted for What's On should be minimum 200dpi. Articles must be in plain text and should include name and phone numbers. Articles and photos that fail to meet these requirements will not be published.

Please send them to  
news@kuwaittimes.net

## LULU HYPERMARKET TO OPEN NEW OUTLET IN EGAILA

Lulu Hypermarket, the leading retailer in the region, will be opening its new outlet in Sama Mall in Egaila, on 17 February. The Egaila launch will mark the 123rd branch opening of the hypermarket in the region and the 6th outlet in Kuwait.

Located in South Kuwait, in Egaila's prime area, the new outlet provides easy access from surrounding areas and has been designed keeping in mind the utmost convenience of customers. The expansive Egaila branch will feature sections dedicated to grocery, fruits and vegetables, seafood, meat and poultry, fresh bakes, dairy and cheese, hot-food, fashion garments, footwear, household, toys and accessories, electronics and IT.

Shoppers to the new venue can expect to find a widest range of groceries and the freshest fruits and vegetables, along with fresh fish and choice selection of meat and poultry. In addition to an assortment of dairy and cheese, the outlet also has a dedicated Hot-Foods section

providing take-away foods ready-to-eat. Other popular aspects of the hypermarket's shopping experience include the Fashion Garments and Footwear section where fashion enthusiasts will find a range of casual, modern and ethnic styles.

While the Household area will have some of the best home essentials, the toys section will delight tots and the range of electronics and IT offerings is bound to please everyone looking for the latest in digital. True to its reputation, the new outlet of Lulu Hypermarket will stock the best of world-class brands and offer them at reasonable prices.

Lulu Hypermarket, which attributes its success to a winning formula of value-for-money and quality shopping, has over the years, delighted shoppers at all their venues in the country. The hypermarket has always aimed to please every demographic with their international and regional assortment of products, growing in status as a one-stop shop for the entire community in Kuwait.



## LULU HYPERMARKET LAUNCHES TOY FEST 2016



Lulu Hypermarket, the leading hypermarket chain in the region, launched the Toys Fest 2016 campaign at all their outlets on 11 February. The festival, which runs till 28 February, is offering special prices on all toys designed to attract children looking for the latest and most popular toys. The Toys Fest 2016 also features a host of exciting activities and competitions for children that are bound to inspire their imagination and creativity.

Among the activities and competitions challenging children in a fun way are, Bouncing Bubbles, Ride On, Flying and X-shot competitions. Other creative facilities set up to engage young participants and immerse

them in amazing play time are trendy Jewelry Tattoo and Body Art and popular toys such as Nitro Grinders, Power Top Plate and more.

The Toy Fest 2016 is an incredible venture by Lulu Hypermarket to draw in children with lively campaign, where they get to fulfill their interest in exciting activities and discover great toys at reasonable prices.

Lulu Hypermarket has consistently branded itself as the company that meets customers' expectations for quality products at competitive prices. The hypermarket presents a unique shopping experience through attractive customer-oriented campaigns that help garner shoppers' interest and increase support for the brand.



## GUST LAUNCHES RESEARCH CENTER WITH BOSTON UNIVERSITY'S ZAMAN LAB

Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Boston University's (BU) Zaman Lab to launch the International Center for Applied Mathematics and Computational Bioengineering (ICAMCB). The Center aims to increase research quality and solidify GUST as a world class research producer.

The ICAMCB will be run by faculty from the GUST Department of Mathematics & Natural Sciences and the Department of Computer Science, and will conduct and collaborate on different research projects in Kuwait in close collaboration with Zaman Lab at Boston University. The Lab specializes in the interface of cell biology,

mechanics, systems biology & medicine, and developing robust technologies and innovative solutions to improve the quality and practice of medicine in the developing world.

GUST President, Professor Donald Bates, said, "In recent years, GUST has increased its focus and commitment to research, and with the recent launch of the ICAMCB, in collaboration with Zaman Lab, it will cement its status in the country and the region as an internationally recognized research hub."

One of the ICAMCB missions is to look at prevalent medical problems in Kuwait, such as cancer and heart disease, and search for possible effective solutions. The focus of the center will remain on local problems, how to

address them, and attempt to look for solutions. This goes in line with GUST's mission to be a center of excellence in research and productive member of society.

Boston University Professor of Biomedical Engineering and Founder of Zaman Lab, Professor Muhammad Hamid Zaman, said "It is an honor to work with such dedicated individuals at GUST. At the end, we all have the same goal: to improve the world around us. Which is why we are working with various schools and institutions around the globe, including GUST, to develop solutions for many widespread issues." The Center will be hosting its inaugural lecture, led by Professor Zaman today, at 12:30pm on its campus.

## FSIS WIN ISACK U-19 VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

The Fawzia Sultan International School made its first championship win in the ISACK under 19 volleyball game. The FSIS White Tigers played against a strong squad from Kuwait English School, in a strongly contested match, winning the game 2-0.

The final match was played on home turf in the presence of many teachers and students from FSIS. It was an exciting match for the spectators as the score went back and forth between the two equally strong teams. In the first set, KES had the lead, but the White Tigers were not in a mood to give

up and won the first with a 3 point lead.

The FSIS White Tigers started the second set on a high and had total control over the game for the first part of the set. But team KES made a great come-back from being down by 9 points to equalizing the score 18 all. However, team FSIS rallied together with vice-captain Mohammed making some very strong back raw attacks that helped the team gain the momentum back. FSIS won the set 25-23 and the Championship, making the White Tigers the ISACK Volleyball Champions for the year 2015-2016.





## OOREDOO CONCLUDES 'HALA FEBRAYER 2016' ART AND SPORT COMPETITIONS

Ooredoo Kuwait, a member of the international Ooredoo Group, today announced the successful conclusion of the Hala Febrayer Graffiti competition entitled 'For the Love of Kuwait' and the family marathon, which were held in celebration of the National and Liberation days.

The 'Graffiti for the Love of Kuwait' competition was held on Friday and Saturday, the 12th and 13th of

February, where participants expressed their love for their beloved country by drawing on the walls of a specialized area in Souq Sharq. Ooredoo presented the participants with a prize for the best work of art.

In addition, the Annual Marathon was held on the 13th of February, in collaboration with 'Rijeemy' Center. Thousands of individuals from different ages and backgrounds participated in the marathon, and activities in the

arena were held all day.

Commenting on these activities, Mijbil Alayoub, Director of Corporate Communications at Ooredoo Kuwait said: "We are very pleased to be part of these events, which witnessed a great crowd of art and sport fans from all across Kuwait. We look forward to taking part in other events yet to come, as part of the Hala Febrayer Festival 2016 program with Ooredoo".

Ooredoo earlier announced their sponsorship for Hala Febrayer 2016, which included several events such as musical concerts, poetry recitals, cultural lectures and street parades. This sponsorship stems from Ooredoo's strong belief in the partnership between the private and public sectors, especially when it comes to public celebrations and events that unite all the people of Kuwait, from different backgrounds.



**ANIMAL PLANET HD**

- 00:50 Gator Boys
- 01:45 Gator Boys
- 02:40 Bahama Blue
- 03:35 Wildest Latin America
- 04:25 North America
- 05:15 Wildest Middle East
- 06:02 Wildest Islands
- 06:49 The Primeval Forest Of Belovezhskaya Pushcha
- 07:36 Swamp Brothers
- 08:00 Swamp Brothers
- 08:25 Treehouse Masters
- 09:15 Big Fish Man
- 10:10 Treehouse Masters
- 11:05 Tanked
- 12:00 Bad Dog
- 12:55 Bondi Vet
- 13:50 Big Fish Man
- 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 Treetop Cat Rescue
- 19:50 Treetop Cat Rescue
- 20:15 Tanked
- 21:10 Roaring With Pride
- 22:05 Treehouse Masters
- 23:00 Treetop Cat Rescue
- 23:30 Treetop Cat Rescue
- 23:55 Gator Boys

**Discovery CHANNEL HD**

- 00:20 Fast N' Loud
- 01:10 Incredible Engineering
- Blunders: Fixed
- 02:00 Incredible Engineering
- Blunders: Fixed
- 02:50 Wheeler Dealers: Top 5
- 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
- 09:20 Auction Hunters: Pawn Shop Edition
- 09:45 How It's Made: Dream Cars
- 10:10 How Do They Do It?
- 10:35 Fast N' Loud
- 11:25 Street Outlaws
- 12:15 Street Outlaws
- 13:05 Storage Hunters
- 13:30 The Liquidator
- 13:55 Auction Hunters: Pawn Shop Edition
- 14:20 Flying Wild Alaska
- 15:10 Highway To Sell
- 16:00 Fast N' Loud
- 16:50 How It's Made: Dream Cars
- 17:15 How Do They Do It?
- 17:40 Gold Rush
- 18:30 Gold Divers
- 19:20 Ben Earl: Trick Artist
- 20:10 The Liquidator
- 20:35 Auction Hunters: Pawn Shop Edition
- 21:00 Gold Rush
- 21:50 Gold Divers
- 22:40 Pacific Warriors
- 23:30 Highway To Sell

**Discovery SCIENCE**

- 00:35 Space Pioneer
- 02:55 How The Universe Works
- 03:42 Food Factory
- 07:37 How Do They Do It?
- 08:00 How Do They Do It?
- 08:23 Weird Or What?
- 09:08 Mythbusters
- 09:53 Prototype This
- 10:38 How It's Made
- 11:00 How It's Made
- 11:23 Alien Mysteries
- 12:08 Space Pioneer
- 12:53 Prototype This
- 13:38 Weird Or What?
- 14:23 How It's Made
- 14:46 How It's Made
- 15:10 Mythbusters
- 15:57 Alien Mysteries
- 16:44 Space Pioneer
- 17:31 Prototype This
- 18:18 Mythbusters
- 19:05 Weird Or What?
- 19:50 Strangest Weather On Earth
- 20:40 Space Pioneer
- 21:25 Fire In The Sky: A Daily Planet Special
- 22:15 Meteorite Men
- 23:00 Strangest Weather On Earth
- 23:45 Space Pioneer

