

Opposition grows to planned demolition of Bayt Lothan



Masterful Messi's late double sinks Arsenal



SUPPLEMENT INSIDE

Kuwait National & Liberation Days

Kuwait - Times Special Supplement

February 25, 26

GOVT WANTS TO RAISE PETROL PRICES BY UP TO 83 PERCENT

CABINET, ASSEMBLY INCH CLOSER ON SUBSIDY CUTS



Min 13°
Max 25°
High Tide 00:27 & 13:44
Low Tide 07:37 & 19:33

AMIR, PREMIER TOUR SOUQ MUBARAKIYA



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, accompanied by HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, pay a visit yesterday to Souq Al-Mubarakiya, Kuwait's oldest traditional market. During his tour of the market, HH the Amir was accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Information Minister and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Minister of Electricity and Water Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah. — KUNA (More pics on Page 5)

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The National Assembly and the government yesterday held another round of discussions over plans to cut subsidies on electricity and fuel as part of an economic reform package, and a minister said the two bodies have moved closer on the issue. Head of the financial and economic affairs committee MP Faisal Al-Shaye said the government proposed to raise the prices of petrol by 42 percent to 83 percent.

Under the proposal, low-grade petrol will be raised from 60 fils to 85 fils per liter, high-grade petrol from 65 fils to 105 fils a liter and ultra-grade petrol from 90 fils to 165 fils a liter. He said the committee asked the government to provide other alternatives if the price of petrol is linked to developments in the international market.

A fresh meeting will be held on Sunday for the government to provide details about the way it wants to raise electricity, water and petrol prices. Shaye said MPs asked questions about what the government presented and it was agreed that the government will provide details about consumption groups or categories on Sunday.

The committee will then select the best option among the plans the government will submit in order to ensure that people are not harmed, the lawmaker said. If the committee completes discussing the issue on Sunday, it will then be debated by the Assembly on Tuesday, otherwise it will be delayed.

The meeting was attended by Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, about 12 lawmakers and four Cabinet ministers including Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh and Public Works Minister Ali Al-Omair. The meeting came following a series of meetings between the government and MPs in order to allow the government to present details of its economic reform package and reach a deal with lawmakers before the issue comes up for official debate in the Assembly on March 1.

Continued on Page 15



KUWAIT: In this Feb 24, 1991 file photo, Kuwaiti soldiers pause to pray inside their homeland as a Kuwaiti armored column (rear) heads north towards Kuwait City, as the ground war gets underway. — AP

25 YRS LATER, GULF WAR STILL SHAPES KUWAIT

KUWAIT: The scene US forces encountered as they pushed into Kuwait in 1991 to end the Iraqi occupation could only be described as a hellscape. Hundreds of burning oil wells set ablaze by Iraq's army had left sand sodden in an oily sludge and the skies overhead choked with thick black smoke. As they fled, Saddam Hussein's troops took what they had looted from homes, private property and state buildings. As many as 5,000 Kuwaitis were dead.

Twenty-five years later, the Iraqi occupation and its aftermath still shapes life in this state at the tip of the Arabian Gulf, now challenged by power struggles, a failure to diversify its oil-dependent economy and the growing disillusionment of its youth in the wake of the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings. "After the liberation, Kuwait was supposed to bring about a very promising dynamic to its society," said Shafeeq Ghabra, a political

Continued on Page 15

OBAMA PRESENTS PLAN TO CLOSE GITMO

SAUDIS AND UAE URGE CITIZENS TO AVOID LEBANON

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia yesterday urged its citizens in Lebanon to leave, after Riyadh halted a \$3 billion program funding military supplies to Beirut in response to "hostile" positions linked to Hezbollah. Saudi ally and fellow Gulf Cooperation Council member the United Arab Emirates followed suit but went even further, banning its nationals from going to Lebanon and reducing its diplomatic representation there.

In Riyadh, the foreign ministry issued a statement calling on "all citizens not to travel to Lebanon, for their safety, and asking citizens residing in Lebanon or visiting not to stay unless extremely necessary," the official SPA news agency reported. Announcing the Saudi aid halt on Friday, an official said the kingdom had noticed "hostile Lebanese positions resulting from the stranglehold of Hezbollah on the state". Riyadh was making "a comprehensive review of its relations with the Lebanese republic", the unnamed official said, cited by SPA.

Alleged leaders of the Lebanon-based Hezbollah are under sanction by Saudi Arabia. The militant group is fighting in support of Syria's regime and is backed by Saudi Arabia's regional rival Iran, with whom relations have worsened this year. Riyadh cut diplomatic ties with Tehran last month after demonstrators stormed its embassy and a consulate following the Saudi execution of a prominent Shiite cleric. Syria's war has exacerbated political rivalries within Lebanon, which has been without a president for

Continued on Page 15

WASHINGTON: President Barack Obama presented a long-shot plan to shutter Guantanamo Bay prison yesterday, hoping to fulfill an elusive campaign promise before he leaves office next year. Describing the jail as a stain on America's reputation and a catalyst for jihadists, Obama said "I don't want to pass this problem on to the next president." "For many years, it's been clear that the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay does not advance

our national security. It undermines it," Obama said from the Roosevelt Room.

He outlined a \$290-\$475 million plan to move the 91 remaining detainees abroad and to one of 13 possible - unnamed - facilities in the United States. Obama has tried for almost eight years to close the jail, but has been thwarted by Congress, his own Department of Defense and some in his own party.

Continued on Page 15



WASHINGTON: US President Barack Obama delivers a statement on the Guantanamo Bay detention camp flanked by US Vice President Joe Biden (left) and Defense Secretary Ashton Carter yesterday in the Roosevelt Room of the White House. — AFP

VIENNA WORLD'S NICEST CITY AND BAGHDAD WORST

VIENNA: Vienna, Austria's grand capital on the Danube river, offers the highest quality of life of all cities in the world, while the Iraqi capital Baghdad, once more took its place at the bottom of a livability list compiled by consulting firm Mercer. The survey of 230 cities helps companies and organizations determine compensation and hardship allowances for international staff. It uses dozens of criteria such as political stability, healthcare, education, crime, recreation and transport.

Global centres London, Paris, Tokyo and New York City did not even make the top 30, lagging behind

Continued on Page 15



BARCELONA: This picture shows a screen with the "Li-Fi" system logo, an application by Oledcomm, on the second day of the Mobile World Congress yesterday. — AFP

INTERNET BY LIGHT PROMISES TO LEAVE WI-FI EATING DUST

BARCELONA: Connecting your smartphone to the web with just a lamp - that is the promise of Li-Fi, featuring Internet access 100 times faster than Wi-Fi with revolutionary wireless technology. French start-up Oledcomm demonstrated the technology at the Mobile World Congress, the world's biggest mobile fair, in Barcelona. As soon as a smartphone was placed under an office lamp, it started playing a video. The big advantage of Li-Fi, short for "light fidelity", is its lightning speed.

Laboratory tests have shown theoretical speeds of over 200 Gbps - fast enough to "download the equivalent of

23 DVDs in one second", the founder and head of Oledcomm, Suat Topsis, told AFP. "Li-Fi allows speeds that are 100 times faster than Wi-Fi" which uses radio waves to transmit data, he added. The technology uses the frequencies generated by LED bulbs - which flicker on and off imperceptibly thousands of times a second - to beam information through the air, leading it to be dubbed the "digital equivalent of Morse Code".

It started making its way out of laboratories in 2015 to be tested in everyday settings in France, a Li-Fi pioneer, such as a museums and shopping malls.

Continued on Page 15



PROMOTION VALID FROM : 24th FEBRUARY till
1st MARCH 2016 / TILL STOCK LAST

BULK QUANTITY NOT APPLICABLE
كمية بالجملة لا تنطبق



0.395
KD

APPLE RED / KG

0.175
KD

ORANGE NAVEL / KG

0.125
KD

ONION / KG

0.125
KD

5 DAYS ONLY
FEB 26,27,28,29, MAR 1

POTATO / KG

0.095
KD

1 DAY ONLY
FEB 25

TOMATO / KG

2.475
KD

2 DAYS ONLY
FEB 27,28

INDIAN MUTTON / KG

1.350
KD

2 DAYS ONLY
FEB 25,26

BEEF W/ BONE / KG

0.495
KD

AVOCADO / KG

0.595
KD

GRAPE BLACK / KG

0.245
KD

ARVI / KG

0.295
KD

GINGER / KG

0.375
KD

TAPIOCA (KAPPA) / KG

0.395
KD

APPLE IRANI / KG

0.580
KD

KARELA INDIAN (BITTER GOURD) / KG

0.580
KD

INDIAN SMALL ONION / KG



3.790
KD

Hot Deals

NIDO POUCH 2.25 KG

1.990
KD

2 DAYS ONLY
FEB 25,26

TANG 2.5 KG ORANGE

1.295
KD

JUMAN SUGAR 8 KG

1.995
KD

Hot Deals

ROYAL UMBRELLA JASMINE RICE 5 KG

2.695
KD

Hot Deals

CASHEW PER KG

4.490
KD

2 DAYS ONLY
FEB 25,26

NESTLE NIDO POWDER 2.5KG + NESQUIK POWDER 200 GM

2.195
KD

GAZALLE BASMATI RICE 5 KG

1.895
KD

Hot Deals

VERKA GHEE 1 LTR

1.890
KD

Hot Deals

AFIA SUNFLOWER OIL 1.8LTR*2+ 750 ML

1.490
KD

Hot Deals

SUNNY COOKING OIL 1.8LTR*2

0.850
KD

2 DAYS ONLY
FEB 25,26

Hot Deals

FAIRY 2X750 ML

3.490
KD

2 DAYS ONLY
FEB 25,26

Hot Deals

TIDE 2X3KG ASSTD



3.995
KD

Hot Deals

SONIKA PARBOILED RICE 20 KG

1.890
KD

Hot Deals

KOHINOOR EVERYDAY RICE 5 KG

1.990
KD

Hot Deals

JOANS MATTA 10 KG

1.795
KD

Hot Deals

BOUNTY 2 X 427.5 GM

0.990
KD

Hot Deals

PRINGLES 2X165GMS ASSORTED

0.425
KD

Hot Deals

CHANADAL PER KG

0.395
KD

BLACK CHANA PER KG

1.695
KD

JUMAN ALMOND 450 GMS

0.995
KD

Hot Deals

JUMAN PISTA 300 GM

0.995
KD

Hot Deals

TIFFANY GLUCOSE 36X50 GMS

2.950
KD

OMO ASSORTED 2 X 2.5 KG

0.790
KD

Hot Deals

LUX SOAP 120GM 5+1

1.950
KD

Hot Deals

AXE DEO SPRAY ASSORTED 150 ML (2+1)

1.290
KD

Hot Deals

25% EXTRA

EMAMI FAIR & HANDSOME 80MLX2+25% EXTRA

1.290
KD

YARDLEY SOAP ASSORTED 6 X100 GM

1.995
KD

Hot Deals

NUNU DIAPER M-50/XL-40/L-46 ASSORTED

1.495
KD

TIGER BALM (19.4 GM) 3 PCS (WHITE) + KWAN LOONG MEDICATED OIL 28 ML FREE

26.490
KD

NIKON S2900 20 MEGA PIXEL CAMERA WITH 16 GB MMC ADAPTOR

67.990
KD

Hot Deals

SAMSUNG GALAXY J7 MOBILE

6.990
KD

Hot Deals

3 DAYS ONLY
FEB 25,26,27

WiFi TAB ASSTD

6.990
KD

GTRON 3 IN 1 BLENDER

38.990
KD

Hot Deals

EUROSTAR 32 LED TV

NEW CROSSWORD PUZZLES UNVEILED

KUWAIT: Since His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah attended the flag hoisting ceremony in January to mark the start of the celebrations of the national days, the citizens and residents in Kuwait have expressed joy for the occasion in various forms. George Arsalan, a veteran crossword puzzle maker working for Al-Qabas Arabic daily newspaper, celebrated in his own innovative style the country's 55th Independence Day, the 25th Liberation Day and the 10th

Anniversary of His Highness the Amir's assumption of power. He worked out 1,120 crossword squares on the history, the national icons, and main events of Kuwait where he spent 40 years of his lifetime. The national crossword network has become part of the national celebrations as it deepens the sense of patriotism and expands understanding of the history of Kuwait among readers, whether young or old. In statements to KUNA, Arsalan said that he worked hard over the

last two months to complete the network in synchronization with start of the national celebrations. "The network represents a cultural addition to the celebrations as it surveys the national historical facts with emphasis on the reign of Al-Sabah family," he pointed out. "I've spent 25 days in developing the plans, headlines and main ideas of the network and seven other days in executing these plans. "Al-Qabas will start publishing the crosswords as of February 25th, the

National Day of Kuwait," Arsalan revealed. He noted that the new crossword broke his previous record of 1,024 squares which took 30 days to complete five years ago. Arsalan's previous crosswords dealt with the biographies of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) and His companions, and the national anthem. He voiced great joy for his success in producing useful works for the society and contributing to the promotion of public awareness about the history and national icons of Kuwait.— KUNA

News

In brief



Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Sulaiman Al-Jarallah and Ambassador of the Czech Republic Martin Vitek during the signing ceremony. — KUNA

Kuwait, Czech Republic in visa exemption pact

KUWAIT: Kuwait and the Czech Republic signed yesterday a visa exemption agreement for holders of diplomatic passports. Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Sulaiman Al-Jarallah and Ambassador of the Czech Republic Martin Vitek signed the agreement at the Foreign Ministry's headquarters. The signing ceremony was attended by Assistant Foreign Minister of European Affairs Ambassador Walid Ali Al-Khubaizi.

Kuwaitis 'exemplify and reflect true patriotism'

KUWAIT: The people of Kuwait have reflected and exemplified true notions of patriotism throughout the nation's history, standing in support with their leadership under all circumstances, said Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah yesterday. Speaking on the occasion of Kuwait's 55th national day and 25th anniversary of liberation, Sheikh Salman, who's also the head of the national committee for Kuwait's national celebrations, said that the Kuwaiti people should heed the calls by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for unity and loyalty expressed during his speech at the National Assembly's opening session on October 27th, 2015.

KFAED developmental projects not hindered by Iraqi invasion

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) continues to play an integral role in financing projects worldwide and not even the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 had an effect on the fund's global efforts. During the invasion, KFAED signed loan agreements worth about KD 87 million (\$296 million) with three Arab countries in addition to four African and Asian nations. KFAED said that fund's assistance during the invasion included KD 30 million loans to Syria, about KD 20 million to Egypt in addition to a loan of KD 14 million to Morocco.

NEW AMIRI DECREE

By Meshal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: An Amiri decree No 31/2016 was recently issued to add the Interior Ministry Undersecretary and the National Guard Undersecretary to the Supreme Defense Council as new members for a three-year tenure.

Iraq deal

Kuwait has approved a commercial cooperation agreement with Iraq, which was signed in Baghdad on Dec 28, 2014 including nine articles. The agreement is part of a desire by both sides to cement commercial relations and fraternity based on both countries' joint and exchanged interests.

Regulating commercial ads

The Information Ministry officially endorsed a new charter on regulating commercial ads on various Kuwaiti TV channels and radio stations. The charter also regulates sponsorship rates according to show times - regular, excellent or primetime. It also regulates sponsoring news bulletins, studio backdrops, fixed logos and ticker ads.

Judicial police powers

The manpower authority authorized 60 male and female employees to use judicial police powers, a decision which was endorsed by Minister of Social Work and Labor and Minister of State for Planning and Development Hind Al-Subaih. The 60 employees were sworn in to be responsible for monitoring the execution of labor laws and various related executive decisions.

License canceled

In accordance to clause number one

of article 14 of law number 3/2006, the Information Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Journalism, Printing and Publications Khaled Fuhaid Al-Rasheedi canceled the license of Al-Daleel weekly because its publication had stopped for over six months without any acceptable cause.

Footbridges

Municipal council member Hassan Kamal yesterday suggested building two footbridges linking the coastal road with Rumaithiya and Salwa. Kamal based his proposal to the growing activities on that leg of the coastal road and the lack of enough parking spaces, which makes people park on the other side of the road and cross the street on foot. In another development, another Municipal council member Yousef Al-Ghareeb expressed amazement at the continuity of traffic jams despite the many projects completed and in progress to develop road grids, flyovers, bridges and intersections. "This problem is becoming chronic in Kuwait with the growing number of vehicles," he underlined.

Football case

A local court yesterday referred a case filed by the government against Kuwait Football Association to its sports section. Notably, FIFA has suspended all sports activities in Kuwait over allegations of political interference in sports.

Housing units

The Housing Authority is scheduled to draw the names of citizens today to receive housing units in South Mutlaa's N6 area, which includes 351 400-sq-m units.



KUWAIT: Kuwait's old flag seen flying next to the country's current flag as Kuwait marks national holidays. — KUNA

IRAQ AMBASSADOR CONGRATULATES KUWAIT

KUWAIT: As Kuwait celebrates its 55th national Day anniversary, its 25th Liberation Day anniversary, the 10th anniversary of HH the Amir's and HH the Crown Prince's succession and the first anniversary of UN honoring to Amir as the Humanity Leader and Kuwait as a Humanity Center, Embassy of the Republic of Iraq in Kuwait yesterday issued a press release congratulating HH the Amir, HH the Crown Prince, the Speaker, HH the PM and Kuwaitis. The embassy also highlighted both countries' strong ties and stressed the importance of joint work in fighting terrorism and achieving stability in Iraq.



Iraq Ambassador Mohammed Hussein Bahr Al-Ulum

Rise in glory my beloved Kuwait

25th/26th
of February



'KUWAIT IN OUR EYES - KUWAIT TIMES, AL-ANBAA PHOTO COMPETITION

SPONSORED BY BURGAN BANK, ZAIN, NASSER AL-SAYER COMPANY



KUWAIT: The 10th Photography Competition, organized exclusively by Kuwait Times in cooperation with Al-Anbaa newspaper, kicked off on January 5, 2016 and runs through March 17, 2016. Adnan Saad, Kuwait Times Deputy General Manager and the competition's organizer, said in that regard that the competition takes place annually, adding that this year's event will carry the theme 'Kuwait in our Eyes.'

The competition is open for participants from all ages, Saad said, adding that participants will have the opportunity to capture images through their camera lenses that reflect the cultural, social, civilized and heritage aspects of the society. Furthermore, it

allows people to capture images reflecting social and cultural activities and celebrations during the month of February, as well as celebrations of the 10th anniversary of His Highness the Amir's ascension to power, and the selection of Kuwait as a Capital of Islamic Culture for 2016.

The Sabah Al-Ahmad Heritage Village also offers several folklore and musical activities held during February, offering photographers the chance to capture beautiful pictures that can qualify them to win one of the competition's valuable prizes. There are several basic ideas for the snapshot can be built using the camera. For example, inspiration can be derived from the Kuwaiti environment, the sea or even the faces around us.

Selecting the right picture qualifies the photographer to winning this year's competition. The competition also seeks motivating and improving the skills of photographers, both professional and amateur, as well as highlighting photography as a tool to improve and document artistic skills, in addition to focusing on the creative and skillful contributions of Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti participants.

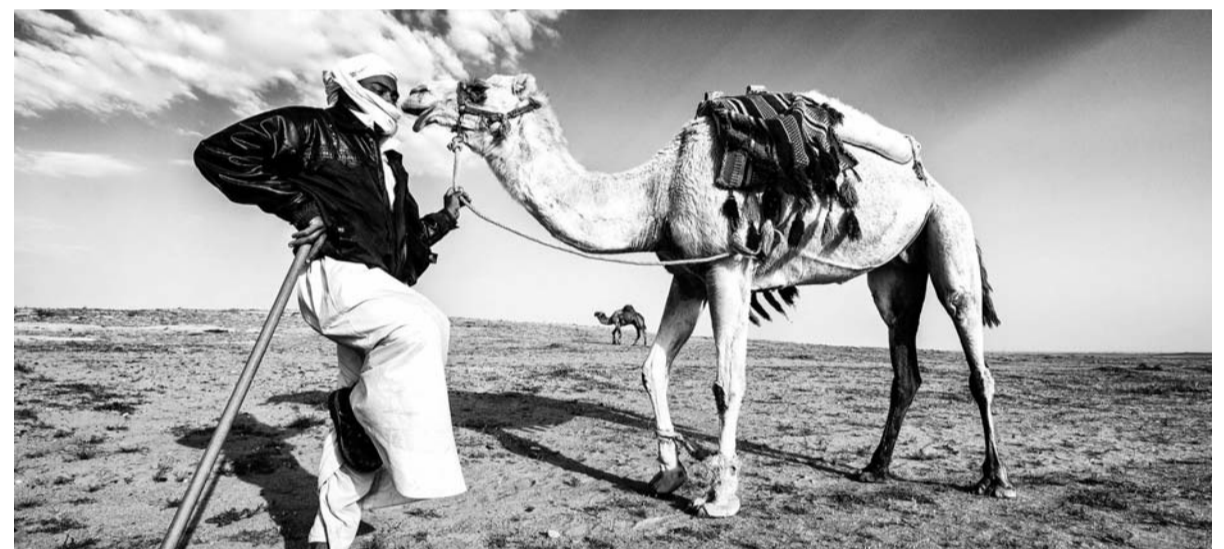
Each participant can submit a maximum of five works; each with a maximum size of 40x30 cm. The works must be owned by the participant, as he or she would lose the right to obtain the prize if proven otherwise. You can also benefit from the special offer presented by 'Albumii' company to print high res-

olution pictures for your photos in a special price during the period of the competition. Pictures carrying texts, signatures or which were modified will be disqualified. The judging panel's decisions are final and cannot be challenged. Further, all pictures submitted by participants will be considered property of the competition's organizers, who retain the right to use them in any way they deem proper without reference to their owners.

You do not have to be a professional photographer or use a professional camera to participate; you can submit pictures taken by a phone's camera or any other camera, as long as the picture carries elements of creativity inspired by the environment.

The awards will be distributed during a

ceremony which takes place at Holiday Inn - Salmiya, the official host of the competition. The competition is sponsored for the third year by Burgan Bank as a main sponsor, in cooperation with Zain. Nasser Al-Sayer Company, the official dealers of Canon cameras in Kuwait is also participating by presenting valuable prizes. The winning pictures will be selected by a judging panel comprising of specialists in the art of photography. Their selection will be based on creativity and artistic effects pertaining with lighting and composition, which can contribute in delivering the message in an influential and fascinating way, through a distinguished picture that shows Kuwait in our eyes.



LAST 5 DAYS TO ENJOY FREE 4G LTE, COOL GIFTS & EXCLUSIVE DISCOUNTS*

Internet wherever you go!

Happy National & Liberation Day, Kuwait!

	Khaleejia Office	Jahra Branch
25th, Thur	9:00 am - 4:00 pm	10:00 am - 2:00 pm 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm
27th, Sat	9:00 am - 1:00 pm	5:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Our working hours for the National Weekend are:

*Terms & Conditions apply

Qualitynet_q8 | Qualitynet_q8 | مبيعات الأفراد Residential Sales | 1827827 | www.qualitynet.net

SHOOT & WIN KUWAIT IN OUR EYES 2016
FROM 5th JAN. TILL 17th MAR.

First prize

- Canon Camera Eos 70D + Canon EF-S 18-200mm f/3.5-5.6 IS.
- Free Camera Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai-Kuwait.

Second prize

- Canon Camera Eos 70D + Canon EF 20mm f/2.8 USM.
- Free Camera Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait.

Third prize

- Canon Camera Eos 70D + Canon EF-S 18-135 mm.
- Free Camera Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait

Fourth prize

- Canon Camera EOS 760D + Canon EF 85 mm f/1.8 USM.
- Free Camera Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait- Bahrain- Kuwait

Fifth prize

- Canon Camera EOS 760D + Canon EF 70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 DO IS USM.
- Free Camera Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Bahrain - Kuwait

Sixth prize

- Canon Camera PowerShot G15.
- Free Camera Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Bahrain - Kuwait

Rules & Conditions:

- The competition is open to individuals of all ages.
- The submitted photos should be taken by the participant.
- Every participant is allowed to submit maximum five entries.
- The photos can be black and white or colour size 40X30 cm.
- All entries should be provided a hard copy and Soft Copy on a CD (in high resolution)with photo of the participant needs to be included in the CD.
- The original coupon should be attached to the back of each photo and should include a complete information about the participant.
- The coupons are advertised at Kuwait Times and Al Anba newspapers during the period of competition.
- All submitted photos will become property of Kuwait Times newspaper and can be used for different purposes.
- The winners will be chosen by a panel of judges.
- All photos must be original and should not be doctored with any design program, such as Photoshop.

COUPON

Kuwait Times
THE LEADING INDEPENDENT DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION 2016

Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Civil ID: _____

Tel: _____

WASER AL-SAYER
1952

In Corporation:

smart dots | **albumii** | **الانباء** | **Holiday Inn** KUWAIT-SALMIYA

For a Limited Time Only All Participants Can Get A Special Discount Of 50% For A High Definition Prints, Including Delivery To Their Door Step . Act Now And Use Discount Code (SHOOTWIN) During Checkout. Download Our Free App For Mac and Pc at www.albumii.com. For More Information Contact Albumii At (69302526)

AMIR, PREMIER TOUR SOUQ MUBARAKIYA



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, accompanied by HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, pay a visit yesterday to Souq Al-Mubarakiya, Kuwait's oldest traditional market. During his tour of the market, HH the Amir was accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Information Minister and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Minister of Electricity and Water Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah. — KUNA



THE PROMENADE wishes everyone a joyous National Day and Liberation Day.

The Promenade

Thepromenadekw

Located on the 3rd Ring Road and Tunis Street

Created with life in mind.

We are the home to the best loved brands, restaurants and entertainment.



Planned demolition of historic Bayt Lothan stirs opposition

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: One of Kuwait's oldest surviving buildings, Bayt Lothan is now slated for demolition with plans to be replaced, possibly, by a food mall. The historic Salmiya structure was the home of the late Emir Sheikh Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, the twelfth ruler of Kuwait.

Construction began in 1926 but the house was built over three stages. The house was built in the style and tradition of the pre-oil era, representing an important period of Kuwait's architectural history. It has an internal courtyard, high ceilings and a traditional Kuwaiti house layout.

More importantly, it has served for years as a



KUWAIT: Photos show the interior and exterior of the historic Bayt Lothan building in Salmiya which is slated for demolition end of March.

— Photos by Athoob Al-Shuaibi and Ben Garcia

noon. On the petition page, the organizers call on the owners to "consider the historical, cultural, and economic value of Bayt Lothan..." Hundreds of signers left comments in support of stopping the demolition. "Bayt Lothan is a part of Kuwait's heritage and it's sad to see it demolished for the sake of building yet another mall in a country filled with malls," wrote Yousef Al Abdulhadi.

Speaking with the Kuwait Times at Bayt Lothan in Salmiya, Walid Thakur, Administration and Finance Manager confirmed that the planned demolition will take place by the end of March. "This property is not our own. This is a private property; the owner had already given us six months notice to vacate the place, we are complying with the order and the Bayt Lothan team is winding down operations; we will obediently follow and leave this place as agreed," he said.

"The place is used not just by Kuwaitis but by communities of people wanting to exhibit their arts and designs. The place is also used as venue for cultural presentations and charity events," Thakur mentioned.

"Since we started in 1993, this period is the saddest part because I have been here since the beginning of Bayt Lothan operations; being here and being involved in many activities of this center, very saddened to leave the place you once called home. It has been our home and a place for honing young people talents in arts," he said.



local cultural and community center, offering a range of arts, music and photography classes, providing a space for community events and in recent years serving as a home for the popular used bookshop, Q8 Books. The nonprofit Bayt Lothan's primary objective was to nurture arts and crafts in Kuwait and provide the people of Kuwait a place to exhibit their designs and artistic work.

Dozens of local artists, architects, designers and photographers have visited in recent days as a way to document the structure before it is demolished.

Dr Jawaher Al-Bader, Kuwait University Department of Communication Design and Interior Architecture Professor, opposes the plan to demolish Bayt Lothan. She brought a class of students to draw Bayt Lothan this way in order to document the building.

"We have here future designers and architects; we brought them here to feel the place for the last time, document the place...What we are doing now is very important, there is no existing records of the physical design of the place and no blueprint, so now we are measuring it. I understand the owners want to generate money rather than preserve history. But we are depriving the next generations from witnessing the structures of Kuwait's past," she said. Plans for Bayt Lothan's demolition have sparked outrage and opposition among Kuwait's society.

Dr Lamis Behbehani agrees with the sentiment: "It's an unfortunate decision to make. We don't have many historical places.... Only this place is available, most of the old buildings are abandoned and derelict, but this one was preserved because it was used by Bayt Lothan, and because of that, we were able to experience how Kuwait in the past lived," she said. "Why would they [demolish Bayt Lothan] without considering the historical value of the place?" she asked.

A petition has been started on Change.org with nearly 3,500 signatures as of Tuesday after-



KUWAIT: A now famous drawing of the historic Bayt Lothan building in Salmiya by Shahad Al-Wadani, known on Instagram as @WadaniArt. The sketch was spread all over Kuwait via social media as opposition to the structure's demolition went viral.

"I created this drawing upon hearing of the unfortunate demise of Bayt Lothan -

one of Kuwait's very few artistic, cultural and historic sites. My hope is that this image would raise awareness on this integral part of Kuwait's history and culture to preserve it for future generations.

— Image used courtesy Shahad Al-Wadani

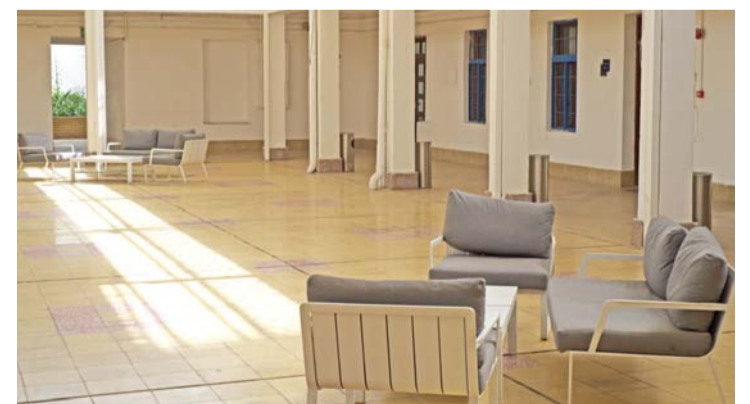
KUWAIT: Sketches during a recent Drawing Kuwait event at Bayt Lothan to document the building.

"Bayt Lothan is a measure of how far we came from what we were. An evidence of development, and a connection to the past," said Shoug Emad.

"Bayt Lothan isn't just a shadow of the past,

it is also a reflection of the future. It was a product of our culture, and now it has come to generate it, through shaping musicians, artists, and artisans. In that respect, it has lived full circle, to become a symbol of the marriage of our traditionalism and our modernization," said Farah Dashti.

Sketches are by Shoug Emad and Farah Dashti - courtesy of Drawing Kuwait.



DEPUTY FM LAUNCHES E-MESSAGING SYSTEM

KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah yesterday launched a new electronic messaging system at the Foreign Ministry in order to streamline communication between the ministry and its diplomatic missions abroad. Speaking at a news conference on this occasion, Al-Jarallah said the ministry's electronic messaging system has been devised and installed by its own technicians, boasting that his ministry is the first governmental agency to put this scheme in place. Al-Jarallah expressed hope that other ministries and departments in Kuwait would follow suit in order to keep their respective necessary privacy.

The electronic messaging system would make it very easy for the ministry to have safe communications with its departments, he said, lauding it as a quantum shift that would ensure the confidentiality of documents and papers. The move comes upon the instructions of First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah for upgrading the Ministry's performance and capabilities in order to keep abreast of state-of-the-art technology, he added. Optic-fiber networks are used in the ministry's new electronic messaging system so as to provide safe and clear communications with the ministry's 104 diplomatic missions abroad, the deputy foreign minister pointed out. —KUNA



Al-Qabas

'ENOUGH MESSING AROUND'

By Nermin Al-Houti

If we gather what has been written about the problems and bad standards of the Ministry of Education and its facilities 10 years ago until now, we would have owned volumes titled "you the officials of education ministry, enough messing around." We became bored while we are writing, as no ear is hearing nor an eye is seeing until the papers became dry and ink dried out of pens, and despite this we focus today on several points in hopes that our officials may move out of their chairs to make corrections without decisions, committees and meetings. What we want today is a steely hand that has the decision to change the crooked path of the education ministry so that it gets on the right track, and education in our country gets revived out of sound educational basics.

- You installed cameras to monitor educational buildings, and despite this we still hear about students beating each other and the result is having some children injured and sustain disabilities that may hinder them in the future. A question: Are the cameras not operational?

- Once again, aren't surveillance cameras supposed to be in a control room where screens are kept and an employee is hired for this purpose? Then why do some art institutes have a doctor monitoring the screens? Even stranger, the dean of the institute programmed the cameras to see them on his personal phone. Good morning, Snapchat!

- You should know that toilets are government property and made for students, employees and educational faculties, and not for each official in a school, institute or university to take over a bathroom and lock it to become his own property. Welcome education!

- * Kuwait is a Muslim country, and in our beloved Kuwait, all its facilities have a special place for women to pray, except for some educational facilities. They do not have special places designated for women, and even if there are, the place is dirty with a noxious smell and the best example is the art institutes, Mr Minister of Education.

- New and youthful blood is good, but scientific experience and seniority in the job is needed. What are their standards in education? Allah help us when the job pyramid gets inverted.

- We face an economic problem, and everyone agreed with rationalizing financial spending, except for the education ministry with all its outstanding jobs and musical shows, and if you demand that they pay your dues, they say "the item does not allow it".

A final word: A,B,C - repeat for the millionth time, and the result is "nothing".

Translated by Kuwait Times



ZAIN CELEBRATES WITH EMPLOYEES

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, organized a special themed internal event to share Kuwait's National celebrations with its employees, reconfirming the company's and employee's pride in Kuwait's national identity. The company gathered a large number of its staff in a patriotic and family-oriented atmosphere that witnessed the presence of senior Zain executives including Chief Executive Officer Eaman Al

Roudhan. The annual patriotic event was held at Zain's main headquarters in Shuwaikh and witnessed several highlights of the many national-themed activities and programs undertaken during the celebrations, including a traditional live performance by a Kuwaiti band.

Zain's participation in National celebrations was not limited to the internal event only, but extended to redecorating the company's building with the National

flag's colors, and participating in National celebrations with people with special needs and children in hospitals. Zain has long considered itself as a key partner of the Kuwaiti society, especially in such National celebrations. The company has achieved many outstanding achievements by supporting many of the various social programs, especially related to Kuwait's annual celebrations.

Spring Menu

قائمة أطباق الربيع

Available for pick-up and delivery only

متوفر لخدمة التوصيل والإستلام فقط



قم بالمشح الضوئي وتصفح قائمتنا الجديدة
Scan Here and Explore Our New Menu

182 11 55
www.maisalghanim.com

ميس الغانم
Mais Alghanim
سفرى ٥٥ ٢٥



Kuwait Times International

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2016

CHINA MAY BE INSTALLING RADAR ON S CHINA SEA OUTPOSTS

Page 13



Angry victims heckle Modi ally after riots kill 19

Page 12



SULAIMANIYAH, Iraq: People look yesterday at a sculpture by artist Bakhtiar Halabjaj depicting Aylan Kurdi, a three-year-old Syrian boy who drowned off Turkey, displayed on a pier at Azadi (Freedom) Park in this northern Iraqi Kurdish city. The sculpture replicates the photograph of tiny Aylan's lifeless body on the beach at Bodrum after he drowned on the crossing to Greece, that rapidly went viral on social media and caused a global outcry as it put a human face to the dangers refugees risk trying to reach safety in Europe. —AFP

IS TIGHTENS GRIP ON GOVT ROAD TO ALEPPO REGIME AGREES TO SYRIA PEACE DEAL

DAMASCUS: Syria's regime agreed yesterday to a ceasefire deal announced by the United States and Russia, but there were widespread doubts it could take effect by the weekend as hoped. The truce agreement, announced Monday, does not apply to jihadists like the Islamic State group and Al-Nusra Front, putting up major hurdles to how it can be implemented on Syria's complex battlefield. A Syrian foreign ministry statement said the government would continue to fight both those groups as well as other "terrorists", while agreeing to stop other military operations "in accordance with the Russian-American announcement."

The deal calls for a "cessation of hostilities" between forces loyal to President Bashar Al-Assad and opposition groups that would take effect at midnight Friday Damascus time. The High Negotiations Committee (HNC) - the leading Syrian opposition group - gave its conditional acceptance to the deal late Monday. But after several previous failed attempts, few had serious expectations for a lasting ceasefire.

Analysts said the deal may be simply unworkable, rebels on the ground doubted the regime's goodwill and many civilians expected their hopes to once again be

dashed. "It's a waste of time and it's difficult to implement on the ground," said Abu Ibrahim, a commander in the 10th Brigade opposition force in the northwestern Latakia province. He expected "numerous rebel groups" to reject the agreement, which he said was formed "without consulting any factions on the ground."

Truce deal 'Likely Doomed'

In Damascus, residents tired after nearly five years of war were also deeply sceptical. "It's a fragile deal," said Rana, a 54-year old pharmacist in the capital. "Ceasefires have been announced repeatedly in the past and we didn't see any results on the ground because they were violated," she said. Despite being on opposing sides of the conflict, Moscow and Washington have been leading the latest diplomatic push to try to resolve the brutal conflict. Both powers are pursuing separate air wars in Syria, with a US-led coalition targeting IS and occasionally other jihadist groups.

Russia says it is targeting "terrorists" in its strikes but has been accused of hitting non-jihadist groups in support of Assad, a long-time ally. Analysts say that given the facts on the ground - in particular the complicated make-up of Syria's opposition forces and

frequently shifting frontlines - the ceasefire may be doomed to fail. While IS control over territory is relatively clear and stable, its jihadist rival Al-Nusra Front, the local affiliate of Al-Qaeda, works closely with many other rebel groups particularly in Syria's north.

"Cessation of Hostilities" allows attacks on Nusra. That likely dooms it, since Russia/regime tend to hit others & call em Nusra (or IS)," Noah Bonsey, a senior analyst at the International Crisis Group, said on Twitter. "To have any chance of addressing this, US/Russia must delineate Nusra areas BEFORE implementation." Yezid Sayigh of the Carnegie Middle East Centre said the deal presented "a serious opportunity" but "there clearly are significant obstacles and risks".

Hope for Peace Talks

"An obvious challenge is for other armed opposition groups to stand by while Russia continues strikes against Nusra," Sayigh said. "Russia and the US will also need to agree some sort of monitoring mechanism or process for determining who is responsible for any local breaches of the ceasefire." The ceasefire plan was announced by top diplomats in Munich earlier this month, but

failed to take hold last week as initially planned.

As well as reducing violence and expanding humanitarian access, it aims to pave the way for a resumption of peace talks that collapsed earlier this month in Geneva. The talks had been scheduled to resume on Feb 25, but the UN Syria envoy has already acknowledged that date is no longer realistic. French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault, in Kiev yesterday, hailed the agreement as a "positive announcement," saying he hoped it could lead to the resumption of negotiations in Geneva. But Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Numan Kurtulmus told reporters in Ankara that he was "not very optimistic (the truce) will be respected by all the parties."

In a new toll released Tuesday, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring group said that 271,138 people - including nearly 80,000 civilians - had lost their lives in the war. Sunday saw the deadliest jihadist attack in Syria's conflict, when 134 people were killed in a shrine south of Damascus in bombings claimed by IS. Also yesterday, IS and allied jihadists wrested control of the key town of Khanasser in the northern province of Aleppo from regime forces, the Observatory said. —AFP

US COUNTER-TERRORISM SLEUTHS COACH WEST AFRICAN COUNTERPARTS

THIES, Senegal: A group of plainclothes police, soldiers and investigators huddle over the charred wreckage of a blue Mercedes near Senegal's dusty third city, Thies, the vehicle's two occupants blown apart by a bomb. As jihadist bombers extend their reach across west Africa, hitting popular tourist venues in neighboring nations in recent months, FBI and US military experts are coaching local counterparts on how to comb a crime scene for clues. The victims of this car bomb are dummies and the crime scene a simulation, but the explosives are real - part and parcel of the type of improvised explosives device (IED) attack the country has until now avoided.

"It's 9.30 am, the explosion went off in the trunk," a Senegalese army lieutenant reported back. "The witness is a street hawk, Said Mohamed," he said after interrogating an FBI explosives specialist playing the role of a passerby. "Two individuals, two terrorists, were trying to cross the border from Mauritania into Senegal, and the suicide vest they were carrying prematurely went off," said FBI supervisory special agent Victor Lloyd, explaining the scenario. "Now the students are going to look around and gather whatever intelligence they can," added Lloyd, as the four-day simulation kicked off in the military base of Thies, some 70 km east of the Senegalese capital, Dakar.

The session is part of a larger annual military exercise, known as Flintlock, that has been bringing together African, European and US counter-terrorism forces every year for the past decade. But as the nature of the threat in west Africa changes, this is the first time police and even customs officials have been involved, said Billy Alfano, who works in a counter-terror unit within the US State Department. A group of Senegalese police and soldiers secure the area, cordon it off with yellow tape and then rake it over for fragments of the bomb, tiny clues that could lead them to those behind the aborted "attack". Part of the course is explicitly about "how to respond to a terrorist attack," Lloyd said, "which I hope never happens on Senegalese soil."

'No Illusions'

Those involved learn not only how to respond when an attack takes place but how to subsequently gather the right intelligence to prevent further bloodshed. "Those individuals that you captured on the trail, they're not the ones that are actually orchestrating and planning the attacks," Lloyd pointed out. Clad in a grey t-shirt, the FBI bomb expert - who earlier played the role of a witness - explained how vital the right questions could be in the aftermath of a bombing. "We ask witnesses: What was the color of the explosion, was it a thump in the chest?" he said. "If they do a good job searching the bodies, they will find identity cards," he continued as the team puzzled over the smoking remains of the vehicle, whose roof was blown off in the blast. —AFP

FORCES MAKE KEY BENGHAZI GAINS

BENGHAZI: Forces loyal to Libya's internationally recognised government seized a key central neighborhood of second city Benghazi from Islamist militias yesterday, the military said. The advance came as Libya's parliament again failed to vote on a UN-backed unity government seen as a crucial step in ending years of political chaos and conflict in the North African state. Special forces retook the Benghazi area of Lithi, which had been a stronghold for extremist fighters including the Islamic State group, after days of fierce clashes.

Fadel al-Hassi of Libya's special forces said the neighborhood was "totally liberated". Libya has had rival administrations since the summer of 2014 when the recognized government fled Tripoli after a militia alliance including Islamists overran the capital. A power vacuum since the 2011 toppling of dictator Muammar Gaddafi has fostered the rise of IS, which is currently headquartered in the former dictator's hometown of Sirte, but control of Benghazi remains divided between a collection of militias.