**ID. INVESTIGATION DISCOVERY**

- 00:40 Deadly Affairs
- 01:30 Deadly Devotion
- 02:20 Serial Killers
- 03:10 House Of Horrors: Kidnapped
- 03:35 House Of Horrors: Kidnapped
- 04:00 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
- 04:45 Deadly Affairs
- 05:30 Deadly Devotion
- 06:20 The Will
- 08:00 Dr. G. Medical Examiner
- 08:50 On The Case With Paula Zahn
- 09:40 Fatal Encounters
- 10:30 Murder Shift
- 11:20 Deadly Affairs
- 12:10 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
- 13:00 The Will
- 13:50 I Almost Got Away With It
- 14:40 California Investigator
- 15:05 Dr. G. Medical Examiner
- 15:55 Fatal Encounters
- 16:45 On The Case With Paula Zahn
- 17:35 Murder Shift
- 18:25 I Almost Got Away With It
- 19:15 The Will
- 20:05 Deadly Affairs
- 20:55 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
- 21:45 California Investigator
- 22:10 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
- 23:00 House Of Horrors: Kidnapped
- 23:25 House Of Horrors: Kidnapped

**Disney CHANNELS**

- 00:00 Violetta
- 00:45 The Hive
- 00:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 01:40 Hank Zipzer
- 02:05 Binny And The Ghost
- 02:30 Violetta
- 03:15 The Hive
- 03:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 03:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch

- 04:10 Hank Zipzer
- 04:35 Binny And The Ghost
- 05:00 Violetta
- 05:45 The Hive
- 05:50 Mouk
- 06:00 Lolirock
- 06:25 Sofia The First
- 06:50 Gravity Falls
- 07:15 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
- 07:40 Jessie
- 08:05 Shake It Up
- 08:55 That's So Raven
- 09:20 That's So Raven
- 09:45 Austin & Ally
- 10:35 A.N.T. Farm
- 11:25 Jessie
- 11:50 Jessie
- 12:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
- 12:45 Fish Hooks
- 13:10 Good Luck Charlie
- 13:35 I Didn't Do It
- 14:00 Dog With A Blog
- 14:30 H2O: Just Add Water
- 14:55 Girl Meets World
- 15:20 Jessie
- 15:45 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
- 16:10 Violetta
- 17:00 The Next Step
- 17:25 Liv And Maddie
- 17:50 Jessie
- 18:15 Austin & Ally
- 18:40 I Didn't Do It
- 19:05 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
- 19:30 Violetta
- 20:20 The Next Step
- 20:45 Good Luck Charlie
- 21:35 H2O: Just Add Water
- 22:00 Binny And The Ghost
- 22:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 22:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 23:10 Hank Zipzer
- 23:35 Binny And The Ghost

**EHD**

- 00:00 The Grace Helbig Show
- 00:30 WAGs
- 01:25 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
- 02:20 E! News
- 03:15 Stewarts And Hamiltons
- 04:10 E! Entertainment Special
- 06:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 06:55 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 07:50 Style Star
- 08:20 E! News
- 09:15 Giuliana & Bill
- 10:15 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
- 11:10 E! News
- 12:05 E! News
- 13:05 Dash Dolls
- 14:05 Hollywood Cycle
- 15:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 16:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 17:00 Stewarts And Hamiltons
- 18:00 E! News
- 19:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 20:00 Botched
- 21:00 Hollywood Medium
- 22:00 WAGs
- 23:00 Sex With Brody
- 23:30 Fashion Bloggers

**food network**

- 00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 01:00 Rev Run's Sunday Suppers
- 02:00 All Star Academy
- 03:00 Ching's Amazing Asia
- 04:00 The Freshman Class
- 05:00 Chopped
- 06:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 07:00 Man Fire Food
- 08:00 Chopped
- 09:00 Grandma's Secret Cookbook Special
- 09:30 Grandma's Secret Cookbook Special
- 10:00 The Kitchen
- 11:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
- 12:00 Chopped
- 13:00 Guy's Big Bite
- 13:30 Guy's Big Bite
- 14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 15:00 Man Fire Food
- 15:30 Man Fire Food
- 16:00 Chopped
- 17:00 The Kitchen
- 18:00 The Pioneer Woman
- 18:30 The Pioneer Woman
- 19:00 Chopped
- 20:00 Iron Chef America
- 21:00 Staten Island Cakes
- 22:00 Mystery Diners
- 23:00 Mystery Diners
- 23:00 Save My Bakery

- itv CHOICE**
- 00:10 The Chase
  - 01:05 Emmerdale
  - 02:00 Coronation Street
  - 02:30 Murdoch Mysteries
  - 03:25 Seven Days With Añi
  - 04:20 The Jonathan Ross Show
  - 05:15 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
  - 06:10 Who's Doing The Dishes?
  - 07:05 Tales From Northumberland With Robson Green
  - 07:30 Seven Days With Añi
  - 08:25 The Jonathan Ross Show
  - 09:20 Murdoch Mysteries
  - 10:15 The Chase
  - 11:10 Tales From Northumberland With Robson Green
  - 11:35 Blue Go Mad In Ibiza
  - 12:30 Who's Doing The Dishes?
  - 13:25 Emmerdale
  - 13:50 Tales From Northumberland With Robson Green
  - 14:20 Coronation Street
  - 14:45 Murdoch Mysteries
  - 15:35 Pick Me!

**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD**

- 00:10 Big Fish, Texas
- 01:00 Inside The Mega Twister
- 02:00 A World Unseen
- 02:55 Lawless Island
- 03:50 Big Fish, Texas
- 04:45 World's Toughest Fixes
- 05:40 Prospectors
- 06:05 Prospectors
- 06:35 Drain The Titanic
- 07:30 How To Win At Everything
- 08:25 80s: The Decade That Made Us
- 09:20 World's Toughest Fixes
- 10:15 Lawless Island
- 11:10 Survive The Tribe
- 12:05 Taiwan: Island Of Fish
- 13:00 80s: The Decade That Made Us
- 14:00 How To Win At Everything
- 15:00 Inside The Mega Twister
- 16:00 Lawless Island
- 17:00 Primal Survivor
- 18:00 Rebuilding Taiwan: Beyond The Storm
- 19:00 Inside The Mega Twister
- 20:00 Lawless Island
- 20:50 Primal Survivor
- 21:40 Rebuilding Taiwan: Beyond The Storm
- 22:30 Inside The Mega Twister
- 23:20 Prospectors

**OSN FIRST HD COMEDY**

- 04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
- 06:30 Community
- 07:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers
- 08:30 Cristela
- 09:00 Sunshine On Leith
- 11:00 Manny
- 13:00 Se Puder... Dirjal!
- 15:00 Upside Down
- 17:45 When A Man Loves A Woman
- 21:00 Little White Lies
- 23:30 Mary Shelley's Frankenstein

**OSN FIRST HD**

- 00:00 Chicago Fire
- 01:00 Scandal
- 02:00 How To Get Away With Murder
- 03:00 The Last Kingdom
- 04:00 Bones
- 05:00 Good Morning America
- 06:00 Suits
- 07:00 Backstrom
- 08:00 The Player
- 09:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 10:00 Bones
- 11:00 Backstrom
- 12:00 Coronation Street
- 13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 14:00 Suits
- 15:00 Live Good Morning America
- 17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 18:00 The Player
- 19:00 Scandal
- 20:00 How To Get Away With Murder
- 21:00 Quantico
- 22:00 Rosewood
- 23:00 Allegiance

**OSN MOVIES ACTION**

- 00:15 Kite
- 02:00 Contraband
- 04:00 The Marine 4: The Moving Target
- 06:00 Age Of Dinosaurs
- 08:00 Abandoned Mine
- 09:45 Days Of Thunder

- 11:45 The Perfect Storm
- 14:00 Android Cop
- 15:45 Snow White And The Huntsman
- 18:00 Biker Boyz
- 20:00 Days Of Thunder
- 22:00 The Scorpion King 4: Quest For Power

**OSN MOVIES HD ACTION**

- 00:00 Contraband-18
- 02:00 The Marine 4: The Moving Target-PG15
- 04:00 Age Of Dinosaurs-PG15
- 06:00 Abandoned Mine-PG15
- 07:45 Days Of Thunder-PG15
- 09:45 The Perfect Storm-PG15
- 12:00 Android Cop-PG15
- 13:45 Snow White And The Huntsman-PG15
- 16:00 Biker Boyz-PG15
- 18:00 Days Of Thunder-PG15
- 20:00 The Scorpion King 4: Quest For Power-PG15
- 22:00 Lone Survivor-PG15

**OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY**

- 00:00 Cadillac Man
- 02:00 Cas & Dylan
- 04:00 Planet 51
- 06:00 Orange County
- 08:00 Roommates
- 10:00 Planet 51
- 12:00 Cas & Dylan
- 14:00 Beethoven's Treasure Tail
- 16:00 Roommates
- 18:00 Date Night
- 20:00 Laggies
- 22:00 Grudge Match

**OSN MOVIES DRAMA**

- 01:15 God Help The Girl-PG15
- 03:15 A Valentine's Date-PG15
- 05:00 Romeo & Juliet-PG15
- 07:00 10 Years-PG15
- 09:00 The Railway Man-PG15
- 11:00 Romeo & Juliet-PG15
- 13:00 Barefoot-PG15
- 14:45 Testament Of Youth-PG15
- 17:00 The Railway Man-PG15
- 19:00 Very Good Girls-PG15
- 21:00 Lords Of London-PG15
- 23:00 The Devil's Violinist-18

**OSN MOVIES HD FESTIVAL**

- 00:45 Evita
- 03:00 The Immigrant
- 05:00 Manny
- 06:30 Far And Away
- 09:00 Sunshine On Leith
- 11:00 Manny
- 13:00 Se Puder... Dirjal!
- 15:00 Upside Down
- 17:45 When A Man Loves A Woman
- 21:00 Little White Lies
- 23:30 Mary Shelley's Frankenstein