Fighting has flared periodically in Benghazi as security forces try to wrest

neighborhoods from armed groups including IS and Ansar al-Sharia, which is close to Al-Qaeda. Lithi had become notorious as a jihadist nerve centre, dubbed by locals as "Benghazi's Kandahar" - a reference to the Afghan province that has seen some of the worst insurgent attacks since the US invasion of 2001. Residents celebrated alongside loyalist fighters in streets retaken from Islamists, flashing victory signs next to the bombed-out shells of buildings.

Vote Adjourned to Next Week

Libya's conflict, which has help to create a surge in refugees fleeing the country, has alarmed Western governments over the prospect of extremist groups including IS establishing a bridgehead just 300 km from Europe. Successive UN-backed initiatives aimed at reuniting Libya's rival political factions have so far failed to find a route out of the crisis. The internationally recognized administration, now exiled in the eastern town of Tobruk, failed on Tuesday to hold a vote of confidence in a new, UN-brokered unity government because it lacked a quorum.

"The required quorum (89 members of

parliament) was not reached, so the president of the chamber adjourned the session," MP Mohamed al-Abbani told AFP. Another parliamentarian, Ali Al-Qaidi, confirmed that "the necessary quorum was not reached,

and the session for the vote was adjourned until next week". Forces loyal to the Tobruk government launched a major operation at the weekend aimed at retaking areas of Benghazi under extremist control. — AFP



BENGHAZI: A man celebrates in the streets as fighters loyal to Libya's internationally recognized government come close to seizing the centre of this eastern coastal city yesterday. —AFP



RICHMOND, Virginia: Protesters hold signs as they protest the appearance of Republican presidential candidate, Ohio Gov John Kasich, at a town hall meeting on Monday. — AP

KASICH: WOMEN 'LEFT KITCHENS' TO BACK ME

WASHINGTON: US Republican presidential candidate John Kasich said Monday that women "left their kitchens" to support him in a 1978 Ohio state senate race, triggering pushback from voters and rivals. "How did I get elected?" Kasich asked rhetorically during a campaign event in Virginia. "Nobody was - I didn't have anybody for me. We just got an army of people... many women, who left their kitchens to go out and go door to door, and to put yard signs up for me. All the way back, when, you know, things were different.

"Now you call homes and everybody's out working. But at that time, early days, it was an army of the women that really helped me get elected to the state Senate," Kasich added.

Kasich, who now serves as Ohio's governor, first ran for the state senate in 1978. A woman attending the Virginia town hall later quipped: "First off, I want to say - your comment earlier about the women came out of the kitchen to support you? I'll come to support you, but I won't be coming out of the kitchen." The woman also asked a question about Kasich signing a bill on Sunday to defund Planned Parenthood, which provides abortion and family planning services.

Democratic presidential candidate

Hillary Clinton - who is trying to become the first woman US president - was quick to jump on Kasich's remarks to suggest he was out of touch with women. "It's 2016. A woman's place is... wherever she wants it to be," Clinton tweeted. Kasich later apologized, telling CNN: "I'm more than happy to say I'm sorry if I offended somebody out there, but it wasn't intended to be offensive." He also made a more vigorous defense of his record on women. "We had a lot of women that played a major role in my political campaign, political life, and they still do... I'm very grateful to all the work they put in for me," Kasich said, noting his lieutenant governor is a woman (Mary Taylor).

And he sought to bolster his credentials as an independently-minded politician. "I take orders from nobody," Kasich said. Earlier, Kasich had told reporters he would try to be "a bit more careful" going forward but plans to stay unscripted. "I'll continue to operate on a high wire without a net. And frankly, I'd like to see everyone who is running for president get out of the scripted role and start to be real and take questions," he said. Kasich spokesman Rob Nichols sought to defuse the controversy, dismissing the backlash as "desperate politics". — AFP

US TOWNS RESTRICT SOLICITATION AMID INFLUX OF HASIDIC JEWS

RESIDENTS FEEL INTIMIDATED, HARASSED

LAKEWOOD, New Jersey: James Jackson didn't want to sell his home but thanked the black-suited man for his interest anyway. That's when the man put his hand on Jackson's shoulder and told him he might want to reconsider. Many of his neighbors in the New Jersey shore town of Toms River, the man said, already planned to sell to Jewish buyers like those he represented. "He asked me why I would want to live in a Hasidic neighborhood if I wasn't Hasidic," Jackson recalled. "He asked if I would really be happy, if it would be in my family's best interests."

A housing crunch in Lakewood, home to one of the nation's largest populations of Hasidic Jews, has triggered what residents of neighboring communities say are overly aggressive, all-hours solicitations from agents looking to find homes for the rapidly growing Jewish community. The complaints have prompted towns, including Toms River, to update their "no-knock" rules and related laws, adding real estate inquiries to measures that already limit when soliciting can occur and allow residents to bar solicitations.

But Jewish leaders and others say the no-knock laws unfairly target Orthodox Jews and those seeking to help them find houses. Many current residents came to the community to study at one of the largest yeshivas in the world and eventually settled down. The 2010 census found the town had nearly 93,000 residents, about 32,000 more than a decade earlier. And town officials believe there are closer to 120,000 residents now.

"The growth in Lakewood is a sign of the great quality of life which is attracting all these people," said Avi Schnall, the state director of Agudath Israel, a national grassroots advocacy and social service organization representing Orthodox Jews. "However, the challenge is being able to keep up with the influx," Schnall added. "This has driven people to take residents in nearby towns, where houses are more available and affordable."

Schnall calls the recent no-knock changes "troubling". He also believes there is a campaign to prevent members of the Orthodox community from moving in. And he thinks the real estate agents are being used as the scapegoats, claims



TOMS RIVER, New Jersey: A sign saying, "Don't Sell! Toms River Strong" is seen on a street on Monday. — AP

that leaders in neighboring towns say are unfounded. Samuel Heilman, a sociology professor at Queens College in New York City and a leading authority on Orthodox Judaism, says he doubts that such laws are anti-Semitic in their origins. But he notes that the measures may now be invoked more aggressively by people trying to keep Orthodox Jews out of their neighborhoods, for fear the area will become a Hasidic community.

"The problem is structural: Hasidim live in Hasidic communities predominantly. They can only move as groups," said Heilman. "That leads to counter-moves by other groups who do not want their community to be inundated by them." Municipal leaders stress that their laws are not aimed at keeping out any groups, but rather to protect residents. "Our 'no knock' law goes back many years. It's not just in response to what has been happening now," Toms River Mayor Thomas Kelaher said. "We are trying to protect those people from conduct that's outrageous, harassing, intimidating or unwelcome."

Jackson said he was working outside his

home last fall when he was unexpectedly approached by the man in the black suit. The encounter was initially cordial but turned darker, he said. "He was trying to intimidate me, but not in a physical way," Jackson said. "He was playing mind games, and he was really good at it."

'Cease and Desist'

Toms River is also in the process of creating "cease and desist" zones, where door-to-door real estate soliciting would be banned in designated areas that have been inordinately and repeatedly solicited. The ordinance is modeled on one in New York state that held up in court despite objections from realty groups. The New York rule allows residents to petition for their neighborhood to be included on the list of areas where solicitation is not allowed.

Realty groups say their main concern is to find common ground. "Our local communities are incredibly important to both our members and our association," said Mary Ann Wissel, chief executive officer of the Ocean County Board of Realtors.—AP



TEHRAN: Head of the reformists' coalition list for the Iranian parliamentary elections in Tehran Mohammad Reza Aref (second right) enters a subway station as part of his parliamentary election campaign yesterday. — AP

IRAN'S TOP REFORMIST HITS CAMPAIGN TRAIL

TEHRAN: Iran's most prominent reformist candidate said yesterday that should his camp win in the parliamentary elections later this week, his bloc will work on the country's economic problems by creating more job opportunities through attracting both domestic and foreign investors. Mohammad Reza Aref upped the ante on his campaign trail, mingling with Tehran residents during a subway ride in the Iranian capital - a novel initiative by the reformists seeking to win more voters' hearts and minds.

"Creating job opportunities is our priority," Aref told AP during the subway ride. "We are focused on solving the economic problems of the people." Aref, who served as vice-president under reformist Mohammad Khatami, Iran's president from 1997 until 2005, said that once in parliament, he would use that experience and that he believes an eight percent economic growth is possible through "adding to efficacy of the economy and attracting investors," both foreign and domestic.

Aref mingled with Tehran residents riding the subway in the city's downtown line and met ordinary shoppers at a local bazaar. Many came up to him, appealing for a solution to the country's unemployment, which official figures say is at 10 percent - though critics claim it is much higher among young people. According to government statistics, inflation stands at 13 percent. "I

am 35 years old and still jobless," one metro passenger, Mohammad Heidari, shouted above the noise of the train at Bazaar station. He said he recently moved to Tehran from a poor area in western Iran in hopes of finding a better future. "Think about this, Mr Aref." Another passenger criticized Aref's bloc for allegedly lacking more prominent figures on its list.

Reformists hope to do well in Friday's elections, boosted by public enthusiasm for the recently implemented Iranian nuclear deal with world powers and the lifting of international sanctions - though the country is still feeling the effects of years of sanctions. In the current, conservative-dominated 290-seat chamber, there are about 30 reformists while hardliners have 60 lawmakers. The rest are conservatives.

In absence of real political parties in Iran, the affiliation of half of the 62,000 candidates running in the elections cannot be determined. Reformists and moderates say they have some 200 candidates across the country; the rest are divided between conservatives and hard-liners. Analysis suggests some 10 percent of the candidates are pro-reform and moderate. Many reformists are believed to have been disqualified from running during the candidate vetting process. In Tehran, over 1,000 candidates are competing for just 30 seats. — AP

Xpress XL

More than you'd expect

10

K.D

🕒

Unlimited

Ooredoo

Minutes/SMS

📶

1000

Local

Minutes/SMS

📶

25 GB

Internet

Chef de Partie - Babel
 M.H. Alshaya Co.
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for working within the kitchen team, assisting the Sous Chefs in the effective running of the kitchen, producing the dishes unique to your chosen brand, and will be influential in catering to a higher class of clientele, delivering to them a bespoke dining experience. Additionally, you will train and mentor junior members of the kitchen team.

Apply Now [JB3453938](#)

.Net Developer
 Burgan National Information
 Systems - Kuwait

You will be responsible for defining and structuring system requirements and components, designing, implementing, deploying, and maintaining software solutions and projects, mentoring developers and also acting as development lead for the project team, as well as, managing systems life cycle including requirement gathering, prototyping, development, testing, etc.

Apply Now [JB1893585](#)

HR Officer
 Enhanced Engineering &
 Multi-Tech Co. - Kuwait

You will be responsible for assisting and coordinating all issues related to employee benefits, promotions, appraisals, salary increases and other administration activities, reporting on the overall performance and work progress of HR to the HR Manager, as well as, assisting HR Manager in ensuring the availability of required resources to carry out all the tasks related to the HR Dept.

Apply Now [JB3453761](#)

**Director, Program
 Management Operations**
 Vectrus - Kuwait

You will be responsible for the overall effective management and allocation of the personnel and resources necessary to meet all contract specifications within the purview of the specific Project or Program requirement, along with appropriate coordination of Program/ Department managers and interfacing directly with Senior Program Staff for all program management operations.

Apply Now [JB50102387](#)

Resident Engineer
 KEO International Consultant
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for the overall coordination of the entire project management, contractual and technical team, management of the supervision team, the contractors, subcontractors and other specialists, as well as, managing and controlling contractors and subcontractors in conformance with contract documents, drawings and specifications.

Apply Now [JB50102527](#)

HSE Director
 Fluor Corp
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for overseeing the Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) function to create and sustain a productive work culture and safe work environment in order to avoid and minimize HSE related problems, as well as, working collaboratively with management and Client on all matters pertaining to successful HSE program.

Apply Now [JB50102354](#)

Corporate Affairs
 Huxley Banking & Financial
 Services - Kuwait

You will be responsible for developing business strategy for the bank and per business unit, driving and monitoring the strategic project portfolio, developing frameworks, processes and models to support the activities of Group Strategy, as well as, coordinating transformation and business improvement of a particular area.

Apply Now [JB3453567](#)

Customer Service Agent
 Destinations of the World
 Travel and Tourism LLC - Kuwait

You will be responsible for handling hotel and supplier queries and other demands received by the Customer Service team, ensuring that FIT bookings are converted to closed sales in compliance with set service levels, business targets and standard operational procedures, confirming bookings from allotment and free sale.

Apply Now [JB3453403](#)

**Network Design Engineer -
 CISCO IP**
 Fortis HR FZE - KSA

You will be responsible for designing and planning of Cisco IP Networks, designing of either Cisco R&S or Voice networks, as well as, implementing, and testing, from a design perspective.

Apply Now [JB3452460](#)

**Warehouse Manager /
 Inventory Controller**
 Paris Group - KSA

You will be responsible for planning, organizing and controlling of Warehouse Operations, delegating and reviewing activities of Warehouse Supervisors, planning out all warehouse resources and activities in relation to company objectives and targets, as well as, auditing of daily/ weekly/ monthly productivity reports.

Apply Now [JB3452769](#)

Customs Specialist
 Rawaj Co. for Recruitment
 KSA

You will be responsible for ensuring that all shipping documents meet custom requirements, confirming the documents delivery to the brokers based on the percentage assigned by management, as well as, following up the clearance process with brokers for import / export shipments and ensuring that all containers are released on time.

Apply Now [JB3452755](#)

Sales Executive
 Setra
 KSA

You will be responsible for assisting in development and introduction of new products and services, cooperating and supporting workforce fully to ensure success of the team in achieving their targets and growth plans, as well as, adopting a team-based culture that recognizes and encourages performance and innovation.

Apply Now [JB3452751](#)

Admin/ Customer Service
 Kobonaty
 UAE

You will be responsible for answering phone calls and emails, typing, electronic filing and preparing presentations, scheduling and coordinating meetings with other departments, processing customer's orders, preparing sales invoices, credit notes, as well as, following up for outstanding payments and reconciling courier invoices

Apply Now [JB3452655](#)

Retail Sales Promoter
 Excess IT Middle East
 Electronics Trading LLC - UAE

You will be responsible for representing the brand, educating customers on its features, benefits and pushing sales to achieve sales target, focusing on selling and up selling of the products with our retail partners, explaining all the information of the products in the most efficient way and demonstrating in depth knowledge of brand and products.

Apply Now [JB3452656](#)

Finance Director
 Michael Page International
 (UAE) Limited - UAE

You will be responsible for working actively on the strategy of the company, business model and investment decisions, developing tools and systems to provide accurate financial and operational information to the Group CFO in order to make recommendations on strategy, operations and M&A activities and working closely with the board committee

Apply Now [JB3452734](#)

**Business Development
 Manager – SMF**
 AXA Insurance (Gulf) B.S.C - UAE

You will be responsible for promoting and selling the company's SMC Lines products to SME (Small Medium Enterprise) clients in order to meet pre defined sales targets, understanding the SMF insurance market in the Dubai in order to build networks, as well as, generating sales pipelines and identifying cross selling opportunities.

Apply Now [JB3452725](#)

**Teacher Educator -
 Mathematics - Queen Rania
 Teacher Academy - Jordan**

You will be responsible for teaching, planning, administering, working on course and professional Development, researching, presenting the agreed Pre-service Teacher Education Programme with other Tutors to Student Teacher participants, as well as, planning and managing own teaching including the preparation of teaching materials.

Apply Now [JB3452366](#)

Teacher Educator - Science
 Queen Rania Teacher Academy
 Jordan

You will be responsible for teaching, planning, administering, working on course and professional Development, researching, planning and managing own teaching, including the preparation of teaching materials and working with other Teacher Educators and academics from UCL Institute of Education to develop the Pre-service Teacher Education Programme and Jordanian Standards for Teaching.

Apply Now [JB3452365](#)

**Teacher Educator - Social
 Studies - Queen Rania
 Teacher Academy - Jordan**

You will be responsible for teaching, planning, administering, working on course and professional Development, researching, as well as, developing research practices to support the development of the Queen Rania Teacher Education College etc.

Apply Now [JB3452364](#)

Teacher Educator - Arabic
 Queen Rania Teacher Academy
 Jordan

You will be responsible for teaching, planning, administering, working on course and professional Development, researching, presenting the agreed Pre-service Teacher Education Programme with other Tutors to Student Teacher participants, as well as, developing research practices to support the development of the Queen Rania Teacher Education College etc.

Apply Now [JB3452363](#)

CZECH PREMIER SEES 'CZEXIT' DEBATE IF BRITAIN LEAVES EU

PRAGUE: The Czech prime minister said yesterday he expects a debate on his country leaving the European Union if Britain chooses to quit the 28-member bloc in a June referendum.

Three-fifths of Czechs said they were unhappy with EU membership and 62 per cent said they would vote against it in a referendum, according to an October 2015 poll by the STEM agency.

"If Britain leaves the EU, we can expect debates about leaving the EU in a few years too," leftist Bohuslav Sobotka told the CTK news agency. Britain will hold a referendum on leaving the EU on June 23. "The impact may be really huge," he said, adding that a "Czexit" could trigger an economic and security downturn and a return to the Russian sphere of influence.

Such a move "would be an absolute negation of the developments after 1989" when former Czechoslovakia shed Communist rule thereby quitting the Soviet

sphere of influence.

Having separated in 1993, the Czech Republic joined NATO in 1999 while Slovakia followed in 2004, when both also joined the EU. Former Czech president Vaclav Klaus, a staunch eurosceptic who served between 2003 and 2013, was long seen as the major motor fuelling anti-EU sentiment in the country of 10.5 million people.

Euroscepticism there is currently linked to the refugee and migrant crisis, with surveys showing a majority of Czechs opposed to accepting refugees and migrants. Yet few asylum seekers have chosen to stay in the Czech Republic, with the majority heading to wealthier Germany and other western EU states. Leftist Czech President Milos Zeman has nevertheless missed no opportunity to voice fiery anti-migrant rhetoric, even insisting that it was "practically impossible" to integrate the Muslim community into European society. —AFP

BURUNDI PRESIDENT AGREES TO HOLD TALKS TO END CRISIS

BUJUMBURA, Burundi: Burundi President Pierre Nkurunziza has agreed to hold talks to end a 10-month-old crisis, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said yesterday, but the main opposition group dismissed the plan as a "false opening". After meeting with Nkurunziza as well as government and some opposition politicians, Ban said that all sides had agreed to "inclusive dialogue" and that the president "confirmed, that he would engage in political dialogue."

But hours later the influential CNARED umbrella opposition group—whose leaders are in exile—dismissed the talk of talks, angered by Nkurunziza's apparent attempt to choose who should participate. "This dialogue concerns all Burundians, except those engaged in acts of destabilisation," Nkurunziza said after Ban's visit, prompting CNARED to accuse the president of being disingenuous.

"It is a false opening because, in effect, the president told the UN Secretary General that he accepts inclusive dialogue and then immediately afterwards wants to choose his interlocutors, accusing some of disrupting security," CNARED chairman Leonard Nyangoma told AFP. "He says one thing and then its opposite," Nyangoma said. "It is clear Nkurunziza does not want real negotiations to bring peace to Burundi."

Nyangoma added that the International Criminal Court should open an investigation into the "numerous crimes against humanity committed by Nkurunziza's forces". While in Burundi the UN chief had called on the

country's political leaders "to summon the courage and the confidence that will make a credible political process possible," Ban said.

Grenade attacks on the increase

Ban's visit coincided with an uptick in grenade attacks with at least four killed just ahead of his arrival and at least a dozen injured in a series of overnight grenade attacks in several city neighbourhoods.

"Last night, ten grenades exploded in several districts of Bujumbura, leaving a dozen people wounded," a senior police officer told AFP on condition of anonymity. The officer said two soldiers were among the injured as well as civilians after the series of explosions in outlying parts of the capital. Burundi's crisis was triggered by Nkurunziza's controversial decision in April last year to run for a third term which he went on to win in a July election.

Over 400 people have been killed, more than 240,000 have left the country and violent attacks have become a daily routine in the months since, raising fears of a return to the civil war fought between 1993-2006.

Nkurunziza has faced down an African Union threat to send peacekeepers to his country.

Ban's visit—his first since the start of the crisis—was intended to revive stalled efforts to end the dispute and comes after the Burundi government appeared to soften its position towards opponents by agreeing to receive a delegation of African heads of state, expected later this week. —AFP



MYTILENE: A woman carries a sleeping child as refugees and migrants disembark a rubber boat upon arrival at the northern island of Lesbos after crossing the Aegean sea from Turkey, in Mytilene, yesterday.—AFP

GREECE HITS OUT AT BALKANS OVER MOVE TO HALT MIGRANTS

ATHENS BUSSING HUNDREDS OF REFUGEES FROM NORTH BORDER

ATHENS: Greece raged at neighbors and began bussing hundreds of migrants back from its northern border yesterday, fearing it could be inundated with migrants halted by Balkan states trying to shut the main land route to Western Europe.

Athens filed a rare diplomatic protest with fellow EU member Austria for excluding Greek officials from a high-level meeting on measures aimed at curbing Europe's biggest inward migration since World War Two. More than a million migrants and refugees passed through Greece last year, and nearly 100,000 have already arrived this year. Nearly all reached Greece by sea and travelled onward by land over the Balkan peninsula to richer EU countries further north and west, above all Germany.

But several of the countries along that route have been taking measures to close their frontiers, prompting those further down the chain to impose similar restrictions to prevent a bottleneck. Greek police removed migrants from the

Greek-Macedonian border yesterday after additional passage restrictions imposed by Macedonian authorities left hundreds of people, mainly Afghans, stuck at the border. About 450 of them were loaded onto buses to be taken to reception centres in Athens, joining hundreds more fresh arrivals from outlying Greek islands who arrived on the Greek mainland yesterday morning.

"I will continue on to Macedonia," said Abdulah Farash, 21, a student from Syria. "My friend and I want to go on to Germany... it was important to reach Greece through Izmir," he said of a Turkish Aegean port where many migrants set off for the passage to Greece. "Then things are easy."

At the border with Macedonia on Monday, witnesses said Syrian refugees who did not have all travel documents, including passports, were turned back. European countries are trying to slow the migration wave, which includes hundreds of thousands of refugees from Syria and other war zones, as well as large numbers of other

migrants from north Africa, Central Asia and the Middle East.

Austria is due to host west Balkan states on Wednesday to discuss efforts to manage and curb the flow, but did not invite Greece. In unusually heated language that shows how the migration crisis has raised passions across Europe, Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Kotzias described the snub as a "unilateral and non-friendly act". "The exclusion of our country at this meeting is seen as a non-friendly act since it gives the impression that some, in our absence, are expediting decisions which directly concern us."

Greece also accused its old foe Turkey of trying to "blow apart" an agreement that NATO would help patrol the porous sea border between Greece and Turkey to clamp down on human trafficking.

Turkey, which is hosting 2.5 million Syrian refugees, the largest refugee population on earth, says it is trying to stop them from sailing for Greece but needs more aid.—Reuters



CELEBRATING KUWAIT

ABK extends its congratulations to Kuwait and its people on the occasion of the 55th Anniversary of Kuwait's Independence, the 25th Anniversary of Kuwait's Liberation, and the 10th Anniversary of His Highness the Amir's Assumption of Office.

ABK will be closed on Thursday 25th of February and will resume business on Sunday 28th of February 2016.

www.eahli.com

Ahlan Ahli 1 899 899



REDTAG

always fashionable. always affordable.

FREE

KWD

4

VOUCHER

ON PURCHASE OF KWD 20 OR MORE*

WOMEN • MEN • KIDS • BABY • HOME

BAHRAIN • KSA • KUWAIT • OMAN • QATAR • UAE

📍 rewards www.redtag-stores.com
📱 📺 📷 📺 /RedtagFashion

*Terms and Conditions apply



ROHTAK: Chief Minister for the state of Haryana Manohar Lal Khattar is surrounded by security personnel as he appears at a press conference following violent caste protests in Rohtak yesterday. —AFP

ANGRY VICTIMS HECKLE MODI ALLY AFTER INDIA RIOTS KILL 19

BUSINESS GROUP PUTS DAMAGE AT \$5 BILLION

ROHTAK, India: A political ally of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was shouted down yesterday by a crowd angered by rioting in a northern state that destroyed businesses, paralysed transport and cut water supplies to metropolitan Delhi. The chief minister of Haryana, Manohar Lal Khattar was heckled by local people in the town of Rohtak, northwest of the capital, after they objected to his comments promising that they would receive compensation.

More than a week of unrest involving the Jat rural caste has challenged the authority of Modi, who was elected in 2014 with the largest majority in three decades but has publicly ignored the outburst of anger over a lack of jobs. Although Jat leaders reached a deal late on Monday to end more than a week of protests that killed 19 people and injured 170, anger was still

boiling among the victims whose livelihoods had been ruined.

Live TV pictures showed Khattar giving up his attempt to address angry people on the street. After retreating indoors to give an impromptu news conference, he repeated his promise of compensation only to be shouted down again. Soon after Modi won national power, Khattar led his nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party to power in Haryana, a state of 25 million people, for the first time.

TRAIL OF DESTRUCTION

There was a trail of destruction through the town, one of several to be hit by Jat agitation to demand more government jobs and college places, with one Hyundai dealership gutted. Traders who staged an earlier sit-down protest said they had lost everything.

"I had two showrooms on the

road both were first looted and then set on fire. I have nothing left now," Anil Kumar told Reuters Television. Kumar appealed to Modi and to chief minister Khattar for compensation: "Are we not humans? Don't our votes count? Why did they not have any mercy on us? Don't we pay our taxes?" Modi has remained silent through the worst social unrest of his 20 months in office. A senior government official said he would give a statement in due course to parliament, which convened for its budget session yesterday.

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley next week presents his annual budget. He is expected to announce big hikes in public sector pay that would make it hard to free up funds for investment without borrowing more money. Thousands of troops were deployed to quell the protests, which flared on Monday near Sonipat when a freight train was

torched and, according to reports, police shot dead three protesters. Jats also attacked buses in neighbouring Rajasthan. Disruption has been huge, with at least 850 trains cancelled, 500 factories closed and business losses estimated at as much as \$5 billion by one regional lobby group. India's largest car maker, Maruti Suzuki, shut two factories at the weekend because its supply of components was disrupted.

The army on Monday retook control of a canal that supplies three-fifths of the water to Delhi, a metropolis with a population of over 20 million. A key sluice gate was reopened, but protesters sought to cut the water supply at another place. "The canal was damaged by protesters and repair work will have to be done," Delhi's Water Resources Minister Kapil Mishra said. "The water crisis will continue for a few more days." — Reuters

INDIAN GIRL, 14, SHOT DEAD FOR RESISTING SEXUAL ADVANCE

NEW DELHI: Indian police said yesterday they have arrested two men for shooting dead a 14-year-old girl who resisted their advances, in the latest case of sexual violence.

The two men, riding on motorbikes, had been sexually harassing the girl and her elder sister verbally as they walked home from work as domestic servants in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh late on Monday, police said. "The girls asked the men to stop harassing them but they refused, which led to one of them to shoot the girl," Rahul Mithas, a senior police officer in Sitapur district where the incident occurred, told AFP.

The men fled but were arrested after the

elder sister gave officers a description of them, he said. According to local media, the sisters had complained to police about being regularly stalked by the men in the lead-up to Monday's shooting, but did not receive help. Women's rights activists accuse police of often overlooking complaints of stalking, which they say only emboldens the perpetrators.

The fatal gang-rape of a student on a bus in Delhi in 2012 shone a global spotlight on frightening levels of sexual violence against women. It led to reforms including the speeding up of trials, heavier penalties for offenders and more resources for police. But high numbers of assaults persist. — AFP

INDIANS PROTEST IN DELHI OVER STUDENT'S DEATH

NEW DELHI: Shouting slogans and holding placards, thousands of students and teachers marched through the heart of the Indian capital yesterday to protest the recent death of a student who faced caste discrimination and the arrest of a student leader on sedition charges.

The protesters from New Delhi's two main universities marched near the Indian parliament, demanding the student's immediate release and condemning violence by supporters of the ruling Hindu nationalist party.

Kanhaiya Kumar, president of Jawaharlal Nehru University's student union, was arrested earlier this month over his participation in events where anti-India slogans were allegedly shouted. Opposition politicians who addressed the rally accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government and his Bharatiya Janata Party of suppressing freedom of expression and fanning communal tensions.

Hundreds of policemen stood silently as the students, joined by thousands of teachers, journalists and ordinary citizens, shouted slogans and waved Indian flags. "We will not tolerate attacks on freedom of speech," "BJP government come to your senses," and "Down with the BJP government" the protesters shouted as they marched to the accompaniment of drums.

The turmoil that has gripped JNU has led to criticism that the Modi government is attacking freedom of expression and dissent, with the academic community condemning the ultra-nationalism promoted by Hindu nationalist

groups. "This is the result of the BJP's concerted attacks on students. The BJP has a single-point agenda to wipe out all opposition," said Shehla Rashid, a JNU student. A New Delhi court has remanded Kumar in custody until March 2. Five other students who face similar allegations are expected to surrender to police later.

In Srinagar, the main city of Indian-controlled Kashmir, dozens of students in the University of Kashmir marched in the campus in solidarity with protesting JNU students.

Kashmir University students also demanded the release of Delhi University lecturer, SAR Geelani, arrested last week on sedition charges for organizing an event in Indian capital where anti-India slogans were allegedly shouted along with criticism against the 2013 secret hanging of a Kashmiri separatist convicted of attacking the Indian Parliament. The protesters are also demanding justice for Rohith Vemula, a student of Hyderabad University, who police say committed suicide after being subjected to sustained discrimination on account of his caste.

The protesters accused Hyderabad University's vice chancellor of unfairly demanding punishment for five lower-caste students, including Vemula, after they clashed last year with student supporters of the BJP. Although caste discrimination was outlawed soon after India's independence from Britain in 1947, it remains influential. The government sets quotas at universities and in jobs to reverse the discrimination. — AP



NEW DELHI: Indian students and activists shout slogans during a protest in New Delhi yesterday. — AFP

HCA International Hospitals

THE HARLEY STREET CLINIC

THE LISTER HOSPITAL

London Bridgelys Hospital

The Portland Hospital

THE PRINCESS GRACE HOSPITAL

The Wellington Hospital

HCA NHS ventures

LOC

SCRI

HCA is an American company providing world-class private hospital care in London

Tel: +44 (0)20 7034 8564
Internationalreferrals@hcahealthcare.co.uk
www.hcainternational.com

HCA Hospitals
World-Class Healthcare

US AIR STRIKES AID AFGHAN FORCES TO COMBAT IS

KABUL: Afghan forces backed by US air strikes have killed dozens of insurgents loyal to Islamic State this week as they continue a push into areas occupied by the radical group, officials said yesterday. For months, security forces have been trying to dislodge Islamic State fighters from Achin district, an area in eastern Nangarhar province along the border with Pakistan. More than 30 militants were reported killed in the most recent fighting, said Attaullah Khogyani, a spokesman for the Nangarhar provincial government.

"Daesh fighters who had gathered in Mohman Dara village were attacked by a drone," he said, using an Arabic acronym for Islamic State. Khogyani said as many as 22 were killed in the air strike on Monday, but a US military spokesman would not publicly confirm casualty numbers. "US forces conducted a counter-terrorism strike in the Achin district, Nangarhar province, yesterday," said Col. Michael Lawhorn. "For reasons of operational security, we do not discuss counter-terror operations."

Another 15 insurgents died in a gun battle with Afghan troops, Khogyani said, but that number could not be verified. Militants claim-

ing allegiance to Islamic State have taken advantage of the war between the government and insurgent groups like the Taliban to seize territory.

That prompted American leaders in December to relax restrictions on air strikes and allow U.S. warplanes to attack targets linked to Islamic State. Since then, US air strikes have spiked, with American warplanes using their weapons 128 times in January, more than three times as often as January 2015. In late January and early February, at least 20 air strikes hit Islamic State targets, military officials said.

"The air strikes are very useful and we have been able to make progress with their help," said Sherin Aqa, spokesman for the Afghan army's 201st Corps. "The air strikes must continue for us to stop Daesh."

The Afghan troops coordinated intelligence with US forces who conducted the attacks, he added. While Islamic State has not had the same success in Afghanistan as it has in Iraq and Syria, the group's fighters have proven well-equipped, motivated, and willing to use brutal tactics on civilians and security forces alike, military officials say.

Talks date

Meanwhile, talks in Kabul yesterday between representatives of four countries trying to end Afghanistan's war with the Taliban are likely to set a date for a face-to-face meeting between the two sides, an Afghan official said. Representatives of Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and the United States are meeting in the Afghan capital for a fourth round of discussions setting conditions for eventual peace talks between Kabul and the Taliban.

Javid Faisal, the deputy spokesman for Afghan Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, told The Associated Press the delegates "should give a date for the first direct peace talks."

Delegates agreed at their last meeting in Islamabad on Feb. 6 to work toward bringing the two sides together to restart a peace process - derailed last summer by the revelation that the Taliban's one-eyed leader Mullah Mohammad Omar had been dead for more than two years - before the end of February. In remarks opening the meeting yesterday, Afghan Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani reiterated that details of the first proposed meeting would be announced before the end of this month. — Agencies



KABUL: Afghan Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani (center) chairs the fourth round of four-way peace talks at the presidential palace in Kabul yesterday. — AFP

CHINA MAY BE INSTALLING RADAR ON SOUTH CHINA SEA OUTPOSTS

WASHINGTON: Satellite images show China may be installing a high-frequency radar system in the Spratly Islands that could significantly boost its ability to control the disputed South China Sea, a US think tank reported on Monday.

The Asian Maritime Transparency Initiative at Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies said the images showed that construction of facilities at Cuarteron Reef appeared nearly complete and that the artificial island now covered an area of about 52 acres (21 hectares).

China claims most of the South China Sea, through which more than \$5 trillion in global trade passes every year. Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, the Philippines and Taiwan have rival claims. "Two probable radar towers have been built on the northern portion of the feature, and a number of 65-foot (20-meter) poles have been erected across a large section of the southern portion," the report said.

"These poles could be a high-frequency radar installation, which would significantly bolster China's ability to monitor surface and air traffic across the southern portion of the South China Sea." China's Ministry of Defence said in a statement on its microblog that the facilities China had established on the "relevant islands and reefs" included navigation and meteorological equipment.

"At the same time, we have deployed necessary defensive facilities on the islands," the statement added, adding the facilities were "legal and appropriate". Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying, asked about the report, said she didn't know any details, but that China had every right to build on its own territory and deploy "limited" defensive means there.

The world should pay more attention to the civilian facilities China has built like lighthouses, Hua

told a daily news briefing. The report said the images showed that China appeared to have constructed a buried bunker and lighthouse on the northern portion of the feature, a helipad, communications equipment and a quay with a loading crane.

The report, which based its analysis on satellite images from January and February, said China already had significant radar coverage of the northern part of the South China Sea given its mainland installations and in the Paracel Islands to the northwest of the Spratlys.

Both the US and Vietnam last week expressed concern at China's deployment of advanced surface-to-air missiles on the Paracels. A high-frequency radar on Cuarteron Reef would increase China's ability to monitor sea and air traffic coming north from the Malacca Straits and other important channels, the report said. It also pointed to "probable"

radars at Gaven, Hughes and Johnson South Reefs in the Spratlys as well as helipads, and to possible gun emplacements at the former two features.

China previously operated radars on Fiery Cross but the latest installations would give it far more extensive coverage, regional military analysts said.

The report comes a day before a visit to the United States by Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, at which US concerns about China's assertive territorial claims will be high on the agenda. Beijing has been angered by air and sea patrols the United States has conducted near islands China claims in the South China Sea.

Hua said the United States was pushing "groundless worries" about freedom of navigation to carry out such patrols. "The United States talks about freedom of navigation, but I fear in its heart what it's thinking about is absolute maritime hegemony," she added. — Reuters

N KOREA WARNS OF PREEMPTIVE STRIKES AGAINST US, S KOREA

PYONGYANG LASHES OUT AT UPCOMING MILITARY EXERCISE

SEOUL: North Korea yesterday lashed out at an upcoming joint US-South Korean military exercise, warning it would attack the South and the US mainland in case of any armed provocation.

The South and its close US ally will next month hold their largest-ever annual exercise in response to the North's recent nuclear test and long-range rocket launch, Seoul's defence ministry has announced. The North's military supreme command said the allies planned to practise a "beheading operation" aimed at the North's leadership, and other moves to neutralise its nuclear weapons and missiles. If there were even a "slight sign" of special forces moving to carry out such operations, the military said, "strategic and tactical" preemptive attacks would be launched.

The primary target would be the South's presidential Blue House, it said in a statement on the official news agency, condemning it as "the centre for hatching plots for confrontation with the fellow countrymen in the north, and reactionary ruling machines". The North also threatened attacks on US bases in the Asia-Pacific and the mainland. It said it has "the most powerful and ultra-modern strike means" in the world capable of "dealing fatal blows at the US mainland any moment and in any place".

Such blows would "reduce the cesspool of all evils to ashes, never to rise again on our planet", it added in a reference to the United States. The North habitually claims that the annual Key Resolve/Foal Eagle exercise is a rehearsal for invasion while Seoul and



PYONGYANG: This undated picture released from North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) yesterday shows North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un (C) viewing a concert marking the 70th founding anniversary of the KPA military band in Pyongyang. — AFP

Washington say it is purely defensive. Tensions are high as the United Nations considers tougher sanctions against the North to punish it for January's nuclear test and this month's rocket launch. The South, in an unprecedentedly tough move, has shut down a Seoul-financed and jointly-run industrial estate in the North, saying it was helping finance its neighbor's military programs.

Last week, South Korean President Park Geun-hye warned of tough measures against the North following its January nuclear test and its long-range rocket launch this month, saying

Pyongyang's pursuit of nuclear weapons would speed the collapse of the regime.

South Korea and the United States say both actions were violations of UN Security Council resolutions, and are pushing for further sanctions. Days after the rocket launch, South Korea suspended the operation of the Kaesong industrial zone just north of the border, which had been run jointly with the North for more than a decade.

Isolated North Korea and the rich, democratic South are still technically at war after their 1950-53 conflict ended in a truce, not a treaty. — Agencies

ENGINE SMOKE FORCES EVACUATION OF JAL PLANE IN SNOW

TOKYO: More than 160 passengers and crew slid down emergency chutes in swirling snow yesterday after engine smoke forced a Japan Airlines domestic flight to abort takeoff and smoke entered the cabin, Japanese media reported.

National broadcaster NHK showed video of the passengers evacuating and then gathering on the snow-covered tarmac at New Chitose Airport, which serves the city of Sapporo in Hokkaido, Japan's northernmost main island. At least four passengers were injured during the evacuation and taken to a hospital, Kyodo News agency said, citing rescue officials.

Kyodo said that the engine stalled after sucking in snow, and that there was an explosive sound when a pilot restarted it. The Boeing 737 with 159 passengers and six crew members was bound for Fukuoka in southern Japan. — AP



A Japan Airlines Boeing 737 sits on the snow-covered tarmac after more than 160 passengers and crew slid down emergency chutes in snow due to an engine fire at New Chitose Airport in Sapporo in Hokkaido, Japan's northernmost main island. — AP

HCA NHS Ventures

HCA International Hospitals

Committed to collaboration

HCA NHS Ventures is a subsidiary of HCA International which was set up in 2006, the HCA NHS Ventures division leads on private partnerships with NHS Trusts across the country.

Harley Street at UCH is a joint partnership with top teaching hospital University College London Hospital, formed in 2006. Based on level 15 in the tower at UCLH, the 18 bed acute facility is a specialist cancer centre for complex and rare conditions. Patient rooms are private and en-suite offering panoramic views across London. We offer medical and surgical care including day case chemotherapy and a comprehensive JACIE accredited bone marrow and stem cell transplant service one of only a few in the UK. The centre offers the pioneering cord blood transplant; this treatment significantly widens the opportunity to find a suitable unrelated donor particularly beneficial for international patients.

The Young Person's Unit at Harley Street at UCH is the only private teenage cancer unit in Europe, treating any form of cancer in 13-19 year olds and further establishes the relationship with UCLH. The 6 bedded Unit treats all kinds of cancers and provides high quality care. All rooms are private and en-suite with views across central London. There are facilities in each room for a parent or guardian to stay with patients throughout their treatment and international entertainment packages, including internet access to keep in touch with friends and family abroad. Patients also have access to educational facilities and an entertainment lounge. 5* catering is provided with specially adapted menus to suit international patient requirements.

State-of-the-art technology includes the revolutionary TrueBeam STx™, the latest radiotherapy and radiosurgical equipment which the most advanced linear accelerator in the world and is the first of its kind to be installed in the UK.

Harley Street at Queen's is a joint partnership with Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals Trust, based at Queen's Hospital Romford, offering advanced cancer, neurosurgical and general surgery treatment. It is the only centre of its kind in Essex and includes a dedicated High Dependency Unit, Chemotherapy Day Care Unit and advanced radiotherapy through a dedicated linear accelerator including

www.harleystreetatuch.co.uk

HCA - London's No.1 private hospital group



IMRT and RapidArc™ technology. Harley Street at Queen's offers advanced state-of-the-art treatment in the most comfortable of surroundings.

The Christie Clinic is the latest HCA NHS Venture and a partnership with The Christie NHS Foundation Trust in Manchester. The £35million development houses a state-of-the-art cancer clinic with 34 inpatient rooms, 10 chemotherapy chairs, advanced radiotherapy, sophisticated operating theatres and private patient pharmacy. This impressive facility takes the HCA standard of care outside of London to Manchester and the North of England. Located in the heart of Manchester The Christie Clinic offers light and airy private en-suite rooms, with international entertainment packages and is in close proximity to the city centre.