**OSN MOVIES HD**

- 01:00 Animal-PG15
- 03:00 Not Safe For Work-PG15
- 05:00 The Song-PG15
- 07:00 The BoxTrolls-PG
- 09:00 Blended-PG15
- 11:00 Veronica Mars-PG15
- 12:45 Closed Circuit-PG15
- 14:30 Non-Stop-PG15
- 16:15 Godzilla-PG15
- 18:30 The Judge-PG15
- 21:00 Don Peyote-PG15
- 23:00 The November Man-18

**OSN MOVIES HD KIDS**

- 01:00 True Story Of Puss'n Boots
- 01:35 Mamma Moo And Crow
- 04:30 Barnse And The City Of Thieves
- 06:00 Kikoriki: Team Invincible
- 08:00 Memory Loss
- 10:00 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure
- 11:30 Christmas Is Here Again
- 13:00 Mamma Moo And Crow
- 14:30 Egon And Donci
- 16:00 Daddy I'm A Zombie
- 18:00 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure
- 20:00 Blue Elephant 2
- 22:00 Egon And Donci
- 23:30 Daddy I'm A Zombie

**OSN MOVIES HD PREMIERE**

- 00:30 Annabelle-PG15

**CLOSED CIRCUIT ON OSN MOVIES HD**

- |  |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>02:30 Miss Julie-PG15</li> <li>05:00 For Better Or For Worse-PG15</li> <li>06:30 Bears-PG</li> <li>08:00 Searching For Sugar Man-PG15</li> <li>10:00 Northpole-PG</li> <li>12:00 Le Weekend-PG15</li> <li>14:00 Until She Came Along-PG15</li> <li>16:00 Searching For Sugar Man-PG15</li> <li>18:00 Dolphin Tale 2-PG</li> <li>20:00 Kon-Tiki-PG15</li> <li>22:00 Reds-PG15</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15:10 Jon &amp; Kate Plus 8</li> <li>15:35 Little People, Big World</li> <li>16:00 Hoarding: Buried Alive</li> <li>16:50 Sister Wives</li> <li>17:15 Sister Wives</li> <li>17:40 Cake Boss</li> <li>18:05 Say Yes To The Dress</li> <li>18:30 Driving Me Crazy</li> <li>19:20 The Autistic Gardener</li> <li>20:10 Catwalk 30+</li> <li>21:00 First Heartbeat</li> <li>21:50 Love, Lust Or Run</li> <li>22:15 Love, Lust Or Run</li> <li>22:40 Long Island Medium</li> <li>23:05 90 Days To Wed</li> <li>23:55 First Heartbeat</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>02:00 The Haunting Of</li> <li>03:00 Crimes That Shook Britain</li> <li>04:00 Killers</li> <li>05:00 Killer Kids</li> <li>06:00 The Haunting Of...</li> <li>07:00 Fred Dineage: Murder Casebook</li> <li>08:00 The FBI Files</li> <li>09:00 Private Crimes</li> <li>09:30 Frenemies</li> <li>10:00 Crimes That Shook Britain</li> <li>11:00 Nightmare In Suburbia</li> <li>12:00 Beyond Scared Straight</li> <li>13:00 Fatal Vows</li> <li>14:00 Crime Stories</li> <li>15:00 Crimes That Shook Britain</li> <li>16:00 Private Crimes</li> <li>16:30 Frenemies</li> <li>17:00 The FBI Files</li> <li>18:00 Beyond Scared Straight</li> <li>19:00 Crime Stories</li> <li>20:00 Nightmare In Suburbia</li> <li>21:00 Crimes That Shook Britain</li> <li>22:00 Private Crimes</li> <li>23:00 Frenemies</li> <li>23:00 Killer Kids Specials</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>03:30 Loopedido</li> <li>03:45 Art Attack</li> <li>04:10 Henry Hugglemonster</li> <li>04:20 Calimero</li> <li>04:35 Zou</li> <li>04:45 Loopedido</li> <li>05:00 Art Attack</li> <li>05:25 Henry Hugglemonster</li> <li>05:35 Calimero</li> <li>05:50 Zou</li> <li>06:00 Loopedido</li> <li>06:15 Art Attack</li> <li>06:35 Henry Hugglemonster</li> <li>06:50 Calimero</li> <li>07:00 Zou</li> <li>07:20 Loopedido</li> <li>07:35 Art Attack</li> <li>08:00 Calimero</li> <li>08:10 Zou</li> <li>08:25 Loopedido</li> <li>08:40 Miles From Tomorrow</li> <li>09:05 Sofia The First</li> <li>09:30 Art Attack</li> <li>09:45 Jake And The Never Land Pirates</li> <li>10:10 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse</li> <li>10:35 Doc McStuffins</li> <li>11:00 Sofia The First</li> <li>11:30 Miles From Tomorrow</li> <li>12:00 Special Agent Oso</li> <li>12:40 The Hive</li> <li>12:50 Handy Manny</li> <li>13:15 Jungle Junction</li> <li>13:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse</li> <li>14:00 Sofia The First</li> <li>14:25 Goldie &amp; Bear</li> <li>14:50 Doc McStuffins</li> <li>15:15 Zou</li> <li>15:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse</li> <li>15:55 Loopedido</li> <li>16:10 Miles From Tomorrow</li> <li>16:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates</li> <li>17:00 Sofia The First</li> <li>17:25 Jungle Cubs</li> <li>17:50 Aladdin</li> <li>18:15 Gummi Bears</li> <li>18:40 Goldie &amp; Bear</li> <li>19:05 Miles From Tomorrow</li> <li>19:30 Sofia The First</li> <li>19:55 Doc McStuffins</li> <li>20:10 Jake And The Never Land Pirates</li> <li>20:35 Miles From Tomorrow</li> <li>21:00 Goldie &amp; Bear</li> <li>21:30 Sofia The First</li> <li>22:00 Jungle Cubs</li> <li>22:25 Aladdin</li> <li>22:50 Gummi Bears</li> <li>23:20 Lilo And Stitch</li> <li>23:45 Cars Toons</li> <li>23:50 Zou</li> </ul> |
|--|--|---|--|

**AGE OF DINOSAURS ON OSN MOVIES ACTION**

- 00:00 Programmes Start At 7:00am KSA
- 07:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 07:25 K. C. Undercover
- 07:50 Supa Strikas
- 08:15 Annedroids
- 08:40 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 09:10 Kirby Buckets
- 09:35 Wander Over Yonder
- 10:00 Rocket Monkeys
- 10:25 Ultimate Spider-Man
- 10:50 Boyster
- 11:20 Boyster
- 11:45 Pair Of Kings
- 12:10 Pair Of Kings
- 12:35 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 13:00 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 13:30 Phineas And Ferb
- 13:55 Phineas And Ferb
- 14:20 Kickin' It
- 14:45 Kickin' It
- 15:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 15:15 Rocket Monkeys
- 15:40 Wander Over Yonder
- 16:05 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 16:30 Kirby Buckets
- 16:55 Gamers Guide To Pretty Much Everything
- 17:25 K. C. Undercover
- 17:50 Supa Strikas
- 18:15 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 18:40 Mighty Med
- 19:10 Annedroids





CROSSWORD 1169



ACROSS

1. A lyric poem with complex stanza forms.
4. Generally approved or compelling recognition.
12. Electronic equipment that provides visual images of varying electrical quantities.
15. A form of entertainment that enacts a story by a sequence of images giving the illusion of continuous movement.
16. A pipe with a long flexible tube connected to a container where the smoke is cooled by passing through water.
17. An unabridged dictionary constructed on historical principles.
18. The sense organ for hearing and equilibrium.
19. Preceding all others in time or being as first made or performed.
20. Having undesirable or negative qualities.
21. Primitive evergreen mosslike plant with spores in club-shaped strobiles.
23. (computer science) A unit for measuring computing power.
25. An artificial source of visible illumination.
27. Of or relating to o occurring in a tube such as e.g. the fallopian tube or eustachian tube.
33. Not having rhyme.
36. Remove completely from recognition or memory.
39. A mountainous landlocked communist state in southeastern Asia.
40. The mission in San Antonio where in 1836 Mexican forces under Santa Anna besieged and massacred American rebels who were fighting to make Texas independent of Mexico.
43. Yellow-fever mosquitos.
44. One of the most common of the five major classes of immunoglobulins.
46. Devoid or partially devoid of light or brightness.
48. (the feminine of raja) A Hindu princess or the wife of a raja.
49. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
51. A former agency (from 1946 to 1974) that was responsible for research into atomic energy and its peacetime uses in the United States.
53. The force of workers available.
54. A public promotion of some product or service.
55. Aromatic bulb used as seasoning.
61. A Spanish female Gypsy.
65. (Greek mythology) Goddess of the earth and mother of Cronus and the Titans in ancient mythology.
67. Lower in esteem.
68. Sweet pulpy tropical fruit with thick scaly rind and shiny black seeds.
69. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
70. A clique that seeks power usually through intrigue.
72. Marine fishes with a flattened elongated body and a sucking disk on the head for attaching to large fish or moving objects.
73. Footwear usually with wooden soles.
75. Make one's home or live in.
77. United States composer noted for his innovative use of polytonality (1874-1954).
78. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls.
79. An angular shape made by folding.
80. Kamarupan languages spoken in northeastern India and western Burma.

- DOWN
1. An organization of countries formed in 1961
  2. The face of a timepiece.
  3. A very light brown.
  4. Deviation from the normal or common order or form or rule.
  5. A glancing rebound.
  6. (of something seen or heard) Clearly defined.
  7. Oval reproductive body of a fowl (especially a hen) used as food.
  8. The 21st letter of the Greek alphabet.
  9. A silvery malleable metallic element that resists corrosion.
  10. A member of an ancient people living east of Babylonia as early as 4000 BC.
  11. A style of glazed earthenware.
  12. Common Business Oriented Language.
  13. Gather, as of as crops.
  14. The probability of a specified outcome.
  22. (informal usage) A general feeling of boredom and dissatisfaction.
  24. United States economist who proposed the Laffer curve (born in 1940).
  26. Denoting a quantity consisting of six items or units.
  28. Not subjected to an aging process.
  29. Having great (or a certain) extent from one side to the other.
  30. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
  31. The place where some action occurs.
  32. Any of a class of solid or semisolid viscous substances obtained either as exudations from certain plants or prepared by polymerization of simple molecules.
  34. A mountain in the Himalayas in Nepal (27,790 feet high).
  35. Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).
  37. The syllable naming the fourth (subdominant) note of the diatonic scale in solmization.
  38. (Old Testament) In Judeo-Christian mythology.
  41. Informal terms for a mother.
  42. A port city in northwestern Algeria and the country's 2nd largest city.
  45. Harsh or corrosive in tone.
  47. (British) A dish of rice and hard-boiled eggs and cooked flaked fish.
  50. The United Nations agency concerned with atomic energy.
  52. A user interface in which you type commands instead of choosing them from a menu or selecting an icon.
  56. Corrupt morally or by intemperance or sensuality.
  57. A port city in southwestern Turkey on the Gulf of Antalya.
  58. A soft cotton or worsted fabric with an open mesh.
  59. A long noosed rope used to catch animals.
  60. A heavy wooden pole (such as the trunk of a young fir) tossed as a test of strength (in the Highlands of Scotland).
  62. A statistical method for making simultaneous comparisons between two or more means.
  63. A constitutional monarchy in northern Europe on the western side of the Scandinavian Peninsula.
  64. Squash bugs.
  66. In bed.
  71. Electrical conduction through a gas in an applied electric field.
  74. Before noon.
  76. An honorary degree in science.

Yesterday's Solution

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

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Indulge your curiosity because today your imagination and creativity are at their best. New ideas are easily understood and bring interesting and exciting rewards. Make the most of this exciting day. Someone is watching how you handle things and may mimic your behavior. It is nice to know that we have the power to influence another person's life. You are doing much better this year with your budgeting and as you look over your financial situation, you can see improvements. Continue to budget, even after you get those raises and realize a better income. Ideas and technologies that change the way people live may be much of your conversation with friends and family today. Take time for that special loved one tonight.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Your productive mind is clear as you separate the most complex concepts into their essential parts for easier understanding. Your objectivity should make it possible for you to talk with others about subjects that may have been too difficult before now: science, politics. This is also a good time to think about a change in career. Plans made today should work out, perhaps much farther down the road. Everything points to your taking the initiative on a humanitarian cause. You could feel great support from those around you. This afternoon is the perfect time to look at the real-estate development in your area. You may even be able to find a house that you can afford. You are inventive and original-you will gain ideas on how to improve your surroundings.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Your imagination soars! Awareness and insight into others' minds is especially acute. Escape the stresses from this last week with some relaxing activity. Enjoy a good fantasy or romance novel. Do not worry-reality always returns, but today you need a rest. This evening you will have fun finding new ways to make your dreams come true. A display in a store may allow a little hands-on play. Some very new high-tech equipment may give you ideas about some rather very simple methods that grandpa used for communicating. Perhaps this would be a good time to think and study-you have a real appreciation for ideas and thoughts. You may find yourself enjoying a long conversation, writing a letter, or making a special phone call this evening.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

There is a feeling that anything is possible if you have a plan. There is optimism, faith and a tendency to really concentrate on becoming focused and reaching future goals. To you dreamers of impossible dreams, you just might make them come true today. Do not let your high spirits get too far ahead of the discipline and attention to detail that is necessary to make any dream a reality. You are learning to make the most of your personal talents and abilities, working within your limitations instead of feeling hemmed in by them. This could mean anything from purchasing a product to painting a picture. Good luck! Do not hesitate to remove yourself from the house later today-perhaps stepping outside to walk. Perhaps a movie will suit your fancy.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

The currents of love-giving and receiving-even the desire to nurture-flow easily today. For the unattached, this could spill over to the desire of forming a new relationship-even if it is an unwise decision to do so. Emotions are high. Save the intense discussions for another time and just go with the flow. Coming to grips with the past and getting in touch with the mystical and the spiritual are things that give a sense of satisfaction and completeness. Healing comes from destroying the roots of a disturbance-letting go. You and your loved ones or family may enjoy board games, bird-watching, cooking, etc. If you are in your own surroundings by yourself this evening, you may decide it is a good time to relax, goof off and maybe enjoy a good movie.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

The ways you take care of your health and other obligations are important keys to your positive attitude just now. There is a need for focus and coordination of time. Set up systems and schedules and stick to them! You are thoughtful of the needs and desires of others, and they notice that you put them before yourself. Whatever feelings underscore your life, will be felt more strongly now. If you are going through a particularly trying time, you could have low energy levels. If you are going through some particularly rewarding and loving type of experiences, they will deepen and continue. You should find a wonderful burst of energy that will move you into a most positive place this whole month long-pass it around!



Libra (September 23-October 22)

This is a great day. Finally a day off to enjoy the people you love best. Friendships are a source of great pleasure and joy, in turn, should be quite popular today. This harmony can be most beneficial. Today you may become involved with teaching, student teaching or tutoring. Helping young people seems to be where your energies are just now. Your future plans and goals are important and probably need sharing with a loved one. This afternoon is a good time to sit down with a loved one and discuss what each of you need from the other. Marriage and other close relationships give rise to great expectations, as a new cycle gets underway. This is the time to enjoy and appreciate your ties to others.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Today you would rather switch than fight. You are a pushover just now. If there is some issue brewing where you really should stand up for your rights, you would be wise to save it for another day. Socializing and love interests are favored now. Watch the calories and avoid the dessert table. You could feel great support from those around you for whatever you want to accomplish. The home and family scene is likely to be in something of a state of change or confusion just now-this may mean moving or an addition to the family, etc. High-tech equipment disturbs the domestic environment later this evening. This could mean a time period of reading instructions or occupying more time than necessary for the learning process.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

A fascination with the mysterious may be reawakened today. Going beyond just finding a good novel or movie, you may be drawn toward the serious study of some occult subject. Keep an open mind now and try not to become too intense. A strong force is present this month of February that will encourage you to look for ways in which you can improve your monetary position. Changes in both you and your environment can help you to better appreciate your situation in life. This may mean some classes to learn better problem solving skills or some future environmental change such as plans for an upcoming vacation. You have lots to look forward to this month and your enthusiasm rubs off on others.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Your passion is high! You feel vital; you feel good; you feel in harmony with yourself, the entire world, and everybody in it. Others can feel this, so they in turn are drawn to you, making this a successful day for any kind of group endeavor. Perhaps some sort of group sports can be enjoyed in the early afternoon. Best of all, relations with the opposite sex are at a peak. This is a super day to go on a date, be married or be in love! Close relationships take on a more emotional depth. Feeling cared for and needed is comfortable and that is what you work to achieve these days. This evening, you and your loved one will have time to compare dreams and goals. For example: if you could travel, where would you go what if you won the lottery and so forth.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You may feel that you are giving more than you are receiving in a love relationship. Remember that in some countries there are gifts to lovers as well as those who celebrate a birthday. This does make life a little interesting when there are two celebrations but you will enjoy the day more than you thought you would if you buy a special gift for your beloved that is sweet. Creative or artistic interests are stimulated this afternoon. Your attention may move to an activity that involves a large group-perhaps a party! There are fun opportunities to be with old friends and to enjoy talking about old times. All of this camaraderie brings about pleasant feelings. Today is a time of celebrations, soft lights and romantic reveries.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Believe it-you are doing all the right things. Now, however, is the time to let up on you-take it easy-do nice things for yourself. Relaxing may seem a difficult thing to do, but in order to find a balance in your life, some of the work you do can be done by others for a bit. You strive for a well-ordered life and your high standard is an example for many to follow. Take care of yourself the way you take care of others-and ... Laugh a little! You will begin to notice that others are in a better mood this afternoon-you will probably reveal your good-natured spirits. Little children or small animals bring much laughter, maybe even cheerful tears. If you like, have some chamomile tea before bed-it could help you to relax.

WORD SEARCH

Insects

Find and circle all of the insects that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an additional insect.

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

- |             |          |            |
|-------------|----------|------------|
| ANTS        | EARWIG   | MOSQUITO   |
| APHID       | FIREFLY  | MOTH       |
| BEDBUG      | FLEA     | SILKWORM   |
| BETLE       | FLIES    | SILVERFISH |
| BUMBLEBEE   | HORNET   | TERMITE    |
| BUTTERFLY   | LACEWING | THRIP      |
| CATERPILLAR | LADYBUG  | TICKS      |
| CICADA      | LICE     | WASP       |
| COCKROACH   | LOCUST   | WEEVIL     |
| CRICKET     | MAYFLY   | WORMS      |
| DRAGONFLY   |          |            |

Yesterday Solution

SCUBA Diving

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

The hidden message is: SELF CONTAINED UNDERWATER BREATHING APPARATUS

Daily SuDoku

			4		8		9	7															
	3																						
			9																				
						3	7																
					5	4		8	1														
			8				5	6															
1	9									5													
				</																			

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	00660
Argentina	0054	Maldives	00960
Armenia	00374	Mali	00223
Australia	0061	Malta	00356
Austria	0043	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Niger	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	Sao Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	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