Kuwait Times

Premier Brands

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

Offers FEBRUARY

BEST PRICES

SHARP
LC-40LE265M
LED

40"

FULL HD 1080P

89 KD
Price Value of 950 KD

2xHDMI USB 200Hz

SHARP
LC-50LE458X
LED

50"

FULL HD 1080P

159 KD
Price 1950 KD

DVB-S2 HDMI CI+ DOLBY DIGITAL PLUS PC INPUT USB DTS

SHARP
LC-50LE570X
SMART TV
AQUOS LED

50"

FULL HD 1080P

199 KD
Price 2450 KD

androidtv QUAD CORE USB WiFi HDMI

best بست
AL-YOUSIFI اليوسيفي

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

Credit: Start from SKD • Up to 48 month • Instant approval

Shop Online www.best.com.kw Free Delivery

1809 809

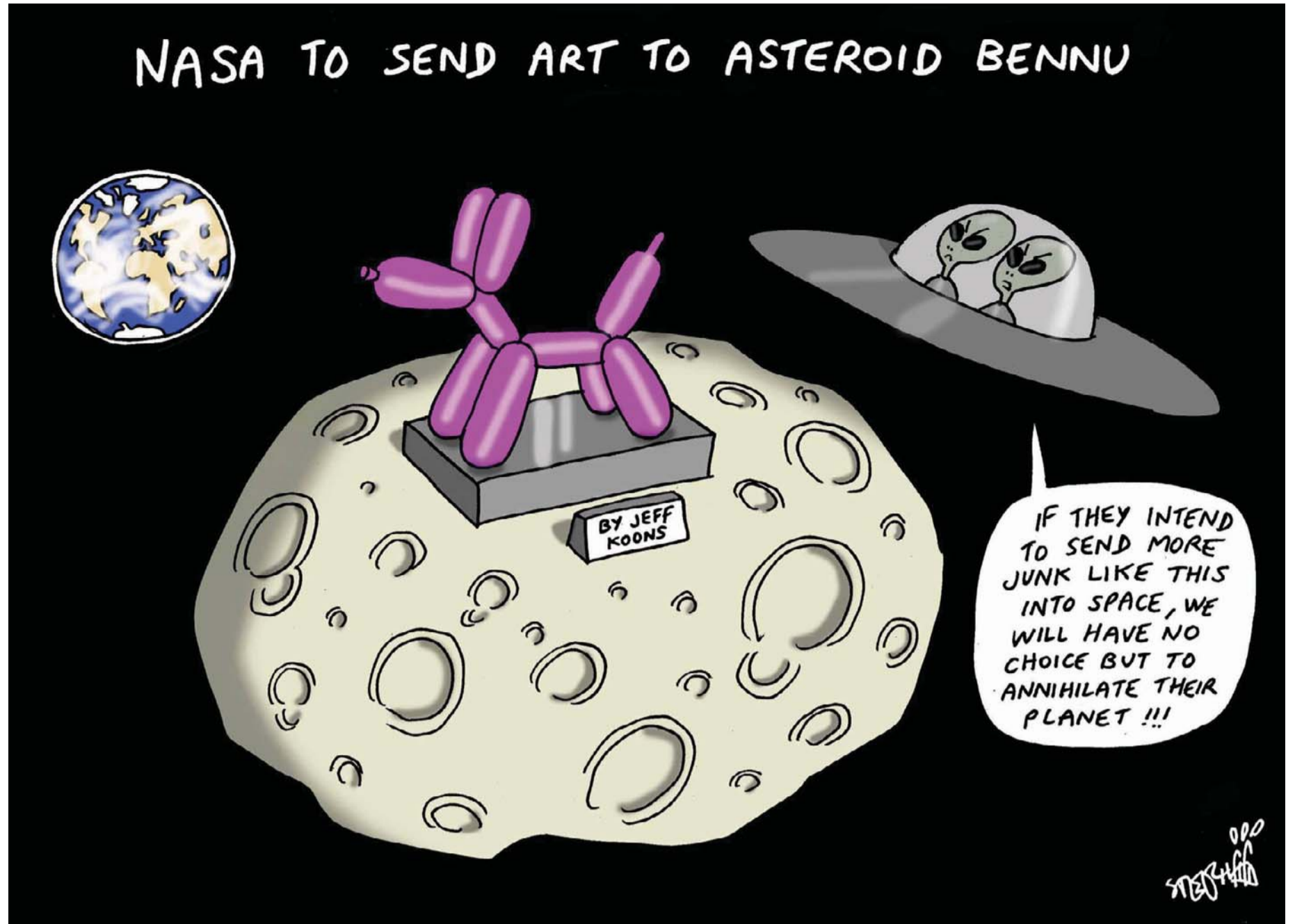
Kuwait Times
THE LEADING INDEPENDENT
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF
ESTABLISHED 1961

Founder and Publisher
YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN

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

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

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



CONFLICT, POWERFUL FIRMS STOKE LAND DISPUTES

By Thin Lei Win

La Laung Daung Nan vividly remembers the last day of April 2015. Alone in front of the two-acre plot of land her family had been allocated in a United Nations-led project, she waited for fellow villagers to turn up. They had been sent by officials and were coming to take down the barbed wire that protected her rubber saplings from the trampling of cows and buffalos. "When they came, I pleaded with them not to do it, that we are from the same village," she recalled, sitting on the bamboo floor of her stilt home with three other aggrieved farmers.

Her words fell on deaf ears. The next day, roaming animals seeking pasture left few traces of the 11-month-old saplings. Daung Nan, her husband and 16 others in Naung Chain, a dusty village a 40-minute motorbike ride away from the state capital Myitkyina, are in a legal tussle with village authorities over land they consider theirs, but which officials say is part of 1,600 acres designated as grazing ground. The villagers say they were not consulted about plans to turn their land into grazing grounds and believe it was a ploy by officials who planned to profit from renting out 300 acres to a Chinese company for a banana plantation.

Their battle is an illustration of land rights disputes engulfing Kachin state and the whole country, a largely agrarian nation emerging from decades of military rule where rights are fragile and victims of injustice have little recourse. Sa Yaw Haung Khaung, the village administrator, defended the land seizure in an interview with Myanmar Now, an independent news service supported by the Thomson Reuters Foundation, saying officials acted according to the law. He played down the impact on villagers, saying the Chinese concession covered only 70 acres for growing watermelons. It would have generated income for the whole village but was abandoned following protests, he added.

Rampant Land Seizures

Campaign group "Land In Our Hands" said in a 2015 report Kachin, Myanmar's northernmost state bordering China, has the second largest number of land confiscations after Shan state. "Land confiscations in Kachin have been so rampant there is little vacant land left," Bawk Ja Lum Nyo, a

fiery political activist known for taking on powerful interests, said. "Villagers are too scared to speak up. There are more landless people now and many are struggling to survive."

Land disputes have been fuelled by the outgoing semi-civilian government of President Thein Sein's liberalisation policies that have driven up land prices and attract foreign and domestic investment, analysts said. Fighting between ethnic insurgents and the army, which flared up again in 2011 after a ceasefire fractured over long-held grievances, has weakened communities' rights and driven more than 100,000 civilians from their homes. Many worry whether they will still be able to access their farmland when peace returns and accuse the army of seizing swathes of land.

Meanwhile, junta-era issues such as a heavy military presence across the state, oppression of ethnic minorities and the unchecked exploitation of natural resources persist. If land disputes remain unresolved they will be detrimental to the peace process and overall stability of Kachin, activists said. "Many farmers do not dare to demand the return of land confiscated by the military," said Lahpai Zaw Tawng from Kachin State Farmers Network, who has been helping the Naung Chain villagers. Many are hoping the new government and parliament led by the National League for Democracy (NLD) will keep its election promises, including fair resolution of disputes, establishing land tenure security and support for the landless.

Land Key to Peace and Democracy

Changes in land ownership and use are among key issues in Myanmar's political and economic transition, with deep resentment and protests over acquisitions for infrastructure, development or large-scale agricultural projects. Up to 70 percent of Myanmar's labour force is estimated to work in agriculture. The sector accounts for 44 percent of economic output, according to consulting firm McKinsey & Co.

All land is owned by the government but farmers are given land use or tillage rights, making land use a particularly sensitive issue for small-scale farmers who make up the majority of the country's population of 51 million. Yet these rights are neither respected on the ground in practice, nor provide protection against land grabbing, activists said. The

"Land In Our Hands" report found 42.9 percent of respondents said they possessed legal documents issued by the government when their land was confiscated.

The issue is even more sensitive in ethnic areas. Ethnic minorities make up an estimated 30 to 40 percent of Myanmar's population, and ethnic states occupy some 57 percent of the total land area. "Important questions around access to and control of land are at the heart of the civil war, and unless they are addressed well, real peace is likely to remain out of reach," the Netherlands-based Transnational Institute said in a report. Bawk Ja, chair of the National Democratic Force (NDF) in Kachin, who took a powerful company to court over a land grabbing case and has been jailed for her political activities, agreed. "Without resolving the land issue, there's no way you can achieve real peace," she said.

Ruled by Guns

Activists like Bawk Ja and Zaw Tawng are educating villagers about their rights so they are better able to stand up for themselves. It is a long process. Arr Ti, 65, and Yaing Myaw, 45, from Shwe Aite village, remember shaking with fear during a meeting a few years ago with a senior military official. "He put his pistol down on the table first before telling us we have to move. Then he asked, 'Anyone want to say anything?'. I was so scared," Yaing Myaw said.

But they've become emboldened. With help from Bawk Ja, they sent letters to central authorities about their cases, and defiantly returned to their homes and farms. "I'm not giving in. It's my land," said Arr Ti, who was asked in 2006 to leave her orchard, which she has owned since 1982. The army told her it was confiscated to build a telecommunication tower, but nothing has been built so far.

Land grabs have become so politically contentious that Myanmar's military-backed parliament set up the Farmland Investigation Commission in 2012. In just two years the commission received more than 30,000 cases. But it has heard only two-thirds of cases and found in fewer than 1,000 that compensation was justified, according to Namati, a charity working on land rights. Daung Nan and her husband, La Ban Khan Phan, have begun to prepare their land in Naung Chain village again, while keeping up the fight to save it from becoming a grazing ground. —Reuters

SYRIANS AT MERCY OF GREEDY SMUGGLERS

By Michel Moutot

After a harrowing 15-hour journey by minibus, dodging gunfire and explosions, a group of Syrian refugees reached a village near Turkey, desperate to cross the recently shut border into safety. "The people smugglers are there and they're shouting 'Turkey! Who wants to go to Turkey?'" Fatima al-Ahmed recalled, after reaching the town of Kilis on the Turkish side of the frontier. "They are mean, violent, and only think about money. They push us like beasts, hitting the women who don't walk fast enough, even when they are carrying babies. It's terrible, it's the law of the jungle."

The 27-year-old woman told AFP about her clandestine escape from Aleppo to Kilis in southern Turkey a week ago - a journey that in peacetime would have taken little more than 90 minutes. Turkey's decision to close its border with Syria has become a boon for smugglers who are charging refugees to secretly cross over. Like the traffickers who make thousands of dollars off each boat-load of migrants crossing the Mediterranean to Italy or the Aegean to Greece, smugglers at the Turkish border take advantage of Syrians who refuse to wait in overcrowded tent camps for Ankara to possibly open up the crossing.

Fatima, sitting at a table outside a cafe in Kilis, said she crossed the border with her two-year-old son in her arms through an opening cut in the barbed wire fence. She had decided to flee her home in the rebel-held neighborhood of Sakhur in eastern Aleppo, when her husband was killed a month ago in the bombing while he was out looking for food.

'Too Many People'

The smugglers organized them "in groups of eight, with our neighbors," she said, speaking in a soft voice. "They helped me pay, I didn't have enough money. Before, everything was organized in Aleppo, we used smugglers we trusted. But now since the Russian bombing, there are too many people," she said referring to the Russian aerial bombing campaign launched in September last year in support of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's regime.

Like others in Kilis, Fatima told how the Syrian smugglers were in constant contact, by cellphone and walkie-talkie, with the Turkish smugglers who would take charge of the refugees once they were over the border. "They made us wait, sitting on the ground under some trees, until it was time - the time when the Turkish soldiers who they paid are on guard and look away while we pass," she said of the clandestine journey that cost around \$300 (\$330).

That sum was too high for the family of Ahmad, a scrawny 14-year-old, who looks even younger than his age. He was among the last to survive in the ruins of Marjeh, his battered Aleppo neighborhood. When a barrel bomb dropped from a helicopter killed two of his brothers and wounded their father, the family piled into a truck and took off for the border.

'We Were Lucky'

"We couldn't pay the smugglers, so we hid. We crawled up to the barbed wire fence and slipped underneath it," said the teenager with a mischievous look, who has never been to school. "We were lucky, the Turkish police found us but since we were with a lot of children, they didn't send us back. They even called for a bus." At Kilis, the flow of refugees has begun to slow down, a sign that the closing orders given to the Turkish guards are being adhered to more.

The price of the secret passage has risen to as high as \$1,000. And no matter the price, a planned escape sometimes just doesn't work. Yazan Ahmad, 35, has been waiting for his parents who fled the Syrian town of Tal Rifaat, which was seized last week by Kurdish militia. "They are in a camp just on the other side," he said. "Last night, my brother paid some smugglers to try to get them out... But they failed. The Turks fired over their heads." Meanwhile those who are stuck in Aleppo live as prisoners of Syria's five-year civil war. "My neighbor in Aleppo, she's alone with five children, and she's desperate," Fatima said. "I spoke to her yesterday. She was crying. She doesn't know what will happen next." —AFP

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

FENCED IN: KASHMIR BARRIER ENDANGERING WILDLIFE

By Sajjad Qayyum

A double row of fence and tangled concertina wire curves like a Frankenstein stitch across the Kashmir frontier, blocking anything that might try to cross one of the world's most dangerous flashpoints - including, environmentalists say, migrating wildlife. Built in 2007 by India, the impenetrable barrier scarred hundreds of kilometres of snowy forests has obstructed militants from neighboring Pakistan for years, but it has also halted the movement of some spectacular and rare species formerly abundant in the area, wildlife officials have told AFP.

Creatures such as black bears and leopards, fenced in on the Pakistani side, are being driven by hunger into nearby settlements, often with fatal consequences. In the lush hilltop hamlet of Arang Kel, more than 8,000 feet (2,500 m) above sea level, residents say they have no choice but to kill the wild animals stalking their land. "Our cattle, sheep, goats and cows are not safe from them and sometimes they attack people," villager Roshan Khan, who is in his 60s, tells AFP. "That's why they are being killed."

"They have to travel towards human settlements in search of food, where they are killed by people when they attack their livestock," says Yousuf Qureshi, the former director of the wildlife department in Pakistani Kashmir. Since 2007 around 35 common leopards, five bears, and several brown bears have met their fate this way, says Pakistani Kashmir assistant wildlife and fisheries department director Naem Dar. The detour, exacerbated by deforestation and coupled with a lack of resources available to wildlife officials, has contributed to the eradication of many such species on the Pakistani side of the Line of Control (LoC), officials say.

'Tragedy'

The electric fence stands up to twelve feet tall in places, and is attached to an elaborate network of motion sensors, thermal imaging devices, lighting systems and alarms. The area immediately around it is peppered with landmines - all in a bid to protect the frontier from infiltration by militants. Kashmir's thick forests and soaring slopes are divided between bitter nuclear-armed neighbors Pakistan and India along the de facto border agreed on in a 2003 ceasefire, but claimed by both in full. Two of their three wars since independence have been fought over the region.

The Srinagar-based commander of the Indian army's XV Corps, Lt Gen S K Dua, tells AFP the flow of militants crossing over from Pakistan-administered Kashmir is "down to a trickle" now, crediting the formidable fence and other counter-insurgency initiatives. But, while blocking militants - and wildlife - from Pakistan, the barrier has also prevented animals moving from the Indian side. Creatures such as the markhor, a type of wild goat with majestic horns, simply no longer appear on the Pakistani side - blocked by hundreds of kilometres of barbed wire and explosives, says Qureshi.

"(The markhor) would travel from Pir Panjal

(in the Himalayan mountains in Indian-held Kashmir) to Neelum Valley, but the fence created a barrier and their migration has ended," he says. "This is a tragedy." The same goes for the hangul, or Kashmir deer, once common in the area but now "totally extinct" on Pakistan's side of the border, he says.

Tear Down This Fence

The fence itself is not the only issue, Qureshi warns. The barrier has not stopped regular instances of firing by soldiers on both sides across the LoC which, he says, which has also driven wildlife away. "Once they abandoned their habitats they did not go back," he says. Deforestation also plays a significant role. Neelum Valley winters are harsh, with wood the only fuel for villagers bereft of electricity or other sources of power.

When India and Pakistan were created in 1947 forest covered some 24 percent of Pakistani Kashmir, but that has now dropped to 11 percent. "The natural living places of these animals are being destroyed," says Munawar Hussain, a wildlife employee posted in Arang Kel. For Muhammad Arshad, district program manager for the Himalaya Welfare Organization, the problem is clear: The area needs peace. "Fencing on the LoC has disturbed their natural habitat and limited the territory," he says. "India and Pakistan should have peace in the region and dismantle the fencing on the LoC for the conservation of these species," adds Qureshi.

For now, villagers in Arang Kel say they have no choice but to keep killing the animals - despite the threat of fines and imprisonment for illegal hunting. "We are worried the wildlife department will lodge a case against us when we kill these animals," says villager Khan. "There must be some solution." —AFP



This photograph taken on Nov 12, 2015 shows a Pakistani Kashmiri man walking with his livestock in the snow-covered Neelum Valley in Pakistan-held Kashmir. —AFP

FLASHBACK: US FORCES ENTER KUWAIT TO END IRAQI OCCUPATION

KUWAIT: In Feb 1991, after months of building an international coalition, US forces entered Kuwait to end the Iraqi occupation of its smaller, oil-rich neighbor. The ground operation to end Iraq's nearly seven-month occupation lasted only 100 hours, despite fleeing Iraqi forces lighting hundreds of massive blazes at Kuwaiti oil wells. As today marks the 25th anniversary of the US advance into Kuwait, The Associated Press is making available its story by correspondent Denis D Gray about the military operation, as well as historic photographs of the conflict.

WITH US MARINES ADVANCING INTO KUWAIT: US Marines surged into Kuwait through mine-sown defensive barriers Sunday, wrecking an Iraqi division and taking 4,700 prisoners, spokesmen said. Some units reached the outskirts of Kuwait City. The Marines lost three dead in the first day of fighting, officers said. The 2nd Marine Division reported one killed and eight wounded; the 1st Division two dead and nine wounded. A pilot was missing after his plane crashed. "I myself am amazed" at the light casualties, said Lt Col Jan Huly, 2nd Division spokesman. "We expected it to be a lot more so far."

Iraqi casualties were not known, but Huly said the frontline Iraqi division the 2nd Marines faced as they broke through the defensive barriers "doesn't exist anymore". The size of the Iraqi division was not known. Huly said its commander apparently was captured or surrendered. The 2nd Marine Division said it took at least 1,500 Iraqis prisoner; the 1st Division reported more than 3,200 Iraqis captured.

The assault, apparently the largest Marine operation since World War II, involved the two divisions based along Kuwait's southernmost border with Saudi Arabia. The military did not say how many Marines were involved, but a division has 6,000 to 15,000 men. Wearing full chemical protection outfits and moving behind tanks and plows, the Marines pushed through walls of sand, trenches, barbed wire and minefields as deep as 600 yards. One officer said some Marines encountered chemical gas, apparently from mines.

The Iraqis have sown an estimated 500,000 mines in southern Kuwait, and some were believed to include chemical agents.



In this Feb 27, 1991 file photo, members of Task Force Ripper of the First Marine Division ride a Humvee under a "Welcome to Kuwait" sign at the entrance to Kuwait City's International Airport. — AP photos

But the Iraqi forces appeared to be using only conventional explosives in their artillery shells. Huly said forward elements of the 2nd Division, including tanks and artillery batteries, were already near Kuwait City and were consolidating their positions. Lead units of the 1st Division, operating to the west, drove deep into Kuwait late Sunday after breaking through Iraqi lines northwest of the Al-Wafra oilfields, according to a pool report. "Things are going very well," said Col John Stennick, chief of staff for the division. "We thought we'd have to fight harder to get this far. The best news is that so few of our people have gotten hurt."

An expected amphibious assault from Marines in the Arabian Gulf had yet to be launched. The USS Nassau and about 20 other ships in the amphibious task force awaited orders in the northern Gulf. Rear Adm. John B LaPlante, commander of the group, said he did not expect assault orders "in the near term." Before sunset Marine units were still pouring through six lanes cut through the breaches. Markers were placed in the desert so that the assault force would not stray into zones sown with mines. Huly said that Iraqi opposition was "very mild." He said

the only known 2nd Division Marine death came when an artillery breach either exploded or struck the gunner in the head. He had no details, and there was no information available on the deaths in the 1st Division. The spokesman ascribed the low allied casualties to superb US equipment and training and poor Iraqi morale. "We've got our act together, he doesn't. He's only shooting rounds randomly," Huly said.

Stiffer Opposition

He warned, however, that the Marines would probably face stiffer opposition as they moved deeper into Kuwait, where Saddam Hussein has deployed some of his better troops, including the elite Republican Guard. The Iraqis are said to have manned the front lines largely with conscripts. "I don't think we've gotten into the real battle yet," said Huly. "The tough guys are still ahead of us." He said entire units, complete with their weapons and other equipment, were surrendering after putting up minimal resistance, and the morale of the prisoners taken so far "is about boot-top level."

Huly said the POWs were being placed in a temporary compound south of the breach,



In this Feb 25, 1991 file photo, a Kuwaiti military helicopter herds Iraqi prisoners, arms in the air, across a stream in southeastern Kuwait, as Operation Desert Storm continues.

and attempts were being made to whisk them to rear areas. "There are so many we can't talk to them all," Huly said. Among the prisoners was an officer believed to be commander of the frontline division overcome by the Marines, Huly said. He did not know if the officer had been captured or surrendered. As the assault force drove forward, it came under fire from Iraqi artillery and ground troops. Helicopter gunships and allied warplanes swooped in to knock out the Iraqi gunners as they emerged from dug-in positions, Huly said.

Allied aircraft included Harrier jump jets, A-6 attack fighters, A-10 tank killers and Cobra helicopters. He said B-52 bombers, which played a major role in the aerial strikes, were not being used in close support of the ground troops. Lt Gen Walt Boomer, the Marine commander, said the 1st Marine assault began at 4 am Sunday (8 pm EST Saturday), the starting time for the allied ground war. The 2nd Marine started its attack about 1 1/2 hours later, under an unexpected downpour and after a night of allied artillery, rocket and air strikes. The rain later gave way to clear, sunny skies.

Huly said three Marine tanks - each with a

crew of four - were damaged or destroyed. One Marine AV-8B Harrier crashed at night and the pilot was missing, Boomer said. Boomer said the Marines encountered chemical gas that apparently was released by buried mines nine miles north of the Saudi border. Huly said the troops went into battle wearing full chemical protective gear, which includes a suit, gas masks, boots and gloves. Troops have also been taking anti-nerve gas and anti-anthrax pills for several days.

The way was prepared for the Marine advance on Friday morning when other Marine units slipped into Kuwait on foot through the minefields to establish a safe route for advancing armor. The Marines preceded their attack with loudspeakers urging Iraqis to surrender. Smoke continued to pour from the Umm Qadir oilfield in southwest Kuwait, which was allegedly set ablaze earlier in the war by Iraqi forces. But Huly said it posed no problems for the assault force. "They can see well enough to shoot at us, and we can see well enough to shoot at them," Huly said. The spokesman also played down the effects of the rainstorm. Allied warplanes continued to pour in supporting fire under heavy cloud cover. — AP

25 YRS LATER, GULF WAR STILL SHAPES KUWAIT

Continued from Page 1

science professor at Kuwait University. "Sadly, 25 years later, Kuwait is navigating its way in a very troubled region that reflects its problems on the feelings and temperament of Kuwait's citizens."

Many in the West were unfamiliar with Kuwait prior to the Aug 2, 1990, Iraqi invasion. With just 6 17,820 sq km of territory, Kuwait is smaller than New Jersey. But within its confines lie massive oil reserves - the world's sixth-largest - that have allowed Kuwaitis to enjoy cradle-to-grave subsidies and drawn a large expatriate population, including many Palestinians who came to fill technical jobs. Before the invasion, the country's population of 1.6 million was 60 percent foreign.

It proved to be too tempting of a target for Saddam as his troops, hardened by the 1980s war with Iran, rushed into the country and pushed aside Kuwaiti forces. Kuwait's Amir, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and his royal court left for Saudi Arabia, where they directed an armed resistance from their temporary abode in a Saudi hotel in the western mountain city of Taif.

By the time the US-led coalition retook the country following a ground war that lasted only 100 hours, much damage had been done. It took months for firefighters to cap and stop the oil well blazes set by the retreating Iraqi army. Iraqi troops also had flooded the Arabian Gulf with as much as 336 million gallons (1.3 billion liters) of oil, the biggest offshore spill in history.

For four months after the Iraqis were pushed out, Kuwait was ruled under martial law. Kuwait's security forces, angered by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's support for Saddam's invasion of Kuwait, targeted Palestinian expatriates and other foreigners. Many Palestinians fled, while Kuwaiti officials arrested thousands. Dozens were killed, while activists at the time said hundreds were tortured.

Today, Kuwait is home to 4.2 million people, some 70 percent of them foreigners. It has a freely elected parliament, though recent elections have seen largely pro-government lawmakers gain seats. A new sky-

scraper-studded skyline has risen in its capital, fueled by high oil prices. HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah now serves as the Amir. The ruling family controls all key government positions, yet nowhere else in the Gulf can elected lawmakers block initiatives or question officials, calling in Cabinet ministers for grilling over allegations of mismanagement and other issues.

But there is widespread frustration over government policies and corruption. Though Arab Spring-inspired protesters stormed parliament in 2011, Kuwait largely escaped the unrest that swept the region. "After the liberation, we hoped that Kuwait would be rebuilt to its days of glory, the golden '70s and '80s, when it was at the forefront in terms of development in the region," said Nadia Sager, a writer whose book on the Iraqi invasion was turned into a popular television drama. "I wouldn't be exaggerating if I say that no one is that optimistic anymore."

Though some Gulf countries have diversified, oil remains the driver of Kuwait's economy, leaving it vulnerable to low global prices. Lawmakers are looking at making unpopular budget cuts in response. Another pressing concern is terrorism. Kuwait, home to both Sunnis and a minority of Shiites, largely has avoided the unrest gripping the rest of the Mideast following Al-Qaeda attacks and the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq.

However, the rise of the Islamic State group has worried the country, especially after a June suicide bombing at a Shiite mosque in Kuwait City claimed by the extremists killed 26 people and wounded 227. Soon after the attack, HH Sheikh Sabah visited the bomb site in a sign of support. There are also other sectarian and domestic issues. Over 100,000 people live in Kuwait without citizenship. Known by the Arabic word "bedoon", they are pressing for government recognition. Kuwait's youth population is growing increasingly disenfranchised over corruption, poor governance and lack of reforms. "The government's failures to bring about progressive change, in infrastructure and development projects especially, is undeniable and is affecting the new generation," Sager said. — AP

SAUDIS AND UAE URGE CITIZENS...

Continued from Page 1

almost two years because of fierce disagreements between Hezbollah and its rivals.

The Saudi official quoted on Friday said Lebanon had not joined condemnation of the attacks on its diplomatic missions in Iran, either at the Arab League or the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. The official also denounced "political and media campaigns inspired by Hezbollah against Saudi Arabia," as well as the group's "terrorist acts against Arab and Muslim nations". Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah last week accused Turkey and Saudi Arabia of dragging the region into war and said "victory" was imminent for his group and its

Syrian regime allies.

Saudi Arabia supports rebels opposed to Syria's government, and says it is ready to send special forces under a US-led coalition to fight the Islamic State group. In a statement, Hezbollah said Saudi Arabia stopped the military aid because of economic pressures from the war in Yemen, where it leads an Arab military coalition fighting Iran-backed rebels, and lower oil revenues. On Friday, Saudi Arabia also stopped the remainder of a \$1 billion financing package for Lebanese internal security forces, in a separate decision. The \$3 billion deal funded military equipment provided by France and was to ship vehicles, helicopters, drones, artillery and other equipment to Lebanon. — AFP

GOVT WANTS TO RAISE PETROL PRICES...

Continued from Page 1

Omar said the government provided plenty of data and information to MPs and answered their questions. He said that the vision has become clear now after the government provided specific details and the two sides are closer than ever for reaching a deal. The minister said the government will provide more information and data during the meeting on Sunday to complete the discussion on the issue. He said the two sides are very close to reaching an understanding on the issue, adding that the government and the Assembly are

careful not to take any measures that could harm the people.

Omar confirmed reports that the Cabinet has increased the financial allocations for patients sent to the United States and Europe to KD 75 after reducing it last week to just KD 50 per day. He said the government through this decision wanted to regulate and control the issue of sending patients for treatment abroad. The report of the financial committee is expected to be crucial for decisions expected to be taken to reduce public subsidies in the face of the sharp decline in oil revenues and the impending budget deficit.

VIENNA WORLD'S NICEST CITY AND BAGHDAD...

Continued from Page 1

most big German, Scandinavian and Australian cities. Vienna's 1.7 million inhabitants benefit from the city's cafe culture and museums, theatres and operas. Rents and public transport costs in the city whose architecture is marked by its past as the centre of the Habsburg empire are cheap compared with other western capitals.

Switzerland's Zurich, New Zealand's Auckland, Germany's Munich and Canada's Vancouver followed Vienna - which

reached the best position for the seventh time in a row - in the top five of most pleasant cities to live in. The best African entry on the list was South Africa's Durban at 85. Baghdad was again ranked lowest in the world. Waves of sectarian violence have swept through the city since the American-led invasion in 2003. Damascus, five years into Syria's bloody war, ranked six places above Baghdad, with Bangui in the Central African Republic, war-torn Yemen's capital Sanaa, Haiti's Port-au-Prince, Sudan's Khartoum and Chad's N'Djamena in between. — Reuters

INTERNET BY LIGHT PROMISES TO LEAVE WI-FI...

Continued from Page 1

It has also seen test runs in Belgium, Estonia and India. Dutch medical equipment and lighting group Philips is reportedly interested in the technology and Apple may integrate it in its next smartphone, the iPhone7, due out at the end of the year, according to tech media.

With analysts predicting the number of objects that are connected to the Internet soaring to 50 million by 2020 and the spectrum for radio waves used by Wi-Fi in short supply, Li-Fi offers a viable alternative, according to its promoters. "We are going to connect our coffee machine, our washing machine, our tooth brush. But you can't have more than ten objects connected in Bluetooth or Wi-Fi without interference," said Toppu. Deepak Solanki, the founder and chief executive of Estonian firm Velmenni which tested Li-Fi in an industrial space last year, told AFP he expected that "two years down the line the technology can be commercialised and people can see its use at different levels."

Analysts said it was still hard to say if Li-Fi will become the new Wi-Fi. "It is still a laboratory technology," said Frederic Sarat, an analyst and consultancy firm PwC. Much will depend

on how Wi-Fi evolves in the coming years, said Gartner chief analyst Jim Tully. "Wi-Fi has shown a capability to continuously increase its communication speed with each successive generation of the technology," he told AFP. Li-Fi has its drawbacks - it only works if a smartphone or other device is placed directly in the light and it cannot travel through walls.

This restricts its use to smaller spaces, but Tully said this could limit the risk of data theft. "Unlike Wi-Fi, Li-Fi can potentially be directed and beamed at a particular user in order to enhance the privacy of transmissions," he said. Backers of Li-Fi say it would also be ideal in places where Wi-Fi is restricted to some areas such as schools and hospitals. "Li-Fi has a place in hospitals because it does not create interference with medical materials," said Joel Denimal, head of French lighting manufacturer Coolight.

In supermarkets it could be used to give information about a product, or in museums about a painting, by using lamps placed nearby. It could also be useful on aircraft, in underground garages and any place where lack of Internet connection is an issue. But Li-Fi also requires that devices be equipped with additional technology such as a card reader, or dongle, to function. This gives it a "cost disadvantage," said Tully. — AFP

OBAMA PRESENTS PLAN TO CLOSE GITMO

Continued from Page 1

As a candidate and as president, Obama has argued that the detention without trial and torture of orange jumpsuit-clad suspects harms America's image and makes it less safe. "Keeping this facility open is contrary to our values," he said yesterday. "It undermines our standing in the world. This is about closing a chapter in our history."

Lawmakers in the Republican-controlled Congress have blocked the most obvious path to closing the facility, banning the transfer of detainees to the United States. The release of Obama's plan is as much an effort to enlist the support of American voters as a possibly utopian effort to convince Republicans to change their minds in the run-up to the November presidential election. "This plan deserves a fair hearing, even in an election year," Obama said Tuesday.

But Republican Senator and presidential candidate Marco Rubio swiftly hit back with a pledge to increase the Guantanamo population if elected. "Not only are we not going to close Guantanamo - when I am president, if we capture a terrorist alive, they are not getting a court hearing in Manhattan. They are not going to be sent to Nevada. They are going to Guantanamo and we are going to find out everything they know."

The US president also has faced opposition from within his own administration, with the Pentagon accused of slow-pedaling transfers and overstating closure costs. The Guantanamo Bay closure plan, which took months to produce, gives few specifics on where a US facility would be, but military officials have previously listed Fort Leavenworth, Kansas or the US Navy brig in Charleston, South Carolina among the possible destinations for inmates. Those locations, however, face objections from local politicians.

The US leader has long argued that many Guantanamo prisoners should be transferred overseas and some should be tried by military courts. A small number - those deemed too

dangerous to release but too difficult to prosecute - would be held in the United States. Human rights groups worry this would only extend detentions without trial and create a "Guantanamo North." "The possibility of a new, parallel system of lifelong incarceration inside the United States without charge would set a dangerous precedent," Amnesty International said in a statement. "If successfully mounted, it would be a devastating blow to basic principles of criminal justice." The plan says a US facility would save money over time. It currently costs about \$455 million each year to run Guantanamo, and a US site would reduce that amount by up to \$180 million. Most of the savings would come from a decrease in the number of troops guarding the reduced population on the US mainland, but it could cost as much as \$475 million in one-time expenses to move the men and build or update a facility to hold them. "However, within three to five years the lower operating costs of a US facility with fewer detainees... could fully offset these transition costs," the closure plan notes.

Efforts to transfer prisoners overseas have been stymied by unrest in Yemen - a likely destination for many - and by recidivism among those already released. Still, Defense Secretary Ashton Carter has in recent weeks signed off on a flurry of transfers, and last month, the prison's population dropped below 100 for the first time. Today, 91 inmates remain. Of them, 35 have been approved for release. The rest face ongoing, indefinite detention.

Perhaps the most notorious prisoner is Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who along with four co-defendants is charged with plotting the Sept 11, 2001 attacks. The Guantanamo Bay military prison was opened in Jan 2002 on a US naval base on a coastal spit of land in southeastern Cuba, leased from Havana under a treaty dating back to 1903. It was set up after the 9/11 attacks under the administration of then-president George W Bush to deal with prisoners who were termed "enemy combatants" and denied many US legal rights. — AFP

SAILORS COMPETE WITH CONSTANT HEALTH FEAR IN RIO WATERS

BERLIN: The bad water quality at Rio de Janeiro's Guanabara Bay puts Paralympic sailors in constant fear of their health during competitions with organisers having failed to live up to their promises, Paralympic champion Heiko Kroeger said yesterday.

The experienced German sailor, who won a gold medal at the Sydney 2000 and silver at the London 2012 Paralympics, said sailors in wheelchairs would be especially vulnerable in the polluted waters during the Sept. 7-18 Paralympics in the Brazilian city.

"Usually when you are sailing you open your mouth and take in some

water to refresh yourself," Kroeger told Reuters a day after returning from a competition in Rio. "But in Rio last week, mouths and noses stayed shut and heads turned away from the spray," he said. "I have been sailing a long time but I have never seen that happening."

"There is a constant fear in our heads, a fear that you could get sick," said Kroeger, who also sailed in the bay back in September. "That of course affects the competition because you know that if you get sick you are out."

When Rio won the right in 2009 to stage the Olympics and Paralympics, the city had promised to cut the amount of

raw sewage flowing into the bay by 80 percent but has since confirmed it will not meet that target.

The bay, which will also host the sailing, open water swimming and triathlon races during the Olympics in August, has dangerously high levels of viruses and bacteria in the water, independent studies have shown.

Biologists in 2014 said rivers leading into the bay contained a superbacteria that is resistant to antibiotics and can cause urinary, gastrointestinal and pulmonary infections. The country is also struggling with the spread of the Zika virus, linked with an alarming surge in

cases of babies born with abnormally small heads.

"You have to take every single precaution," Kroeger said. "We will arrive in Rio two weeks before the Paralympics, then there are six days of sailing competitions and we have to stay healthy throughout. This is a very long time." He said the hot and humid climate was already a drawback for sailors in wheelchairs with the polluted water adding another layer of threat.

"They have many times open wounds because of the wheelchairs and in that water they are far more vulnerable," Kroeger said. He said the International

Olympic Committee (IOC) was also to blame for failing to pressure Rio organisers to deliver Games that would protect the health and safety of the athletes. "A city was picked to host the Games but their promise has not been kept with the IOC being weak in pushing the organisers to deliver," Kroeger said.

"You would expect the IOC's top priority to be the safety of the athletes."

The IOC has ordered testing for disease-causing viruses after taking advice from the World Health Organisation but has said it is confident water quality at the time of the Games will be safe for the athletes. — Reuters



BARCELONA: Ferrari's German driver Sebastian Vettel speaks to the press at the Circuit de Catalunya yesterday in Montmelo on the outskirts of Barcelona on the second test day of the Formula One Grand Prix season. — AFP

VETTEL SETS PACE AGAIN IN SECOND DAY OF F1

BARCELONA: Sebastian Vettel continued to show good pace with Ferrari in Formula One's preseason testing yesterday, setting the fastest time in the morning session.

Vettel was nearly a second faster than Daniel Ricciardo of Red Bull, the only other top driver to go out on Pirelli's new ultra-soft tire compound.

Vettel's time of 1 minute 22.810 seconds at the Circuito de Barcelona was almost two seconds quicker than the pole position in Spain last year. Vettel also was fastest on Monday, ahead of defending F1 champion Lewis Hamilton.

Hamilton's Mercedes teammate Nico Rosberg, testing for the first time yesterday, was third on medium tires, two seconds slower than

Vettel's time. Rosberg ran 81 laps, the most of any driver.

Vettel ran 46. Hamilton had driven 156 laps in total on Monday. Two-time champion Fernando Alonso made his debut in testing by driving 71 laps, another promising sign for McLaren after a disappointing season last year. Teammate Jenson Button had completed a total of 84 laps on Monday without any major reliability problems. Alonso was only 10th fastest among the 11 drivers on the track on Tuesday, though. Sergio Perez was fourth with Force India and Marcus Ericsson fifth with Sauber, which will only debut its 2016 car when teams return to Barcelona for the final tests of the season on March 1-4.

Esteban Gutierrez drove for newcomer Haas, finishing ninth after staying in the pits for the first hour-and-a-half of the test session. Haas, the first American-led team in F1 since 1986, had to reinforce its front wings after a failure in the car driven by Romain Grosjean on Monday.

A red flag came out near the end of the session when Max Verstappen stopped on Turn 13 with a mechanical failure in his Toro Rosso. The car had to be towed back to the garage.

Indonesian driver Rio Haryanto was scheduled to make his debut for Manor yesterday, but the team changed plans and said it decided to keep German Pascal Wehrlein in the driver's seat the entire day. Wehrlein was seventh fastest. — AP

HONDA REPLACE F1 HEAD AFTER TROUBLED SEASON

BARCELONA: Embattled Honda surprised partners McLaren yesterday by announcing a change of leadership in their Formula One engine programme less than a month before the season starts in Australia.

The Japanese company said Yasuhisa Arai, the boss who managed to keep smiling through the team's worst season last year, will step down at the end of the month and be replaced by Yusuke Hasegawa. Honda press officers said the team had been informed only after a statement detailing a wider management restructuring of Japan's third largest carmaker was issued by company headquarters on Tuesday.

The move was aimed at bringing youth and diversity to the management team.

Hasegawa has previous experience in Formula One from Honda's time with the BAR and Jordan teams in the 1990s and 2000s. "I need to catch up with what is going on," Hasegawa told Reuters during testing at Barcelona's Circuit de Catalunya. "There are a lot of good people working very closely with McLaren so I don't think it will be a big problem. "Compared to Arai-san, I think I am a very conservative person."

Arai's optimism seemed at odds with

the reality at times last season as McLaren endured record grid penalties because of repeated engine failures. Media reports suggested that the former champions wanted him replaced. Last season was the first of Honda's new partnership with McLaren, who have not won a race since 2012 and finished ninth of 10 teams.

Arai, who will retire next year, told Reuters he would help Hasegawa settle in for as long as he deemed necessary before stepping aside completely.

"I will do my best to support him," he said. "He has a different personality, the approach is a little bit different. This year we know how big the gap is to the top teams...so we don't say such optimistic words. More realism." In a joking reference to a photograph of McLaren driver Fernando Alonso that went viral on social media last season, the departing boss said he looked forward to sunning himself on a beach in a deckchair when retired. When Alonso's Honda engine failed in Brazilian Grand Prix practice last year, the Spaniard found a foldable chair and lay back trackside sunning himself with his feet resting on his helmet.

The picture swiftly spread around Twitter with fans imagining other places Alonso would rather be. — Reuters

KFH SPONSORS KUWAITI OLYMPIC CHAMPION, KHALED AL-MUDHAF

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) sponsored the Kuwaiti national team trap shooter, Khaled Al-Mudhaf during the 2016 season, emanating from bank's social responsibility while supporting the youth and sport, particularly those talented people who raise Kuwait's flag in the international forums and championships.

The Olympic champion Khaled Al-Mudhaf received several gold medals in different shooting championships at the GCC and Asia levels. He won and Olympic seat and will participate in Brazil's forth-

coming Olympic Games in 2016. KFH's sponsorship and strategic partnership with Al-Mudhaf reflect its interest in supporting the national players to participate in prominent international, regional, and local tournaments. Such players attract positive attention to their country through their achievements.

Meanwhile, Al-Mudhaf valued KFH's sponsorship affirming his determination to do his utmost for the sake of raising the Kuwaiti flag in Brazil's 2016 Olympic Games. He applauded KFH's outstanding role in achieving the social responsibility.



KFH offers the cheque of sponsorship to Al-Mudhaf

16 FINALISTS TOWARDS RED BULL KING OF THE ROCK'S FINAL

KUWAIT: After qualifiers full of excitement and suspense, Red Bull King of the Rock's last qualifier was a great closing for the four. Out of 160 participants, 16 winners qualified to the final tournament and they are Al Fadhli, Abdullah Al Salem, Ziad Houry, Talal Al Marri, Ali Ayed, Mohammed Hersi, James Cocheran, Bader Al Yaqout, Abdullah Bashir, Ebrahim Al Shemary, Jayme Gawrych, Ahmad Al Raqum, Nathan Diveley, Ali Yousef and Al Fayed.

Rules:

* Head-to-head single elimination tourna-

ment
 * Coin toss to determine first possession
 * Five-minute games with running clock
 * 15-second shot clock
 * Standard two and three points for shots made

* Alternating possession
 * Five fouls lead to disqualification
 * One technical foul leads to disqualification
 * If fouled in the act of shooting a successful basket, player gets the one additional point

and possession changes

* Injury time-out: Two minutes at the referee's discretion
 * A tie after regulation leads to two minutes overtime (coin toss for first possession)
 * 11-0 skunk rule applies, game over.

It is worth mentioning that Friday March 4th will witness the final of the competition in which the Red Bull King Of The Rock is culminated at the Radisson Blu Hotel. The final winner will qualify to represent Kuwait at the World Final in Turkey on September 18th.



NEW COORDINATORS IN SPOTLIGHT AS SPRING FOOTBALL BLOOMS

ARIZONA: Spring comes early in college football - or at least spring practice does. Arizona, Duke and Northwestern have already started spring practice. Stanford does today. Soon after the calendar flips to March there will be football on college campuses all over the country.

Off campus, too. Michigan opens its spring practice on Monday in Bradenton, Florida, at the IMG Academy. Maybe you have heard?