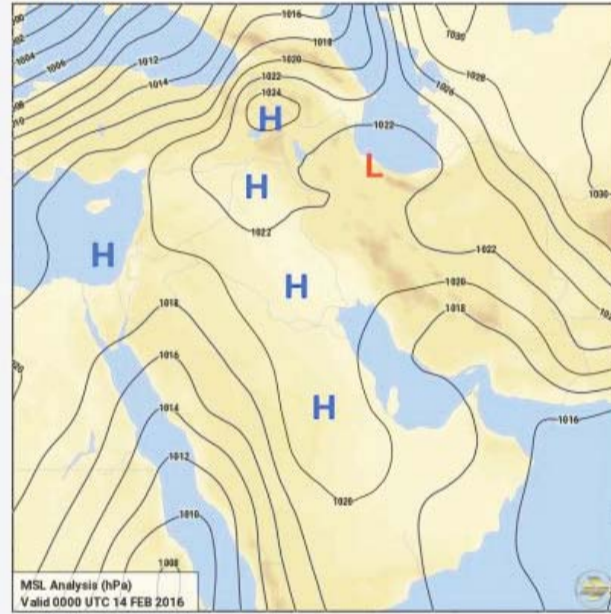
**Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours**

Issued 14/02/2016-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

**Max Temperature 24 °C**

By Day : Mostly sunny with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 28 km/h  
By Night : Cold with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 26 km/h

**SFC. CHART**



**Four-Day Forecast**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Expected Weather				
Min Temp °C	08	09	10	10
Max Temp °C	25	25	25	26
Wind Direction	north westerly	north westerly	north westerly to light variable	north westerly to light variable
Wind Speed km/h	08 - 28	15 - 38	06 - 28	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	15	22
KUWAIT AIRPORT	08	24
ABDALY	08	22
BUBYAN	09	22
JAHRA	11	23
FAILAKA ISLAND	11	22
SALMIYAH	15	20
AHMADI	14	21
JAL ALIYAH	09	22
QAROH ISLAND	16	18
UMM AL-MARADEM	16	20
NUWAISIB	10	23
WAFRA	09	23
MANAGISH	09	21
SALMY	09	21
MUTRIBA	09	23

**Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport**

Max Temp (°C)	23
Min Temp (°C)	07
Max Rel Hum (%)	70
Min Rel Hum (%)	28
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	50 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	18:54



**PRIVATE CLINICS**

Ophthalmologists	
Dr. Abidallah 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	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daory	25731988
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426
General Practitioners	
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaizeem	22636920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abidallah Al-Rfae	25333501
Urologists	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abidallah 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 Maarouf	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gujare	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282
Dermatology	
Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University	23845955
Dentists	
Dr. Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abidallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abidallah 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. Mohammed Akkad	24555050 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

Psychologists /Psychotherapists	Soor Center Tel: 2290-1677 Fax: 2290 1688	info@soorcenter.com www.soorcenter.com	Kaizen center 25716707	Noor Clinic 23845955	William Schuilenberg, RPC 2290-1677 Zaina Al Zabin, M.Sc. 2290-1677
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# Bratislava: The gateway between East and West

It is no wonder that leisure-seekers and business travelers turn to flydubai, the ambitious carrier that has unlocked new gateways between East and West with the launch of new fascinating destinations such as Bratislava, the indelible capital of Slovakia. Since its inception a few years ago, flydubai has pioneered in the aviation industry and has become a leading player in connecting cities, which has, in turn, contributed to enabling many customers to discover new countries and stunning horizons. Since flydubai launched destination Bratislava in December 2014, throngs of culture tourists have flocked to this remarkable city that's nestled in the heart of Europe to discover its natural beauty and graceful origins. Bratislava... Beethoven's retreat and rich with history.

Quite literally, Bratislava lies in the virtual midpoint mark in Europe, acting as a gateway between east and west for awe-inspired heritage seekers who may choose to jet off farther afield after taking in Bratislava's marvels and Slovakia's colossal legacy. Bratislava is the only capital city in the world that holds claim to bordering two countries, Austria to the west and Hungary to the south. A remarkable city in its own right, Vienna happens to be a mere 50 kilometers away from Bratislava. It was widely known that the celebrated composer Beethoven strolled into Bratislava once in a while

for a good dose of relaxation following his concert performances. But let this not misguide the nimble traveler, a country that boasts more than 6000 discovered caves to date, over 180 castles and 425 chateaus does very little to appease today's weary jet-setter whose sole intent is to prod about town warming restaurant chairs and park benches.

### Stunning landscapes and therapeutic springs

There is simply too much to do in this extraordinarily invigorating destination, but travelers can rest at ease...



Slovakia and Bratislava are also renowned for the 21 thermal spring resorts that are actively patronized for their leisurely and therapeutic splendors. The country has incredible sources of mineral water and healing



springs, which originate from within and round the vast national parks and protected landscapes that make up Slovakia's natural backdrop. It is believed that upward of 1300 natural thermal springs exist within Slovakia, and they are often frequented for their soothing aftereffects.

### Bratislava with flydubai... an unmatched traveling experience!

Appreciating its Kuwaiti customers' needs and their insatiable appetites for discovering exciting, picturesque destinations, flydubai now offers affordable fares for both leisure trekkers and business executives journeying into Bratislava. Flights take place from Dubai International Airport's Terminal 2 three times weekly. Kuwaiti travelers in particular are able to visit Bratislava via Dubai through a standard fare guarantee by catching a flydubai aircraft to Dubai on any of the numerous jour-

neys from Sheikh Saad Al Abdallah Airport. The journey is seamless and requires no luggage handling at the connection port in Dubai.

Business travelers from Kuwait are also hard pressed not to revel in flydubai's exclusive and premiere Business Class Lounge on arrival to Sheikh Saad Al Abdallah Terminal. The lounge offers a host of luxurious amenities and a wide range of meals and refreshments, not to mention the

requisite free WiFi connectivity, a real-time information desk and an assortment of daily periodicals and publications. In addition to these convenient services, passengers will also enjoy countless hours of music, movies and TV shows through the award-winning in-flight entertainment system on flydubai's aircrafts. The company's fleet consists of 49 new Next-Generation Boeing 737-800 aircraft with an average age of around three years.

Business travelers from Kuwait are also hard pressed not to revel in flydubai's exclusive and premiere Business Class Lounge on arrival to Sheikh Saad Al Abdallah Terminal. The lounge offers a host of luxurious amenities and a wide range of meals and refreshments, not to mention the

# Phoenix Essentials: Dining, hikes, art and sunshine



A cactus wren sits atop a flowering saguaro cactus at the Desert Botanical Gardens in Phoenix.

With hundreds of golf courses and 300 days of sunshine a year, it's easy to cast metropolitan Phoenix as a retiree's paradise that leaves everyone else out in the cold. But within the desert beats the heart of an actual urban core that has come into its own. There's an emerging restaurant-and-retail scene along with classic attractions like the view from Camelback Mountain, plus newfound treasures like peeking inside a little-known house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.

### What's new

A house built by Frank Lloyd Wright that dodged the wrecking ball is Phoenix's latest tourist attraction. The David and Gladys Wright House, named for the architect's son and daughter-in-law who lived there, is in the Arcadia neighborhood. There are free public tours daily. The spiral walkway offers a spectacular view of Camelback Mountain. Events on the grounds range from an Easter egg hunt to yoga classes.

Changing Hands Bookstore, about 5 miles (8 kilometers) north of downtown near a light rail stop, opened in May 2014 but already feels like the place where everybody knows your name. Patrons can grab a book with some beer or wine at the store's First Draft Book Bar. Next door, the Southern Rail restaurant, named for its proximity to the light rail and its "low-country" cuisine, serves tasty Southern and Creole-influenced food like red beans and rice and fried chicken.

Another new hub is DeSoto Central Market in downtown. The property, once a vacant brick building and former car dealership, is now a market with food stalls, bar and patio. It's known for happy hour, live music and swing dance nights. Droll-worthy delicacies include fried chicken-skin po'boys at the larder + the delta.

### Classic attractions

The 140-acre (57-hectare) Desert Botanical Garden boasts more than 50,000 plants and five trails that illustrate the role desert plants play in the environment. The latest exhibit incorporates eight light-based installations using colorful fiber optics.

With all the sunshine, take a hike. Two popular summits are the 2,704-foot (852-meter) Camelback Mountain and 2,608-foot (795-meter) Piestewa Peak. Both are north of downtown and offer views of the entire metropolitan Phoenix valley. A less crowded alternative is South Mountain Park 10 miles (17 kilometers) south of downtown, where you'll find ancient petroglyphs. The Heard Museum is known for art and artifacts showcasing Southwestern tribal culture, including Hopi katsina dolls, Navajo textiles and Zuni jewelry.

Frank Lloyd Wright fans may want to



Visitors meander through the Bruce Munro "Water-Towers" Sonoran Light exhibition light-based installation at the Desert Botanical Garden, in Phoenix. — AP photos

drive 30 minutes to tour his winter home and studio in Scottsdale. Galleries at the Musical Instrument Museum in north Phoenix are organized by world regions. Special headphones play music samples when you near the corresponding display. One gallery spotlights instruments and clothes belonging to icons from Elvis Presley to Taylor Swift.

### Tips

Phoenix's roughly 23-mile (37-kilometer) light rail system makes the ideal hop-on-hop-off tour bus with a \$4 all-day pass. Several stops have free park-and-ride areas

too. The tracks run through downtown, the college town of Tempe and the suburb of Mesa. In Tempe, stroll around Tempe Town Lake, popular for jogging, fishing and even dragonboat racing.

Mill Avenue is lined with shops, restaurants and bars. In Mesa, get off at the Main Street/Sycamore stop and walk five minutes to Mekong Plaza. The shopping center is a smorgasbord of authentic Asian cuisine - dim sum, pho or Taiwanese specialties like simmered pig ear. Also available: green Grid Bike Share bicycles all around central Phoenix. Download the app to find and reserve a bike. Rescues of out-of-state visi-

tors who aren't accustomed to the heat are unfortunately not rare. If you're hiking, dress properly, go with a buddy, carry a fully charged cellphone and hydrate (pets too).

Every March, spring training brings 15 Major League Baseball teams to Phoenix suburbs as part of the Cactus League. Because the stadiums are relatively small, fans who arrive early have a good chance of interacting with favorite players.

### Hanging out

Phoenix's artsy Roosevelt Row neighborhood is the best place for quirky people-watching along a seven-block stretch with restaurants, bars, galleries and street art. The first Friday of each month, the neighborhood hosts outdoor musicians, artists and vendors.

For a respite from the desert landscape, the 10-acre (4-hectare) Farm at South Mountain in south Phoenix feels like a country garden party. Onsite eateries include a breakfast-brunch cafe and fine-dining restaurant serving locally-grown produce. You can also grab lunch in a basket and use picnic tables in the farm's pecan tree grove.

Mexican restaurants in Phoenix are like Starbucks: There's practically one on every corner, from gourmet taco houses to casual mom-and-pop joints. Barrio Cafe is a local institution known for its collection of some 300 different tequilas and for dishes made from cochinita pibil (slow roasted pork) flavored with sour orange and a blend of spices. — AP



In this March 20, 2015 file image taken with a fisheye lens, Milwaukee Brewers shortstop Jean Segura signs autographs before a spring training baseball exhibition game against the Arizona Diamondbacks in Phoenix.

## 'Spotlight,' 'The Big Short' scoop Writers Guild wins

'Spotlight' and 'The Big Short' won top prizes at the Writers Guild of America awards Saturday, two weeks ahead of the Oscars, the glittering climax of Hollywood's annual awards season. Josh Singer picked up the trophy for best original screenplay for 'Spotlight,' a drama about sexual abuse in the Catholic church that he co-wrote with director Tom McCarthy.

The film, starring Mark Ruffalo, Michael Keaton and Rachel McAdams, has already landed the top prize at the Screen Actors Guild Awards and is nominated for six statuettes at the Oscars, to be held on February 28. Singer paid tribute to abuse survivor Phil Saviano as he picked up the trophy at the Los Angeles ceremony hosted by American stand-up comedian, writer and actor Patton Oswald. "He'd been trying to tell his story for a very long time and I think that story is finally now being told," Singer said.

'Spotlight,' beat out 'Bridge of Spies,' 'Sicario,' 'Straight Outta Compton' and 'Trainwreck,' written by its star Amy Schumer. Charles Randolph and Adam McKay scooped the prize for best adapted screenplay for their work transforming the book 'The Big Short' into the film of the same name. The movie, set on the eve of the 2008 global financial meltdown, bested highly-touted rivals, including 'Carol,' 'The Martian,' 'Steve Jobs' and 'Trumbo.' It is nominated for five Oscars, including nods for best director for McKay and best supporting actor for Christian Bale.

"Millions of people lost their homes, millions of people lost their savings, and that's really what this was about," said McKay. "And in the end we just want people to really look at why these banks had taken control of our government." Best documentary screenplay went to Alex Gibney for 'Going Clear: Scientology and the Prison of Belief,' a condensed history of the church and its founder, L Ron Hubbard. In the television category, 'Mad Men' won best TV drama, 'Veep' took best TV comedy series and 'Mr Robot' scooped best new TV series. The WGA awards is one of the last major award ceremonies ahead of the Oscars. — AFP



Light rail trains make a stop along the roughly 23-mile light rail system in Phoenix.



In this Jan 14, 2015 file photo, customers are serviced at the counter of The Phoenix Public Market Cafe restaurant in Phoenix.



Neil Portnow, president and CEO, The Recording Academy, left, and Kevin Spacey present the Person of the Year award to Lionel Richie.



Honoree Lionel Richie performs at the MusiCares Person of the Year tribute at the Los Angeles Convention Center on Saturday. — AP photos



Lionel Richie accepts the Person of the Year award while holding a cast of his and his father's hand.



Kevin Spacey performs before he presents the Person of the Year award.

## Rihanna, Grohl perform at the Grammy event for Lionel Richie



Ellie Goulding performs "Sail On" at the MusiCares Person of the Year tribute.



Rihanna performs "Say You Say Me".



Yolanda Adams performs "Jesus is Love".

Rihanna, Dave Grohl and Chris Stapleton have performed honoring Lionel Richie at a pre-Grammy event on Saturday. Florence Welch, Yolanda Adams, Ellie Goulding and Leon Bridges also performed at the concert naming Richie the 2016 MusiCares person of the year.

The event was held Saturday at the Los Angeles Convention Center. Performers including Stevie Wonder, Pharrell, John Legend, Luke Bryan, Usher, Lady Antebellum, Lenny Kravitz and Demi Lovato also performed. Jimmy Kimmel hosted the event. The Grammys will air live Feb 15 from the Staples Center in Los Angeles. — AP



Host Jimmy Kimmel speaks on stage.



Recording artist Kendrick Lamar awarded the keys to the city of Compton, California Rapper Kendrick Lamar attends the ceremony honoring him with the Keys of the City of Compton, in Compton, California, on February 13, 2016. — AFP

## Rap capital honors native son Lamar before Grammys

Kendrick Lamar, the reflective rapper who is nominated for a near record haul of Grammys, enjoyed a hero's welcome Saturday as he returned to his hometown of Compton. The notoriously rough city in Los Angeles County, which gave birth to gangsta rap pioneers N.W.A. in the 1980s, presented Lamar a symbolic key to the city, as students from local schools put on choreographed dances to his songs. Lamar is in contention for 11 Grammys on Monday at the music industry's signature award ceremony, more than any artist in history except Michael Jackson.

The 28-year-old has won wide acclaim for his album "To Pimp a Butterfly," an experimental rap opus whose tracks include "Alright," which has become an unofficial anthem of Black Lives Matter movement against police abuse. Lamar told the students that he was proof of Compton's resilience, saying, "I knew for a fact that I could be anything I wanted to be." "Through all the pain and hardship-losing family members, losing homeboys-for some reason we always still love Compton because we have faith," he said. "Before I wrote, 'We're gonna be alright,' that's what we're thinking since day one," said Lamar, who now lives elsewhere in southern California.

Regis Inge, who taught Lamar in middle school, called the rapper's success "a teacher's dream come true." "You have not only pursued your dream, but you have taken on the responsibility that comes with leading people to their own destiny," he said. Satra Zurita, president of the school board, predicted that "Alright" will live on for decades as a great protest song, in a league with Billie Holiday's "Strange Fruit" and Marvin Gaye's "What's Going On." Lamar came "just when rap started to begin to sound like a bunch of repetitive cliches, and sometimes like a bunch of mumbo-jumbo, that even I, who was born in the rap capital of the world, cannot understand," she said.

Lamar "single-handedly restored the art of storytelling and social consciousness in the genre of rap, this generation's music," she said. If the praise was not enough, Mayor Aja Brown assured Lamar that the key to the city was bigger than the one just received by chart-topping rapper Drake from his hometown of Toronto. Despite leading in Grammy nominations, Lamar faces tough competition in key categories from artists including pop superstar Taylor Swift. — AFP

## Streep blasts white male studio bosses for blocking diversity

Three-time Oscar winner Meryl Streep told young actors at the Berlin film festival yesterday that Hollywood would never resolve the diversity row until studio boardrooms became less white and male. Giving a master class for 300 budding actors from around the world at the cinema showcase, where Streep is serving as jury president, the most acclaimed US film actress of her generation was asked whether sexism and racism in show business had waned over her four-decade career.

"I think it's moving in a very positive direction. I think you have to make noise to have room at the table, for people to move aside and let you pull your chair up to the conversation," she said. "But in our industry it will always depend on diversity in the boardroom. So all the talk about the lower levels of endeavor-if the decisions are only made by one group of people whose tastes will decide which kinds of films are made, then only certain kinds of films will be made."

Streep lamented that it was hard to get "40 to 50-year-old white males to be interested in stories about their first wives or their mothers." "They don't feel invested in this journey and yet younger men are and that's good," she said. The movie industry is embroiled in a bitter debate about unequal pay between the sexes and a shut-out for non-white actors in the main acting nominations for this month's Academy Awards, for a second year in a row.

### 'Hags and witches'

Streep, 66, landed in hot water on the opening day of the Berlin festival when she was asked whether she felt qualified to judge Middle Eastern films and responded by emphasizing human beings' common origins. "I've played a lot of different people from a lot of dif-

Festival director Dieter Kosslick, left, and jury head Meryl Streep, right, open the 2016 Berlinale Film Festival in Berlin, Germany. — AP



ferent cultures and the thing that I notice is that there is a core of humanity that travels right through every culture," she said. "And after all we're all from Africa originally. You know, we're all Berliners, we're all Africans really." Critics using a #wereallafricans hashtag on Twitter called the comment tone-deaf, while others defended her as trying to call for greater inclusion. Streep said yesterday she had been surprised by her career's longevity, expecting sexism to thwart her much earlier on.

"I always thought my career was over starting at 38 years of age," Streep said. "In those days I had no reason to think that I would work past 40. You could work to 40 and then you start playing hags and witches," she said. "That's one reason I didn't play a witch until 'Into the Woods' (in 2014) and I had

been offered many. It's that trough that women fall into when they're no longer fertile, whatever that word is." Streep advised the acting students not to become too attached to their sex appeal if they hoped to go the distance. "You can't have a long career and play a lot of different kinds of characters of all different ages and maintain your magazine cover vanity," she said. "It's stupid and it's superficial and it's unartistic and who cares?" she said to cheers from the young audience.

### Rather die than direct

Asked if she would follow the long trail of acting colleagues from Clint Eastwood to Angelina Jolie into directing, Streep quipped: "Some of my directors would say that I already have," referring to her own hands-on style on

set. "But no, I think it's two different muscles," she said. "I'm not that quick on my feet to be able to walk around and choose a lens and then," she said, striking a pose. "It is also a, to me, much more boring job. I don't care where they put the toilets, I'm an actress. I don't have to put on a puffy jacket at four in the morning and location scout. I'd rather die."