Coaches get 15 practices to sort through their rosters and implement new schemes, leading up to a spring game which in some places will pack game day-sized crowds into stadiums. At Arizona, Rich Rodriguez has decided to take a different approach this spring. The Wildcats are focusing almost exclusively on fundamentals instead of schemes, and they won't be playing a spring game.

"Half the scrimmages you have, or the spring game, you either don't play your top guys or you cross your fingers that nobody gets hurt," Rodriguez told reporters last month. "It's good to look at schemes, but what are you trying to win? Beat your own team? It's not nearly as important as teaching them how to play."

At Pitt, the Panthers are taking their

spring game back to the big stage. Pittsburgh will wrap up its workouts with an intra-squad game on April 26 at Heinz Field. It will be the first time since 2011 the Panthers have held a spring game at the home they share with the Pittsburgh Steelers. Construction at Heinz last year forced Pitt to hold its spring game at nearby Highmark Stadium, a 4,000-seat facility used by a professional soccer team. In three seasons under previous coach Paul Chryst, Pitt either played its spring game at local high schools as a way for the new staff to build relationships in the area or did not have one.

The Panthers' average attendance last year was 48,150, up 17 percent from the year before as new coach Pat Narduzzi helped excite fans. Coming off an 8-5 season, Narduzzi hopes playing the spring game at Heinz helps Pitt develop a home-field advantage that has been challenging to cultivate off campus. "It's always important to get into your home field and get our kids comfortable with playing in that stadium," Narduzzi said. While Narduzzi and Rodriguez are taking different approaches to spring, they do have something in common: Both are breaking in new coordinators on the side of the ball that is not their specialty.

Narduzzi, the architect of Michigan State's great defenses while working under Mark Dantonio, brought in former North Carolina State offensive coordinator Matt Canada to replace Jim Chaney, who left for Georgia. Rodriguez parted ways with long-time assistant Jeff Casteel, who had been his defensive coordinator at West Virginia, and brought in Marcel Yates from Boise State to fix an Arizona defense that ranked 93rd in the nation in average yards allowed per play.

Here are six more teams breaking in coordinators for whom much will be expected next season. Brady Hoke, Oregon. Second-year coordinator Don Pellum, who has been on staff for 25 years, was demoted after the Ducks' defense finished 98th in the nation in average yards allowed per play. Oregon prides itself on being a promote-from-within program, but coach Mark Helfrich knew the Ducks were in need of a fresh perspective. Hoke, the former Michigan coach, came through the ranks as a defensive line coach but has never been a coordinator.

JOE MOORHEAD, PENN STATE

The Nittany Lions' first two seasons under James Franklin have produced some ugly offenses, despite having a quarterback with

an NFL skill set in Christian Hackenberg. There was plenty of blame to go around, but offensive coordinator John Donovan was the one who got fired. In steps Moorhead, who spent the last four seasons as the head coach at Fordham, leading the Rams to three straight FCS playoff appearances with a high-powered spread offense.

NOEL MAZZONE, TEXAS A&M

The swag left Texas A&M's offense with Johnny Football. Highly recruited quarterbacks have not developed. The running game has been spotty at best. The overall inconsistency led to the dismissal of 30-year-old Jake Spavital, who as it turned out was not quite ready to be the next Kliff Kingsbury. Coach Kevin Sumlin hired the veteran Mazzone away from UCLA hoping to trade some swag for production.

BOB SHOOP, TENNESSEE

The Volunteers' defense was OK last season (39th in the country in yards per play) so it was a little surprising when coach Butch Jones fired coordinator John Jancek. Then it all made sense when Jones quickly pulled Shoop away from Penn State. Even burdened by limp offenses, Shoop's Penn State defenses

were excellent. The Vols have talent (DL Derek Barnett, CB Cameron Sutton) and high expectations. There will be no patience in Knoxville.

STERLIN GILBERT, TEXAS

The Baylor offense has been ripping up the Big 12 for most of Art Briles' eight years as coach of the Bears. But can it save Charlie Strong at Texas? The Longhorns coach plucked the 37-year-old Gilbert from Briles' coaching tree, luring him away from Tulsa, where he was the offensive coordinator last season under former Baylor OC Philip Montgomery. One of the best parts of Baylor's offensive system is it usually doesn't take long to get it up and humming. For Strong's sake, that better be the case for Gilbert in Austin.

MANNY DIAZ, MIAMI

Diaz has fully rehabbed his reputation after it was dragged down by Mack Brown's sinking ship at Texas. The Hurricanes will have one of the best quarterbacks (Brad Kaaya) in the country, leading an experienced offense for new coach Mark Richt. If Diaz can fix a defense that has been an underachieving mess, maybe Miami can finally reach the ACC title game. — AP

MURRAY TO LEAD BRITISH DAVIS CUP DEFENCE AGAINST JAPAN

LONDON: Andy Murray is set to make his first competitive appearance since becoming a father after being confirmed yesterday in the team that will begin Great Britain's defence of their Davis Cup title against Japan. Murray has not played since losing to Novak Djokovic in last month's Australian Open final, opting instead to spend time with new daughter Sophia, born on February 7, and wife Kim Sears.

But having inspired Britain to their first Davis triumph in 79 years with victory over Belgium in Ghent in November, it was no surprise that the 28-year-old was included in captain Leon Smith's team for next week's first-round tie against Japan in Birmingham, central England.

"Andy Murray has once again demonstrated his commitment to the team and his country in making himself available to play, especially so soon after becoming a father," Smith told the Lawn Tennis Association's website.

"His outstanding performance at the Australian Open is further evidence that he is one of the world's best players," Smith added. Also included in a five-man squad, which will eventually be trimmed to four for the tie proper, was Murray's older brother Jamie, a doubles specialist.

While Andy, a former US Open and

Wimbledon champion, endured heartache when losing the Australian singles final to Djokovic in January, Melbourne proved a happy hunting ground for Jamie who, together with Brazil's Bruno Soares, won the Australian Open doubles title last month. "Jamie Murray is arguably the most in form doubles player in world tennis, currently at a career high ranking of number two and continues to show signs of improvement," said Smith. "He made vital contributions to our 2015 Davis Cup campaign and is playing the best tennis of his life right now."

However, Smith added: "Japan have a very strong team, progressed well in recent years and with Kei Nishikori have an established top-10 player.

"It will be a test for us but I'm confident in our team and I'm sure when the guys pull on their GB shirt they will give their all. "We are lucky to have another home tie and it's exciting to be returning to Birmingham."

Britain were languishing in the third tier of the Davis Cup, the sport's leading international men's team event, before Smith took over as skipper in 2010 but, thanks mainly to Andy Murray, have enjoyed a rapid rise in recent years.

The winners of the Britain-Japan tie will face either Serbia or Kazakhstan in a July 15-17 quarter-final. — AFP



DOHA: This file photo taken on February 11, 2013 shows Fatma al-Nabhani of Oman returning the ball to Caroline Garcia of France during their match on the first day of the WTA Qatar Open in the capital Doha. — AFP

PACQUIAO NEGOTIATING NEW DEALS AFTER NIKE AXE

MANILA: Philippine boxing hero Manny Pacquiao is holding sponsorship negotiations with sports apparel companies after US giant Nike dropped him over his controversial comments on same-sex couples, his business manager said yesterday. Nike cut ties with the eight-time world champion last week after he described gay couples as "worse than animals". The 37-year-old's comments, which Nike described as "abhorrent", touched off a firestorm of international criticism, particularly from US athletes and the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community.



Manny Pacquiao

"There are several already now in the pipeline. They (the Pacquiao camp) were actually negotiating with some already," Pacquiao business manager Eric Pineda told AFP without naming the companies.

He said they included a "multi-million-dollar" brand that would likely replace Nike as the supplier of Pacquiao's sports gear. Pineda also said no Philippine-based companies had dropped Pacquiao as a commercial endorser despite the furore over his comments.

"They will still be sponsoring Manny. Just look at his shorts," he said, referring to commercial logos that cover the training togs of Pacquiao, who is preparing to fight US foe

Timothy Bradley in Las Vegas in April and then retire from boxing.

Pacquiao, a national hero in the Philippines, has made a fortune endorsing products and brands ranging from automobiles, motorcycles, car batteries, pizzas, beer, a bank and even property firms.

A devout Christian, Pacquiao has issued a public apology while also defending his comments, saying he was merely quoting the Bible. He remains widely popular in the Philippines, where he is running for a seat in the Senate in May elections, a higher-profile national post than his current seat in the House of Representatives representing a southern province. Surveys have shown that despite Pacquiao's lacklustre performance in parliament, he is likely to win a Senate seat.

Meanwhile, undefeated world champion Keith Thurman was hurt in a car accident, forcing his March 12 welterweight title defense in Connecticut against Shawn Porter to be postponed, organizers said Monday. Promoter Lou DiBella, president of DiBella Entertainment, made the announcement. The nature of Thurman's injuries were not given, but according to his doctors is expected to be cleared to resume training in the coming weeks, a statement from DiBella said.

"While it's unfortunate that we must temporarily postpone this marquee matchup, a main event of the magnitude of Thurman vs. Porter requires both fighters be healthy and at their best," the promoter said. Thurman, 26-0 with 22 knockouts, was preparing for the second defense of the title he won last March with a unanimous decision over compatriot Robert Guerrero. Thurman stopped US southpaw Luis Collazo in the seventh round last July in his first title defense.

Porter, 26-1-1 with 16 knockouts, owned the International Boxing Federation version of the welterweight title until losing it in 2014 by majority decision to Britain's undefeated Kell Brook. Porter bounced back last year with wins over Ecuador's Erick Bone and American Adrien Broner. — AFP



ST LOUIS: San Jose Sharks' Brent Burns, right, congratulates teammate Joe Thornton after Thornton scored a hole during the third period of an NHL hockey game against the St. Louis Blues on Monday, in St. Louis. The Sharks won 6-3. — AP

SHARKS TOPS BLUES 6-3 ON THE ROAD IN NHL

ST. LOUIS: Tomas Hertl, Logan Couture and Joe Thornton each scored two goals, powering the San Jose Sharks to a 6-3 victory over the St. Louis Blues in the NHL on Monday. Thornton also had two assists as San Jose improved to 21-9-2 on the road, matching their total road wins from last season. At home, the Sharks are just 11-12-3. The Blues lost goalie Brian Elliott to a lower-body injury in the first period. San Jose defenseman Matt Tennyson left in the first after he was driven into the glass. Hertl had two of San Jose's three goals in the first. He also scored in the Sharks' 5-2 loss at Carolina on Friday. Vladimir Tarasenko had a goal and two assists for St. Louis. David Backes and Jay Bouwmeester also scored.

CAPITALS 3, COYOTES 2

Mike Richards scored his first goal in more than a year, leading the Capitals to the victory. Alex Ovechkin put Washington ahead with his league-leading 39th goal of the season and had an assist. Evgeny Kuznetsov also had a goal and an assist for NHL-best Washington, which won its fourth straight and ninth in its last 10 games. Defensemen Connor Murphy and Kevin Connauton scored for Arizona, which began a five-game East Coast road trip with its second consecutive loss.

Louis Domingue made 31 saves. Only seconds after Ovechkin's goal made it 2-1, Domingue appeared to have the puck covered with a glove in his crease when Washington's Tom Wilson reached a stick in to poke it away. It found Richards, who rifled home Washington's second goal in 26 seconds. Coyotes coach Dave Tippett challenged the goal, but it stood.

PREDATORS 2, CANADIENS 1, SO

Craig Smith scored the only goal in the shootout, lifting Nashville to the road win. Viktor

NHL results/standings

Montreal 1, Nashville 2 (SO); St. Louis 3, San Jose 6; Boston 4, Columbus 6; Washington 3, Arizona 2.

Eastern Conference							Western Conference						
Atlantic Division							Pacific Division						
	W	L	OT	GF	GA	PTS							
Florida	34	18	7	164	137	75	Chicago	38	19	5	176	148	81
Tampa Bay	33	22	4	163	148	70	Dallas	37	17	6	194	169	80
Boston	32	22	6	185	169	70	St. Louis	35	18	9	156	150	79
Detroit	29	20	11	151	157	69	Nashville	28	21	11	156	155	67
Ottawa	28	26	6	172	186	62	Colorado	31	27	4	165	173	66
Montreal	28	27	5	163	165	61	Minnesota	27	22	10	156	148	64
Buffalo	24	29	7	144	166	55	Winnipeg	25	29	4	149	171	54
Toronto	20	27	10	140	172	50	Central Division						
Washington	44	10	4	194	133	92	Los Angeles	34	20	4	157	137	72
NY Rangers	34	19	6	171	150	74	Anaheim	31	19	8	146	141	70
NY Islanders	31	19	7	164	144	69	San Jose	32	21	5	174	157	69
Pittsburgh	30	20	8	154	151	68	Arizona	27	26	6	163	183	60
New Jersey	29	24	7	133	141	65	Vancouver	23	24	12	142	168	58
Carolina	27	23	10	148	160	64	Calgary	26	29	3	160	180	55
Philadelphia	26	21	11	144	158	63	Edmonton	22	32	6	150	184	50
Columbus	24	29	7	155	188	55	Note: Overtime losses (OT) worth 1 pt and not included in loss column (L)						

Arvidsson scored in the first period for the Predators (28-21-11), who are 3-0-3 in their last six games. Brendan Gallagher scored his 16th goal for Montreal (28-27-5), which has recorded at least one point in its last five home games (4-0-1). Nashville outshot Montreal 29-27 in regulation time and 30-29 overall.

BLUE JACKETS 6, BRUINS 4

Boone Jenner scored two goals and Scott Hartnell had a goal and an assist, leading Columbus to the road win. William Karlsson,

Brandon Saad and Dalton Prout also scored for the Blue Jackets, who avoided a sweep in the three-game season series by picking up a point for 10th time in their last 12 games (7-2-3). Columbus goaltender Joonas Korpisalo made 26 saves. Matt Beleskey and Loui Eriksson each had two goals for Boston, which continued its inexplicable home woes. Backup goalie Jonas Gustavsson made 29 saves. The Bruins were coming off an impressive 4-2 road trip, but they were unable to build on that momentum back at home. Boston is 20-7-3 away from TD Garden, and just 12-15-3 at home. — AP

WALES' CHARTERIS TO MISS FRANCE CLASH

LONDON: Wales lock Luke Charteris has been ruled out of the Six Nations international against France in Cardiff on Friday with a knee injury, the Welsh Rugby Union said yesterday.

His place in coach Warren Gatland's starting XV has been taken by Bradley Davies. Gatland has made two other changes to the side that beat Scotland 27-23 at the Millennium Stadium 10 days ago, with wing Alex Cuthbert and flanker Dan Lydiate drafted into the New Zealander's run-on team. Meanwhile, in a positional switch, Wales captain Sam Warburton moves to open-side flanker from blindside, with Justin Tipuric dropped to the bench.

Behind the scrum, centre Jonathan Davies has been given the all-clear after missing French club side Clermont's Top 14 match against Castres last weekend because of a groin problem. But Charteris, who also plays his club rugby in France,

has not recovered in time after being sidelined from duty with Paris-based Racing 92 last Saturday.

Cuthbert has been given his first start of this Six Nations in place of Cardiff team-mate Tom James, who is now no longer even in the match-day 23. "We have made a couple of changes, one injury enforced with Luke missing out with a knee injury, but Bradley deserves a starting spot as well, so it's a good opportunity for him," said Gatland in a WRU statement.

"We have made two other personnel changes, with Alex and Dan coming into the starting team. They have trained well and will suit the game France will potentially bring as well." Wales were not due to reveal their team until today but Gatland, explaining the change, said: "We initially thought we would have to wait until later in the week to have a final update on injuries, but we

know where we are earlier than expected and have told the squad, hence announcing (the team) today (Tuesday) as well."

Wales, who drew against defending champions Ireland in their opening fixture of this season's Six Nations, face a France side bidding to make it three wins out of three under new coach Guy Noves after victories over Italy and Ireland.

However, Wales have not lost to France since an agonising 2011 World Cup semi-final defeat in Auckland - a match where Warburton was sent off and have won their last four Six Nations clashes against 'Les Bleus'.

"France come to Cardiff unbeaten in the campaign so far, and impressing under Guy (Noves)," said Gatland. "We are looking to continue our unbeaten run and will be looking for another step up after the victory over Scotland," he added. — AFP

INDIA, PAKISTAN TO RENEW RIVALRY IN ASIA CUP

DHAKA: India and Pakistan will renew cricket's most bitter rivalry this week after a two-year gap when they face off in the Asia Cup, a contest for regional supremacy which is also a final rehearsal for the World T20. The biennial 12-day tournament, which is being held in Bangladesh for the second time in a row, begins tonight when the hosts take on India at Dhaka's Sher-e-Bangla stadium-the venue for all the matches.

Local supporters will be looking to see if Bangladesh's sharp improvement in 50-over cricket will translate into an upturn in their performances in the shortest form of the game, with the World T20 in India only weeks away. But most eyes will be on Saturday's glamour tie when India and Pakistan take to the field together for the first time since the last World T20 in 2014. India-Pakistan showdowns usually draw

hundreds of millions of television viewers, making it the biggest box office attraction in the sport. But diplomatic tensions have meant that the two teams have not played any bilateral series for more than three years and their rivalry is therefore restricted to multi-national tournaments.

Pakistan, furious that India has rebuffed repeated pleas to play a bilateral series at a neutral venue, will be desperate to cause an upset against their giant neighbour.

With the reigning champions Sri Lanka going through a rebuilding phase, most pundits expect India to cement their position at the top of the T20 world rankings ahead of their staging of the format's premier tournament.

DHONI BLOW

Confidence is high among Mahendra Singh Dhoni's men after recent convincing

T20 series victories over Australia and Sri Lanka. Although India are likely to give most of their players a work-out in the build-up to the World T20, team director Ravi Shastri made clear they would not be taking their foot off the gas.

"Whether we play Bangladesh, Pakistan or Sri Lanka and wherever we are playing, we have to continue our good form," Shastri told reporters in Dhaka.

India's star batsman Virat Kohli also quashed any suggestion that the team would be holding back with only weeks to go before the World T20 begins.

"When I go into field I go to play cricket with bat and ball, playing with Pakistan is not different. It's competitive and Pakistan is a strong team," Kohli said yesterday.

India are set to be without Dhoni for the Bangladesh opener after the skipper suffered a back spasm during a practice ses-

sion on Monday. But former Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar acknowledged India would nevertheless start as tournament favourites after their recent successes.

"In the T20 format any team can beat anyone on a given day. Still, if we have to single out a team as favourites, I would say it is India," he said. "They are an in-form team. Also they now play Twenty20 cricket more than anyone else."

Two crushing Indian victories over Sri Lanka in their recent three-match series underlined how much the islanders are missing batting greats Kumar Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardene, who have both retired since the 2014 triumph.

Pakistan, who will become the first side to play 100 Twenty20 internationals during the tournament on February 29, will arrive late in Dhaka after the finale of the inaugural edition of the Pakistan Super League.

Bangladesh will hope home advantage will help them build confidence before heading to India for the World T20 qualifying round from March 8-13.

The Tigers had a dream run in 2015 in one-day internationals, but when it comes to 20-over cricket they are still ranked among the minnows.

Schedule:

- Feb 24: Bangladesh v India
- Feb 25: Sri Lanka v UAE
- Feb 26: Bangladesh v UAE
- Feb 27: India v Pakistan
- Feb 28: Bangladesh v Sri Lanka
- Feb 29: Pakistan v UAE
- Mar 1: India v Sri Lanka
- Mar 2: Bangladesh v Pakistan
- Mar 3: India v UAE
- Mar 4: Pakistan v Sri Lanka
- Mar 6: Final. — AFP



CHRISTCHURCH: Australia's David Warner (R) plays a shot watched by Brendon McCullum (L) captain of New Zealand during day four of the second cricket Test match between New Zealand and Australia at the Hagley Park in Christchurch yesterday. — AFP

AUSTRALIA IN SIGHT OF VICTORY, TOP RANKING

CHRISTCHURCH: Joe Burns and Usman Khawaja had Australia in sight of victory and the top Test ranking yesterday after an absorbing fourth day marked by stubborn resistance from New Zealand and umpire abuse by the tourists.

With Burns on 27 and Khawaja 19, Australia were 70 for 1 at stumps in the second Test in Christchurch, requiring a further 131 to sweep the series 2-0 and return to world number one. Jackson Bird, with his first five-wicket Test haul, and James Pattinson combined to end the New Zealand second innings at 335, giving Australia a 201-run target.

David Warner, who has struggled on New Zealand surfaces, was the Australian wicket to fall, caught behind for 22. Neil Wagner, using the short ball that provided him with six wickets in the first innings, caught Warner's glove and BJ Watling completed the dismissal down the leg-side. Burns offered chances but luck was on his side. On 19, he pulled Matt Henry through square leg where Wagner was unable to hold a difficult chance. On 23, an inside edge off Henry sailed close to off stump. Khawaja, however, looked untroubled and effortlessly moved to 19 off 23 deliveries.

Although New Zealand had their backs to the

wall, all-rounder Corey Anderson said they see hope in a fragile Australian tail. "We're going to have to come up with some interesting fields and give it a real crack," he said.

"We managed to run through the tail pretty quickly in the first innings after they'd put on about 400 for the first six wickets. "If we can get in a similar situation then we've just got to back ourselves." Although Australia have been dominant for much of the Test, New Zealand put up a valiant fight with two century partnerships as they battled to save the contest.

Kane Williamson made 97 when adding 102 for the fifth wicket with Anderson. The loss of Anderson for 40 was the start of a Bird strike that claimed three wickets in six balls.

Williamson and Tim Southee also fell before BJ Watling and Henry mounted rearguard resistance, adding 118 for the eighth wicket. Bird, back in the Australian side for the first time in three years, was not totally happy with his performance despite taking five for 59. "I feel like I've been pretty inconsistent with the way I've bowled in the series which is disappointing, but it was nice to get a few wickets today and to put us in a pretty good position to win the game and win the series," he said. — AFP

SCOREBOARD

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand: Scoreboard at stumps on day four of the second Test between New Zealand and Australia in Christchurch yesterday.

New Zealand first innings 370 (B. McCullum 145, C. Anderson 72, B. Watling 58; N. Lyon 3-61)

Australia 1st innings 505 (Burns 170, S. Smith 138, A. Voges 60; Wagner 6-106, Boult 2-108)

New Zealand 2nd innings (overnight 121-4)
 T. Latham c Nevill b Pattinson 39
 M. Guptill c Nevill b Pattinson 0
 K. Williamson b Bird 97
 H. Nicholls c Smith b Pattinson 2
 B. McCullum c Warner b Hazlewood 25
 C. Anderson b Bird 40
 B. Watling c Burns b Pattinson 46
 T. Southee c Smith b Bird 0
 M. Henry b Bird 66
 N. Wagner not out 3
 T. Boult c Pattinson b Bird 0
 Extras: (b2, lb14, nb1) 17
 Total (10 wickets; 111.1 overs) 335
 Fall of wicket: 1-8 (Guptill), 2-66 (Latham),

3-72 (Nicholls), 4-105 (McCullum), 5-207 (Anderson), 6-210 (Williamson), 7-210 (Southee), 8-328 (Watling), 9-335 (Henry), 10-335 (Boult).
 Bowling: Hazlewood 34-11-92-1, Pattinson 26-8-77-4, Bird 17.1-5-59-5, Lyon 17-3-42-0, Marsh 17-4-49-0 (nb1)

Australia 2nd innings
 J. Burns not out 27
 D. Warner c Watling b Wagner 22
 U. Khawaja not out 19
 Extras (nb2) 2
 Total (1 wicket; 20 overs) 70
 Fall of wicket: 1-49 (Warner)
 Bowling: Boult 7-0-30-0, Southee 2-1-9-0, Henry 4-1-17-0 (nb1), Wagner 6-0-13-1 (nb1), Anderson 1-0-1-0
 To bat: S. Smith, A. Voges, M. Marsh, P. Nevill, J. Pattinson, J. Hazlewood, N. Lyon, J. Bird.

CURRY LEADS WARRIORS TO 50TH WIN OVER HAWKS

ATLANTA: Stephen Curry scored 36 points and the Golden State Warriors became the fastest team in NBA history to 50 wins, beating the Atlanta Hawks 102-92 Monday night after squandering a 23-point lead. The Warriors (50-5) eclipsed the mark set by the 1995-96 Chicago Bulls, who needed one more game to win their 50th. Of course, that's the team Golden State is chasing, moving another step closer to the record 72-10 mark put up by Michael Jordan and his teammates at the height of their six-titles-in-eight-years dynasty.

Atlanta closed the third quarter on a 28-6 run and grabbed the lead briefly early in the fourth, igniting the sellout crowd. But the Warriors would not be denied, bouncing back to hand the Hawks their fourth straight home loss. Klay Thompson added 27 points for the Warriors. Both he and Curry knocked down five shots from 3-point range. Draymond Green had 14 rebounds and nine assists. Al Horford led the Hawks with 23 points.

PISTONS 96, CAVALIERS 88

Reggie Jackson scored 23 points, Kentavious Caldwell-Pope added 19 and Detroit withoutstod Cleveland's late comeback to end a five-game losing streak. One day after allowing New Orleans center Anthony Davis to score 59 points with 20 rebounds, the Pistons beat the Eastern Conference's top team for the second time this season. Andre Drummond added 15 rebounds for the Pistons, who let an 18-point lead in the fourth quarter dwindle to six before putting away the Cavs and ending their five-game winning streak. Kyrie Irving scored 30 and Kevin Love 24 for Cleveland, which had an off night after looking so impressive in a win at Oklahoma City on Sunday. LeBron James scored just 12 points - 13 below his average - and went 5 of 18 from the floor, missing all four 3-point tries and committing six turnovers. Tobias Harris, acquired from Orlando in a trade last week, scored 14 in his first start for the Pistons.

HEAT 101, PACERS 93, OT

Goran Dragic scored 24 points, Hassan Whiteside finished with 19 points and 18 rebounds, and Miami won its third consecutive game since the All-Star break, rallying from 14 points down to beat Indiana in overtime. Dwyane Wade added 16 points and Justise Winslow scored 15 for Miami, which won despite shooting only 38 percent. The Heat grabbed 66 rebounds for the second consecutive game after reaching that mark only three times in their first 28 seasons. Luol Deng added 13 points and 16 rebounds for Miami. Paul George had 31 points and 11 rebounds for the Pacers, and Myles Turner scored 16. But Indiana's starting backcourt of Monta Ellis and George Hill combined to miss 22 of 24 shots.

RAPTORS 122, KNICKS 95

Kyle Lowry had 22 points, 11 rebounds and 11 assists for his first triple-double of the season, DeMar DeRozan also scored 22 while becoming the winningest player in Raptors history, and Toronto beat New York. Jonas Valanciunas added 20 points for the Raptors, who won so easily that Knicks interim coach Kurt Rambis changed his mind in the final minutes of the blowout and inserted Jimmer Fredette. Just signed to a 10-day contract, the former college player of the year made a 3-pointer on his lone shot attempt - about the only thing Knicks fans had to cheer during the team's 12th loss in 14 games. DeRozan passed Chris Bosh and Morris Peterson with his 233rd win in six-plus years wearing a Raptors uniform. Carmelo Anthony had 23 points and 11 rebounds for the Knicks on the fifth anniversary of his trade to New York. Robin Lopez added 21 points and 13 boards.

TIMBERWOLVES 124, CELTICS 122

Karl-Anthony Towns had 28 points, 13 rebounds



ATLANTA: Kyle Korver #26 of the Atlanta Hawks defends against Harrison Barnes #40 of the Golden State Warriors at Philips Arena on Monday in Atlanta, Georgia. — AFP

NBA results/standings

Atlanta 92, Golden State 102; LA Clippers 124, Phoenix 84; Miami 101, Indiana 93 (OT); New York 95, Toronto 122; Milwaukee 108, LA Lakers 101; Minnesota 124, Boston 122; Cleveland 88, Detroit 96.

Eastern Conference				Western Conference					
Atlantic Division				Northwest Division					
	W	L	PCT	GB					
Toronto	37	18	.673	—	Oklahoma City	40	16	.714	—
Boston	33	25	.569	5.5	Portland	29	27	.518	11
New York	24	34	.414	14.5	Utah	27	28	.491	12.5
Brooklyn	15	41	.268	22.5	Denver	22	34	.393	18
Philadelphia	8	47	.145	29	Minnesota	18	39	.316	22.5
Central Division				Pacific Division					
Cleveland	40	15	.727	—	Golden State	50	5	.909	—
Indiana	30	26	.536	10.5	LA Clippers	37	19	.661	13.5
Chicago	29	26	.527	11	Sacramento	23	31	.426	26.5
Detroit	28	29	.491	13	Phoenix	14	43	.246	37
Milwaukee	24	33	.421	17	LA Lakers	11	47	.190	40.5
Southeast Division				Southwest Division					
Miami	32	24	.571	—	San Antonio	47	9	.839	—
Atlanta	31	27	.534	2	Memphis	32	23	.582	14.5
Charlotte	29	26	.527	2.5	Dallas	30	27	.526	17.5
Washington	25	29	.463	6	Houston	28	28	.500	19
Orlando	24	30	.444	7	New Orleans	22	33	.400	24.5

and four assists, and Minnesota outlasted Boston. Gorgui Dieng had 17 points and 12 rebounds, and Ricky Rubio gave the Timberwolves 15 points, eight assists, eight rebounds and some terrific defense on Celtics All-Star Isaiah Thomas. Jae Crowder had 27 points and nine rebounds for the Celtics, who lost on the second night of a back-to-back for the first time in six games. Boston's normally stingy defense gave up 51.8 percent shooting to the Wolves. The Celtics were also outbounded 51-38, and Marcus Smart missed a 3-pointer at the buzzer that would have won it. Zach LaVine had 16 points and shot 4 of 5 on 3-pointers, and Andrew Wiggins scored 17 for the Wolves.

BUCKS 108, LAKERS 101

Giannis Antetokounmpo had 27 points, 12 rebounds and 10 assists, and Milwaukee beat Los Angeles in retiring star Kobe Bryant's last trip to the Bradley Center. Bryant had 15 points in 24 minutes, shooting 3 of 12 from the field and 8 for 9 at the foul line. He was feted with a pregame video tribute by

Bucks coach Jason Kidd, who faced the 37-year-old Bryant numerous times during his playing days. Kidd's young players set the pace and outscored the Lakers 36-17 in the third quarter. All five Bucks starters scored in double figures. The Lakers lost their sixth straight game.

CLIPPERS 124, SUNS 84

J.J. Redick scored 22 points and Los Angeles handed Phoenix its 12th consecutive loss overall and 15th in a row on the road. DeAndre Jordan added 17 points and 11 rebounds, and Chris Paul had 16 points and 14 assists for the Clippers, who split their previous two games against the West's top two teams, the Warriors and Spurs.

Los Angeles had its way with the conference's second-worst team, earning its most lopsided win of the season while improving to 20-6 without injured Blake Griffin. Archie Goodwin scored 20 points off the bench for the Suns, who trailed the entire game on the way to their worst loss of the season. — AP

KUWAIT CRICKET & IDP EDUCATIONS PRESENT GRAND DOMESTIC FINALS

HERSCHELLE GIBBS TO GRACE THE OCCASION

KUWAIT: Kuwait Cricket (KC), the official body of governing cricket in Kuwait in association with IDP Educations - official IELTS centre in Kuwait have invited South African legend Herschelle Herman Gibbs as the guest of honor in order to give yet another boost to the overall development of domestic cricket in Kuwait. As many as 7 finals are going to take place over an action packed weekend that will see the entire Kuwait Cricket fraternity celebrate the national and liberation day of Kuwait T20 style. KC-SDL & KC-DTL are the on-going turf tournaments that shall be concluded on the 25th & 26th of February respectively at TACK entertainment city cricket ground - Doha in a lively atmosphere created by DJ flames that will keep the audience present at the ground fully entertained. KC - DTL saw as many as 20 teams participate in the tournament spread across two divisions of A & B over a period of 3 months whereas KC-SDL had as many as 48 teams spread across 5 divisions of A, B,

C, D, & E having played at both Sulaibiya cricket ground and TACK-TEC over a period of 4 months and therefore, it comes as no surprise that the finalists are more than ready for an epic finale.

When Johnny Rhodes retired, South Africans wondered where they would find a replacement fielder of the most predatory type; Herschelle Gibbs answered the call and was as good, if not better than the great Johnny himself. Gibbs started his international career in 1996 and played many match winning innings for his country; none better than his 175 off just 111 balls against Australia at the Wanderers in 2006. Set a world record 434 to chase in 50 overs, Gibbs' innings set the tone to what turned out to be the most outrageous run chase in history of ODI cricket. He also became the first player to hit 6 sixes in ODI cricket, doing so against the Netherlands in the 2007 World Cup. Gibbs retired from international cricket in 2010 and is considered by many as one of

the game's modern legends. It is undoubtedly a privilege for all the finalist teams and their respective players along with the entire Kuwait Cricket fraternity to have someone of Gibbs' stature not only to witness the finals but also give his expert opinions and pitch reports during the process. In order to make the most of Gibbs' tour to Kuwait, KC has set up a unique coaching clinic in association with IDP and indiansinkuwait.com that will see as many as 40-50 registered kids between the ages of 8 - 19 learn batting, bowling, fielding and confidence building skills from the legend himself on Saturday, the 27th of February from 12:00 - 3:00 PM. Kuwait Cricket has always paid special attention to developing grass root level of cricket and has therefore ensured the youth of today are encouraged to become the stars of tomorrow by seeing a legend train and teach as a firsthand experience.

IDP Educations, a world leader in international

student placement services is the main event partner of Kuwait Cricket. IDP is a proud co-owner of IELTS (International English Language Testing System) and it is the official IELTS centre in Kuwait. Since both Kuwait Cricket and IDP value the development of young talent, it seemed a very natural partnership for these two organizations. Registrations for the clinic can be done through indiansinkuwait.com who are the official online media partners for this event. Crowne Plaza, Caesars, Al Hafiz, Kuwait Swedish, Schneider, Sadia, Blink.com, Esselte and Abdul Rahman Al Bahar - Caterpillar are the other official co-sponsors of the event and Kuwait Cricket is proud to have such esteemed brands in their respective categories to come forward and support the development of domestic cricket in Kuwait like never before. Kuwait Cricket looks forward to welcoming people from all the different backgrounds on this hala febray celebration weekend.



Herschelle Herman Gibbs

UNDER-FIRE MAN CITY MUST REVIVE FADING SEASON IN KIEV

LONDON: Manchester City must put a potentially ruinous fortnight behind them as they seek to reboot their faltering season with a big performance in their Champions League last-16, first leg trip to Dynamo Kiev today. With their English Premier League title hopes badly dented by successive home losses to fellow contenders Leicester City and Tottenham Hotspur, City received heavy criticism for fielding a second-string team in Sunday's embarrassing FA Cup capitulation at Chelsea.

Suddenly, the lavishly-funded team who had been campaigning for a quadruple of titles finds their season in danger of careering off the rails with manager Manuel Pellegrini brought to task by a former England great over his moans about the club's fixture congestion.

Alan Shearer, the Premier League's all-time leading scorer, criticised City's approach, telling the BBC he could not understand Pellegrini's decision to start six teenagers in the team which was thrashed 5-1 at Chelsea. "Barcelona played on Saturday and they face Arsenal in the Champions League on Tuesday. It's the same amount of time (between games) as City, but they didn't rest any players," Shearer said. "I don't get the talk of resting players. City are and want to be a very big club on the global stage. They've got more resources than anyone. I never see Luis Suarez, Lionel Messi or



KIEV: Manchester City FC head coach Manuel Pellegrini (R) takes part in a training session at Olympiyski Stadium in Kiev yesterday, a day before the Champion's League, round of 16 football match between FC Dynamo Kiev and Manchester City. — AFP

Cristiano Ronaldo wanting to be left out." Pellegrini responded to the criticism by saying he should not have to defend his selection. City, he explained, had been struggling with injuries and he was forced to prioritise in a crucial week featuring not just the Kiev game but also Sunday's League Cup final against Liverpool.

City had written to the Football Association to complain about the scheduling of the Chelsea game, having wanted it played on Saturday.

All this turmoil plays into the hands of outsiders Kiev, who have reached the knock-out stages for the first time since they were beaten by Bayern Munich in the 1999 semi-finals. This will be the Ukrainian champions' first official match after a two-and-a-half-month winter break, during which they have tried to maintain sharpness in a series of friendlies.

Kiev's key concern is the physical shape of winger Andriy Yarmolenko, who spent two months on the sidelines with a knee injury suffered in the final game of the group stage against Maccabi.

They have also made a plea to their fans to behave during the game after the club had initially been ordered by UEFA to play the tie in an empty stadium following incidents in the match against Chelsea in October. However, UEFA reduced the sanction on appeal. — Reuters



SHREWSBURY: Manchester United's Dutch manager Louis van Gaal reacts as he signs autographs for fans following the English FA Cup fifth round football match between Shrewsbury Town and Manchester United at the Greenhous Meadow stadium in Shrewsbury, western England on Monday. Manchester United won the match 3-0. — AFP

RELIEVED VAN GAAL READY FOR EURO REDEMPTION

SHREWSBURY: Louis van Gaal insists Manchester United still have "a lot of chances" for success this season as they prepare to face FC Midtjylland in a make-or-break Europa League tie. United extended their FA Cup run with a comfortable 3-0 win over Shrewsbury on Monday to secure a tie against West Ham United in the quarter-finals. And Van Gaal has now begun preparing his side for tomorrow's crucial home game with Midtjylland as they try to overturn an embarrassing 2-1 deficit from the away leg in Denmark.

The United manager's future remains uncertain despite the routine win against League One Shrewsbury, and Van Gaal admits Thursday's fixture at Old Trafford is a significant occasion.

"It is in my opinion a big game because it's a chance to qualify for the Champions League next season (by winning the Europa League)," he said. "But we have to win a lot of matches of course. It's easily spoken about but doing it is different. But it is possible and then we'll see. "Still everything is possible, we're still in three competitions, so we have to fight for a lot of chances I think."

Van Gaal could have first-choice goalkeeper David De Gea fit to face Midtjylland after he suffered a knee injury in the warm-up for the first leg. And the Dutchman expects more injured players to return to action in the next few weeks. He has captain Wayne Rooney

sidelined for around six weeks with a knee problem while Matteo Darmian, Marouane Fellaini, Adnan Januzaj, Phil Jones, Ashley Young, Marcos Rojo, Antonio Valencia and Bastian Schweinsteiger are also missing.

"I think in March a lot of players are coming back and then we'll have a full selection, and with our full selection we were first in the Premier League," he said.

COMMITTED

Van Gaal was pleased with his team's display at Shrewsbury after the dismal defeats against Sunderland and Midtjylland.

"Everybody shall say it is against Shrewsbury Town and Manchester United has to win but we have seen very difficult results in the FA Cup," he added. "The top team is not always winning. I think the performance was very good. I said that already at half-time to my players. "They were very committed, they performed our game-plan very well and the consequence was we were ahead 2-0 at half-time. "So I think we have done it fantastically, I have congratulated my players, I was very pleased but now we have to beat Midtjylland because it is also possible to beat them."

"But it is not easy because Midtjylland are very well organised, we have seen that in the away game." Shrewsbury offered little resistance to a United side who dominated throughout a one-sided contest and boss Micky Mellon said: "You've got to congratulate Manchester United on a superb display. "You see players of that quality getting free kicks around the area you always know you're going to be in trouble. "What we're disappointed about is that we never gave the fans a goal to cheer. "We'll be disappointed when we have seen the opportunities back that we haven't scored. "I'm determined I'm not going to be any way critical of the players because we came up against some fantastic quality. "The players can walk away with their heads held high because they gave us everything they had." — AFP

SPORTS COURT TO RULE ON FIFA VOTE DELAY

ZURICH: The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) said it will decide by tomorrow whether to suspend FIFA's presidential vote after candidate Prince Ali bin al Hussein filed a case seeking a delay. The Jordanian prince, one of five hopefuls, wants transparent voting booths used at Friday's congress to find a replacement for Sepp Blatter. This call was rejected by FIFA's election commission. Prince Ali then took the case to the Lausanne-based CAS, which said Tuesday that it had asked for a written response from FIFA before deciding whether to invoke "provisional measures" and suspend the poll.

"The request for provisional measures will be decided by CAS no later than the morning of Thursday 25 February 2016," a court statement said. An unlikely win by the prince would upend months of build-up to the election which many believe is crucial to salvaging the world body's scandal-tainted reputation. FIFA faces mounting pressure over arrangements for the vote in which Asian and European contenders Sheikh Salman bin Ibrahim Al-Khalifa and Gianni Infantino are the favourites.

Jerome Champagne, a former FIFA official from France, has demanded that the world body cancel accreditations for the Asian Football Confederation and UEFA saying they will be used to lobby for Sheikh Salman and Infantino.

Prince Ali's Paris lawyers from the firm Szpiner, Toby, Ayala and Semerdjian-said they first sought FIFA's agreement for CAS to decide the voting booth issue, but were rejected.

They then asked CAS to suspend the election.

PICTURES OF BALLOTS?

The prince has paid for transparent voting booths to be sent to Zurich for the congress.



GENEVA: This file photo taken on February 11, 2016 shows FIFA presidential contender Prince Ali bin al Hussein looking on during a press conference at the Geneva press club. The prince, one of five contenders in the FIFA presidential race, had wanted transparent voting booths used at the congress but this was rejected by FIFA's election commission yesterday. — AFP

"Only a transparent booth can prove that each voter is following his heart and conscience and that there are no forced votes, by preventing voters taking photos of their voting paper to prove that they have followed voting instructions," Renaud Semerdjian, one of the lawyers, told AFP. FIFA responded by saying that mobile phones and cameras would be banned in the voting booths so that no photos could be taken.

With the election campaign reaching a tense peak, the prince and Champagne have led complaints about the arrangements. The fifth con-

tender is Tokyo Sexwale, a South African tycoon and politician. Champagne called on FIFA to cancel the accreditation of UEFA and AFC observers and indicated he could also go to CAS.

Champagne accused Sheikh Salman, the AFC president, and Infantino, UEFA general secretary, of seeking to "swamp" Friday's vote with supporters. Champagne said the observers would give an unfair advantage to Sheikh Salman and Infantino. The former FIFA deputy secretary general said he had discovered with "stupefaction" that AFC and UEFA observers had been accredited "at the very moment when these two confederations are in their final push in favour of their respective candidates." He added that those accredited were mainly members of Sheikh Salman and Infantino's campaign teams.

"It is clear that this reveals the objective to swamp the Congress hall with confederation employees able to access the voting FAs and their delegates," he said in an official complaint to FIFA's electoral committee.

He called on the committee to cancel "these unfair and undue privileges" and warned of other action if there was no response yesterday. FIFA's 209 member associations are to vote for a new leader as the world body seeks to recover from multiple scandals that has seen 39 football officials and business executives charged with corruption by US authorities. Two companies also face charges.

Swiss prosecutors are investigating FIFA's management and the attribution of the 2018 and 2022 World Cups to Russia and Qatar.

Blatter and UEFA president Michel Platini were suspended for eight years by FIFA over a two million dollar payment that Blatter approved for the French football legend. — AFP

FALLEN GIANTS AC MILAN CAN BATTLE FOR CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

MILAN: AC Milan coach Sinisa Mihajlovic insists the fallen Serie A giants can fight for a place in next season's Champions League after a battling 1-1 draw with Napoli that dented their opponents' title hopes. Napoli welcomed Milan to the San Paolo on Monday looking to capitalise on Juventus's stalemate at Bologna on Friday with a win that would have sent them a point clear of Juve at the top.

But despite a dominant performance, Maurizio Sarri's title challengers had to settle for a sixth draw of the campaign that left them in second place at a point behind the champions.

Adding to the hosts' woes ahead of what should be a mouthwatering race for the title, Argentine striker Gonzalo Higuain, who has 24 goals on his league account, failed to score in back-to-back Serie A games for the first time this season.

Milan remain sixth, eight points behind third-placed Fiorentina in the last possible Champions League qualifying place.

Mihajlovic, whose side remain unbeaten after seven league games in 2016, told Sky Sport: "They dominated the game but we had planned for that, otherwise it would have been impossible for us."

"After seven games so far this year we've picked up a lot of points. If we keep on playing with this kind of intensity and concentration, we can fight for third place."

Milan started brightly but it was Napoli who broke the deadlock, on 39 minutes, when Lorenzo Insigne's shot deflected off the legs of Ignazio Abate to leave teenage goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma scrambling at his far post. Donnarumma has been solid for Milan since pushing Diego Lopez down the pecking order, and Mihajlovic said he could not fault the 16-year-old. "I didn't see the goal, but I think if Gigi didn't manage to get it, no one would have," he added.

To their credit, Milan restored parity almost immediately. Jose Callejon had failed to track back to pick up Giacomo Bonaventura and when Kalidou Koulibaly inadvertently nodded Keisuke Honda's cross towards the back post, Bonaventura sent a volley past Pepe Reina. Napoli had the lion's share of the best chances in the second half but Donnarumma was decisive in the dying minutes. Donnarumma, who will celebrate his 17th birthday tomorrow, did well to intercept Faouzi Ghoulam's cross for Higuain as the Argentine ran in on goal. Callejon was replaced by Dries Mertens just after the hour and only minutes after his arrival the Belgian international spurned a great chance when he struck Elseid Hysaj's daisy-cutter off the far post. Mihajlovic replaced a tiring Bacca with French forward Jeremy Menez. Minutes later Higuain beat Zapata to a cross from the left to fire a deflected shot just wide of the upright. When left-back Luca Antonelli blocked Mertens's cross for Higuain,

Milan launched a counter that saw Menez set up Niang, but the Frenchman's angled strike curled wide of the far post. Mihajlovic replaced Niang with on-loan Liverpool striker Mario Balotelli for the last five minutes but it was Honda who tested Reina with a curling shot that forced the Spanish keeper to save low at his near post. Sarri, who was

sent off a quarter-hour from the end for dissent, praised his players despite the disappointment.

"I can't fault the lads' performance, we didn't give a lot to Milan and we created several real chances," said the Italian. "But it came to a certain point in the game where we were just lacking that extra ingredient." — AFP



DOHA: Qatar's Lekhwiya Chico Flores (R) vies for the ball with Iran's Zobahan Kaveh Rezaei during their AFC Championship league football match at the Lekhwiya Club Stadium in Doha yesterday. — AFP

Live Matches on TV
(Local Timings)

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE
PSV Eindhoven v Atletico de Madrid 22:45
beIN SPORTS 2 HD
Dynamo Kyiv v Manchester City 22:45
beIN SPORTS 1 HD

PSV WILL MISS BANNED DE JONG AGAINST ATLETICO

AMSTERDAM: PSV Eindhoven will miss striker Luuk de Jong when they entertain Atletico Madrid in the first leg of the Champions League last 16 on Wednesday. Philip Cocu's side won all their home games in the group stage but must take on 2014 runners-up Atletico without the suspended De Jong who has scored 17 goals this season to help lift PSV to the top of the Dutch championship. Cocu, though, will be encouraged by the return of influential Mexican midfielder Andres Guardado following a hamstring injury.

PSV have kept clean sheets in their last three domestic league games to edge one point ahead of second-placed Ajax Amsterdam. "I thought we were defensively a lot stronger," Cocu told reporters after Saturday's 2-0 home win over Heracles Almelo. "The last line and the midfield worked well together and the players put in a lot of work."

"On Wednesday we'll need to bring the same work and intensity. We gave

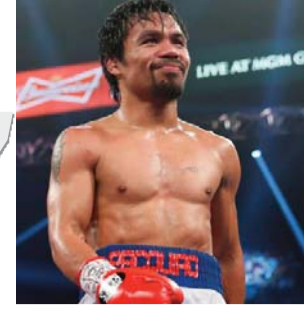
Heracles too much space in the second half and made the field too big.

"We can't do that on Wednesday because Atletico are deadly on the counter attack," said Cocu. Second-placed Atletico slipped eight points adrift of Barcelona after Sunday's 0-0 draw at home to Villarreal but will also take heart from a consistent rearguard that has conceded 11 goals in 25 La Liga games this season.

Coach Diego Simeone said his team were still on course to achieve their targets. "If you look at the objectives we set at the beginning of the season we are on the right track and, apart from Barcelona who are different to all the rest, it's hard for all of us," explained Simeone.

Atletico won 13 points out of 18 in the Champions League group stage and will hope to repeat the 3-0 win they recorded in Eindhoven in the 2008-09 Champions League when the two clubs were in the same first-round section. The return match in Madrid is on March 15. — Reuters

Manny Pacquiao negotiating new deals after Nike axe



Sports court to rule on FIFA vote delay



WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2016

INDIA, PAKISTAN TO RENEW RIVALRY IN ASIA CUP Page 18



LONDON: Barcelona's Neymar is challenged by Arsenal's Hector Bellerin during the soccer Champions League round of 16 first leg soccer match between Arsenal and Barcelona at the Emirates stadium in London, yesterday. — AP

MESSI'S LATE DOUBLE SINKS ARSENAL

LONDON: Two goals from Lionel Messi steered Barcelona to a convincing 2-0 victory over Arsenal in the last 16 of the Champions League yesterday.

Messi provided a clinical finish to a breakaway move that featured strike partners Luis Suarez and Neymar in the 71st minute and then scored an 83rd minute penalty to seal the first-leg match.

The five-time world player of the year decided a game that Arsenal had dominated, without taking all the chances that came the way of its feared strike trio.

Arsenal created opportunities in both halves and looked to limit the damage against a side that its own manager Arsene Wenger described as "super favorites."

Barcelona will be confident of reaching the quarterfinals for the ninth consecutive season after the second leg on March 16 at the Nou Camp. Barcelona had beaten Arsenal in both their previous meetings in the knockout stages, in 2010 and 2011, along with the 2006 final in Paris. Its second-half performance in London, which combined possession with dangerous counterattacks, was a potent reminder of that track record.

Arsenal made a bright enough start and carved out a half-chance after only eight minutes. A clever backheel by Aron Ramsey found Mesut Ozil, but the return pass wasn't good enough for the Wales midfielder to get a clean shot away.

Arsenal was clearly looking to move the ball forward quickly on the break, as Barcelona gradually took control of the play - though the visitors were initially showing a lot more patience than real attacking threat.

Instead, the hosts came close to breaking the deadlock when Hector Bellerin's blocked shot ran free in the area for Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain, whose low shot from close range drew a smart save by Marc-Andre ter Stegen.

Despite all its share of the ball, Barcelona's first real chance came midway through the half with a free kick on the edge of the area that Messi ploughed into the Arsenal wall.

The holders were gradually ratcheting up the pressure, though, and should have opened the scoring on the stroke of halftime. Dani Alves lofted in a clever ball from the right side of the area but Suarez could only flash a glancing header across the face of the goal.

It was a scoreline that seemed to satisfy Wenger, who kept his team on the defensive for the second half. Yet Barcelona ripped through Arsenal's defense barely three minutes after the re-start with a superb pass for Neymar, whose shot was blocked in a one-on-one with Petr Cech.

Arsenal replied with a header from Olivier Giroud from a Nacho Monreal cross that Ter Stegen did well to block as the pace and tempo of the game ticked up.

Messi had a shot in the area charged down, Suarez sent an inviting low pass across the face of the goal and it seemed to be only a matter of time before Barcelona scored.

The goal came when Suarez released Neymar down the left and Messi had time and space to beat Cech. Suarez then somehow managed to hit the post from point blank range after a pass from Messi from another breakaway.

Messi made such no mistake from the spot after being tripped by Mathieu Flamini, sending Cech the wrong way with the spot kick, and only a fine save at the end by the Arsenal goalkeeper prevented Neymar from adding a third with a header. — AP



TURIN: Bayern's Arjen Robben, top, jumps past Juventus' Patrice Evra during the Champions League, round of 16, first-leg soccer match between Juventus and Bayern Munich at the Juventus stadium in Turin, Italy, yesterday. — AP

JUVE STAGE TWO-GOAL COMEBACK TO DRAW 2-2 WITH BAYERN

TURIN: Juventus staged a superb comeback from two goals down to rescue their Champions League hopes and secure a 2-2 draw against Bayern Munich in their last 16 first leg yesterday.

Thomas Mueller pounced on a deflected cross to put the visitors ahead in the 43rd minute and Dutchman Arjen Robben doubled the lead early in the second half before goals from Paulo Dybala and substitute Stefano Sturaro drew the hosts level. Bayern had looked to be cruising to their third straight win at Juventus with close to 70 percent possession in the first hour.

Yet last season's finalists, who have been in superb form in recent months, refused to surrender, and staged a scintillating second-half comeback to leave the tie open after a frustrating finish for the Germans.

Bayern, the 2013 champions, shot out of the blocks in search of a quick goal and were almost rewarded when former Juve player Arturo Vidal's powerful volley forced 38-year-old keeper Gianluigi Buffon to palm his effort round the post.

Mueller then missed an excellent chance when he failed to tap in from two metres out after Robert Lewandowski had set up his team mate with a superb assist. The Germany international, however, proved why he is such a prolific goalscorer, when he was in the right place to slot in from 10 metres for his sixth goal in seven Champions League matches this season, after Juve failed to clear a ball in the box. Robben doubled their lead after the break with his first goal of the year, a trademark move by the Dutchman, who cut inside from the right and curled a left-footed effort into the net.

Dybala, however, made the most of a bad Philipp Lahm clearance to beat Manuel Neuer on the hour and inject new life into the hosts' performance and trigger a frantic Juve search for an equaliser. Juan Cuadrado almost got it minutes later but Neuer calmly stood his ground to block the Colombian's shot. The keeper, however, could do nothing when Sturaro beat his marker to slide in and level in the 76th minute. — Reuters

CHINA CAN CHALLENGE FOR WORLD CUP GLORY: ERIKSSON

MELBOURNE: Shanghai SIPG boss Sven-Goran Eriksson believes China, buoyed by the power and influence of President Xi Jinping, can put aside years of failure at international level and push for World Cup glory in a decade. The Swede's club has, like many Chinese Super League sides, invested heavily of late in new players and facilities after football fan Xi demanded soccer officials improve on just one disappointing group stage exit at the 2002 World Cup. China are in danger of an early exit from 2018 World Cup qualifying in Asia but Eriksson, who managed the Ivory Coast at the 2010 tournament in South Africa, said the Asians would quickly see the returns on their multi-million dollar investment.

"Ten years ahead, 15 years ahead, I am quite sure that the China national team will compete to win the World Cup," he told reporters yesterday ahead of their AFC Champions League opener away to Melbourne Victory on Wednesday. "The future for China is great."

The much-travelled 68-year-old coach made his managerial name after winning titles in Portugal with Benfica and Lazio in Italy before taking over as England coach and later Manchester City.

Eriksson moved to China with Guangzhou R&F in 2013 before taking over at Shanghai a year later and led them to a runner-up Super League finish last term after signing Argentina Dario Conca and Ghanaian Asamoah Gyan.

He said his move to the burgeoning football market of China had been another fortunate step in his career. "I think I am at the right place at the right time," said the Swede, who also managed Mexico, Sampdoria and Leicester City and held technical positions at clubs in Dubai and Thailand. "I've been lucky. I was in Italy during the 90s when every football player wanted to come to Italy because there was more money and the football was very, very good. "Then the 2000s, the English Premier League, all the players wanted to go there."

"Now 2016, it seems like every football player wants to come to China. "For Chinese football it's very, very good." — Reuters

Kuwait Times BUSINESS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2016

Kuwait's credit growth exceeds expectations

Page 22

LSE confirms merger talks with Deutsche Boerse

Page 23



Jazeera unveils special livery

NBK CAPITAL HOLDS ITS ANNUAL INVESTMENT FORUM 'THE INSIGHT'

Page 26

Page 25



DUBAI: (L to R) Jordan's Queen Rania, Dubai's Crown Prince Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashed Al-Maktoum and International Monetary Fund chief Christine Lagarde take part in the opening day of the Global Women's Forum yesterday.—AFP

FISCAL REFORMS KEY TO ME STABILITY: LAGARDE

IMF CHIEF SAYS GULF OIL PRODUCERS ARE FACING A 'NEW REALITY'

DUBAI: The International Monetary Fund's managing director is pressing the need for greater taxation and fiscal reforms as a pathway to political stability in the Middle East. Speaking at the Global Women's Forum in Dubai yesterday, Christine Lagarde said oil-producing countries are facing a "new reality" amid lower global oil prices, and that economic stability requires job creation, strong taxation policies and the reorganization of public spending. The IMF has urged countries across the Middle East, particularly the Gulf's oil-exporting nations, to reign back public spending by lifting lavish government subsidies, diversifying their economies and implementing new tax schemes. The world economy is going through a "tepid" recovery, International Monetary Fund chief Christine Lagarde said yesterday, adding that growth in advanced economies should be higher.

Speaking at the women's forum in Dubai, the newly reelected Lagarde said global economic growth stood at 3.1 percent last year, and is expected to grow by "a bit more than three percent" this year, and a "little higher" in 2017. "It is a growth but it is a tepid growth because the recovery that we see in the United States, Europe and a little bit in Japan as well could be bigger," she said.

"If you compare current growth to the potential output the economy should deliver, it is less," she added. As for emerging economies, apart from India



DUBAI: Christine Lagarde, head of the International Monetary Fund, IMF, talks at the opening day of the Global Women's Forum in Dubai, United Arab Emirates yesterday.—AP

which is "doing pretty well," they are slowing down, said Lagarde. Other emerging economies are either "deliberately" slowing down like China, or "in a pretty weak position" like Russia, Brazil or South Africa, she said. "Those countries

are struggling. Both Russia and Brazil will be in negative territory this year," Lagarde said commodity producers, particularly oil exporters, "are facing a completely new reality." She said world prices, not only of oil but also of metals and food, "have

gone down significantly to actually change the business models of those countries, which some of them are addressing well.

"It's really a new reality that these countries are dealing with at the moment." —Agencies

GULF INDEXES NEAR TECHNICAL BARRIERS

MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

DUBAI: Major Middle Eastern stock markets rose yesterday, nearing important technical barriers as investors were encouraged by strength in oil and global equities prices.

Rises in Brent crude and emerging market stocks over the past several days have helped to create a feeling that after a disastrous start to the year, the worst may be over for Gulf bourses; this sentiment has been seen in rising trading volumes. The Saudi stock index rose 0.8 percent to 6,023 points in active trade yesterday. It faces resistance at the February and January peaks of 6,056-6,098 points. Petrochemical blue chip Saudi Basic Industries edged down 0.3 percent as buying focused on second-tier stocks favoured by local retail investors trading for the short term. Tihama Advertising jumped its 10 percent daily limit.

Saudi Printing & Packaging also surged 10 percent despite reporting a 52 percent drop in 2015 net profit. It cited fires at two subsidiaries in late 2014 and early 2015 as well as a drop of selling prices.

Dubai's stock index rose 0.7 percent to 3,192 points, testing resistance on its late December peak of 3,189 points. A clean break would trigger a reverse head & shoulders pattern formed by the highs and lows since December, and pointing sharply higher.

Beaten-down construction stock Drake & Scull, which hit record lows in January as low oil prices prompted governments in the region to slow project spending, added 7.2 percent in its heaviest trade since last July.

District cooling firm Tabreed rose 2.7 percent as CI Capital upgraded the stock to "overweight" from "neutral". Abu Dhabi's index rose 0.4 percent as Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank surged 2.5 percent to 6.95 dirhams, after Goldman Sachs raised its price target for the stock to 8.1 dirhams with a "buy" rating.

In Qatar the index climbed 0.9 percent. Drilling rig provider Gulf International Services, the most active stock, fell 1.4 percent but industrial blue chip Industries Qatar surged 2.3 percent and Barwa Real Estate rose 3.6 percent, recovering from Monday's loss in response to disappointing fourth-quarter earnings.

Egypt's index added 0.3 percent. Beltone Financial, which has soared nearly 150 percent in the past 10 trading days on hopes that its new owners will make the company a financial powerhouse, jumped its 10 percent daily limit once again. But most stocks among the 10 most heavily traded barely moved. —Reuters

GLOBAL WINDS CHILL BUSINESS OPTIMISM IN EUROPE

FRANKFURT: Business confidence fell in Germany and France this month, increasing concern that global market turmoil may be weighing on the economy of the 19-member euro currency union. Germany's closely watched Ifo confidence index fell to 105.7 points in February from 107.3 last month, the third decline in a row. France's INSEE index dropped to 100 points in February from 102 in January.

The data released yesterday bolsters the argument for the European Central Bank to expand its monetary stimulus efforts at its next meeting March 10.

The central bank is currently pumping 60 billion euros (\$66 billion) per month in freshly printed money into the financial system through bond purchases in an attempt to push up weak inflation and support a modest recovery. The eurozone grew 0.3 percent in the last three months of last year; unemployment remains high at 10.4 percent.

In Germany, the eurozone's largest economy, business executives' view of current conditions improved but their outlook for the next half-year worsened significantly.

Economist Carsten Brzeski at ING-DiBa called the reading a "wake-up call." "Global events have finally reached German companies' boardrooms," he wrote in an email research note.

The euro's exchange rate fell below the \$1.10 mark, to \$1.0993 from around \$1.1040. The German survey indicated executives share worries about the global economy that have sent financial markets lower recently. China's economy is slowing down, with unpredictable consequences for the rest of the world, while low oil and commodity prices have hit emerging market economies that supply much of the world's growth these days. Financial market turmoil itself could have an impact by making businesses cautious about risking more investment in production.

The Ifo index is valued as a guide to where the economy is headed. The survey is based on monthly responses from about 7,000 firms. Germany, the biggest economy in the 19-country euro currency union, is enjoying low unemployment of 4.5 percent and steady growth of 0.3

percent in the fourth quarter of last year. While exports have slowed, spending by consumers and the government has picked up. The French confidence index slipped due to declining confidence among retailers. Manufacturing held up, suggesting global headwinds were not yet severely affecting the country's gradual recovery.

Analyst Chantana Sam at HSBC Global Research said the fall in retail confidence could suggest that the impact from the terror attacks that left 130 people dead in November was lingering more than expected. Retail confidence remains below the level seen before the attacks.

Analysts say the ECB could try to help the economy by increasing its bond-buying stimulus program. It could also cut the interest rate on deposits it takes from commercial banks, currently minus 0.3 percent. The negative rate is a drastic step aimed at pushing banks to lend money rather than let it pile up at the central bank's super-safe overnight deposit facility. The negative rate has also helped push the euro lower against other currencies, helping exporters. —AP

5 THINGS YOU CAN DO ONLINE TO BOOST YOUR CAREER

We all know everyone can apply to jobs for free on job sites and be found by the MENA's top employers, as long as their CV is active and complete. We also know there are lots of research surveys, tests, tools and literature on the sites to assist professionals with the job search process and their careers.

That's why today, we're taking you through five of many new cool things you can do on Bayt.com, the Middle East's leading job site, that you may not have known about.

1. Find which friends work for companies you are targeting

Bayt.com has allowed jobseekers to tap

into their friends' career networks by identifying which of their friends work for companies they are targeting. Armed with this vital piece of information, you can get the inside scoop from who-better-than-your-friends on what positions are open, what the work culture is like, what salary to expect, what interview style is favoured, and other juicy nuggets to get you in the door. You can also ask them for references and referrals to get that extra advantage.

2. Determine if you are being paid right

Ever wondered if your friend in the crisp designer suit at the competitor company is really making more than you or if it really pays to be the big boss? Do you find

BAYT.COM WEEKLY REPORT

yourself speculating what you could make if you switched job roles or industries or countries or careers? Well, before you consider such giant leaps, you may well want to visit the Bayt.com Salaries platform which has detailed real-time salary insights for job roles and industries across the MENA.

3. See what skills are in demand in your preferred industry

Many skills are very transferable or at least can be readily broken down or remapped into transferable components

that can be made more palatable and appealing for future employers. The Bayt.com's unparalleled "Career Map" tool has allowed jobseekers to identify what exact skills are in most demand in their target industry and how they can map a career path in that specific industry.

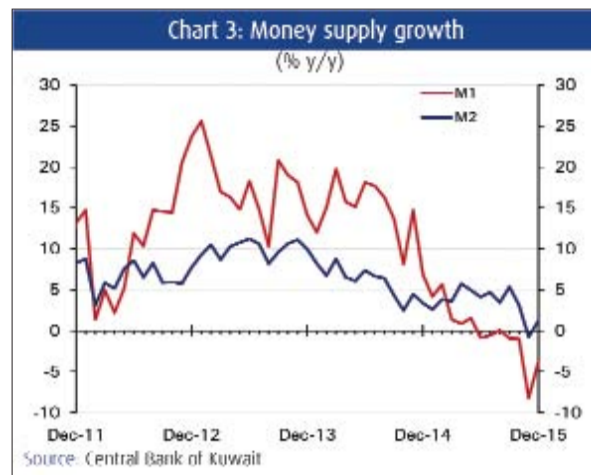
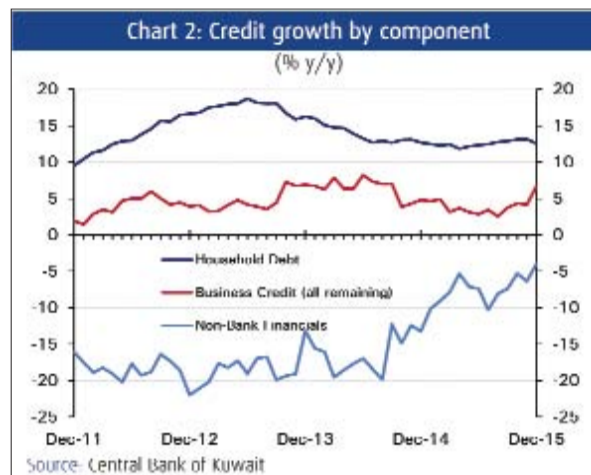
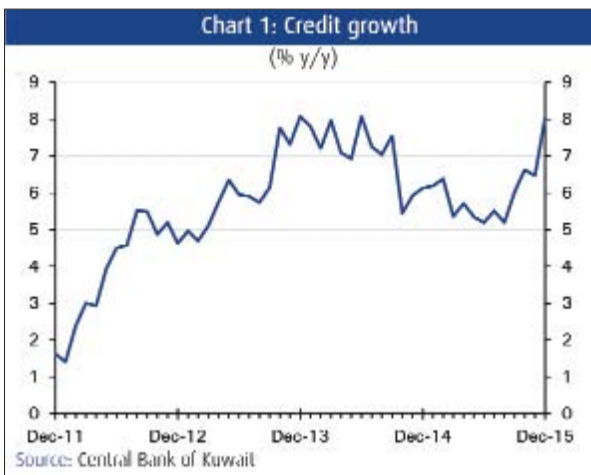
4. See how popular you are

We don't mean how many times your name is mentioned admiringly on the golf course of the town and country club - it's your professional brand that concerns us, specifically your Bayt.com CV! On Bayt.com, you can see exactly how many searches your CV appeared in, how many times it was viewed, and even what keywords

employers are using to find you. Fine tuning a CV to land in your target employer's line of vision has never been so easy.

5. Find old friends peers and colleagues

Want to reconnect with an old teacher to whom you are particularly grateful, network with peers and colleagues in your industry, be found by top employers, or get referred for hot positions? No better place to start than by building a Public Profile on Bayt.com. Remember, on Bayt.com you need no intermediaries, and once you activate your Public Profile, friends, peers, colleagues and anyone else interested in your profile can access it directly and for free.



KUWAIT'S CREDIT GROWTH EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS

KUWAIT: Credit growth exceeded most expectations as it ended 2015 at 8 percent thanks to a strong December gain. Total credit was up by KD 632 million during the month on large increases in credit to the industrial sector and for the purchase of securities. Most other sectors were unimpressive including household borrowing, which recorded a weaker month than usual. Private deposits saw a healthy bounce following several months of decline. December saw a notable increase in interest rates, with deposit and interbank rates up during the month. Interbank rates continued to rise since.

Household debt saw a smaller gain than usual during December. Personal facilities excluding loans for the purchase of securities gained KD 70 million in December; growth slowed to 12.6 percent y/y. While shorter term consumer loans, used to finance car and other consumer goods purchases, increased slightly, longer tenor installment loans continued to be

NBK ECONOMIC REPORT

the sole source of growth, growing by 15.1 percent y/y, down from a month ago.

December was a strong month for business credit, though gains were not broad-based. Business credit, which excludes loans extended to investment companies, rose by a healthy KD 533 million; growth picked up to 6.7 percent y/y, its most rapid pace since September 2014. Gains came largely from the industrial sector and lending for the purchase of securities. Other sectors did not do as well, with real estate, trade and construction all seeing modest declines.

Non-bank financial companies (i.e. investment companies) saw a net gain in credit in December as deleveraging abates further. While the sector remained in deleveraging mode, declining by 4 percent y/y, a gain of KD 29 million helped slow the pace and provided

further evidence that the sector may soon be done with a deleveraging phase which followed the financial crisis.

December also saw private deposits bounce back following several months of decline. Private deposits rose by KD 794 million, pushing up money supply (M2) growth to 1.2 percent y/y. Narrower money supply (M1) growth improved as well, but remained in negative territory, at -3.8 percent y/y. The gains in private deposits were across the board in KD time, KD sight and foreign currency deposits.

Government deposits, which have helped offset some of the decline in private sector deposits in recent months, were also up in December. Government deposits with domestic banks rose by KD 131 million during the month and are up by KD 810 million since July 2015; their ratio to total bank assets have risen

from 9 percent in July 2015 to 10 percent in December.

System liquidity is still relatively comfortable, though it has come under some pressure recently. Banks' liquid reserves (which include cash and deposits with the CBK, as well as CBK bonds) were steady at KD 5.0 billion in December 2015, or 8.5 percent of total bank assets, down from 10-11 percent before the summer.

December had seen a notable increase in dinar interest rates as markets anticipated that month's CBK policy rate hike. The 3-month Kuwait interbank offer rate (Kibor) climbed to 1.62 percent in December, rising by 57 basis points (bps) in 2015. Rates have risen further since, recording a gain of more than 70 bps y/y through January 2016, and rising to 1.75 percent. Customer deposit rates on dinar time deposits were also up in December, gaining by 9-10 bps, following the CBK discount rate hike.

SAUDI HAS ENOUGH WHEAT TO LAST MORE THAN 6 MONTHS

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia has 1.8 million tons of wheat reserves, up from 1.6 million tonnes this time last year, enough to last more than six months, the director-general of the kingdom's main wheat-buying agency said yesterday.

Saudi Arabia has become a major importer of hard and soft wheat since abandoning plans for self-sufficiency in wheat in 2008, as farming in the desert drained scarce water supplies. It has halted purchases of locally grown wheat this year.

Ahmed Al-Fares also said he expects Saudi Arabia to complete the privatisation of its flour mills by the first quarter of 2017, although the Ministry of Finance's Public Investment Fund determines the final timeframe. Saudi General Grains Organization (SAGO) and the Public Investment Fund are studying how to establish four joint-stock companies to operate the flour mills, as approved by the Saudi cabinet in November. The privatised entities will be open to both national and foreign investment.

SAGO, previously called the General Silos and Flour Mills Organization (GSFMO), said in October that it expected to import 3.5 million tons of wheat in 2016. Fares said Saudi Arabia has not been in the wheat market so far in 2016 because it has enough reserves, but said he expects to go back to the market soon. — Reuters

BAHRAIN TO DISCUSS BANK RULES WITH US TREASURY

MANAMA: Bahraini authorities will discuss with the US Treasury the problem of international banks becoming reluctant to deal with banks in Bahrain and the Gulf because of tight US regulation, Bahrain's central bank governor said yesterday.

"Many international banks have curtailed their correspondent services with regional and local banks. Some of the banks have refrained from dealing with exchange houses," Rasheed Mohammed al-Maraj told a business conference. "This has affected a wide sector of the population, especially the expatriates." Maraj said officials in Bahrain, one of the Gulf's financial centres, had met US Treasury officials last November and planned another meeting on the issue in April.

US regulations, part of a tougher regime introduced since the financial crisis, include scrutiny of potential tax avoidance and anti-money laundering rules.

These have imposed extra costs on US banks,

prompting many to reduce the number of foreign institutions with which they do business, and making international banks operating in the United States more wary of ties with the Gulf. Some banks in the Gulf have been under particularly close scrutiny by US authorities because of a drive to curb financing of Islamist militancy and flows of money to Iran.

United Arab Emirates central bank governor Mubarak Rashid Al-Mansouri complained of the problem in December, saying it had become harder for UAE banks to obtain dollar clearance services - the processing of transactions in the US currency.

Maraj said Bahrain was engaging with US authorities including the Federal Reserve and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, as well as with international banks, to convince them that the compliance standards of Bahraini and Gulf banks were in line with global practices.

"We are hoping they will give us some flexibility ..." he said. "This is a serious issue for us." — Reuters

News

in brief

US dollar stable against KD at 0.299

KUWAIT: The exchange rate of the US dollar against the Kuwaiti dinar was stable at KD 0.299 on Monday while the euro was down to KD 0.330 compared to the exchange rates for Sunday, said a statement by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) yesterday. According to the CBK, the exchange rate of the Sterling pound went down at KD 0.422 as well as the the Swiss franc at KD 0.302. Exchange rate of the Japanese yen remained the same at KD 0.002.

UAE's Senaat says unit raises \$185m loan

DUBAI: A unit of Abu Dhabi's Senaat has secured a \$185 million loan from a consortium of Japanese and UAE banks, the industrial conglomerate said yesterday. The loan will finance the manufacturing and sale of steel pipes for the oil and gas sector by Al-Gharbia Pipe Company, which is 51-percent owned by Senaat, it said in a statement. Japan Bank for International Cooperation provided \$111 million of the loan, with Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation, Mizuho Bank and National Bank of Abu Dhabi lending the remainder. Senaat did not disclose the loan's pricing, but said it represented one of the lowest financing costs it had ever achieved.

Egypt pound dips to record lows

CAIRO: The Egyptian pound has dropped to record lows in the past week in the black market, hovering between 9 and 9.25 per dollar, as importers struggle to find dollars for their operations and pressure mounts on the central bank to devalue the pound. A banking source also said the central bank has this week directed local banks to prioritize giving dollars to pharmaceutical companies to import medicine and supplies. "They have been delayed for a while, like everyone else is, but they definitely should have the priority," said Hany Farahat, a senior economist at CI Capital in Egypt. Net international reserves have remained around \$16.5 billion in recent months, following declines from \$36 billion in December 2010, a month before the 2011 uprising that toppled long-time autocrat Hosni Mubarak.

Sohar oil refinery begins two-month maintenance

MUSCAT: Oman's 116,400 barrels per day Sohar oil refinery yesterday started major maintenance expected to last until April 23, the operator said in a statement. Oman Oil Refineries and Petroleum Industries Co (Orpic) said that this maintenance is due every three years and would not affect the local supply of fuel, according to a statement published by state news agency ONA. Sohar's polypropylene plant will also undergo maintenance over the same period, the company added.

Turkey CB keeps rates on hold for 12th straight month

ISTANBUL: Turkey's central bank left its benchmark interest rate unchanged at 7.5 percent for the 12th month running yesterday, a widely expected move that is likely only to heighten concerns about its reluctance to tackle inflation head-on. The bank has abstained from tightening even as rising food costs and a weakening lira currency have sent inflation to its highest in more than a year, at more than 9.5 percent, a level that Deputy Prime Minister Mehmet Simsek has warned could seriously threaten growth potential. The bank's lack of action has only deepened the impression it is bowing to political pressure to keep borrowing costs down. President Tayyip Erdogan has repeatedly railed against high interest rates in Turkey.

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.672
Indian Rupees	4.397
Pakistani Rupees	2.865
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.087
Nepali Rupees	2.741
Singapore Dollar	215.000
Hongkong Dollar	38.658
Bangladesh Taka	3.826
Philippine Peso	6.316
Thai Baht	8.442

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	80.136
Qatari Riyal	82.548
Omani Riyal	780.535
Bahraini Dinar	798.060
UAE Dirham	81.817

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	35.250
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	38.423
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.402
Tunisian Dinar	149.060
Jordanian Dinar	423.540
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.002
Syrian Lira	2.142
Morocco Dirham	31.124

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	300.350
Euro	333.090
Sterling Pound	425.600
Canadian dollar	219.880
Turkish lira	103.040
Swiss Franc	302.920
Australian Dollar	218.500
US Dollar Buying	299.150

20 Gram	244.530
10 Gram	125.190
5 Gram	63.440

UAE EXCHANGE CENTRE WLL

CURRENCIES

Australian Dollar	201.91
Canadian Dollar	219.82
Swiss Franc	306.95
Euro	336.85
US Dollar	299.90
Sterling Pound	431.04
Japanese Yen	2.67
Bangladesh Taka	3.817
Indian Rupee	4.375
Sri Lankan Rupee	2.083
Nepali Rupee	2.732
Pakistani Rupee	2.860
UAE Dirhams	0.08161
Bahraini Dinar	0.7970
Egyptian Pound	0.03819
Jordanian Dinar	0.4265
Omani Riyal	0.7788
Qatari Riyal	0.08269
Saudi Riyal	0.07994

TELEX TRANSFER PER 1000

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	300.600
Canadian Dollar	220.175
Sterling Pound	434.175
Euro	335.755
Swiss Franc	298.590
Bahrain Dinar	795.235
UAE Dirhams	82.085
Qatari Riyals	83.290

Saudi Riyals	80.840
Jordanian Dinar	423.450
Egyptian Pound	38.278
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.088
Indian Rupees	4.378
Pakistani Rupees	2.863
Bangladesh Taka	3.823
Philippines Peso	6.307
Cyprus pound	572.540
Japanese Yen	3.660
Syrian Pound	2.365
Nepalese Rupees	3.735
Malaysian Ringgit	72.165
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	46.455
Thai Bhat	9.385
Turkish Lira	102.060

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.417106	0.426106
Czech Korune	0.004237	0.016237
Danish Krone	0.040350	0.045350
Euro	0.325933	0.333933
Norwegian Krone	0.030808	0.036008
Romanian Leu	0.073904	0.073904
Slovakia	0.008911	0.018911
Swedish Krona	0.031292	0.036292
Swiss Franc	0.294853	0.305053
Turkish Lira	0.096820	0.107120
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.208857	0.220357
New Zealand Dollar	0.194766	0.204266
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.213499	0.221999
US Dollars	0.296250	0.300750

US Dollars Mint	0.296750	0.300750
-----------------	----------	----------

Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003440	0.004040
Chinese Yuan	0.044529	0.048029
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036561	0.039311
Indian Rupee	0.004180	0.004570
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002588	0.002768
Kenyan Shilling	0.002944	0.002944
Korean Won	0.000233	0.000248
Malaysian Ringgit	0.067945	0.073945
Nepalese Rupee	0.002847	0.003017
Pakistan Rupee	0.002714	0.002994
Philippine Peso	0.006235	0.006515
Sierra Leone	0.000070	0.000076
Singapore Dollar	0.210822	0.216822
South African Rand	0.013687	0.022187
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001736	0.002316
Taiwan	0.008911	0.009091
Thai Baht	0.008095	0.008645

Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.789801	0.797801
Egyptian Pound	0.033761	0.038097
Iranian Riyal	0.000083	0.000084
Iraqi Dinar	0.000197	0.000257
Jordanian Dinar	0.419604	0.427104
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000149	0.000249
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020395	0.044395
Nigerian Naira	0.001234	0.001869
Omani Riyal	0.773711	0.779391
Qatar Riyal	0.081788	0.083001
Saudi Riyal	0.079207	0.080157
Syrian Pound	0.001272	0.001492
Tunisian Dinar	0.145013	0.153013
Turkish Lira	0.096820	0.107120
UAE Dirhams	0.080793	0.081942
Yemeni Riyal	0.001357	0.001437

US GASOLINE DEMAND IS CRITICAL TO OIL OUTLOOK

LONDON: US gasoline consumption increased by more than 2.6 percent last year thanks to a combination of lower oil prices and economic growth. In volume terms, consumption rose by around 240,000 barrels per day (bpd), one of the largest increases in the last 40 years, according to data from the US Energy Information Administration. Ordinarily, gasoline consumption is more influenced by macroeconomic variables such as growth, employment and incomes, as well as demographic variables such as the driving age population and.

Consumption is more weakly affected by prices in the short term. But significant changes do occur in response to a very large price move such as the one that has happened since the middle of 2014.

The combination of economic growth, rising employment and substantially cheaper gasoline has produced a significant

increase in driving and fuel consumption since mid-2014. The volume of traffic on US roads rose by 3.5 percent in the 12 months to December 2015, according to the Federal Highway Administration, the fastest increase since 1997.

There has also been a big shift in vehicle buying behaviour with consumers opting for larger, fuel-hungry crossover utility vehicles in record numbers while cutting purchases of smaller more fuel-efficient cars. Rapid growth in driving and the gradual shift in the vehicle fleet more than offset the continued improvement in fuel efficiency for all classes of vehicle as a result of federal fuel efficiency standards. The result was a big increase in gasoline consumption last year (+240,000 bpd) that was three times larger than in 2014 (+78,000 bpd) and 50 percent larger than in 2013 (+161,000 bpd).

On a worldwide basis, gasoline rather

than middle distillates has accounted for the fastest oil consumption growth last year because distillate demand has been hit by the global freight slowdown and a warm winter in the northern hemisphere.

Strong gasoline consumption growth in the United States as well as in China and India accounted for more than half of all the increase in global oil demand in 2015. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries is counting on cheap fuel prices to continue boosting gasoline demand and help rebalance the oil market over the course of 2016 and 2017. But the dynamics of gasoline demand are complicated and remain poorly understood, which makes forecasting challenging.

The EIA has asked Congress for an additional \$1 million to improve the collection and analysis of data on personal vehicles and fuel consumption as one of its four strategic

priorities for fiscal 2017 ("Department of Energy FY 2017 Congressional Budget Request" Vol. 3, 2016).

In the meantime, there is considerable uncertainty about whether gasoline consumption will continue growing at the super-fast rate reported in 2015. The EIA predicts gasoline consumption will increase by only 70,000 bpd in 2016 and be flat in 2017 as fuel efficiency offsets the impact of economic growth and lower prices ("Short-Term Energy Outlook", EIA, February 2016).

Continued growth of gasoline demand in the United States (as well as India and China) is the single most important factor in the outlook for oil prices in 2016. Gasoline prices have become critical to the margins of refineries in the United States and around the world given the depressed state of diesel demand. US-India-China gasoline consumption is critical for the global oil supply-

demand balance over the next 12 months.

Complicating the outlook, the most recent US consumption data have been mixed because of weather-related disruptions, first the Midwest floods at the start of the year and then snow blizzards at the end of January. Comparatively low fuel prices should continue to support faster than average growth in fuel demand although it remains uncertain how much of the impact from the drop in prices has already filtered through.

Looming over everything are concerns about the health of the US and global economies, with signs of financial distress and more sluggish growth especially in business investment. If the US economy slows, gasoline demand will slow as well, pushing back the rebalancing of oil supply and demand even further into the future. — Reuters

LSE CONFIRMS HOLDING MERGER TALKS WITH DEUTSCHE BOERSE

MERGER WILL CREATE THE LARGEST EUROPEAN EXCHANGE

LONDON/FRANKFURT: Deutsche Boerse and the London Stock Exchange are taking a fresh run at a merger that would create a large European exchange operator potentially capable of facing down strong competition from the United States and Asia. The LSE said in a statement it was holding detailed discussions on an all-share merger under a new holding company that would give Deutsche Boerse shareholders a 54.4 percent stake and LSE shareholders 45.6 percent.

The talks, using code names Delta for Deutsche Boerse and Luna for the LSE, are at an early stage, a person familiar with the matter told Reuters earlier.

Shares in both exchange operators jumped on the news, with LSE shares up 18.7 percent and Deutsche Boerse up 8.3 percent by 1406 GMT. Deutsche Boerse, which had worked on a joint venture called iX with the LSE in 2000 before making a full-blown but failed

attempt to take over its British counterpart in late 2004, was not immediately available for comment.

Deutsche Boerse Chief Executive Carsten Kengeter, on taking the German exchange operator's helm in June, said he had an "open mind" on both bolt-on and large acquisitions as part of his strategy to boost growth and revenue. He has since spent around \$1.5 billion buying out equity index joint ventures from Switzerland's Six Group and taking over foreign exchange trading platform 360T. Meanwhile, Britain's top equity index fell yesterday as a slump in major bank Standard Chartered and miner BHP Billiton pushed back the market, although shares in the London Stock Exchange surged on merger news.

London Stock Exchange Group soared 16.6 percent, set for its biggest daily gain since November 2008, after confirming that it was in talks to potentially merge with Deutsche Boerse.

The potential union would be structured as an all-share merger of equals under a new holding company. The blue-chip FTSE 100 index was down 0.4 percent at 6,015.59 points at 1405 GMT, retreating from a 1.5 percent rise a day earlier.

Standard Chartered was among the worst-performing FTSE 100 stocks in percentage terms, dropping 3.2 percent after the emerging-markets focused bank posted an 84 percent fall in annual profits. Standard Chartered blamed tumbling commodity prices, which have been hit by a slowdown at top commodities consumer China, and rising loan impairments for its weak earnings.

"It's a horrendous headline number out on StanChart. I'd still be a seller of any rallies on the stock because I am concerned about their exposure to China," said Beaufort Securities' sales trader Basil Petrides. — Reuters



HANOVER: This July 10, 2015 file photo shows signage at a Macy's department store at the Hanover Mall in Hanover, Massachusetts. — AP

MACY'S Q4 PROFIT SLUMPS, BUT SIGNS OF HOPE EMERGE

NEW YORK: Macy's reported a 31 percent decline in fourth-quarter profits, dragged down by store closings and other costs. But the adjusted results beat Wall Street estimates and sales picked up in the final weeks of the holiday quarter as winter finally arrived, driving sales of coats and boots higher. A very warm winter early on plagued retailers during the most critical selling period of the year. Shares rose more than 5 percent before the opening bell yesterday and appeared headed for a new high for the year.