Streep joked that her late friend Mike Nichols, who directed her in several films including "Postcards from the Edge" and "Silkwood," used to "drill" her about how other filmmakers worked. "I told him it's like asking about the other boyfriends, 'Does he do it better than I do?'" she said. "They are all different. It's the most interesting thing about having a long career, seeing how many different ways there are to get a good result." — AFP

## DiCaprio favored for best-actor prize at Britain's BAFTAs

Leonardo DiCaprio could add to his accolades for epic endurance story "The Revenant" with a win at the British Academy Film Awards. DiCaprio is bookies' favorite to take the best-actor trophy at yesterday's ceremony, considered a portent of success at Hollywood's Feb 28 Academy Awards.

The role of a fur trapper fighting for his life has earned DiCaprio his sixth Oscar nomination - and, many believe, his best shot at finally winning. At the British awards, known as BAFTAs, he's up against Matt Damon for "The Martian," Bryan Cranston for "Trumbo," Michael Fassbender for "Steve Jobs" and last year's winner Eddie Redmayne, nominated for playing a transgender artist in "The Danish Girl."

The best-actress category pits Alicia Vikander for "The Danish Girl" against Brie Larson for "Room," Cate Blanchett for "Carol," Maggie Smith for "The Lady in the Van" and Saoirse Ronan for "Brooklyn."

Steven Spielberg's Cold War thriller "Bridge of Spies" and Todd Haynes' lesbian romance "Carol" have nine nominations



Leonardo DiCaprio (left) and Robert De Niro attend the 2016 amfAR New York Gala at Cipriani Wall Street on February 10, 2016 in New York City. — AFP

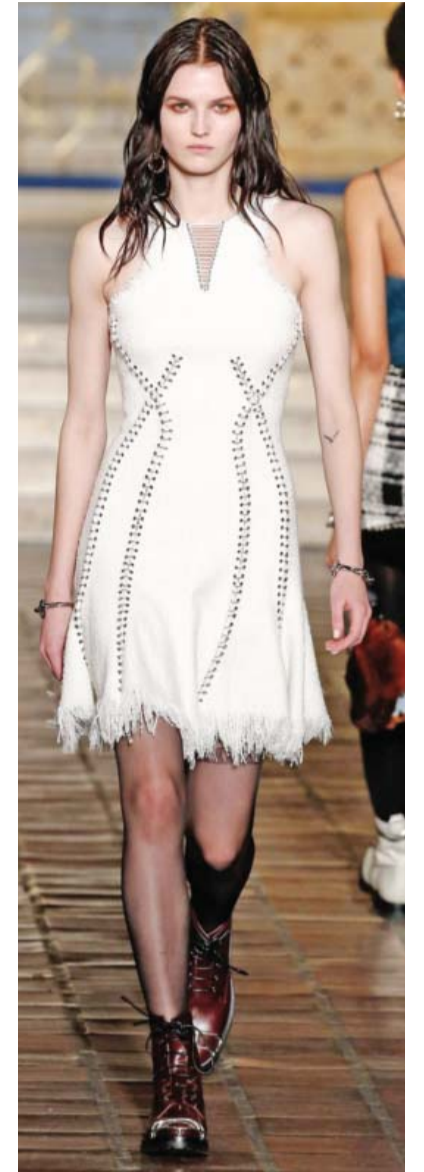
each for Sunday's prizes. Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu's "The Revenant" has eight, while George Miller's dystopian thriller "Mad Max: Fury Road" has seven.

Stars expected on the red carpet at London's Royal Opera House include Cate Blanchett, Rooney Mara, Mark Ruffalo and Kate Winslet. A group called Creatives of

Colour Network says it plans to protest outside the ceremony against a lack of racial diversity in show business. The movie awards season has been dominated by debate about why the film industry remains dominated by white men. All the acting nominees for the Oscars both this year and last have been white.

The head of the British film academy said she supported Sunday's protesters. "Our industry isn't diverse enough, so the pool of people to draw award winners from isn't diverse enough," chief executive Amanda Berry told the Daily Telegraph newspaper.

Like Hollywood's Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the British film academy says it will work to make sure its 6,500 voting members become a more diverse group. Two black actors are up for BAFTAs - Idris Elba in the supporting actor group for "Beasts of No Nation" and "Star Wars" performer John Boyega in the rising star category. Pioneering black American actor Sidney Poitier is due to receive a lifetime achievement award at the BAFTAs. — AP



Models present creations by Alexander Wang, during the Fall 2016 New York Fashion Week at the Saint Bartholomew's Church in New York. — AP/AFP photos

NY Fashion Week

# Wang goes to church, Siriano goes for knits

The Associated Press is all over New York Fashion Week, from the runway designs to the celebrity-filled front rows. Here are some recent highlights:

**Alexander Wang goes to church**

Perhaps part of the reason Alexander Wang was grinning as he made his post-show victory lap on Saturday was the phrase emblazoned on the pockets of his black shirt: "HOLY SMOKE." The words had, at the least, a double meaning: Wang's runway show had just taken place under

duction notes as "deliberately opposing standard definitions of beauty and taste." With celebrity fans in the front row like "Empire" star Taraji P Henson, Kylie Jenner and rapper boyfriend Tyga, and Beyonce's sister Solange Knowles, Wang displayed mini-skirts in tweed, big fluffy sweaters, and heavy combat boots to add a masculine touch. There were angora beanies, roomy zippered jackets and hooded sweatshirts, perfect for the bitterly cold day outside. Besides the leaf motif, Wang emblazoned some of his garments - for both men and women -

to see one of his shows." Wang, 32, left the Paris design house Balenciaga last July after less than three years, during which he balanced that job with run-



ning his namesake label in New York.

Siriano brought the drama, as always, in go-big-or-go-home gowns that shared his runway with day looks in a fresh wide stripe, along with a touch of knit and a clever digital print that looked like woven yarn, but wasn't. He was inspired by the textile artist Sheila Hicks and an exhibition she once put on called "Art of the Yarn." "One of her pieces was this char- treuse woven, long tapestry and that jumped off the whole color palette. Then I started exploring other knit textiles and types of crochet.

I love the ideas for the colors that they're yarn dyed, and they came out really citrusy and strong. I like that we have all this color for fall," Siriano explained backstage before the show. While honoring the artistry of Hicks in bright yellows and reds, he also paid homage in actual knits. Big cables were used on dresses and crochet lace



Taraji P Henson and Zoe Kravitz attend the Alexander Wang Fall 2016 fashion show.

the stained-glass windows and mosaics of the imposing St Bartholomew's, an Episcopal church on Manhattan's tony Park Avenue. That was the "holy" part. As for the "smoke," some of Wang's typically racy outfits bore what appeared to be a marijuana leaf motif. If that was an odd thing to see in the pews of a church, even more so were the totally sheer tops worn by a few of the models.

Wang is well known for his edgy urban streetwear, mainly in black, with lots of studs and metallic details. His collection Saturday held true to his style, which he described in his pro-

duction notes as "deliberately opposing standard definitions of beauty and taste." With celebrity fans in the front row like "Empire" star Taraji P Henson, Kylie Jenner and rapper boyfriend Tyga, and Beyonce's sister Solange Knowles, Wang displayed mini-skirts in tweed, big fluffy sweaters, and heavy combat boots to add a masculine touch. There were angora beanies, roomy zippered jackets and hooded sweatshirts, perfect for the bitterly cold day outside. Besides the leaf motif, Wang emblazoned some of his garments - for both men and women -

with a print showing an exotic dancer, perhaps a throwback to the actual pole dancers at his fashion after-party last season. Wang also incorporated a few choice words into his collection: Women's sheer tights bore the word "girls" on the legs, a black sleeveless mini-dress bore the word "strict," and the words "tender" and "faded" also popped up. Henson, a Wang devotee, had nevertheless never been to one of his shows until Saturday, she said. "I just happened to be in town doing a show," she said. "I love him to death. He's always there for me. His clothes look amazing on me so I'm finally here



Music artist Tyga and TV personality Kylie Jenner attend the Alexander Wang Fall 2016 fashion show during New York Fashion Week.



was paired with fluttery sequins. A wide-stripe print on a background of light tan included a touch of sexy pinky purple as Siriano also showed off menswear-inspired tailoring in pantsuits and other looks.

Slowly, Siriano has built a presence in luxury, also sticking with Payless for shoe lines.

He's a busier man, red carpet wise, than he has ever been, dressing six clients for the Screen Actors Guild awards and six for the Golden Globes after nabbing Knowles for the Oscars last year. He put her in bright red. Sarah Jessica Parker, Rihanna, Lady Gaga and Taylor Swift have all worn Siriano designs. — AP



Fashion from the Christian Siriano Fall-Winter 2016 collection is modeled during Fashion Week on Saturday in New York.

## Breaking the rules: Click and buy with Tommy Hilfiger

Tommy Hilfiger has been breaking the rules his whole life. So it's no surprise he's revolutionizing fashion by gearing up to sell clothes straight from the catwalk at the click of a perfectly manicured finger. The 64-year-old dapper American designer, effortlessly charming with a precise attention to detail has turned his eye for style into a multi-billion-dollar brand sold in more than 90 countries worldwide. One of the first to master the art of celebrity endorsement in the fashion industry, he learned from mentor Andy Warhol to marry fashion, art, music and entertainment or F.A.M.E as he likes to spell it out.

But he's going a step further, again, by planning to do away with the customary six-month lag between a collection debuting on the runway and the clothes being available to buy in stores. Instagram and Twitter have blown the calendar out of the water, as a new generation of bloggers zap images from the catwalk across the planet in seconds. "There is now a new need for immediate gratification," Hilfiger told AFP at his palatial Chelsea studios overlooking the Hudson River and streaming with sunlight.

"The younger customer does not want to wait any longer, they want to see it and wear it that day or the next day. So we're going to change the rules," he explained. "We're going to allow the consumer to click and buy." In the fashion world, perhaps more than any other

industry, not setting the trend can be fatal. New York designer Rebecca Minkoff introduced click and buy on the catwalk this weekend. Burberry and Tom Ford also follow suit in September, but Hilfiger's participation will take it to another level.