It's an encouraging sign for Macy's, which had to slash prices toward the end of the year as inventories piled up. The retailer, which also operates upscale Bloomingdale's, had been a stellar performer since the recession, but it stumbled through the holiday season, and it wasn't only the weather.

Like many department stores, Macy's faces increasing competition from online retailers like Amazon.com. It also has acknowledged that customers are spending more of their money on restaurants, spas and vacations, rather than clothes. And when they do spend money on clothing, they are increasingly walking through the doors of discount stores like TJ Maxx.

Shares of Macy's Inc. fell 36 percent over the past 12 months, but have begun to climb back this year.

"I have reminded my team that our setback last year is a setup for our comeback," said Chairman and CEO Terry Lundgren in a printed statement yesterday. Lundgren has closed 40 stores and trimmed staff in corporate offices and in stores to become more nimble. The retailer has strived to expand online and has pursued other avenues of growth. It acquired Bluemercury, the upscale beauty products and spa company. And it's not playing defense against discounters. Last year it opened Macy's Backstage to go head to head with TJ Maxx on its home turf.

The maneuvers did cost the company in the fourth quarter, but investors appear to think it was worth it. Shares rose \$2.25 to \$43.31 before the opening bell. Macy's earned \$544 million, or \$1.73 per share, in the quarter ended Jan. 30. That compares with \$793, or \$2.26 per share, in the year-ago period.

Adjusted profits were \$2.09 per share, better than the \$1.86 per share estimate from analysts, according to Zacks Investment Research. Total revenue fell 5.2 percent to \$8.87 billion, but that's still higher than the \$8.84 billion projection from analysts.

While comparable-store sales declined to 4.3 percent, given the terrible holiday season it was better than Wall Street had expected. — AP

TRIBUNE PUBLISHING CO REPLACES GRIFFIN AS CEO

CHICAGO: Tribune Publishing Co, the troubled owner of the Chicago Tribune and other newspapers around the country, announced yesterday that it is replacing Jack Griffin as CEO less than two years after he joined the company. Tribune Publishing named Justin Dearborn to be its new CEO. He most recently was CEO of Merge, a publicly traded health care technology company that IBM acquired in October.

"Although this is a different medium than my last technology company, it has the same challenge on how to create the highest value for our content," Dearborn said in a statement.

Griffin joined Tribune Publishing in April 2014. The company said Griffin was instrumental in the spin-off that created Tribune Publishing and cited his work managing costs.

"The timing is right for a new leader to come on board and lead Tribune Publishing through its next phase of transformation," Griffin said in a statement.



Tribune Publishing Co CEO Jack Griffin poses for a photo in Boston. — AP

The move comes nearly three weeks after Tribune Publishing said it received a \$44.4 million cash infusion from Merrick Media, which is controlled by Chicago investor Michael

W. Ferro Jr. Ferro was added to Tribune's board as a non-executive chairman.

Ferro has a stake in the Chicago Tribune's rival newspaper the

Chicago Sun-Times through a company called Wrapports. Because of the Tribune investment, Ferro has stepped down from the board of Wrapports. Tribune said Ferro will keep his stake in Wrapports, but he will not attend meetings related to Sun-Times Media Holdings. "The board thanks Jack Griffin for his significant contributions and wishes him the best of luck in his future endeavors," Ferro said in a statement.

At the same time the cash infusion was announced, Tribune Publishing suspended its quarterly dividend to free up more money after a difficult year. Revenue has slumped as readers and advertisers continue to migrate online and the company has trimmed staff to cut costs. Its stock has plummeted 68 percent in the last year. Chicago-based Tribune Publishing owns 11 daily newspapers, including the Los Angeles Times and the Orlando Sentinel. It spun off from media company Tribune Co. about two years ago. — AP

DUBAI AC FIRM EMPOWER HALTS PLAN TO GO PUBLIC

DUBAI: Dubai air-conditioning provider Empower has halted plans to go public citing adverse market conditions, the utility's chief executive said yesterday, in a blow to the emirate's attempts to diversify its stock exchange.

Oil is thought to account for only about 5 percent of Dubai's economy, but the slump in crude prices has nevertheless sent the share prices of Dubai-listed companies tumbling. The main stock index, in which real estate and bank stocks dominate, is down 40 percent from a 2014 peak. "Empower is a company that must go public ... we have studied this, we came up with the result that we will (launch an) IPO (initial public offering) but the market conditions are not encouraging," Ahmed bin Shafar, Empower's chief executive told a news conference to announce the company's annual results.

"We are freezing the decision until we see the right time."

Empower, a joint venture between Dubai's monopoly electricity and water provider and a company owned by the emirate's ruler, made an annual net profit of 516 million dirhams (\$141 mln) in 2015, up 27 percent year-on-year.

Revenue rose 12 percent to 1.7 billion dirhams. Shafar forecast Empower's 2016 profit would be 600 million dirhams, while revenue would reach 1.8 billion dirhams.

The company's cooling capacity increased 6.7 percent to 1.12 million refrigeration tons over the same period. It was providing air conditioning to 810 buildings by the end of 2015, up from 746 a year earlier, Shafar said, predicting Empower would connect a further 52 buildings in 2016.

The company requires 1.2 billion dirhams in new funding to pay for projects under construction, of which 80 percent will come from bank borrowings and the rest from company funds, Shafar said. He said the company was talking to local and international banks to secure this money. Empower typically borrows over six years, but sometimes syndicated loans differ with lenders seeking to restructure a facility after about half the money had been repaid. Its current liabilities total 1.5 billion dirhams after it paid off 580 million of debt last year. The company has halted plans to expand into Qatar and Saudi Arabia after the drop in oil prices led to state spending cutbacks in those countries, Shafar said. — Reuters

US HOME PRICES RISE AT A STEADY CLIP IN DECEMBER

WASHINGTON: US home prices increased at a steady clip in December, helped by a healthy job market and low mortgage rates. The Standard & Poor's/Case-Shiller 20-city home price index rose 5.7 percent from a year earlier, same as the annual increase in November.

Prices rose 11.4 percent in Portland, Oregon; 10.3 percent in

San Francisco and 10.2 percent in Denver. Washington D.C. registered the lowest annual increase, just 1.7 percent.

The index is still more than 11 percent below its mid-2006 peak. Mortgage rates remain near historic lows more than two months after the Federal Reserve raised short-term interest rates for the first time

since 2006. Unemployment has fallen to an eight-year low 4.9 percent.

David Blitzer, chairman of the index committee at S&P Dow Jones, said steady price increases would encourage builders to start putting more new homes. Last year, construction companies broke ground on 1.1 million properties, most since 2007. — AP



HOUSTON: "For Sale" signs are stacked up outside a new complex of townhouses in Houston. Yesterday, the Standard & Poor's/Case-Shiller 20-city home price index was released. — AP

ADB OFFERS \$2BN FOR SRI LANKA'S RECOVERY

COLOMBO: The Asian Development Bank yesterday announced over \$2.0 billion in loans and equity to Sri Lanka, which is in negotiations with the International Monetary Fund for a bailout.

ADB president Takehiko Nakao said the money would be used to finance expressways, railways, power generation and education. It covers 2016 through 2018 and compares with \$1.5 billion allocated in the preceding three years.

"The ADB is re-orienting its operations to meet the evolving needs of Sri Lanka as it moves to become an upper-middle-income country in the next few years," he said after talks with President

Maithripala Sirisena and other leaders. Nakao praised the government which came to power last year promising an end to corruption under the former regime of Mahinda Rajapakse. But he urged better tax collection and prudent spending.

"Both tax revenue enhancement and effective management of public expenditure are urgent tasks for the government," he said. The new government has gone on a spending spree to deliver on election promises of higher wages and lower prices, increasing the budget deficit and causing concern over the balance of payments.

On Friday the central bank raised benchmark interest rates for the first

time in nearly four years, by 50 basis points to 8.0 percent.

The rate rise came as Sri Lanka made a formal request for an IMF bailout package to aid its struggling economy after a sharp slowdown in growth. Details of any bailout have yet to be finalized. The IMF, which sent a mission to review Sri Lanka's economy earlier this month, said it had warned the authorities they should make a "stronger effort" immediately to reduce the deficit.

Sri Lanka received \$2.6 billion from the IMF in 2009 to boost its financial reserves, which had dropped below \$1 billion at the height of fighting between Tamil Tiger rebels and government forces. — AFP

WORLD STOCK MARKETS RALLY PETERS OUT

LONDON: World stock markets retreated yesterday following a rally that kicked off the week, as global growth concerns returned to the fore with the mining sector taking another hit.

The pound remained under pressure over fears for Britain's future in the EU, while the euro fell in response to poorly-received German data. "Equity markets are in the red... but not quite down and out," said Mike van Dulken, head of research at Accendo Markets.

"A pullback by oil and industrial commodities from key technical levels is sapping risk appetite, as is another miner showing us how tough things are."

Global mining giant BHP Billiton posted a net loss for the six months to December 31 of \$5.67

billion (5.15 billion euros) and slashed dividends as plunging commodity prices hammered its bottom line and the company warned of a prolonged period of volatility.

In late morning deals, BHP shares were down 5.0 percent at 756 pence on London's benchmark FTSE 100 index, which was 0.7-percent lower overall. In the eurozone, Frankfurt's DAX 30 index was down 0.9 percent and the Paris CAC 40 lost 0.6 percent compared with Monday's close. German business confidence fell for the third consecutive month in February, with manufacturers reporting the biggest drop in confidence since November 2008, the Ifo economic institute said Tuesday.

The institute's closely-watched business cli-

mate index slumped to a level not seen since January 2015, falling to 105.7 points in February from 107.3 points in the previous month, Ifo said in a statement.

Analysts said the reading showed that Germany's powerful export industry was starting to wake up to a global concerns roiling international markets.

ING's Carsten Brzeski said the data showed that "global events have finally reached German companies' boardrooms".

"Expectations have taken another sharp hit from recent market turmoil, the adverse impact of low oil prices and renewed concerns about a slowing of the Chinese economy," he said.

No to 'Brexit'

Almost 200 bosses of top British companies yesterday urged voters to keep Britain in the European Union, warning that an exit from the bloc would threaten jobs. Some 198 business leaders including Roger Carr, chairman of BAE Systems, BP chief executive Bob Dudley and Ron Dennis, chief of F1 team McLaren, wrote a joint letter published in the Times, backing Prime Minister David Cameron's deal to reform the EU.

The letter comes as a boost for Cameron, who was rocked on Sunday by the decision of charismatic London mayor Boris Johnson to back a "Brexit" in a referendum on June 23.

Cameron wants Britain to remain part of the EU, as long as it undergoes a series of reforms. Sterling fell to near seven-year lows Monday on fears voters might opt to quit the union.

Asia's share rally stalled yesterday with markets battling a fresh fall in the price of oil and renewed fears over the Chinese economy. Japanese stocks fell as a stronger yen hit exporters while Shanghai also dropped, after private indicators showed confidence in the manufacturing and service sectors falling to new lows. The impact of the gathering Chinese slowdown and the collapse in commodity prices helped push global mining giant BHP Billiton, which counts China as a key customer, to a huge six-month net loss yesterday.

"China's slowdown is yet to fully play out and markets are watching what poli-

cies will be rolled out to address that," said Nescyn Presinede, trader at Manila-based Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation, according to Bloomberg News.

"The environment remains volatile with investors focused on oil prices." US crude for April fell 2.58 percent while Brent for April was down 2.48 percent, as traders remained doubtful that talks on an output freeze among key crude producers would bear fruit.

US inventories probably expanded further from their highest levels in more than eight decades, according to a Bloomberg survey before US data today.

"The increase in stockpiles will mean oil will remain lower for longer," Evan Lucas, a market strategist at IG Ltd in Melbourne, told Bloomberg. "The supply side is a big hurdle. We expect prices to edge up ever so slightly in the second quarter, it'll inch toward \$35 and average around that level."

Japan out of options

Wall Street equities had enjoyed healthy gains Monday, closing sharply higher after US oil prices surged more than six percent. But Tokyo lost 0.37 percent yesterday after early gains fizzled out as crude prices reversed course and the yen rose, which is a negative for exporters' profitability, and tends to hit demand for their shares. Analysts warned that the Bank of Japan may be running out of policy tools after it announced a negative interest rate policy last month—a move widely seen as a desperate effort to kick-start growth. — Agencies

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report

Tuesday 23 February 2016

Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low
Price Index	▲ 21.64	5,166.19	5,144.55	5,167.32	5,140.85
Weighted Index	▲ 3.03	354.58	351.55	354.67	352.28
KXS 15	▲ 10.24	836.40	826.16	837.42	828.98

Volume	166,535,456
Value (KWD)	17,092,029
Number of Trades	3,399

Trades

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
MARIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	114	0.0	0.0
IKARUS	82	78	27,000	2,128	4	82	▼ -1.0
IPG	0.0	0.0	0	0	320	0.0	0.0
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	640	0.0	0.0
ENERGYH	30.5	28.5	233,258	6,858	26	29.5	▼ -0.0
GPI	41.5	41.0	2,167,100	88,881	49	41.0	▼ -0.0
ABAR	118	110	2,273	256	6	118	▲ 2.0
Oil & Gas			2,429,631	98,122	85	756.05	▲ 0.42

KFOUC	0.0	0.0	0	0	210	0.0	0.0
BPCC	450	445	139,260	62,667	6	445	▼ -0.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	610	0.0	0.0
ALQURAI	174	174	8,082	1,406	2	174	▲ 0.0
Basic Materials			147,342	64,073	8	887.89	▼ -0.00

KCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	365	0.0	0.0
REFRI	0.0	0.0	0	0	320	0.0	0.0
CABLE	340	320	16,390	5,346	8	340	▼ -0.0
SHIP	146	144	95	14	5	146	▲ 2.0
PCEM	1,060	1,040	11,590	12,059	8	1,060	▼ -0.0
PAPER	0.0	0.0	0	0	420	0.0	0.0
MRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	67	0.0	0.0
ACICO	280	275	1,100	303	3	280	▲ 10.0
GMCM	470	470	833	392	1	470	▼ -0.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	134	0.0	0.0
KPAK	340	340	11,150	3,791	1	340	▼ -0.0
KBMMK	0.0	0.0	0	0	250	0.0	0.0
NICBM	0.0	0.0	0	0	230	0.0	0.0
EQUIPMENT	51	51	435,000	22,185	11	51	▼ -0.0
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	99	0.0	0.0
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	102	0.0	0.0
SALBOOKH	67	64	197,891	12,856	15	67	▲ 2.0
AGLTY	425	420	467,299	197,751	23	425	▲ 5.0
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	200	0.0	0.0
CLEANING	37.0	37.0	90,601	3,352	7	37.0	▼ -0.0
CITYGROUP	0.0	0.0	0	0	460	0.0	0.0
KGL	0.0	0.0	0	0	41.0	0.0	0.0
KPCP	0.0	0.0	0	0	210	0.0	0.0
HUMANSOFT	750	670	45	31	4	750	▲ 40.0
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	136	0.0	0.0
SAFWAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	300	0.0	0.0
GFC	0.0	0.0	0	0	31.0	0.0	0.0
MAYADEEN	17.5	17.5	811,000	14,193	19	17.5	▼ -0.0
CGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	790	0.0	0.0
MTCC	71	70	295,591	20,692	9	71	▲ 1.0
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	600	0.0	0.0
ALAFCO	208	202	74,010	15,126	12	204	▲ 6.0
MUBARRAD	60	59	367,500	21,688	12	60	▲ 1.0
LOGISTICS	57	56	24,107	1,352	8	56	▼ -0.0
SCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	84	0.0	0.0
GCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	73	0.0	0.0
QCEM	65	65	100,000	6,500	1	65	▼ -2.0
FCEM	73	72	505,010	36,361	12	72	▼ -5.0
RKWC	0.0	0.0	0	0	95	0.0	0.0
SPEC	83	81	100	8	2	83	▲ 5.0
Industrials			3,409,312	373,998	161	961.11	▲ 6.05

KSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	204	0.0	0.0
NSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	64	0.0	0.0
PAPCO	112	112	1,350	151	1	112	▲ 10.0
CATTL	0.0	0.0	0	0	122	0.0	0.0
DANAH	69	69	25,000	1,725	1	69	▼ -0.0
POULH	200	192	33,245	6,599	9	200	▲ 10.0
FOOD	2,160	2,080	1,129,227	2,379,302	17	2,100	▲ 20.0
Consumer Goods			1,188,822	2,387,777	28	1057.86	▲ 21.17

MHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	210	0.0	0.0
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	920	0.0	0.0
YIACO	218	218	6,296,760	1,372,694	21	218	▲ 10
Health Care			6,296,760	1,372,694	21	1009.37	▲ 7.19

Health Care

KCIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	1,120	0.0	0.0
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	210	0.0	0.0
SULTAN	62	60	34,000	2,065	7	61	▼ -1
CABLETV	24.5	24.0	70,000	1,690	5	24.0	▼ -3
EYAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	385	0.0	0.0
IFAHR	172	172	500	86	1	172	▼ -20
OULAFUEL	110	110	2,185	240	10	110	▼ 0
MUNTAZAHAT	90	90	150,000	13,500	4	90	▼ -5
JAZEERA	820	770	373,814	301,751	21	820	▲ 2.0
SOOR	112	112	137,795	15,433	19	112	▼ 0
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	110	0.0	0.0
ALNAWADI	0.0	0.0	0	0	84	0.0	0.0
ALRAI	144	140	257,645	36,837	18	142	▲ 2
ZIMAH	95	90	2,041,407	189,052	143	94	▲ 3
UFIF	0.0	0.0	0	0	96	0.0	0.0
KOUTFOOD	0.0	0.0	0	0	570	0.0	0.0
Mezzan	1,040	1,020	58,660	60,306	5	1,040	▼ -20
Consumer Services			3,126,006	620,781	233	957.89	▼ -7.16

ZAIN	360	355	2,108,568	754,498	51	360	▼ 0
OOREDOO	1,240	1,140	2,268	2,606	10	1,140	▼ -40
HITSTELEC	28.0	27.0	1,272,040	35,012	22	28.0	▲ 1
VIVA	960	930	202,487	191,431	103	950	▲ 10
Telecommunications			3,585,363	983,546	186	590.74	▲ 0.85

NBK	730	720	2,043,674	1,488,732	38	730	▲ 20
GBK	204	202	11,000	2,242	2	202	▼ -2
CBK	0.0	0.0	0	0	530	0.0	0.0
ABK	345	345	110,000	37,950	4	345	▼ 0
ALMUTAHED	435	435	85,316	37,112	3	435	▲ 5
KIB	194	194	642,865	124,716	10	194	▲ 2
BURG	340	335	290,000	97,655	11	335	▼ 0
KFIN	495	490	6,056,442	2,992,373	143	495	▲ 10
BOUBYAN	390	385	947,807	369,285	39	390	▲ 5
AUB	202	198	1,024,640	204,419	25	200	▲ 2
ITHMR	33.0	32.0	4,677,244	152,897	72	32.5	▼ 0
WARBANK	180	178	1,502,376	267,831	71	180	▲ 2
Banks			17,391,364	5,775,213	418	806.75	▲ 6.94

KINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	310	0.0	0.0
GINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	700	0.0	0.0
AINS	465	465	15,000	6,975	2	465	▲ 2.0
WINS	110	108	59,242	6,399	8	110	▲ 10.0
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	200	0.0	0.0
FTI	0.0	0.0	0	0	52	0.0	0.0
WETHAQ	30.0	29.5	17,000	509	4	30.0	▼ 0.0
BKIKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	355	0.0	0.0
Insurance			91,242	13,882	14	1046.86	▲ 5.61

Trades



NISSAN 'UNBOXES' ITS LATEST MOBILE DEVICE

GSMA MOBILE WORLD CONGRESS

BARCELONA: Electric vehicle leader Nissan has 'unboxed' its new software-enabled vehicle, the Nissan LEAF 30 kWh, as some of the largest names in technology gather in Barcelona for the opening day of the GSMA Mobile World Congress 2016.

As well as boasting a 26 percent increase in driving range (250 km on a single charge) via a new 30 kWh battery, the new MY16 LEAF is changing the connectivity landscape with an improved version of the brand's acclaimed NissanConnect EV infotainment system.

Nissan marked the event with a live 'unboxing' of the new MY16 Nissan LEAF 30 kWh while debuting a new film highlighting a raft of new updates available on the latest edition of the best-seller: <https://youtu.be/vh4qHRt6s68>

The 'unboxing' marks the first time Nissan has exhibited at the show, closing the gap between the automotive and technology worlds, and showcasing the manufacturers' innovative approach to in-car technologies.

Gareth Dunsmore, Director of



Electric Vehicles for Nissan Europe, said: "What better place to showcase our latest technology than alongside other leading lights in innovation. Not only is Nissan the leader of the electric vehicle revolution, we are also committed to bringing cutting-edge technology, connectivity and e-mobility to the mass

market". The enhanced NissanConnect EV telematics system is at the forefront of accessible in-vehicle technologies, allowing Nissan LEAF owners to control many of the vehicle's features at the touch of a button. Providing a suite of digital alerts and remote access features, owners can remotely manage



and check the status of the battery, set timers for charging, remotely switch on climate control and find local charging stations.

In addition to this, the new operating system also allows users to analyse their driving patterns, including energy usage and CO2 saved per journey.

"In a fully connected, fully mobile world, in-vehicle connectivity is an absolute must for today's drivers. That is why Nissan is proud to be at the forefront of developing efficient and reliable in-vehicle connected technologies that are available and accessible to all," added Dunsmore.

BREXIT WOULD HIT ECONOMY AND JOBS, SAY UK BUSINESS BOSSES

LONDON: The bosses at more than a third of Britain's biggest companies including oil giants Shell and BP and its largest telecoms group said leaving the European Union would put the economy at risk, backing Prime Minister David Cameron's call to stay in the bloc. The business support provided a boost for Cameron in his battle to win over a divided public and confront the many eurosceptics in his own party before Britain holds a referendum on whether to stay in the EU on June 23.

It came the day after the pound posted its biggest one-day loss in almost six years on concerns Britain might vote to leave the 28-member bloc. Nearly 200 companies, among them 36 FTSE 100 firms, including telecoms group BT, retailers Marks & Spencer and Asda, and oil firms Shell and BP, signed the letter which put forward the economic merits of EU membership.

"Business needs unrestricted access to the European market of 500 million people in order to continue to grow, invest and create jobs," said the letter, published in the Times newspaper yesterday. "We believe that leaving the EU would deter investment, threaten jobs and put the economy at risk."

The high-profile backing for Cameron follows a tough few days since he agreed new British terms with EU leaders at a summit in Brussels last week when deep divisions in his Conservative party over Europe rose to the surface. He suffered a major blow on Sunday when London mayor Boris Johnson, one of Britain's most popular politicians, said he would campaign for a British exit, and on Monday he was forced to mount a defense of his deal in parliament in the face of criticism from some of his own lawmakers. Johnson, who as mayor presides over one of the world's pre-eminent financial centres, dismissed the significance of the letter from the business leaders.

SPREADING ALARM

"There will be people who try to spread alarm, anxiety," he told reporters, saying the same people had been wrong over Britain's decision not to join the euro and to exit the

European Exchange Rate Mechanism 20 years earlier. Other commentators said the potential boost for Cameron was limited given that two-thirds of top bosses had not signed up, including those from its two biggest retailers. Tesco, Britain's biggest private employer with 310,000 staff, said the referendum was a decision for the people of Britain and that its focus remained on serving its customers, while Sainsbury's, the country's second biggest supermarket, said it was an apolitical organization.

"I suspect that the numbers (of FTSE 100 bosses) giving support to remain publicly have been a disappointment," said Andrew Hawkins, founder of polling firm ComRes.

In another survey published by the Institute of Directors on Monday, six in 10 of nearly 700 of its members polled said they planned to vote to stay in the EU.

SCOTTISH EXPERIENCE

"I can tell you this, if the leave campaign could produce 35 business leaders of this sort of stature, they'd be over the moon," Cameron said of the business leaders' letter during a visit to Slough, west of London. "This is simply people running some of the largest businesses in our country that employ over a million people between them, saying this has real consequences for our country."

Economic concerns played a role in the Scottish independence referendum in 2014, when in the weeks ahead of the vote, big companies warned about the impact of leaving the UK on investment and jobs, adding to a climate of fear, and possibly swaying some votes to help keep that union intact.

As a result some voters pledged to boycott firms wading into politics, and perhaps wariness from that experience deterred some of Britain's biggest employers from signing the letter.

Cameron's move to call on the voice of big business - the letter was arranged by his Downing Street office alongside the 'Britain Stronger in Europe' campaign - was not without risk as "Out" campaigners cast the EU as the instrument of a global elite which is out of touch with ordinary Britons. — Reuters



JAZEERA UNVEILS SPECIAL LIVERY IN KUWAIT'S 55TH INDEPENDENCE YEAR

FLYING WITH PRIDE ABOVE THE CLOUDS

KUWAIT: In celebration of Kuwait's 55th National Day and the 25th Liberation Day alongside ten years of its success, Jazeera Airways travelers across major cities in the Middle East will soon be taking off in an aircraft graced by a special livery of Kuwait's national flag.

The Jazeera Airways flag-themed A320 first took to the skies on February 22 at 5.30 pm to Amman, Jordan, and is the first aircraft to mark Kuwait's February celebrations this year.

Visible to travelers from airport gates and runways across the Middle East, the festive livery includes a large Kuwaiti flag on the fuselage, flag

on the airline's 10th Anniversary emblem, and text expressing the pride of the airline, "Long Live Kuwait".

Jazeera Airways is a national airline of Kuwait and a proud successful operator that symbolizes the strength and resilience of Kuwait's private sector.

The airline, which is celebrating the 10th Anniversary of its first flight this year, is a strong testament to Kuwait's leadership vision that enabled the establishment of Jazeera Airways as the first non-government owned airline in the Middle East, contributing to the growth in avia-

tion across the region.

Based in Kuwait, the airline serves popular destinations in the Middle East. The airline operates a fleet of seven Airbus A320 aircraft with two class cabins comprising a Business Class and an Economy Class. Business Class travelers get both an upgraded experience and exclusivity, starting with exclusive check-in lines, business lounge access, up to 60 kilograms in free baggage allowance, and an exclusive on-board cabin. The airline's Economy Class offers travelers free baggage allowance of 40 kilograms and free on-board meals.



KUALA LUMPUR: A woman is seen reflected on glass panels as she walks past a popular shopping mall in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. —AFP

UK FARM MINISTER URGES STAYING IN EU AT TIME OF VOLATILE PRICES

BIRMINGHAM: Britain's farming and environment minister Liz Truss yesterday backed continued membership of the European Union, saying it would be "wrong to take a leap in the dark" at a time of severe price volatility and global market uncertainty. The country's farmers, traditionally strong supporters of membership, are divided ahead of the June 23 referendum, with support eroded by what some see as heavy-handed regulation and bureaucracy which has stifled innovation.

"I believe that by voting to remain we can work within a reformed EU to reduce bureaucracy and secure further reform while still enjoying the significant benefits of the single market which gives access to 500 million consumers," Truss said at the annual conference of the National Farmers Union.

"We are able to export our high quality

products freely without the trade barriers we deal with elsewhere and with a say in the rules," she added. Truss said 60 percent of Britain's food and farming exports were to the European Union, bringing in 11 billion pounds.

"At a time of severe price volatility and global market uncertainty - I believe it would be wrong to take a leap in the dark," Truss said. "The years of complication and risk caused by negotiating withdrawal would be a distraction from our efforts to build a world-leading food and farming industry that brings jobs and growth to Britain."

Critics argue that EU membership has held the sector back, for example through what they see as an overly cautious and lengthy approval process for new crop protection chemicals and a reluctance to embrace genet-

ically modified crops. And while the EU farm budget is declining following reforms to the Common Agricultural Policy, pressure from environmental groups has led to increased regulation on issues such as pesticides and waste disposal.

Truss' predecessor Owen Paterson warned last month that the EU's "obstinate refusal to adopt advanced technology means Europe has become the museum of world farming."

NFU president Meurig Raymond told the conference that farmers had "vastly different opinions" on continued EU membership. "Whatever your view is, there is no denying that this is a huge area of uncertainty for farming. And if the vote is to leave the EU there will be at least another 2 years of uncertainty as new arrangements are negotiated," he said. — Reuters

NBK CAPITAL HOLDS ITS ANNUAL INVESTMENT FORUM 'THE INSIGHT'

FORUM DISCUSSES INVESTMENT CLIMATE IN MENA

KUWAIT: Watani Investment Company (NBK Capital) held its annual investment forum "The Insight". The event outlined the views of various investment professionals at NBK and NBK Capital

Capital heads towards its second decade of operation, we believe it is vital to continue to foster a close working partnership with our clients through transparent communications and open dialogue.

We aim to continue formulating creative financial solutions that address the specific investment needs of our clients". Key highlights of the event included a presentation on the

challenges and opportunities of local, regional and international markets. It was noted that, "Despite the challenging investment and economic landscape, there continues to be certain pockets of opportunities that can create value, and it important now more than ever to rely on active and professional financial management."

Subsequent interactive presentations by a number of financial professionals at NBK Capital also exhibited the Firm's business insights.

The Investment Advisory Group highlighted the value of the Investment Management Process which is a collection of tools used to reach financial objectives. Asset Allocation being at its core and which should govern long term behavior when investing.

The MENA Equities-Asset Management Division provided international and regional historical evidence that "equities are rewarding over the long-term despite their significant volatility" and discussed how investors can navigate the current challenging economic and investment environment in the GCC region".

The forum concluded with a roundtable discussion hosted by senior members of the Investment Banking and MENA Equities Divisions at NBK Capital in addition to NBK Capital partners' seniors on the topic of "Opportunities and Challenges in a Dynamic Investment Environment".

Since its inception in 2005, NBK Capital prides itself on a reach and scale that is global, a focus that is regional and a service level that always remains personal.



KUWAIT: Watani Investment Company (NBK Capital) holding its annual investment forum "The Insight".

relating to the current investment environment in the MENA region.

"The Insight" is an initiative by NBK Capital to share with its clients and investors updates on business operations, offer expert opinion on major trends and observations in the world of finance, as well as provide investment insights that could help stakeholders make informed investment decisions.

Chief Executive Officer of NBK Capital Faisal Al-Hamad commented, "We are delighted to host our annual event, "The Insight". As NBK



Chief Executive Officer of NBK Capital Faisal Al-Hamad.

QALAA'S SUBSIDIARY SIGNS 5-YEAR CONTRACT TO SUPPLY ETHIOPIAN CEMENT COMPANY WITH WASTE TO THERMAL ENERGY SOLUTION

CAIRO: The Egyptian Company for Solid Waste Recycling (ECARU), a subsidiary of Qalaa Holdings' Tawazon, will supply Ethiopia's Messebo Cement Company with an environmentally-friendly and cost-efficient alternative solid fuel that will gradually replace coal.

The Egyptian Company for Solid Waste Recycling (ECARU), a subsidiary of Qalaa Holdings' Tawazon, proudly announced that it has signed a five-year contract with Ethiopia's Messebo Cement to supply Biomass which will be used as a source of energy to replace coal gradually. As stipulated by the agreement between the two companies, ECARU will be the technology and service provider responsible for collecting, transporting and processing local Biomass that will be converted to environmentally-friendly alternative solid fuel.

"Biomass is a renewable, carbon neutral energy source that comes from agricultural residues that would otherwise be openly burned. This

waste to energy solution for heavy industries such as cement manufacturing, is beneficial on multiple fronts. It helps nations solve their Biomass challenges, it reduces emissions that come from burning fossil fuels such as fuel oil, natural gas and coal, and it is a more cost-efficient and sustainable source of energy," said Hisham Sherif, CEO of ENTAG/ECARU.

"Today we are exceptionally proud to be able to transfer our knowledge and years of experience to the countries of sub-Saharan Africa where Biomass as a source of renewable energy has been largely untapped," he adds.

ECARU has been supplying alternative Solid fuel, Biomass, as a source of energy to Egypt's leading cement companies for the past five years.

The contract with Messebo Cement, which is located in Mekelle, 780 km from Addis Ababa with a production capacity of 2 million tons of cement per annum, is renewable beyond the

stipulated five-year time period under the same terms and conditions. Tawazon, Qalaa Holdings' subsidiary company for investment in the regional solid waste management industry, controls two companies: the Egyptian Company for Solid Waste Recycling (ECARU), a solid waste management service provider, and Engineering Tasks Group (ENTAG), a solid waste management technology provider. Together, these two companies form a leading waste management enterprise with extensive operations in Egypt and an international project book in Oman, Malaysia, Sudan, Nigeria, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Syria.

Qalaa Holdings has invested in Tawazon as part of its energy portfolio which also includes TAQA Arabia, Egypt's largest private sector energy distribution company and the Egyptian Refining Company (ERC), a \$3.7 billion refinery, Egypt's largest in-progress, private sector mega project.



WHY SHOPPING AROUND TO SAVE ON BUSINESS TRAVEL DOESN'T MAKE SENSE

KUWAIT: Shopping around for the cheapest fares at the last minute isn't the most effective way for SMEs to get the most from their travel budgets.

Unlike large corporates, which can leverage their substantial global buying power to negotiate travel deals with airlines, small and medium business have limited scope to stretch their spend, says Paolo De Renzis, Head of Sales for British Airways across the Middle East, Africa and Central Asia.

Their travel needs also differ. Global research that British Airways commissioned across fast-growing markets such as India and China and established economies like the United States and United Kingdom shows that SMEs think short-term and are always looking for the best deal. They crave flexibility.

"This is almost the antithesis of the typical airline offering," explains Paolo De Renzis. "Airlines want to encourage early booking, so they can fill flights. They discourage changes, particularly on discounted fares, as this makes booking patterns more predictable."

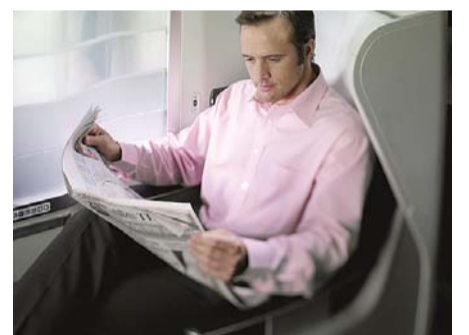
As a consequence, SMEs, which shop around for the cheapest fares at the eleventh hour and are then penalized if they need to change bookings, can end up paying over the odds for travel.

"It's understandably frustrating, particularly if you're a dynamic company, wanting to conclude deals, open up new markets or extend a visit to a trade show to sign up some new business," continues De Renzis.

Although British Airways had traditionally considered the corporate market the mainstay of its business sales, some years ago it began to realise the potential of the SME market. This was particularly manifest in fast-growing economies, where companies seeking to expand into new markets needed to travel more.

"In many cases we already had the ideal on-board product, in World Traveller Plus, our premium economy cabin, which appeals to business travellers whose budget doesn't stretch to Club World. What we didn't have was a viable commercial offering, so SMEs kept wasting money on last-minute travel and we kept missing opportunities."

The solution the airline came up with was On Business. The programme rewards companies for their loyalty, while taking into account some of the particular needs of SMEs. More



recently, based on the feedback from customers, it fine-tuned the programme to make it more user-friendly to this growing and increasingly important customer base.

The new programme has been made more flexible so members who want immediate savings can choose an upfront discount off flights, if they consider this a better option than collecting points for redemption flights.

It has also been simplified. Rather than points being awarded for distance flown, every time an On Business member makes a booking they earn points on the spend. An online account-management tool enables members to maximise the potential of the programme and effectively use accumulated points. It can be configured to provide customised reports, enabling members to track who is earning where and when.

Points can be used for cabin upgrades or special offers. They can also be used up to one day before travel to make date and time changes to redemption flights.

On Business now works across British Airways, American Airlines and Iberia, allowing members to collect and spend on all three carriers. It works in parallel with the Executive Club, British Airways' loyalty programme for frequent flyers, so on a single flight both the company and the individual traveller could accumulate rewards towards redemption flights.

De Renzis argues that the programme delivers real bottom-line benefits to businesses, citing the GBP 30 million a year on flights that the On Business programme has already saved customers.

"On Business is designed to deliver a loyalty dividend, which over time should enable businesses to achieve savings that would not be possible by last minute shopping around for the cheapest fares," he says.

ENJOY THE LATEST MOVIES WITH GULF BANK'S RED PROGRAM DURING NATIONAL AND LIBERATION DAYS

KUWAIT: As part of the National and Liberation day celebrations, Gulf Bank is announcing exclusive discounts for its Red customers to watch the latest films at Kuwait National Cinema Company (KNCC) cinemas between February 18-27, 2016.



Gulf Bank's Red customers will be able to see the latest movies for only KD 1 instead of the usual KD 3.5 by using their Red ATM cards to purchase cinema tickets from ticket kiosks in all KNCC cinema theatres. During the period of the promotion, Gulf Bank will also have a corporate booth present at the KNCC cinema in Avenues Mall to showcase its products and services and to answer any questions from potential and existing customers. In addition customers who open a

new red(tm) account will receive a complimentary cinema ticket.

Gulf Bank continuously looks for new and interesting initiatives to reward its loyal customer base. Given the celebratory atmosphere of February and with the National and Liberation Day celebrations just around the corner, Gulf Bank is committed to providing its Red customers with the right promotions that are tailored to meet their specific needs and to better enjoy their holidays. Gulf Bank is pleased to celebrate this patriotic occasion with the people of Kuwait.

Gulf Bank's Red program is for high school, university and college students aged 15 to 25 years old. There is no deposit required to open the account or minimum balance charge.

To join Gulf Bank's Red program or to find out more of its benefits, visit one of the Bank's 56 branches, contact the Customer Contact Centre on 1805805 for assistance and guidance or log on to www.e-gulfbank.com, Gulf Bank's website bilingual website.

CFA SOCIETY KUWAIT HOLDS AWARENESS SEMINAR



KUWAIT: As part of an ongoing education and awareness initiative by the CFA Society Kuwait for its members, charter holders and investment professionals on significant industry developments, it held its first seminar this year to highlight the newly introduced rules and executive regulations issued by the country's



Capital Markets Authority. The seminar titled "Major Changes in the Kuwaiti Capital Market Rules as per Law 22 of 2015 and New Executive Regulations No 72 of 2015" took place at the Marina Hotel, Salmiya. Hossam Abdullah, Legal Counsel and Managing Partner of Al-Hossam Legal (Adlouni

& Partners Legal Consultants & Attorneys), addressed our distinguished asset managers and investment professionals on the issue and discussed the facilities of such changes and their impact the recently revised rules could have on licensed companies and Kuwait capital market.

FORD CEO SAYS FUTURE IS CONNECTIVITY, NOT JUST CARS

BARCELONA: Ford CEO Mark Fields says the 112-year-old company is tripling its investment in new technologies that will ultimately lead to self-driving vehicles - but will make sure to keep making cars for drivers who want to keep their hands on the wheel. Fields said it was no coincidence that Ford chose the Mobile World Congress, a massive technology trade show in Barcelona, to unveil its new Kuga SUV, which features its latest connectivity and driver-assisted technology.

"We are really emphasizing our transition from an auto company to an auto and mobility company," Fields told The Associated Press in an interview Monday at Ford's stand, which stood out in a sea of smartphone and gadget makers.

"This is a really good audience to reach some new folks." The Kuga includes the latest version of Ford's connectivity technology, SYNC 3, which the company says includes improved voice commands and makes it easier to access applications on a driver's smartphone. It has a new 1.5-liter diesel engine, among other features.

Fields said that over the next five years investment will increase threefold in autonomous driving technologies, such as one-button parking assistance and guidance to keep a car in its lane and help braking in heavy traffic, with the ultimate goal of a fully autonomous car. He declined to provide financial figures.

Don Butler, Ford's executive director of connected vehicle and services, told the

AP "we like to think about it as the transition from just a hardware company to a software and mobility services company as well."

"Mobility" is a buzzword at the wireless show. For Ford customers, it means a wide range of innovations from further integration of the Internet in cars, to ride-sharing and even the use of other modes of transport in conjunction with cars, like bicycles.

Fields said Ford is aware it will have to be careful to keep a hold on the traditional car driver, by protecting - especially in the United States - the aura of personal freedom that automakers have always cast over their products.

Ford is taking a "dual path" in develop-

ing the connected car, said Fields. One for those who want to be assisted by the car or eventually have the vehicle take over, and another for drivers who want to keep control of the wheel.

While going forward with developing semi- and fully autonomous cars, Fields said "clearly there will be a part of the population that will always want to drive and have that driving pleasure, and we are obviously going to provide them great products for that."

With ride-sharing platforms like Uber reshaping driving for many young would-be consumers,

Ford is also staking part of its future on getting a piece of the so-called sharing economy by pushing into car-

and ride-sharing.

"Across the world when you see growth of these megacities, with 10 million or more folks, people want mobility solutions, they want options, whether it's car-sharing, ride-sharing, what we call multi-modal modes of transportation where you are taking a car for a portion of a journey or a train and then maybe a bike," said Fields.

He said Ford is testing some programs in this field, which he sees as a "a big revenue opportunity."

Those projects include car-sharing in London and across Germany. Ford is also working on an experimental e-bikes program that Butler said it could one day mesh with car-sharing. —AP



BARCELONA: A Huawei Watch "Elegant" is displayed during Mobile World Congress wireless show in Barcelona, Spain, yesterday. Along with other Chinese phone makers such as Huawei and Xiaomi, Chinese brands have surpassed Samsung in China and are encroaching on Apple's turf. —AP

GLOBAL MARKET FOR WEARABLES RACES AHEAD, PACED BY FITBIT AND APPLE

WASHINGTON: The global market for connected wearable devices accelerated at the end of 2015, with Fitbit pacing the leaders and Apple closing ground, a survey showed yesterday.

The IDC survey found fourth quarter sales of wearables such as fitness trackers and smartwatches surged 126.9 percent compared with a year earlier, with 27.4 million units. For the full year, sales of wearables sales were up 171.6 percent at 78.1 million devices.

The jump in sales shows "that wearables are not just for the technophiles and early adopters, wearables can exist and are welcome in the mass market," said IDC's Ramon Llamas.

"And since wearables have yet to fully penetrate the mass market, there is still plenty of room for growth in multiple vectors: New vendors, form factors, applications, and use cases. This will help propel the market further." Market leader Fitbit sold 8.1 million units in the fourth quarter, for a 29.5 percent share, IDC said.

Even though Fitbit sales grew more than 50 percent, its leadership is under assault from other vendors, notably Apple and Chinese maker Xiaomi.

Apple has not publicly released sales fig-

ures for its Apple Watch, but IDC estimated the company sold 4.1 million in the fourth quarter and 11.6 million for the year. That gave the California giant a market share of around 15 percent for both periods, even though its smartwatch sales began in June.

Xiaomi was number three for the final quarter of the year with sales of 2.7 million units and a market share of 9.7 percent, paced by sales growth of 258 percent.

For the full year, Xiaomi held the number two spot, with a 15.4 percent share, paced by sales of its fitness tracker selling for as little as \$11.

Among the other major vendors, Samsung was number four for the past quarter with a 4.9 percent share and Garmin fifth with 3.5 percent.

IDC's Jitesh Ubrani said he sees newer devices coming into the wearables market, with "fashion and design" playing a key role.

"The wearables market isn't just about smartwatches and fitness bands," he said.

"Though the top five certainly dominate with wrist-worn devices, there's been an immense amount of growth in other form factors like clothing, footwear, and eye-wear-form factors that arguably require even more fashion sense than watches or bands." —AFP

FOREIGN BUSINESS FEARS FURTHER CURBS WITH CHINA'S ONLINE RULES

BEIJING: Foreign businesses operating in China fear new rules on online publication may mean further curbs, as groups from across politics, business and civil society try to understand the scope of the legislation.

The regulations are the latest step by the ruling Communist Party to rein in the Internet, seeing the web as a crucial domain for controlling public opinion and eliminating anti-Beijing sentiment.

The rules say online content publishers should "promote core socialist values" and spread ideas, morals and knowledge that improve the quality of the nation and promote economic development.

The regulations, set to come into effect on March 10, will prohibit foreign ownership and joint ventures in online publishing and stipulate that all content be stored on servers in China.

If an approved Chinese entity wants to engage in a "cooperative project" with a foreign-related enterprise, it must get approval, the rules say. Some studying the rules worry that, broadly interpreted, they could be used to halt some foreign businesses operating in China and shut down websites, while imposing greater limits on what domestic firms can publish online.

Since coming to power, President Xi Jinping has presided over online censorship on an unprecedented scale, and sought to codify this policy within the rule of law.

"We hope this does not signal greater Internet restrictions," said Ken Jarrett, the head of the American Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai, which has asked member companies and lawyers for an interpretation.

"China says it wants to transition to a more innovative, knowledge-based economy. Allowing the free flow of information is essential to that effort."

The Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, and the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television, which jointly issued the rules, did not respond to faxed requests for comment.

According to the rules, online publishing includes digital work in the fields of literature, art and sciences, such as texts, images, maps, games and audio-visual

reading material. Online games must receive advance approval from authorities.

NEW REGULATIONS

Lawyers and legal scholars say the regulations are likely aimed at online entertainment and educational media. The country's Internet regulator, the Cyberspace Administration of China, is also proposing broad new regulations to cover online news services.

"What's targeted here is (Apple Inc's online music, video and book store) iTunes and their ilk," said Rogier Creemers, a lecturer in China's politics and history at Oxford University.

While the regulations are meant to codify policies and practices adopted for the Internet era, "there is a small possibility the new rules were issued with an eye towards unwinding existing deals," said Scott Livingston, a senior associate with SIPs, an IP and IT consultancy based in Hong Kong.

"Only time will tell."

Samm Sacks, an analyst at Eurasia Group in Washington, said the rules appeared to revise some language on data localisation, keeping servers and data within China, that was removed from anti-terrorism legislation before it was passed into law in December.

"My sense all along was that removing it from the counter terrorism law just meant it would show up in other places, and here we go. I think we will see it crop up in more industry specific regulations, too," Sacks said.

Foreign companies in China, especially in media, face political resistance in China. The country's military newspaper calls the Internet the most important front in an ideological battle against "Western anti-China forces". Many of the world's biggest Internet platforms, like Alphabet Inc's Google services, Facebook Inc and Twitter Inc, are inaccessible in China.

In recent years, Beijing has pursued a raft of laws and regulations, including a new national security law and a draft cyber security law, that have raised the hackles of foreign business groups fearful that China could compel companies to turn over crucial intellectual property to the government in the name of security. —Reuters

HOT PHONES YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF WITH SAME BANG, LESS BUCK

SEOUL: Move over, Apple and Samsung. The next big smartphone might be from little-known Chinese brands such as TCL and OPPO.

Along with other Chinese phone makers such as Huawei and Xiaomi, Chinese brands have surpassed Samsung in China and are encroaching on Apple's turf. In the coming years, analysts forecast that these cheap Android phones with not-so-cheap features will likely attract more budget-conscious customers in Europe and even in Samsung's and Apple's home markets, South Korea and the United States.

Chinese phone makers made their global ambitions known at this week's Mobile World Congress wireless show in Barcelona, Spain. Huawei and TCL vied to steal the spotlight from Samsung and LG, both of which announced new high-end phones at the show. Xiaomi, which typically launches phones in China, will preview the Mi 5 phone in Barcelona today.

"The Chinese smartphone vendors have a very unique feature - it is the price," said Shu On Kwok, editor of AndroidPIT, a website that tracks Android developments. "You get the same features as an LG or a Samsung smartphone has hardware-wise, but for a lower price."

Samsung saw its market share decline in 2015, while Apple forecast its first revenue decline in over 13 years. Both will have to do more to prove the value of the extra dollars their customers pay.

Along with premium hardware, Apple has tried to position its products as unique by offering software, services and apps that work only on Apple devices - although in many cases comparable services are available for Android devices. At Samsung's product event Sunday, mobile chief D.J. Koh said "we have other ideas" beyond core smartphone features. Samsung, for instance, is promoting its Galaxy phones' compatibility with a Samsung virtual-reality headset and an upcoming 360-degree camera. But VR is still in its early days, of interest largely to gamers and tech pioneers.

GOOD NEWS FOR CONSUMERS

The Chinese brands have already taken their toll on Samsung. Although it's still the largest smartphone maker in the world, Samsung is no longer among the top five phone makers in China, according to market research firms IDC and Counterpoint Technology. Profits from the mobile business have plunged to less than half of what it was in its heyday. Apple's sales in China rose in the fourth quarter, but its growth was outshined by Huawei.

But bad news for manufacturers is good news for consumers. Many of these Chinese companies sell decent phones for less than \$200, compared with about \$650 for an iPhone or high-end Samsung Galaxy phone. In other words, for the same price, customers can buy three or four smartphones with decent cameras and screens.

Chinese makers can keep prices low by reducing the profit margin and turning to cheaper components that are a year or two old. That means high-end phones still take better pictures and have sleeker, thinner designs. But phone innovation has slowed, and the advances appear marginal to many consumers. A Huawei photo taken in

STEALING CUSTOMERS

Having succeeded in China, these phone makers are looking elsewhere to grow. OPPO, China's fourth-largest smartphone maker according to IDC, is marketing aggressively in southeast Asia. Xiaomi already sells phones in Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia.

At the Barcelona show, Huawei executive Adam Joshua said that while the company's focus has been on emerging markets, it also has eyes on "the European market, Australia, and obviously the last big one, the US."

Analysts said Huawei and Xiaomi will likely steal customers from Apple and Samsung in their strongholds as some budget-conscious consumers

Rashid used a \$150 Huawei smartphone for about a year.

"For a thousand dollars, I can get five new phones in the space of two years," he said. "I'll always have the latest phone."

Much of the growth comes from consumers who feel comfortable buying phones directly from manufacturers online, rather than from the wireless carrier. In the US, consumers are just starting to warm up to direct online sales, especially as carriers stop offering discounts in exchange for two-year contracts.

Huawei is now the third-largest smartphone maker in the world. Its market share exceeded 7 percent last



BARCELONA: Visitors test smart phones during the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona yesterday, during the first day of the world's biggest mobile fair that runs to February 25. —AFP

good light often looks just as good as an iPhone or Samsung shot when displayed on a small phone screen.

Melissa Chau, senior research manager at IDC, said Chinese companies are catching up on phone design and quality even more quickly than Samsung did a few years ago.

"Samsung was a fast follower in terms of innovation," Chau said. "These Chinese players, they are even faster." And while these phone companies are pushing cheap phones, they are starting to succeed in getting customers to pay more - though still not as much as an iPhone or a high-end Galaxy. For instance, the average price for Huawei smartphones in China was \$213 last year, up 21 percent from 2014, according to IDC.

seek to upgrade their phones without financial pressure.

When South Koreans were just starting to buy smartphones, many upgraded frequently to get longer-lasting batteries, sharper cameras and larger screens.

Now fewer consumers care whether they have the latest technologies, said Oh Bong Yeon, a 38-year-old South Korean. They may even wait several months until the price drops. Although Oh has the iPhone 6, he said he would buy Huawei's flagship smartphone if the company starts selling it in South Korea.

Raphael Rashid, 28, a British citizen living in Seoul, loves his Xiaomi Redmi Note 2, which his friend bought for him in China for about \$120. Before Xiaomi,

year, compared with less than 6 percent in 2014, according to IDC. That's still far behind Samsung's 23 percent and Apple's 16 percent, but success doesn't necessarily mean being No. 1 everywhere.

In fact, ZTE mobile chief Adam Zeng said the Chinese phone maker wants to be in the top three in selected markets - read that as No. 3 - and not necessarily worldwide. And Xiaomi might have trouble expanding to established markets - particularly the U.S. - because of accusations it has copied or closely imitated designs from Apple and other companies. Phone manufacturers routinely sue each other in these markets, and Xiaomi will need to build up a portfolio of its own patents to defend itself. —AP

SAMSUNG, LG IMPROVE SMARTPHONE CAMERAS, TURN TO VIRTUAL REALITY

BARCELONA: South Korean tech giants Samsung Electronics and LG unveiled a new smartphones with better cameras and turned to virtual reality to boost interest in their headsets at a time of slowing sales.

Samsung launched two versions of its flagship phone, the flat screen Galaxy S7 and the curved screen Galaxy S7 edge, with cameras that can take better pictures under low-light conditions.

The company, the world's number one smartphone maker, also debuted its first 360 degree camera, the Gear 360, in Barcelona where the mobile industry is gathered for the start of the Mobile World Congress, in its latest attempt to remain ahead of Apple.

The camera is designed to make it easy to take all-around photos and videos that can be uploaded to Facebook and YouTube, or viewed as immersive experiences on Samsung's virtual reality Gear VR headsets which went on sale in November.

"User generated 360 degree photos and films are going to see rapid growth in 2016. Numerous 360 degree cameras are being launched and users will want to get access to this content," said Ben Wood, chief of research at CCS Insight. "Although it can be viewed on a standard smartphone or PC screen, the most impactful way of looking at this content is with a VR headset-this is undoubtedly going to drive sales of these products." Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg made a surprise appearance at the Samsung press conference to announce a partnership with the South Korean firm to promote the use of virtual reality on the social network. "We want to make Facebook the best video platform for virtual reality and Samsung is the only company in the world that can

provide a good experience in terms of virtual reality," he said.

Rival South Korean tech firm LG sought to steal Samsung's thunder by unveiling its new premium handset, the G5, its first modular smartphone which is made using different components that can be inde-



BARCELONA: A visitor tests the new 'Vive steam VR' virtual device at the HTC stand on the second day of the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona yesterday. —AFP

FOCUS ON ACCESSORIES

The focus on accessories comes with the smartphone market beginning to slow as it becomes increasingly saturated.

LG's parent company LG Electronics' net profit halved last year on the back of a global economic slowdown and increased competition in the mobile sector while Samsung was only able to boost its market share moderately. Apple, which will not be present at the congress in Barcelona, saw iPhone sales fall for the first time on an annual basis in the final quarter of last year, according to Gartner.

The market research firm said that the 9.7 percent increase in smartphone sales in the final quarter of last year over the same period in 2014 takes the industry all the way back to 2008 when the global economy was in crisis. "All of these additional devices, whether it is a virtual reality goggle, whether it is a camera, whether it is a smartwatch, they are all ways of generating additional profits," said Ian Fogg, the head mobile and technology analyst at IHS Technology.

Analysts said handset makers face a tough choice. Focus on the low-price segment, where sales volumes are large but margins become thin. Or focus on features which can differentiate their phones.

"We are moving towards a logic of segmentation and improvement, with a better camera or more autonomy for example, maybe some advances in virtual reality, but there will unlikely be any major innovation," said Thomas Husson, an analyst at Forrester. —AFP

STUDY FINDS ANTI-AIDS VAGINAL RING PARTIALLY PROTECTS WOMEN

WASHINGTON: In a new approach to HIV prevention, women modestly reduced their risk of infection by inserting a vaginal ring coated with an anti-AIDS drug once a month, according to two long-awaited studies from Africa.

The ring proved safe although it cut HIV infections by less than a third overall, researchers reported Monday. But surprisingly, it worked far better in women 25 and older, leaving researchers wondering if the youngest women, who got little to no benefit, simply didn't use the device properly.

"For a woman to have prevention tools that she can control is an incredibly important goal," said Dr. Jared Baeten of the University of Washington, who led a National Institutes of Health-funded study of the ring. "I want rings, pills and other strategies to be on the shelf for women so they can make choices for what's going to work for them."

Women's options

Despite the questions the studies raise, the nonprofit International Partnership for Microbicides said it considered the results promising enough to seek appropriate regulatory approval for wider use in parts of Africa. "You can't just say, 'Until something is perfect, we're going to wait,'" said Dr. Zeda Rosenberg, founding chief executive officer of IPM. "We have to give women options."

Women make up more than half of the nearly 37 million people worldwide living with HIV, most of them in hard-hit Africa, and scientists have long sought tools to help them protect themselves when their partners won't

use a condom.

Aside from condoms, healthy people also can take a daily anti-AIDS pill to lower their risk from an infected partner. That so-called "pre-exposure prophylaxis" isn't widely available in poor countries, and other attempts at HIV-blocking vaginal gels haven't yet panned out. But the age disparity found in the vaginal ring studies is so puzzling that the NIH plans to consult with outside experts on next research steps.

While women need a discreet form of HIV prevention, "it's going to be absolutely critical" to determine if the younger women really didn't follow instructions, or if there was some biological difference, cautioned Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of NIH's National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

Vaginal rings are sold in the US for birth control, but the anti-AIDS version tested in Africa contained no contraception. Instead, it slowly oozes an experimental virus-blocking drug named dapivirine into the surrounding vaginal tissue. Women would replace the ring once a month, when it was time for another dose.

Something odd

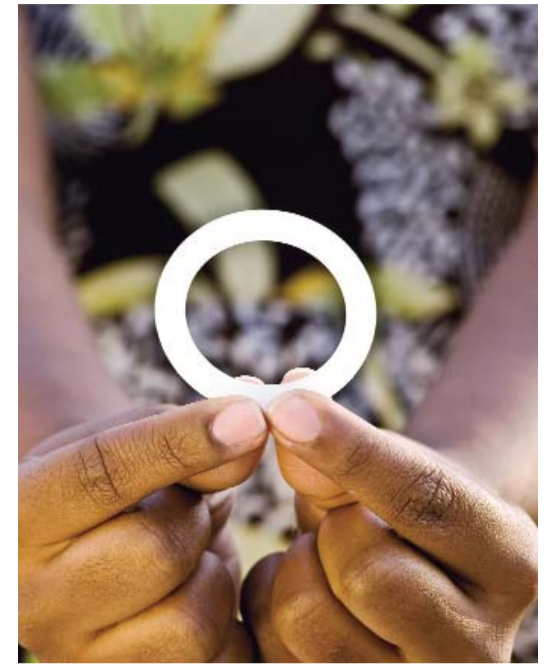
Two studies involving more than 4,500 women in Africa are being presented at the Retrovirus Conference in Boston, comparing women who used the dapivirine ring with those given an identical-looking but drug-free version. It offered modest protection, reducing by 27 percent to 31 percent the participants' overall risk of HIV. But closer inspection of the large NIH-funded ASPIRE study in

Malawi, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe turned up something odd. Ring users who were 25 and older were 61 percent less likely to be infected while those ages 18 to 21 essentially got no benefit, Baeten said.

While the ring is designed to stay in place for an entire month before being replaced, there are signs the younger women didn't use it as regularly, said Baeten, whose results also were published online Monday in the New England Journal of Medicine. He said women had to get comfortable with the how to use a device they'd never seen before, but those who used the ring continuously saw protection that continued throughout the 21/2-year study.

"The ring must be used consistently to achieve protection," the IPM's Annalene Nel told reporters Monday as she discussed the second study, called the Ring Study. Conducted in South Africa and Uganda, that study likewise showed a trend toward greater protection for women over 21, she said. While that study isn't completed yet, the IPM said South African regulators asked researchers to switch all the remaining study participants to the dapivirine-coated ring rather than the placebo version.

Early studies of those daily anti-AIDS pills also found less protection in younger people, who did better at sticking with the tablets only after their effectiveness was proven, said Mitchell Warren, executive director of AVAC, which advocates for a range of HIV prevention tools. He said there is "a global imperative" to answer remaining questions about the ring. — AP



This photo provided by the International Partnership for Microbicides shows a ring that is coated with an anti-AIDS drug designed for women to insert into the vagina once a month to reduce the risk of HIV infection. — AP



JOAO PESSOA: A municipal health worker sprays insecticide in a junk yard to combat the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito that transmits the Zika virus. — AP

US-BRAZIL TEAMS INVESTIGATE LINK BETWEEN ZIKA AND MICROCEPHALY

MORE SCIENTIFIC DATA STILL REQUIRED FOR TESTS

JOAO PESSOA: Joint teams of US and Brazilian health workers were to fan out across one of Brazil's poorest states yesterday in search of mothers and infants for a study aimed at determining whether the Zika virus is causing babies to be born with unusually small heads.

Brazil's health minister, Marcelo Castro, says he is "absolutely sure" mosquito-borne Zika is responsible for a spike in cases of the rare birth defect microcephaly, which sees babies born with small heads and brains and can cause severe developmental problems. But with scant scientific literature published on the matter, some doctors in Brazil and elsewhere say there is not yet enough scientific data to prove the connection. Jointly run by the Brazil's Health Ministry and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the study is intended to fill that vacuum by comparing babies with microcephaly and their mothers to babies without the condition.

The popular "understanding is that Zika virus (behind the microcephaly spike). How much of that is Zika virus is really one of the important goals of this study," said Erin Staples, a Colorado-based epidemiologist who heads the CDC contingent in Paraiba state. "I do believe there is something occurring that is unique and knowable, but we really need to understand better, mostly so we can prevent this from happening to other generations."

Knock on doors

Eight teams made up of one CDC staffer and three Brazilian health workers will knock on the doors of several hundred randomly selected families with infants throughout Paraiba, a northeastern coastal

state that is one of Brazil's least developed. The teams hope to recruit at least 130 babies with microcephaly and their mothers and two to three times that number of mothers and babies without the condition, all born in the same areas and at around the same time.

The researchers will take blood samples from mothers and babies that will be sent to labs in Brazil and the United States to test for Zika and dengue, a similar virus also transmitted by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito. The idea is to determine whether mothers whose babies have microcephaly were infected with Zika and, if so, when during their pregnancies.

Teams will also be on the lookout for other factors that, possibly in conjunction with Zika, could be behind Brazil's increase in microcephaly, such as a prior infection with dengue, toxoplasmosis or the ingestion of toxins.

"If we can provide some basic information or show a potential association, that will allow us another avenue of how do we prevent this and what do we need to do next," Staples said. The recruitment process is expected to take four to five weeks, but the timetable will largely depend on how receptive potential subjects are.

At a training session Monday in the state capital of Joao Pessoa, the field teams rehearsed how they will reach out to families and discussed ethical concerns, including how to react to reticence from potential subjects and how many times it is OK to prick babies to try to draw blood.

The language barrier proved a stumbling block at the training session, with the Brazilians and Americans team members often resorting to pantomime as they ran through the scripts they are to

recite to potential subjects in this Portuguese-speaking nation.

High alarm

Priscila Leite, who leads the Health Ministry's contingent, said she expects recruitment numbers to be high given the level of alarm about Zika in Brazil - particularly here in the northeast, the epicenter of the country's Zika and microcephaly outbreaks. "There is a lot of anxiety out there, and people really want to understand what's going on," she said.

In Paraiba alone, 56 cases of microcephaly have been confirmed since October and 423 suspected cases are under investigation, the Health Ministry says. In previous years, Brazil tended to average around 150 cases nationwide. Skeptics have said microcephaly cases may have been greatly underreported in Brazil in the past because local health officials weren't required to notify the Health Ministry about cases of the condition until November. They also note the microcephaly spike appears to be largely restricted to Brazil, with few cases reported in other countries with Zika outbreaks, such as neighboring Colombia. But Staples said she tended to lean toward the Health Ministry's view. "I come from a pediatric infectious disease background and am also a mom, so looking at these children clinically, they were distinct from other congenital infections I've seen," said Staples, who spent time in Brazil recently as part of a World Health Organization mission. "The scope and the size of the children who were presenting (microcephaly) at the same time, it really made it apparent to me that there was something unique happening in this situation." — AP

BLIND PENGUIN GETS AIRBORNE AT NEW ZEALAND MARINE HAVEN

FLEA BAY: Blindy the little blue penguin was born without functioning eyes and developed the unusual habit of swimming in tight circles. So to prevent the bird from continually crashing into the side of the small pond where it swims, Shireen Helps began tossing it out into deeper water. Penguins are flightless but Blindy, for a few moments anyway, gets to be airborne.

Blindy lives in New Zealand's Flea Bay, home to three humans and more than 2,500 penguins. Efforts by the Helps family over more than three decades helped save the bay's penguins from predators while many nearby colonies were wiped out. These days, the colony is thriving, a hopeful sign at a time when many penguin species from the Galapagos Islands to Antarctica are facing threats from humans that come from overfishing and global warming.

Helps and her husband Francis never intended to become penguin custodians. Francis moved to Flea Bay, also known as Pohatu, in 1969, with the intention of farming sheep and cattle. He said it wasn't until the first night, when he was kept awake by noises like a donkey braying, that he realized he was surrounded by penguins. "They're very noisy at night, especially pre-breeding," said Shireen Helps. "They get really wound up. They party all night."

'Dead penguins everywhere'

After meeting Francis, Shireen moved to the bay in 1974, and said she noticed other penguin colonies in the area were disappearing. "And that's when we started to look critically around our own backyard," she said. "We found dead penguins everywhere. We realized that predators were hitting into them, and if somebody didn't do something to save this colony, it would be lost." So they began trapping feral cats, ferrets and stoats. They also built tiny wooden huts for the penguins to monitor them and to stop them fighting each other for nesting sites. Finally, they started nursing the ill birds, managing to save some and return them to the wild.

Found in parts of Australia and New Zealand, the penguins go by several names: little penguins, little blue penguins, and fairy penguins. Adults stand just 33 centimeters tall and weigh 1 kilogram, making them the world's smallest

penguin species. Those living around the South Island's Banks Peninsula, where Flea Bay is located a little southeast of Christchurch, are a local variant, known as white-flippered, due to the distinctive white stripes along the leading edge of their flippers.

Over the years, the Helps have developed an admiration for the little seabirds, and their observations have brought some amusing insights. "A common thought is that penguins mate for life. Well, some of our monitoring notes make interesting reading if you're into soap operas," she said. "So yeah, they can fool around."

There was one penguin they called Shark Bait, which they found bleeding after it had been mauled by a shark. They got a veterinarian to administer stitches and fed it plenty of anchovies before returning it to the ocean. Blindy, who is about 12 weeks old, was from a nearby colony and was found by a local farmer after it had left its nest and gotten lost in a creek.

Helps said Blindy was born with a malformed head and beak, making it hard to tell if it's a male or female. She said at first its circling antics seemed to make the penguin disoriented but now it's swimming more confidently. "If it gets dizzy going around one way, it changes direction and goes around the other way," she said. "So it's really learning very well."

Plunging population

She said the penguin is too disabled to be returned to the wild, but she hopes that a zoo might take it. Although penguins are seabirds, they can also live in fresh water and often do so in zoos. Animal ecologist Chris Challies, who has monitored white-flippered little penguins for more than four decades, said the population on Banks Peninsula plunged by as much as 80 percent from 1980 to 2000 as they were attacked by predators like ferrets, which would sometimes wipe out entire colonies between breeding seasons. He said the trapping program introduced by the Helps family "probably saved the colony through the 1990s." The penguins were also given a boost after local authorities banned fisher folk from using nets which inadvertently caught the penguins and later declared the area around Flea Bay a marine reserve. — AP



FLEA BAY: A little blue penguin that needed nursing appears at first to be undecided about whether to return to the ocean after being released. — AP

OBAMA SENDS CONGRESS \$1.9BN REQUEST TO COMBAT ZIKA VIRUS

WASHINGTON: President Barack Obama Monday sent lawmakers an official \$1.9 billion request to combat the spread of the Zika virus in Latin America and the US. He is also requesting flexibility to use a limited portion of leftover funds provided in 2014 to fight Ebola to take on Zika, which has been linked to severe birth defects.

Top House Republicans told the White House last week that the quickest way to get the money to fight Zika would be to use some of the approximate \$2.7 billion that had been designated for the Ebola crisis but remains "unobligated." Consideration of a stand-alone Zika request could prove cumbersome, especially in a combative election year.

Zika has been spreading through countries such as Brazil, but is also being transmitted by mosquitoes in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa. Travelers have also returned to the continental US infected with the virus. So far, concerns over Zika have been far more restrained than experienced during the Ebola scare. Voters' fears regarding Ebola were seen as hurting Obama's party in the 2014 midterm land-

slide. Obama said Monday during a meeting with the nation's governors that he hoped to work with them in guarding against the outbreak of the disease. Obama said the \$1.9 billion he is requesting would include investments in research into new vaccines and better diagnostic tools, and more support for Puerto Rico and territories where there are confirmed cases. Obama stressed that the symptoms from contracting the Zika virus are mild and most folks don't even realize they have it.

"But as all of you have read, the possible connection between Zika, birth defects and other serious health problems means that we've got to take precautions, particularly with respect to women who are pregnant or are trying to get pregnant," Obama told members of the National Governors Association. "So we're going to be fighting this disease at every level with every tool at our disposal." Money would go to fight Zika in US territories and states such as Florida and Texas that are at risk of mosquito-borne transmission of the virus; to help to battle its spread overseas; and to develop a vaccine. — AP

DOCTORS URGE 'COMPROMISE' ON FEMALE GENITAL CUTTING

PARIS: Western states should legally permit immigrant communities to surgically "nick" young girls' vaginas as an alternative to genital mutilation, a pair of US gynecologists argued in a hotly-challenged paper yesterday.

Such a "compromise" could allow groups to honor cultural or religious prescripts while saving millions of girls from invasive and disfiguring genital slashing practiced in some African and Middle Eastern cultures, the two doctors stated in the *Journal of Medical Ethics*. "We are not arguing that any procedure on the female genitalia is desirable," said Kavita Arora of the Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland and Allan Jacobs of Stony Brook University in New York state. "Rather, we only argue that certain procedures ought to be tolerated by liberal societies," which have outlawed such practices but host immigrants for whom it is part of their culture.

Efforts to enforce an outright ban on female genital mutilation (FGM) have often had the opposite effect-driving the practice underground and putting women at even greater risk, said the duo. But many peers immediately dismissed the idea.

According to Arianne Shahvisi of the University of

Sussex ethics department in Britain: "One must not cause irreversible changes to the body of another person without their consent." Arora and Jacobs, however, contended that a one-size-fits-all approach ignored that many people believed the procedure to be a means of achieving "moral or ritual purity" for their child.

Vaginal cutting is widely regarded as a libido-reducer, intended in certain cultures to keep a woman chaste. According to the World Health Organization, about three million girls a year fall victim to genital mutilation. It can cause urinary difficulties, cysts and infection, infertility and complications in childbirth.

Like dental work

Arora and Jacobs have proposed new sub-categories of genital cutting. Category One would entail procedures with no long-lasting effect on the appearance or function of the genitalia, such as a "small nick" in the skin. Procedures under Category Two may affect appearance, but not reproductive capacity or sexual enjoyment, they said. This could include removing the "hood" or skin-fold covering the clitoris or trimming the labia (labiaplasty). The first two categories,

they said, should be reclassified as female genital "alteration" (FGA) rather than "mutilation".

"These procedures are equivalent or less extensive than male circumcision in procedure, scope and effect," they wrote. "Indeed, they are equivalent or less extensive than orthodontia, breast implantation or even the elective labiaplasty for which affluent women pay thousands of dollars."

Unclear is whether this type of procedure would be considered valid by communities who perform FGM. Categories Three to Five should remain outlawed, said the pair. These included procedures to remove the clitoris or other parts of the vagina, often to be stitched closed with only a small hole for urine, menstrual blood and intercourse.

Brian Earp of the Bioethics Research Institute in New York said Arora and Jacobs erred in using male circumcision as a benchmark for what is permissible. "Ultimately, I suggest that children of whatever sex or gender should be free from having healthy parts of their most intimate sexual organs either damaged or removed, before they can understand what is at stake in such an intervention and agree to it themselves," he wrote in a commentary. — AFP

BRITISH EBOLA SURVIVOR NURSE HOSPITALIZED FOR THIRD TIME

LONDON: A British nurse who was twice successfully treated after contracting Ebola in Sierra Leone in 2014 was yesterday admitted to hospital for a third time "for further investigations," the health service said. Pauline Cafferkey, who voluntarily went to the West African country to treat Ebola patients, was being treated at Glasgow's Queen Elizabeth

University Hospital, according to a spokesman from NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

"Under routine monitoring by the Infectious Diseases Unit, Pauline Cafferkey has been admitted to hospital for further investigations," he said. Cafferkey was treated twice at an isolation unit at London's Royal Free Hospital,

Britain's only isolation ward for the lethal disease, after suffering an "unusual complication" of her first infection. Cafferkey was diagnosed with Ebola in December 2014 after returning to Glasgow from Sierra Leone.

She suffered a relapse in October 2015, when the virus caused her to become critically ill with meningitis

before she made a full recovery. "It is very sad to hear that Ms Cafferkey has once again been admitted to hospital," said Derek Gatherer from Lancaster University. "The meningitis that Ms Cafferkey suffered from at the end of last year is one of the most serious complications of all, as it can be life-threatening. "She was unlucky enough to be one of

only a handful of patients in whom it has been seen," he added. The deadliest-ever Ebola outbreak since the virus was identified in central Africa in 1976 has killed 11,316 of the 28,639 people infected since December of 2013, according to the latest WHO figures. Nearly all the victims have been in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. — AFP



Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KUWAIT'S FIRST OXYGEN BAR

By Nawara Fattahova

People in Kuwait can now recharge their energy, relieve stress, and relax at Oasis, the country's first oxygen bar. Oxygen is important for life, and a lack of oxygen can have negative effects on the human body including headaches, dizziness and loss of concentration. Ninety percent of our energy comes from oxygen, and only 10 percent from food and water.

"Oxygen has many benefits and is vital for the immune system, memory, thinking and sight. It heightens concentration, alertness and memory. Oxygen promotes healing, counters ageing and strengthens the heart, reducing the risk of heart attacks. It also calms the mind, stabilizes the nervous system, speeds up the body's recovery after physical exertion and provides a natural remedy for headaches, migraines and hangovers," Talal Al-Failakawi, owner of Oasis Oxygen Bar, told Kuwait Times.

Oxygen has many more benefits. "It relieves temporary attitude discomfort, improves digestion and cell metabolism, relieves muscle stiff-

ness and supports athletic performance. Furthermore, oxygen lessens chronic fatigue syndrome and facilitates better sleep patterns," he added.

Failakawi dished out some facts about oxygen. "Less than 200 years ago, the earth's atmosphere comprised of 40 percent oxygen - today we breathe only 21 percent. Lack of oxygen in our universe is due to pollution, burning of fossil fuels and the destruction of the ozone layer. Every day, we breathe 20,000 times. Research has demonstrated that our vital lung capacity decreases five percent with every decade of life. This lung elasticity means less oxygen," he pointed out.

Blood is the carrier of oxygen that fuels the system, stimulates chemical reactions and cleanses itself of wastes and toxins. "By mass, oxygen makes up 90 percent of the water molecule, and water makes up between 65-75 percent of the human body. The brain, which makes up two percent of our total mass, requires 20 percent of the body's oxygen needs. Also, almost all cancerous beginnings are due to a lack of cell

oxygenation, and cancer attacks every organ in our body except the heart because of its abnormal supply of oxygen," said Failakawi.

"The idea of this place was to replace shisha (water pipe) cafes, as smoking shisha is harmful. At our bar, patrons improve their health and vitalize their energy. The customer comes here and sits comfortably in the wide leather seats and puts a tube in his nose, which is connected to the oxygen machine. The client can choose four different essences out of 48 that are available here. He can control the machine for just one smell or two, three or all four together. During the 15-minute-long session, he can open and close or switch between the four essences. We have set 15 minutes for each session as it's enough to get the benefits of oxygen, but the client can take another session," Failakawi explained.

The Oasis Oxygen Bar opened two months ago and provides services for both men and women. It is located in Salmiya, next to the Sultan Center. "There are 10 seats for patrons, and we welcome clients 18 years old and above. It's not because it's dangerous for youngsters, but because people below this age have enough oxygen in their bodies. There are now two public medical centers that are using medical oxygen to treat patients. Also, smokers need more oxygen," stated Failakawi.

"All our products are imported from the United States directly. The 48 aromatic essences are divided into vitalizing or relaxing essences. Usually, our clients come after work, and some come in the evening, especially those who have problems with sleeping. Also, we have some older customers who are retired and they come in the mornings. Also, some clients fall asleep during their session as it's relaxing, and we let them relax till they wake up by themselves," he noted.

The weather in Kuwait is the enemy of oxygen, according to Failakawi. "Heat and humidity affect people and make them angry and bothered during summer, while their mood during winter is better. Some clients come twice and even three times a week. Some people are not aware of the benefits and importance of oxygen, as they don't see it, but it's really important for our well-being," concluded Failakawi.



DAMAGE TO CANAL HIGHLIGHTS DELHI'S WATER VULNERABILITY

NEW DELHI: Engineers were working to restore New Delhi's full water supply yesterday after protesters damaged a key canal in a neighboring state and disrupted supplies over the weekend - highlighting the extreme water vulnerability faced by the Indian capital's 18 million residents.

Some supplies resumed to northern and central parts of New Delhi, and will hopefully reach western neighborhoods by yesterday evening, said Delhi's water minister, Kapil Mishra. In the meantime, 70 water tankers have been sent to western areas of the city where taps have been dry for up to two days.

The destruction of the Munak canal link by protesters in the state of Haryana has focused attention on New Delhi's precarious water supply. The canal, which channels water from north Indian rivers, accounts for about 60 percent of the city's water supply. Another 25 percent comes from groundwater, while the polluted Yamuna River supplies about 12 percent. Yet even when the Munak canal flow is unimpeded, the overall water supply is not enough to meet New Delhi's needs, and shortages are common during the dry seasons.

Marginal communities

The situation is especially bad for the most marginal communities living in slums or riverside shanties, where many rely on sewage-tainted river water, leaks from broken pipes or deliveries by municipal water trucks. Others in New Delhi draw heavily from the ground, leading the city's aquifer levels to decline by 4 meters in the last decade, according to the Central Ground Water Board.

When protesters from the underprivileged Jat community breached the canal wall on Saturday, they effectively cut off about two-thirds of New Delhi's water. The Jats, traditionally a farming community within India's ancient system of caste hier-

archy, were demanding quotas in government jobs and educational institutions.

Clashes between the protesters and government forces left 12 people dead before Jat leaders agreed Monday to end the demonstrations while negotiating with officials, and the army took control of the canal. Residents of Sanjay Colony, a slum in southwest New Delhi, said yesterday that this week's water shortage was making an already bad situation worse.

"We already spend a lot of hours trying to get water," said Indrapal, a security worker who gave only his first name. "People haven't been able to go to work." They worried that a water crisis created by political protesters was setting a bad precedent for New Delhi's water security. "Now it's the Jat community. Later it will be someone else asking for something," a Sanjay Colony resident named Lila said. "The government has been slow in reacting."

Ram Lal, a man who runs a small shop in the slum, also criticized the protesters, saying they "have done wrong. They should not have cut the water supply. Because of that, we couldn't get our water tanker." Authorities in New Delhi had issued warnings over the weekend of impending water shortages, advising residents to use the resource sparingly and canceling all school classes on Monday. But while some residents were filling buckets and bottles in case the situation worsened, others, including many wealthier households that rely on groundwater, were buffeted from the crisis.

Delhi water board authorities were working with experts in the army and Haryana state yesterday to repair the damage done by the protesters, said Mishra, the Delhi water minister. Of the city's three water treatment plants, one was again working at full capacity, while the other two had resumed operations at 50-60 percent capacity. — AP



NEW DELHI: Residents crowd around a municipality tanker delivering drinking water at a slum. — AP

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times
248 33 199

Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
م.فهد علي المخيزيم

استشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM

Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St. 1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B - Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368



FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY HOSTS LUNCHEON IN HONOR OF UK MIDDLE EAST ASSOCIATION

Under the auspices of the British-Kuwait Friendship Society, Sheikh Mubarak hosted a lunch in the honor of the former Chairman of British Arab Chamber of Commerce Sir Roger Tomkys, and Peter Meyer, Chief Executive Officer of the UK Middle East Association. The luncheon attended by members of the Kuwait - British Friendship Society headed by its Chairman, His Excellency Ambassador Abdullah Besharah, the British Ambassador to the State of Kuwait Matthew Lodge, and many leading businessmen, diplomats, and personalities. Sheikh Mubarak in his welcoming speech stressed on the strong economic and trade relations between the United Kingdom and Kuwait, while the British delegation thanked Sheikh Mubarak for the hospitality they felt in Kuwait, expressing their trust that the close investment and commercial ties will continue to grow.



CELEBRATING KUWAIT

ABK LIGHTS UP HEADQUARTERS FOR NATIONAL AND LIBERATION DAYS

Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) marked the start of its National and Liberation day celebrations earlier this month by lighting up its Head Quarters with the colors of the Kuwaiti flag. The Bank will be celebrating today with its staff members on this occasion by distributing Kuwait flags and themed pins as well as traditional sweets across all branches. As part of ABK's social responsibility and in line with its focus on special needs, the Bank will also be the main sponsor of the special needs operetta organized by the Ministry of Social Affairs where special needs children as well as children in care homes will participate to celebrate the country's National &

Liberation Day.

The Bank will be closed for business from 25th to 27th February, 2016 and will resume its operations on Sunday 28th February, 2016. During this period, ABK's online services and call center will be available. ABK takes this opportunity to congratulate HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Crown Prince of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and to the Kuwaiti government and its people. For more information on Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait please visit www.eahli.com or contact an ABK representative via 'Ahli Chat' or by contacting a customer service agent via 'Ahlan Ahli' at 1899899.

ISLAMIC DAWAH CENTRE KUWAIT

Islamic Dawah Centre (IDC) is a non-profitable Indian Muslim Association that works to give the message of Islam to the Muslims and the non-Muslim Indian Tamil speaking community by organizing various forms of programs and Dawah. As a part of this, IDC is conducting a one day mega program for the forthcoming National and Liberation day holidays in Kuwait.

The program is as follows;
Date: 25/02/2016 -Thursday.
Time: 10 am-5:00 pm
Venue: In a specially arranged Tent in Mangaf, Block-2, next to Mangaf fire station
Highlights : Holy Quran quiz competitions, Islamic exhibition, Special Bayaan, Prize distribution and Games for children..

*Separate arrangement for Ladies and Lunch will be served
Program 2:-
Iyarkai Markam Islam (for Non-Muslims)
Date: 26/02/2016 -Friday.
Time: 4:30 p.m
Venue: In a specially arranged tent in Mangaf, Block-2, next to fire station
Highlights : Games , Discussions , Special Speech , Q & A Session ,Prize distribution * Transport will be arranged & Dinner packs will be served
Special Guest: Moulavi Sadaqatullah Umari (Islamic Scholar, Chennai, India)
Tel: 25669425, 23722805, Mob: 97695608
www.idctamil.com - Email: idc@idc-tamil.com



NBK'S FAMILY SHARES THE SPIRIT OF NATIONAL DAY WITH SICK KIDS

KUWAIT: On the occasion of Kuwait's independence and the anniversary of its liberation, National Bank of Kuwait's (NBK) family paid a visit to NBK Hospital and Ibn Sina Hospital at Sabah Medical district to share happy moments of Kuwait's national celebrations with the children who suffer from chronic diseases. "NBK staff have always devoted a considerable part of their time to comfort children and present them with felicitations and gifts as part of NBK's corporate social responsibility program", said Joanne Al Abdul Jaleel, NBK Public Relations Officer. Al Abdul Jaleel added "Sharing happy

moments with the children is our pleasure. We are proud that NBK devotes such attention to support the Kuwait society and provide compassion and help for those in need, including children." The visits were emotional and overwhelming for both the children and NBK family. NBK's visits to hospitals and care centers reflect the bank's high sense of duty and responsibility towards all those in need from different sectors of society. It is a well rooted tradition that has been carried out by NBK each year in its efforts to continuously have an active role in the Kuwait society. It is worth mentioning that NBK pioneered

corporate social responsibility programs by funding the NBK Children's hospital 15 Years ago. The hospital focused on providing treatment for children suffering from chronic diseases. NBK continues to build the first of its kind in Kuwait, the independent marrow transplant center at NBK's Children Hospital. Also, NBK continues to support the transfer of knowledge and skills by hosting a team of experts from the prestigious Great Ormond Street Hospital in London which includes several specialists in blood diseases, cancer and pediatric Neurosurgery to work at the hospital.



ALAPPUZHA DISTRICT ASSOCIATION KUWAIT FORMED

A general body meeting convened in Salmiya on February 19 has formed a new association by name "Alappuzha District Association Kuwait, a gathering of people hailing from Alappuzha district of Kerala. Following are the list of democratically elected office bearers: (Patron) Chacko George Kutty; (President) B S Pillai; (Vice Presidents) Christopher Daniel, Krishnakumar C; (General Secretary) Vipin Mangattu; (Secretaries) Thomas Mathew, Zakeer Puthenpalathu; (Treasurer) Shibu Cherian; (Joint Treasurer) Saiju Ettithara. Executive Members include:- Manoj K John, Binu

Chempalayam, Sunil Suthan, John Varghese, Roshan Jacob, Mathew Achankunju, Abraham Mathew, Sreekumar Gopinathan Pillai, Hari Soman, Saiju George, Sinijith Devarajan, Sujith Muthukulam, George Thomas, Jithesh M M, Thomas Joy, AD Varghese. The Association will stand for: Fostering fraternity among friends from Alappuzha in Kuwait; Promoting the diverse Indian culture; Uplifting the down-trodden; Medical and Educational Assistance; Other social, welfare and cultural activities, respecting the laws of the land and guidance of the Indian Embassy.



Congratulations

Congratulations to you Andrew - for passing your MBBS exams. We wish you 'all the best' in your life. May God bless you. Wishes and prayers from dad, mom, Ammachi, Chechi, Sibiachachan, Kichukutten, Jonukutten, friends and well-wishers.