### Gigi

The Tommy Hilfiger company, which was acquired by PVH Corporation in 2010, clocked up sales of \$6.7 billion in 2014 and has more than 1,400 stores across the world. "It's an enormous undertaking but we're going to tackle it and we feel very confident we're going to do a great job," said Hilfiger. In September he will also debut a collection with supermodel Gigi Hadid, whose profile shot through the roof by appearing in new boyfriend Zayn Malik's steamy music video "Pillowtalk." Hadid, the daughter of real estate developer Mohamed Hadid and "Real Housewives of Beverly Hills" star Yolanda Foster, has more than 13 million followers on Instagram. Hilfiger is effusive in his praise for the 20-year-old model of the moment and California "it" girl. He said it is "probably the first time" a model has really designed a line for and with a designer. "So we're again, I think, breaking rules and doing something brand new. It's going to be terribly exciting."

"We wanted her fans and her age group to embrace Tommy Hilfiger, so I asked Gigi



Tommy Hilfiger (left) and Kenneth Cole attend the 2016 amFAR New York Gala at Cipriani Wall Street on February 10, 2016 in New York City. — AFP

exactly what she wanted to do, the colors, the fabrics, the buttons, all the detail," he said. But first comes Hilfiger's fall/winter 2016 collection at New York Fashion Week on Monday. Known for his flamboyance, his shows are always a spectacular performance and one of

the most eagerly watched. His inspiration comes from the trans-Atlantic ocean voyages of the 1920s and 1930s, when people "would get dressed properly to travel," so think big, think model ocean liner for the staging. French navy features

prominently on captain-style jackets and coats, embellished with braiding, and there is a sprinkling of 1970s styles and shapes thrown in, such as high-waisted bell bottoms. The collection is made sexy with whimsical, fun print dresses and crepe de chine, which would be layered up in winter with a sweater or a jacket, or paired with a stunning black leather coat.

Hilfiger designs themselves are not ground breaking. What he does so well is to make clothes wearable, affordable and inspirational. "In the very beginning I said 'ok I'm going to make clothes people can wear, people can afford, be on top of the trend and embrace pop culture as the engine,'" said the father of five. Hilfiger has collaborated with Hollywood, music legends such as Mick Jagger and the late David Bowie, and recently with tennis ace Rafael Nadal to create a whirlwind of pop culture around his brand.

But how does he always stay fresh and on top of the trends? "I have daughters and sons who will say 'dad have you heard this music, have you seen this star, have you done this, have we gone here, have we seen that?'" he said. "My wife is a muse, she's a former model who loves fashion and we are actually immersed in it at the breakfast table, at the dinner table, on vacation. We're never away from it," he said. "It's not really like work, it's a passion." — AFP



A Palestinian woman looks at red teddy bears displayed at a gift shop on Valentine's Day in Gaza City. — AFP

## 'Monday Afternoon Fever' in S Korea's old-age discos

### A century after 'Dada', Zurich museum recreates lost work

A century after Dadaism was founded in Zurich, a prestigious museum in the city is hosting an exhibit that aims to recreate one of the rebellious artistic movement's great but unfinished projects. Dadaism was born in 1916 at the famous Cabaret Voltaire in Zurich's old town, where artists produced work partly inspired by the devastation of World War I that sought to challenge preexisting notions of what constituted art. One of its founders, Romanian-born Tristan Tzara, tried in 1921 to release a collection with some 200 contributions from some of Dadaism's main contributors—a project named "Dadaglobe," which ultimately faltered due to financing problems.

Thanks to artistic sleuthing, much of the collection has been reassembled and put on display Zurich's Kunsthaus museum. Entitled "Dadaglobe Reconstructed", it includes some 160 works by 40 artists from across the world, including noted figures like Max Ernst, Hans Arp and Sophie Taeubaur. All had sent contributions to Tzara for the project. The exhibit opened this month and will be on display in Zurich until May 1, before it shifts to the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) in New York.

#### 'Detective work'

Tzara's Dadaglobe project was conceived as an anthology of the movement, which ran through the mid-1920s and used humor, wit and irony to highlight what some artists described as the social and cultural decay in Europe. Dadaglobe gradually fell into oblivion, aside from passing interest from a few scholars. In 2005, however, Adrian Sudhalter, an art historian and curator at MOMA, noticed a series of numerical markings on various pieces while participating in a Dada retrospective at the Beaubourg Museum in Paris.

"When we inspected the art work I started to see these numbers at the back of the works and asked myself, 'what are these numbers,'" she told AFP. Her curiosity piqued, Sudhalter headed to the archives of the Jacques Doucet library in Paris, which has a significant collection of Dada and surrealist material. There she discovered a list which corresponded to the numbers and sequences she found on the pieces at the retrospective. Baffled at first, she little by little realized the list was a complete inventory of Tzara's intended Dadaglobe. She would be able to assemble "the pieces of the puzzle." "It was really artistic detective work," Sudhalter told AFP. "Because of this list and because of these numbers I realized it would be possible to put (Dadaglobe) back together again."

#### 'Biggest regret'

Tzara, who died in 1963, commissioned pieces from the leading lights of Dadaism, many of whom sought to poke fun or mock outright a world thrust into upheaval by World War I. The "Reconstructed" exhibit features work by German painter and sculptor Max Ernst, who fought in WWI and was reportedly traumatized by the experience, producing art that was partly concerned with the subject of mental illness.

Also featured are Hans Arp and Sophie Taeubaur, who were married and worked together in Zurich, turning out what were then groundbreaking multi-media projects.

Taeubaur, born in Davos, is pictured on Switzerland's 50-franc note. Sudhalter told AFP that in her research for the project she consulted with Michel Sanouillet, one of France's most renowned experts of Dadaism, who spoke with Tzara a few years before his death. "Tzara told (Sanouillet) that Dadaglobe was one of his biggest regrets," Sudhalter said. — AFP

As the mercury outside plunges to minus 10 degrees on an ice-cold Monday afternoon, the dance floor inside the Kukilgwon Palace is packed with grey-haired Korean couples moving to the rhythms of high-volume disco. "I come here every day of the week, except for Saturday and Sunday," said 81-year-old Jun Il-Taek as he danced beneath the giant disco balls and brightly-colored string lights decorating the venue in central Seoul. Jun was one of around 200 men and women on the floor—all engaged in the same, rather static, knee-bobbing dance routine, with the odd slow-motion twirl to liven things up.

The sedate nature of the dancing is in stark contrast to the decibel level of the music, which slowly envelops the ascending elevator as it approaches the ninth-floor dance club. "Nothing keeps me healthier than dancing ... I can't live without this place," Jun said, deftly leading his 75-year-old female partner into a slow turn. The army veteran is one of thousands of retired South Koreans hitting the dance floors at "Colatecs"—special discos for the elderly that are flourishing across the country. South Korea's rapidly ageing population may be a major headache for policy-makers, but its members are determined to enjoy themselves, dancing the years away at clubs where 50-year-olds are turned away for being "too young."

#### From teens to OAPs

Colatecs first emerged in the late 1990s as dance halls for teenagers, where alcohol was banned and the only drinks on offer were sodas like Coca Cola. But they soon fell out of fashion with their young clientele which migrated to gatherings at Internet cafes and karaoke clubs. And so the



A couple dance at a 'colatec'. — AFP photos

Colatecs rebranded themselves for an entirely different demographic. "They became a playground for the over 60s ... and they turned out to be far more loyal customers," said Lee Kwan-Woo, the owner of the Kukilgwon Palace which was established in the early 2000s.

"Here, they can exercise to stay healthy, make new friends and have a little bit of excitement," said the 70-year-old former nightclub singer. South Koreans aged 65 plus make up 13 percent of the population, that figure is expected to rise to as much as 40 percent by 2060. Currently, half of that demographic live on or below the poverty line. A meagre pension and lack of social welfare make retirement a daunting prospect.

#### New-found leisure

Among those with some disposable

income, leisure activity is something of an unknown field for a generation whose labor transformed the country from a war-ravaged backwater to Asia's fourth-largest economy. "This generation spent all their lives working, working and working, and leisure was considered a privilege of the elite," said Hwang Nam-Hui, a researcher at the Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs. "So many find it hard, and even baffling, just to relax and enjoy themselves after retirement," Hwang said.

Kukilgwon Palace owner Lee says clubs like his offer a vital opportunity to "unwind and just have fun." His venue attracts 800 visitors on a weekday and up to 1,500 at weekends. The entrance fee is cheap at 1,000 won (\$0.80).

Most of the club's income comes from food and drinks. The physical limitations of its elderly patrons are reflected in the noon-

6:00pm opening hours which, Lee says, work well because most "feel too tired at night." A well-stocked medicine cabinet contains remedies for a host of possible emergencies, including a sudden drop in sugar levels. "If a regular suddenly stops coming, it usually means he or she has died," said Lee, who feels attending funerals of loyal customers is part of his job.

#### Turning away the under 60s

Many are widows or widowers looking for some company and mild flirtation, and anyone under 60 is turned away as they may "annoy other patrons and spoil the mood," Lee said. The dress code is generally conservative, with men in pleated pants and blazers and women in dress pants or knee-length skirts. Some women might risk a shorter hemline, or a bit of glitter, but for the men, a fedora worn at a jaunty angle is about as risqué as it gets. In what remains a very Confucian culture, elderly South Koreans are expected to behave with moderation and dignity, and Colatecs are frowned on by those who see them as unseemly hook-up joints for pensioners.

As a result, patrons like Han Keum-Ok, a 75-year-old Kukilgwon regular for the past 10 years, keeps her hobby a secret. "My children and grandchildren think that I just meet my friends over coffee or lunch," said Han, who dances every afternoon away before returning home to cook dinner. Han says the routine has kept her healthy and happy while many of her non-dancing friends have suffered depression or illness. "At my age, you never know how long you will live, and I'd like to enjoy the rest of my life to the full. "But I tell no one I come here because a lot of people think Colatecs are immoral," she told AFP. — AFP



A couple dance at a 'colatec' in Seoul.



A musician plays keyboards as people dance at a 'colatec'.