OOREDOO CONCLUDES HALA FEBRUARY FESTIVAL

Ooredoo Kuwait, a member of international Ooredoo Group, announced the conclusion of Hala February Festival 2016, the biggest local annual festival. Ooredoo's partnership with this festival reflects the company's belief in its social responsibility toward the community and in the importance of effectively taking part in national events and activities. On this occasion, Ooredoo's Director of Corporate Communications, Mijbil Alayoub said: "We are proud to have a positive role in the success of such a massive national event and are happy with the conclusion of the successful cultural, religious, entertainment and sports activities. Ooredoo will continue to support important initiatives benefiting the people of Kuwait. In celebration of the national festival,

Ooredoo Kuwait has dedicated a special song titled "Rayeh Al Kuwait", written by Kuwaiti poet Saher, composed by Abdullah Al Quood and performed by the famous Kuwaiti singer Nabil Shuaib and the Qatari singer Fahad Al Kubaisi. The song revolves around the idea of union of the Arabian Gulf nations and invites them to participate in celebrating Kuwait's national festival. The festival activities included Hala February camp in Bneider, which involved a dedicated area to support small businesses. Other activities included educational, cultural and religious symposiums in addition to children activities. One of the most exciting parts of Hala February Festival 2016 was the musical concerts, which captured the interest of many people inside and out Kuwait. Sixteen

popular singers from the Middle East participated in concerts where hundreds of attendees were amused, participating singers were Abadi Al Johar, Asala Nasri, Fahad Al Kubaisi, Cheb Khaled and Tamer Hosni, Shamma Hamdan, Saad Al Mujarad, Ibrahim Dashti, Hatem Iraqi, Musaed AlBalushi, Nabil Shuaib, Ahlam, Hind Al Bahrania, Shereen and Hussein Aljamsi. This year's carnival was attended by HE Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs, Sheikh Salman Al-Homoud Al-Sabah, and HE Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah. Ooredoo Kuwait's General Manager and CEO, Sheikh Mohammad bin Abdullah Al Thani attended the carnival along with company's executives and department heads. The carn-

ival had special international performances, as well as a gliding show, a parade of government vehicles, and many other entertaining activities. As for the Shopping Festival this year, it included a lot of promotional offers for all participants, in addition to a large number of prizes and draws. The festival kick off was at Al Dabos Mall in Fahaheel, then Beirut Mall in Hawalli, and continued to include Maghateer Mall in Al Farwaneya and was concluded in SouqSharq. On the side-line of Hala February Festival, Ooredoo organized a special visit to Bait Abdullah accompanied by the singer Asala Nasri, during her visit to Kuwait, in order to share the joy of the national celebrations with paediatric patients, the program included entertainment shows for children

and cartoon characters, as well as gifts distributed by the company's representatives and Nasri. The festival also included Hala February Marathon, which witnessed the participation of hundreds of people from Kuwait. In addition to The Graffiti 'For the Love of Kuwait' competition where participants expressed their love for their beloved country by drawing on the walls of a specialized area in Souq Sharq The event also included an Equestrian championship in considered as one of the most exciting activities of Hala February, it was organized by Kuwait Riding Centre and included intermediate tournament, horse dancing shows, beginners' tournaments, advanced tournaments, raffle draws and winners honoring.



AMC TV schedule listing shows like Breaking Bad, Big Screen, Earthbound, etc.

ANIMAL PLANET HD TV schedule listing shows like River Monsters, Swamp Brothers, Wild Capture School, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Doctor Who, Starlings, Call The Midwife, etc.

CCTV NEWS TV schedule listing news programs like News Update, Dialogue, News Hour, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Who On Earth Did I Marry?, The Haunted, Ghost Lab, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Fatal Encounters, True Crime With Aphrodite, The Will, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Solving, Codes And Conspiracies, Origins, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Henry Hugglemonster, Calimero, Zou, etc.

Bloomberg Television TV schedule listing programs like What'd You Miss?, Charlie Rose, First Up With Angie Lau, etc.

Bloomberg Television TV schedule listing programs like News Update, Dialogue, News Hour, etc.

CNBC TV schedule listing programs like CNBC Conversation: David Hertz, Investing In India, U.S. Squawk Alley, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Weir Or What?, How It's Made, Food Factory, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Violetta, The Hive, Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Mickey Mouse Clubhouse, Sofia The First, Goldie & Bear, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Violetta, The Hive, Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Doctor Who, Starlings, Call The Midwife, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Doctor Who, Starlings, Call The Midwife, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Doctor Who, Starlings, Call The Midwife, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Doctor Who, Starlings, Call The Midwife, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Doctor Who, Starlings, Call The Midwife, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Doctor Who, Starlings, Call The Midwife, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Doctor Who, Starlings, Call The Midwife, etc.



LAST PASSENGER ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Solving, Codes And Conspiracies, Origins, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Solving, Codes And Conspiracies, Origins, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Solving, Codes And Conspiracies, Origins, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Solving, Codes And Conspiracies, Origins, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like Solving, Codes And Conspiracies, Origins, etc.

OSN MOVIES HD ACTION TV schedule listing movies like The Quiet Ones, Last Passenger, The Hulk, etc.

OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY TV schedule listing movies like Life Of Crime, Encino Man, All About Christmas Eve, etc.

OSN FIRST HD COMEDY TV schedule listing shows like Suburgatory, The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore, Brickleberry, etc.

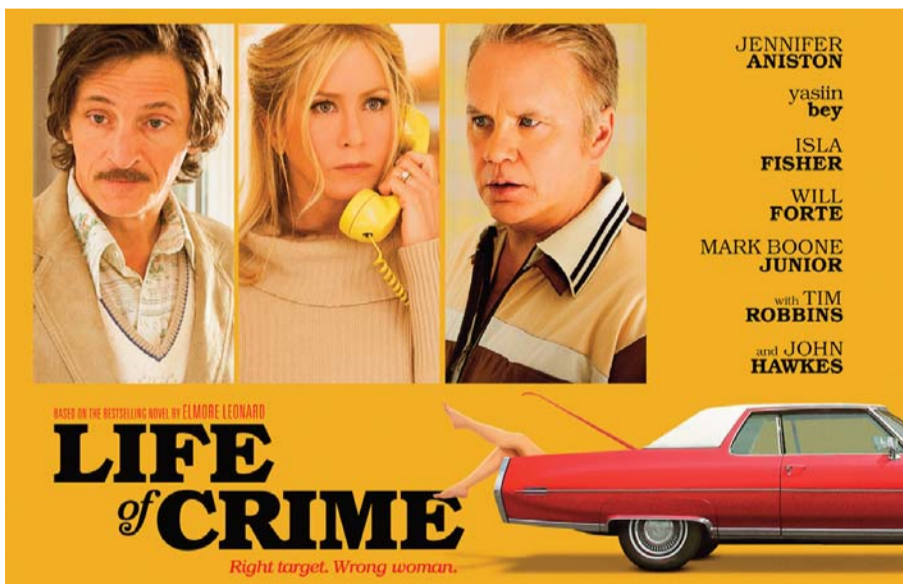
OSN MOVIES HD TV schedule listing movies like Won't Back Down, Blue Ruin, Vanity Fair, etc.

OSN SPORTS 1 HD TV schedule listing sports events like Welsh Open Snooker, LPGA Tour Highlights, AFL NAB Challenge, etc.

OSN SPORTS 2 HD TV schedule listing sports events like Top 14, Rugby League World Club Challenge, PGA European Tour, etc.

OSN SPORTS 3 HD TV schedule listing sports events like Golfing World, PGA European Tour, European Tour Weekly, etc.

OSN SPORTS 4 HD TV schedule listing sports events like The World's Strongest Man, Pro Bull Riders, Mass Participation U.K., etc.



LIFE OF CRIME ON OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like U.S. Squawk Alley, Fast Money: Half Time, U.S. Power Lunch, etc.

Discovery Channel TV schedule listing shows like U.S. Squawk Alley, Fast Money: Half Time, U.S. Power Lunch, etc.

OSN MOVIES HD TV schedule listing movies like Won't Back Down, Blue Ruin, Vanity Fair, etc.

OSN SPORTS 1 HD TV schedule listing sports events like Welsh Open Snooker, LPGA Tour Highlights, AFL NAB Challenge, etc.

OSN SPORTS 2 HD TV schedule listing sports events like Top 14, Rugby League World Club Challenge, PGA European Tour, etc.

OSN SPORTS 3 HD TV schedule listing sports events like Golfing World, PGA European Tour, European Tour Weekly, etc.

OSN SPORTS 4 HD TV schedule listing sports events like The World's Strongest Man, Pro Bull Riders, Mass Participation U.K., etc.



LOUDER THAN WORDS ON OSN MOVIES HD

OSN MOVIES HD TV schedule listing movies like Won't Back Down, Blue Ruin, Vanity Fair, etc.

OSN SPORTS 1 HD TV schedule listing sports events like Welsh Open Snooker, LPGA Tour Highlights, AFL NAB Challenge, etc.

CLASSIFIEDS



KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (18/02/2016 TO 24/02/2016)

Time	Programme	Time	Programme	Time	Programme
11:45 AM	SHARQIA-1 CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	11:30 AM	FANAR-3 THE FINEST HOURS	11:45 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
1:45 PM	THE FINEST HOURS	12:05 AM	FITOOOR - Hindi	11:45 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
3:45 PM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	2:00 PM	FANAR-4 CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	12:05 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
6:15 PM	THE FINEST HOURS	3:00 PM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	12:15 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
8:15 PM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	5:00 PM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	12:15 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
10:45 PM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	7:00 PM	SHAKET DABOUS	12:15 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
12:45 AM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	9:00 PM	SHAKET DABOUS	12:15 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
12:45 AM	SHARQIA-2 HAIL, CAESARI	10:45 PM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	12:15 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
12:45 AM	HAIL, CAESARI	12:45 AM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	12:15 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
12:45 AM	HAIL, CAESARI	12:45 AM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	12:15 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
12:45 AM	SHAKET DABOUS	12:45 AM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	12:15 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
12:45 AM	HAIL, CAESARI	12:45 AM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	12:15 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
12:45 AM	SHAKET DABOUS	12:45 AM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	12:15 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
12:45 AM	HAIL, CAESARI	12:45 AM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	12:15 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
1:00 PM	SHARQIA-3 THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	12:30 PM	FANAR-5 THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	12:15 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
3:15 PM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	2:45 PM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	12:15 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
5:30 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP	5:00 PM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	12:15 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
7:30 PM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	7:15 PM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	12:15 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
9:45 PM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	9:30 PM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	12:15 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
12:05 AM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	11:45 PM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	12:15 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
11:45 AM	MUHALAB-1 HAIL, CAESARI	11:45 AM	MARINA-1 HAIL, CAESARI	11:45 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
1:45 PM	HAIL, CAESARI	1:45 PM	HAIL, CAESARI	11:45 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
3:45 PM	HAIL, CAESARI	3:45 PM	HAIL, CAESARI	11:45 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
5:45 PM	SYNCHRONICITY	5:45 PM	HAIL, CAESARI	11:45 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
7:45 PM	HAIL, CAESARI	7:45 PM	SYNCHRONICITY	11:45 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
9:45 PM	SYNCHRONICITY	9:45 PM	SYNCHRONICITY	11:45 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
11:45 PM	HAIL, CAESARI	11:45 PM	SYNCHRONICITY	11:45 AM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
12:15 PM	MUHALAB-2 THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	12:30 PM	MARINA-2 THE FINEST HOURS	12:15 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
2:45 PM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	3:15 PM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	12:15 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
5:00 PM	FITOOOR - Hindi	5:30 PM	THE FINEST HOURS	12:15 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
5:00 PM	KRISHNASHATAMI - Telugu	8:00 PM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	12:15 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
8:00 PM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	10:15 PM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	12:15 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
10:30 PM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	12:30 AM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	12:15 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
12:45 AM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	12:30 AM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	12:15 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
12:30 PM	MUHALAB-3 CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	12:45 PM	MARINA-3 CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	12:30 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
2:30 PM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	12:15 PM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	12:30 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
4:30 PM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	2:15 PM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	12:30 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
6:30 PM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	4:15 PM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	12:30 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
8:30 PM	SHAKET DABOUS	6:15 PM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	12:30 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
10:15 PM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	8:15 PM	SHAKET DABOUS	12:30 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
12:15 AM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	10:00 PM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	12:30 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
12:30 PM	FANAR-1 HAIL, CAESARI	12:05 AM	CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	12:30 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
2:30 PM	HAIL, CAESARI	1:15 PM	AVENUES-1 JANE GOT A GUN	12:30 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
4:30 PM	HAIL, CAESARI	3:30 PM	FITOOOR - Hindi	12:30 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
6:30 PM	HAIL, CAESARI	6:15 PM	BROOKLYN	12:30 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
8:30 PM	HAIL, CAESARI	8:30 PM	FITOOOR - Hindi	12:30 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
10:30 PM	HAIL, CAESARI	11:30 PM	JANE GOT A GUN	12:30 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
12:30 AM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	1:00 PM	AVENUES-2 ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP	12:30 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
11:30 AM	SYNCHRONICITY	1:00 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP	12:30 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP
1:30 PM	SYNCHRONICITY	1:00 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP	12:30 PM	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: HE ROAD CHIP

REQUIRED FINANCIAL OFFICER.

- At least 3 years experience in investment / financial industry.
- University Education.
- Good command of written and spoken English.
- Good working experience with Microsoft Office.
- Transferable work Visa.

email at: hr_job@live.com
 Fax on: 22497287

CHANGE OF NAME

I Santos Girlie Macapagal, Phillipine Passport No. EC6534457 hereby declare to change my present name to Mckenzie Girlie Santos in my Passport

residing at No. 2, Samayana Sheik Mohamed Moopan Street, Melapalayam, Tirunelveli Dist. Pin: 627005, shall henceforth be known as Kaleel Rahman. (C 5136) 22-2-2016

Abid Hussain Bohra, holder of Passport No. F7052032, changed my name to Abid Hussain Dholkawala. (C 5135)

I, PIEDADE RANGEL holder of Passport No. 4643677 R/o H.No. 129 Kursavaddo Piedade Diwar, Tiswadi Goa changed my name from PIEDADE RANGEL to PIEDADE DA CRUZ. (C 5138) 24-2-2016

I, Syed Mohamed Mohideen Kaleel, S/o Mohamed Mohideen, holder of Passport No. G3449357,

EMERGENCY 112

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is 1889988

Prayer timings

Fajr: 05:00
 Shorook: 06:19
 Duhr: 12:01
 Asr: 15:17
 Maghrib: 17:44
 Isha: 19:01

Flight Schedule

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

In case you are not travelling, your proper cancellation of bookings will help other passengers to use seats

Arrival Flights on Wednesday 24/2/2016				Departure Flights on Wednesday 24/2/2016			
Airlines	Ft	Route	Time	Airlines	Ft	Route	Time
MSC	415	Sohag	00:05	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
SYR	343	Damascus/KAC	00:10	KNE	481	Taif	14:50
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	IRC	527	Mashhad	14:55
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40	MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	14:55
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
THY	772	Istanbul	01:05	FDB	058	Dubai	15:10
DLH	635	Doha	01:35	QTR	1079	Doha	15:10
CLX	784	Luxembourg	01:45	CLX	853	Luxembourg	15:10
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00	KAC	791	Madinah	15:10
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30	SVA	503	Madinah/Jeddah	15:45
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:45
KKK	6507	Istanbul	02:50	KAC	617	Doha	15:45
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	KAC	773	Riyadh	15:50
FDB	067	Dubai	03:05	SVA	2387	Jeddah	15:55
RJA	644	Amman	03:05	KNE	463	Madinah	16:00
MSR	612	Cairo	03:10	FEG	932	Sharm el-Sheikh	16:00
QTR	1076	Doha	03:15	KAC	539	Sharm el-Sheikh	16:00
CEB	7694	Manila	03:15	KNE	473	Jeddah	16:05
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:25	FDB	8054	Dubai	16:10
KKK	6502	Istanbul	03:55	JZR	554	Alexandria	16:10
SAW	703	Damascus	05:00	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:25
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:40	OMA	646	Muscat	16:30
THY	770	Istanbul	05:55	GFA	2530	Bahrain	16:35
FDB	5061	Dubai	06:30	KAC	563	Amman	16:45
BAW	157	London	06:40	TBM	6314	Mashhad	16:55
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	07:20	IAW	1588	Al Najaf	16:55
KAC	204	Lahore	07:40	JZR	266	Beirut	17:05
QTR	1086	Doha	07:40	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	17:30
FDB	053	Dubai	07:45	JZR	238	Amman	17:30
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50	FDB	052	Dubai	17:35
MEA	406	Beirut	07:50	QTR	1073	Doha	17:40
OMA	641	Muscat	07:55	FDB	8056	Dubai	17:40
KAC	382	Delhi	08:00	UAE	858	Dubai	17:45
KAC	206	Islamabad	08:25	JZR	538	Cairo	17:45
KAC	352	Kochi	08:30	RJA	641	Amman	17:55
KAC	344	Chennai	08:30	SYR	342	Damascus	18:00
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	08:30	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40	IRC	6512	ABD	18:20
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:50	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	362	Colombo	08:50	JZR	184	Dubai	18:40
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	MSR	615	Cairo	18:50
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:10	JZR	124	Bahrain	19:10
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:20	FDB	064	Dubai	19:20
QTR	1070	Doha	09:25	ABY	124	Sharjah	19:25
FBA	833	Al Najaf	09:35	UAE	876	Dubai	19:30
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	JZR	512	Sharm el-Sheikh	19:30
FDB	8057	Dubai	10:25	GFA	218	Bahrain	20:15
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	283	Dhaka	20:35
IRA	665	Shiraz	10:40	KAC	361	Colombo	20:45
JZR	1329	Al Najaf	10:45	QTR	1081	Doha	20:50
IAW	157	Al Najaf	10:50	KAC	351	Kochi	20:50
UAE	873	Dubai	11:05	KAC	343	Chennai	21:00
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	11:15	KNE	461	Riyadh	21:10
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	KAC	331	Trivandrum	21:10
ABY	129	Sharjah	11:45	OMA	648	Muscat	21:20
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	FDB	062	Dubai	21:20
JZR	1359	Mashhad	12:00	MSR	619	Alexandria	21:45
IAW	157A	Al Najaf	12:15	DLH	634	Doha	21:45
SAW	701	Damascus	12:20	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25	FDB	5054	Dubai	21:50
IRM	1188	Mashhad	12:25	FDB	8062	Dubai	21:50
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30	JAI	571	Mumbai	21:55
JZR	561	Sohag	12:45	QTR	1089	Doha	22:00
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	KAC	381	Delhi	22:00
IRC	6511	ABD	13:00	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:10
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	KAC	203	Lahore	22:10
FDB	8059	Dubai	13:10	KAC	301	Mumbai	22:10
CLX	852	Luxembourg	13:40	MEA	403	Beirut	22:20
KNE	460	Riyadh	13:50	ALK	230	Colombo	22:25
MSR	575	Sharm el-Sheikh	13:55	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:30
IRC	526	Mashhad	13:55	ETD	920	Dubai	22:35
QTR	1078	Doha	14:10	UAE	860	Dubai	22:55
FDB	057	Dubai	14:10	KAC	345	Ahmedabad	23:00
SVA	9386	Jeddah	14:25	QTR	1083	Doha	23:05
SVA	500	Jeddah	14:30	KAC	205	Islamabad	23:10
FDB	8053	Dubai	14:40	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:15
				FDB	060	Dubai	23:35
				KAC	415	Kuala Lumpur/Jakarta	23:40

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

CROSSWORD 1178



ACROSS

- Type genus of the Musaceae.
- A state in the western United States.
- Type genus of the Sulidae.
- Fungus used in the preparation of punk for furs.
- God of love and erotic desire.
- A very poisonous metallic element that has three allotropic forms.
- The ripened and variously modified walls of a plant ovary.
- A health resort near a spring or at the seaside.
- Goddess of fertility.
- A case for containing a set of articles.
- (Old Testament) The second patriarch.
- A feeling of strong eagerness (usually in favor of a person or cause).
- A very young child (birth to 1 year) who has not yet begun to walk or talk.
- Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.
- A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
- An enclosure made of wire or metal bars in which birds or animals are kept.
- Lacking self-confidence.
- A trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.
- Not paid.
- Draw in by breathing.
- (comparative of 'near') Being the one of two that is less distant in space.
- Pour out.
- Choose and follow.
- A historical region in central and northern Yugoslavia.
- Hurt or upset.
- Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
- Of or related to genetically distinguished groups of people.
- Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
- On, to, or at the top.
- Major items of military weaponry (as tanks or missile).
- 1 species.
- An island in the Netherlands Antilles that is the top of an extinct volcano.
- Having winglike extensions.
- A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
- A genus of temperate and arctic evergreen trees (see spruce).
- Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.
- The highest point of something.
- (Greek mythology) Daughter of Zeus and Demeter.
- A less than average tide occurring at the first and third quarters of the moon.
- Indicating the absence of any or all units under consideration.
- Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
- A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
- The state of matter distinguished from the solid and liquid states by.
- A white linen liturgical vestment with sleeves.
- A state in north central United States.

DOWN

- A doctor's degree in music.

Yesterday's Solution

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

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Interior decorating or window art may be the perfect job for you. Work in retail can also be quite successful. Others value you for your ability to make practical decisions concerning group issues. You have a natural sense of what the public wants at this time. It is easy to make magic happen. There is an increase in romantic daydreaming. For those single people-a relationship begun in the next two weeks may change your mind about the beauty of marriage. Trust and confidence in your own ability to be compatible is greatly improved, overcoming any past feelings of inadequacy. For those of you who are romantically involved, the increase of incredibly romantic feelings occurring now will certainly help to intensify your love relationship.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Projects move along at a rapid rate and deliveries are on schedule today. Your work is where you concentrate your attention and your ability to come up with new ideas seems like magic. If you give your best effort now, considerable success may follow. Everything is moving in your direction to put together a great sales package or some presentation package. What a day to make a deal favorable for any business, financial or legal ventures! Your mind is alert-your objectives are clear. Your cheerful confidence will help you to win your way. At this time, your athletic drive is high. Why not jog around the park or shoot some baskets this afternoon at home this evening you may find that what seemed like a negative path has taken on positive results.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You are particularly easygoing today; your compatibility with higher-ups is certain to draw positive attention. You will find this a very lucky day for making plans or decisions and finding your way through just about any problem you may discover. You feel successful and able to cope with whatever life has to offer. Good advice from a guide or older person may be helpful-a good day. Tomorrow is the key word for today. On some days it is okay to put off until tomorrow the chores you could do today. This is one of those days. The leaky roof will still be there-and who knows, tomorrow a friend may offer to help fix it with you. Recharge your batteries tonight by going to bed early. Your social life will get better-but not tonight.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You may take a serious attitude to just about all aspects of your life today. For a while this morning you may feel that you are just not able to move with the natural flow of energy. You know that energies change-if you wait a while all those cobwebs will begin to clear. This is the time to use your inspiration in constructive ways. This morning is an excellent time to sit down alone and get many things accomplished. It is not a time to try to push projects to a completion. After the noon break you may feel that you have more motivation to tackle people or stressful problems. Your sensitivity to others may delude you this afternoon-perhaps encouraging you to misplace your affections.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

In your professional life, where you want to be and where you are signify that some sort of constraint is stunting your growth. You must either accept your situation, or make massive changes-a middle ground may be hard to find. A new friend that is probably very much different from the friends you usually have comes into your life now. It seems as though this person has popped into your life in order to teach you what you need to know. This could mean travel to a country where you always wanted to visit or expansion of knowledge needed for a new job. Whatever the case, a great number of enjoyable and interesting times may be shared-you have something to offer. Also, public service is calling your name.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

If you are doing professional work that is stressful today, listen to music while you work-perhaps a small player or radio with an earpiece. Your day and the attitude of the day improve as the day moves along. You are a valuable asset to the company for which you work. One of your biggest problems is in overextending yourself. There is no crime in saying the word, no. Self-motivation is easy today... It looks as though you will be reaching a personal goal soon. This may be a time worthy of your attention in meditation. Be proud of your accomplishments in a most humble way. As you become involved in some creative activity with others this afternoon, you may find yourself sharing stories of recent life lessons while you create.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

This is a good time to try to foster a sense of togetherness and team play during work group activities. Do not try to force a particular issue just now. If you are depending on several different people or perhaps the upswing of the dollar to save some business project, you will not have long to wait. There are positive outcomes today. If your own expertise has been the guide to a particular project-you have nothing to fear. You will not dare show your fear to others. You might find yourself on the golf course or in the hair salon later. Results of a contest, competition or tryout will be most positive. This evening is an excellent time for taking part in social activities. You may talk a friend into teaching you some new dance steps tonight.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Discipline may be where your concentration is today. Maintain your spirit of enthusiasm-it will help you to stay on target with your goals. This is a good day for making decisions, carrying out plans and communicating to others just where you stand. Make sure the dialogue goes both ways. Others have good ideas too. If you stick to the main subjects and do not become hung up on trivialities, you should accomplish a lot-particularly in group meetings. You are empowered with a clear and inquisitive mind. Working with and discussing ideas with friends can be most rewarding. You should enjoy time with your family this evening. Expressing affection should come easily at this time and can do much good for your attitude.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

A hobby you have perfected recently may be turning into a very good and profitable enterprise. Even if you have a day job, the hobby you have could be an attraction to others during your lunch break. You may find your time spent in teaching or selling your creative works or invention. This inventiveness of yours could also come in the form of children's stories, candles, mixes of coffees or teas for particular tastes, herbal or scent concoctions all done up in beautiful packaging. Good conversation and enjoyable, non-stress situations make for a great way to bring in some extra money. Good feelings are in the air. This evening you will enjoy listening to good conversation among family members while you prop up your feet and take long sips of herbal tea.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Now is the time for you to receive recognition. Peers and superiors give you credit for your hard work. You have more animation in your thought process than you might realize-start using it and surprise yourself. It is a good time to resolve any long-standing controversy and a good day for work. Consider getting out-of-doors for exercise at the lunch break. Work will seem easier and you should feel more relaxed once you engage in some sort of health-related activity. Also, love is in full bloom-it is a good time to fully demonstrate the depth of affection to loved ones. This is a time when your powers of creativity are great. You are able to solve problems easily, should they occur. Music plays a big part of a romantic evening tonight.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

At home, demanding what you want could lead to frustrations. If you have a serving attitude, others will be more compliant to your needs. In the workplace, conference calls and other means of communication that will help you be a part of some decision-making action today have positive results. You are empowered with a motivation to find ways to increase your business, please customers and be the best you can be. If there is a chance of employee awards, you seek to accomplish a few awards for yourself. You may enjoy teaching newcomers or giving short lectures to new students. Later it will be your turn to enjoy the learning process-something completely different will gain your attention this afternoon and you find an excellent teacher.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

To ensure that you do not become the victim of a misunderstanding at work today, be clear in all the things you do and say. Someone may be hard of hearing. Practical financial understanding and a practical life style are qualities that take on a greater importance. You may feel that you have become a productive worker because you are so busy. You certainly have a knack for knowing how to put people, ideas and things together profitably. Playing the role of a mediator can be rewarding. This afternoon, gathering and exchanging information becomes most important and may also become a very educational experience. Others make a big impact on your goals. This evening is a mentally and socially active time.

WORD SEARCH

Radiohead Songs

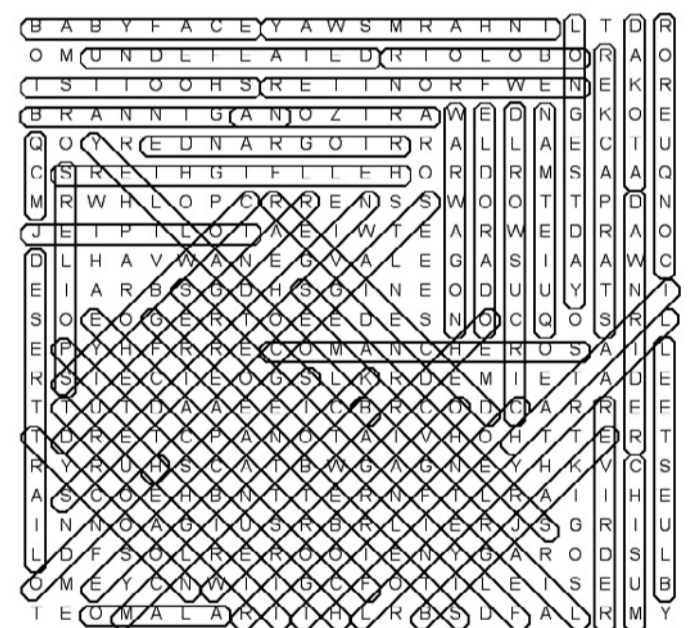
Find and circle all of the Radiohead songs that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an additional song by Radiohead.



- | | | | |
|----------------|---------------|------------------|--------------|
| AIRBAG | HIGH AND DRY | MORNING BELL | PYRAMID SONG |
| ALL I NEED | HUNTING BEARS | MY IRON LUNG | RECKONER |
| BLACK STAR | IN LIMBO | NICE DREAM | RIPCORD |
| BLOW OUT | JUST | NO SURPRISES | SULK |
| BODYSNATCHERS | KARMA POLICE | NUDE | THE BENDS |
| BONES | KID A | OPTIMISTIC | THE TOURIST |
| CREEP | KNIVES OUT | PARANOID ANDROID | TREEFINGERS |
| ELECTIONEERING | LET DOWN | PLANET TEXEL | VEGETABLE |
| FAUST ARP | LUCKY | PROVE YOURSELF | VIDEOTAPE |
| FITTER HAPPIER | LURGEE | | |

Yesterday Solution

John Wayne Movies



- | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| ALAMO, The | COWBOYS, The | JET PILOT | RIO LOBO |
| ARIZONA | DAKOTA | LOVELY TRAIL, The | SEA CHASE, The |
| BABY FACE | DAWN RIDER, The | LONGEST DAY, The | SEARCHERS, The |
| BIG JAKE | DECEIVER, The | MCLINTOCK | SHOOTIST, The |
| BIG TRAIL, The | DESERT TRAIL, The | MCQ | SPOILERS, The |
| BLOOD ALLEY | EL DORADO | NEW FRONTIER | STAGECOACH |
| BLUE STEEL | FLYING TIGERS | NIGHT RIDERS, The | STAR PACKER, The |
| BRANNIGAN | FORT APACHE | PITTSBURGH | TRUE GRIT |
| CHISUM | GREEN BERETS, The | QUET MAN, The | TYCOON |
| CIRCUS WORLD | HATARI | RANGE FEUD | UNDEFEATED, The |
| COMANCHEROS, The | HELL FIGHTERS | RED RIVER | WAR WAGON, The |
| CONFLICT | HONDO | RIO BRAVO | WESTWARD HO |
| CONQUEROR, The | IN HARMS WAY | | |

The hidden message is: TOMORROW HOPES WE HAVE LEARNED SOMETHING FROM YESTERDAY

Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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

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	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	Luxembourg	00352
Albania	00355	Macau	00853
Algeria	00213	Macedonia	00389
Andorra	00376	Madagascar	00261
Angola	00244	Majorca	0034
Anguilla	001264	Malawi	00265
Antigua	001268	Malaysia	0060
Argentina	0054	Maldives	00960
Armenia	00374	Mali	00223
Australia	0061	Malta	00356
Austria	0043	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Nigar	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	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

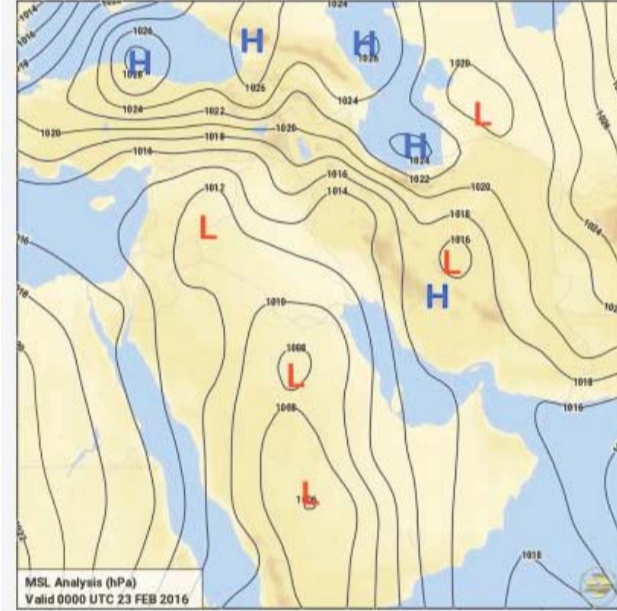
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 23/02/2016-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 30 °C

By Day : Partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening gradually at times south easterly changing to north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 40 km/h causing raising dust with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times later on
By Night : Partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening gradually at times north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 40 km/h with a chance for scattered rain that might be thundery at times

SFC. CHART



Four-Day Forecast

	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Expected Weather				
Min Temp °C	14	11	12	11
Max Temp °C	26	26	27	26
Wind Direction	north westerly	north westerly	north westerly to light variable	south easterly
Wind Speed km/h	08 - 30	08 - 28	08 - 30	06 - 28

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	20		27	
KUWAIT AIRPORT	18		30	
ABDALY	19		29	
BUBYAN	17		22	
JAHRRA	19		31	
FAILAKA ISLAND	18		23	
SALMIYAH	18		25	
AHMADI	19		25	
JAL ALIYAH	20		30	
QAROH ISLAND	20		25	
UMM AL-MARADEM	20		25	
NUWAISIB	17		28	
WAFRA	17		30	
MANAGISH	19		29	
SALMY	20		30	
MUTRIBA	19		30	

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	29
Min Temp (°C)	18
Max Rel Hum (%)	53
Min Rel Hum (%)	10
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	75 SE
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm
Sunrise	06:19
Sunset	17:43

Prayer Times

Fajr	05:00
Sunrise	06:19
Zuhr	12:01
Asr	15:17
Sunset	17:43
Isha	19:00



PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists	
Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223
Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daary	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-Mikhaezem	22636920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abdallah Al-Rafea	25333501
Urologists	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abdallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

Plastic Surgeons	
Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	22547272
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	22617700
Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60
Family Doctor	
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581
Psychiatrists	
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047
Dr. Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0
Gynaecologists & Obstetricians	
Dr Adrian arbe	23729596/23729581
Dr. Verginia s.Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliyami	25343406
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272
Dr. Salem soso	22618787
General Surgeons	
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148
Internists, Chest & Heart	
Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446
Dr Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3

Paediatricians	
Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maarouf	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gujare	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282
Dermatology	
Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University	23845955
Dentists	
Dr Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abdallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abdallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111
Neurologists	
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875
Gastrologists	
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abdallah Al-Ali	22633135

Endocrinologist	
Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330
Physiotherapists & VD	
Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari	25658888
Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr	25329924
Rheumatologists:	
Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees	22666288
Internist, Chest & Heart	
DR.Mohammes Akkad	24555050 Ext 210
Consultant Cardiologist	
Dr. Adel Al-Awadi	25330060
Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290
Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	
Dr. Mohammed Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC	25339667
Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC	2611555-2622555
Inaya German Medical Center	Te: 2575077 Fax: 25723123

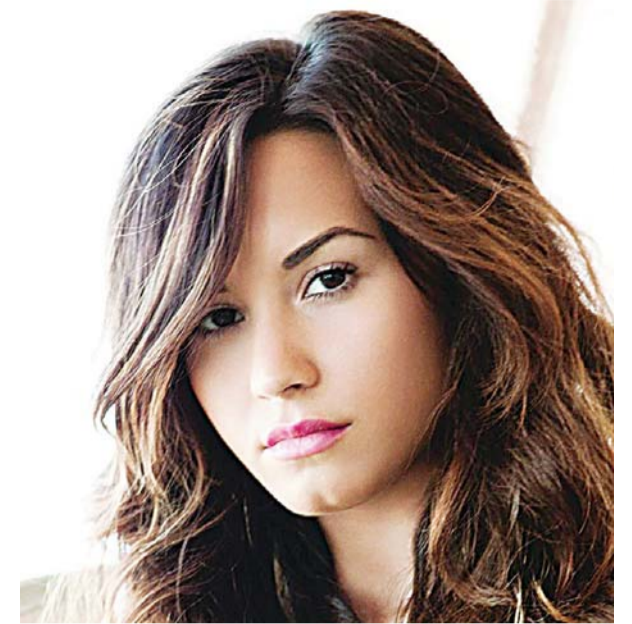
Psychologists /Psychotherapists	Soor Center Tel: 2290-1677 Fax: 2290 1688	info@soorcenter.com www.soorcenter.com	Kaizen center 25716707
---------------------------------	---	--	------------------------

Gossip

Lovato regrets taking a swipe at Taylor Swift

The 'Confident' singer admits her comments after the 'Blank Space' hitmaker donated \$250,000 to Kesha - who a court ruled on Friday cannot break her exclusive contract with Dr Luke despite her claims the producer sexually abused her - have "taken away from the real reason" she initially spoke out in support of the 'Tik Tok' pop star. She wrote on Instagram: "As most people know, I tend to get fired up about the things I believe in, and although my heart and intentions are always in the right place, unfortunately sometimes my passion gets the best of me and causes me to say things that I probably shouldn't say. "And when doing so takes away from the real reason I am speaking up in the first place. Our focus should be on the topic of victims of sexual and physical abuse being afraid to come forward with their stories. They're more likely to face retaliation and harassment than to see justice being served. Especially women." And the 23-year-old

singer further addressed Taylor's donation, recognizing it as her "own way" of giving support to Kesha. She wrote: "Everyone has their own way of giving support to others, and at the end of the day, helping victims is all that matters. "Ultimately, the message I want people to hear is it's okay to come forward with your abuse and if you do decide to take action, you are not alone." Following Taylor's donation, Demi had appeared to suggest the 'Shake It Off' singer had given the money to boost her "brand" while being able to avoid speaking up with an "uncomfortable conversation". She posted: "I'm just tired of seeing women use 'women empowerment' and 'feminism' to further brands without actually being the ones that have the uncomfortable conversations. "I get shade and I don't care because someone has to be the one to take it. At least I'm getting my hands dirty."



Cranston never imagined he'd be nominated for an Oscar

The 59-year-old actor - whose performance in 'Trumbo' has seen him shortlisted for the Best Actor prize at the upcoming Academy Awards - witnessed his father, Joseph Louis 'Joe' Cranston, struggling to make a living in showbusiness and admits he "was not raised" with the notion his profession would give him such recognition. He said: "I was not raised with the idea that you could achieve that. "My dad was an actor, and he made his living getting a job here, getting a job there, sometimes doing fairly well and other times, not so well." Joe was never able to take his career to the next level and felt frustrated by the lack of recognition he

craved. Speaking to Robin Roberts for ABC News special 'Journey to the Oscars', he added: "I think that his ego was inflated to the point where he felt that was what was important." Meanwhile, the 'Breaking Bad' actor was left feeling he was an "enormous failure" after his first stage performance. Bryan was appearing in his elementary school play when he muddled up a line about the White House, calling the presidential base "the White Front" - a local grocery chain - instead, sparking laughter from the audience. He recalled: "Everyone was laughing and I thought it was an enormous failure."



Lopez's children are the 'lights of her life'

The 'On The Floor' hitmaker has paid tribute to her two kids, twins Max and Emme, who she has with ex-husband Marc Anthony, as they turned eight. Taking to Instagram to share a sweet picture of the pair, she wrote: "HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE LIGHTS OF MY LIFE. You have brought me nothing but joy and happiness since the very second you were born. "I am so proud of who you are and the beautiful loving caring people you are growing into. #coconuts8thBirthday. #Iloveyoubeyondforever #maxandemme #February22nd And Thank you everyone for all the beautiful birthday wishes and videos. They are so precious!! (sic)" Meanwhile, the 46-year-old actress previously admitted it is a bit of a "juggling act" trying to balance her work and family commitments. She shared: "I take it step by step and day by day and everyone in my life knows the commitments I have - it was super overwhelming!" Before getting to the American Music Awards in November last year, and after we created the show, and after we filmed 'Shades of Blue', and then filming 'Idol' on the weekends ... I was like, 'Maybe this is the first time I bit off more than I could chew.' But you know what, I take it day by day and I have an incredible support system."

Sheen blames testosterone cream for his behavior

The 50-year-old actor infamously ranted about being a "warlock", "winning" and having "tiger blood" in a series of outbursts in 2011 and though he felt "superhuman" at the time, he believes the hormone supplement had affected his behavior. In an interview airing on 'The Dr. Oz Show' he said: "That was a very specific period of time that did feel very out-of-body and very just detached from all things real. "I felt superhuman during some of that. "It was a lot of highs and lows. "I was taking a lot of testosterone cream, and I think I went too far with it. It was kind of like a borderline, not a 'roid rage, but a 'roid disengage." The 'Anger Management' actor - who even went on a tour titled 'My Violent Torpedo of Truth/ Defeat In Not an Option' at the height of his bizarre conduct - admits he "cringes" at some of his behavior, which included publicly criticizing 'Two and a Half Men' creator Chuck Lorre, and though he enjoyed some "empowering" times, he didn't like how angry



he got. He added: "That's the stuff that I do look at [and] cringe a little .??. It was nice to give people a bunch of slogans and T-shirts and all that. "But the rest of it was a lot of work. "There were things about that person that were empowering, that were vibrant but I didn't like the anger. I tend to be victimized by my anger at times."

Mara thinks Hollywood 'having the wrong conversation' about gender

The 'Carol' star believes the focus on the conversation should be on why women don't get paid as much as men not just the fact that they are. She shared: "I think that we're having the wrong conversation. The conversation isn't we're not getting paid as much as men. "The conversation should be why and where does that come from because it's just a side effect of something much greater." The 30-year-old actress also slammed the language used to describe women who are "opinionated and self-possessed" as unfair. She added to Deadline: "If you're a female who is sort of opinionated or has a point of view or is self-possessed in a way, you get described with this language in ways that others would never talk about me. "I think when you're getting paid less, there's sort of this sense that, 'Well you don't really respect me or feel like you need me as much as you need these other people.'" The issue of the gender pay gap in Hollywood has been a hot topic of conversation ever since hacked Sony emails revealed Jennifer Lawrence and Amy Adams had been paid less for their roles in 'American Hustle' than their male co-



Phil Collins to re-marry his third wife Orianne Cevey

The 65-year-old musician confirmed last month he has reconciled with the 43-year-old jewelry designer - who he famously paid £25 million to six years ago in a record-breaking divorce battle - and the couple are "determined" to tie the knot again. Orianne - who has sons Nicholas, 14, and Matthew, 11 with Phil - said: "I now call Phil my husband again. We are so close that it does not actually make a difference if we are married or not, but we are determined to get married for a second time. "We were always very close, because of the children, and just last year I realised he is indeed the man of my life." Phil and Orianne - who was left partially paralysed with spinal disorder Brown-Sequard syndrome following an operation in 2014 - married in Switzerland in 1999 but split in 2006 and divorced two years later. Despite their previous split, Orianne has insisted they are meant to be together. She told Swiss newspaper

SonntagsBlick: "I spent four months in hospital, and he took wonderful care of Matthew and Nicholas. That was a great relief to me. "We are meant for each other." Phil moved to Miami last year from Switzerland to be closer to his two sons Matthew and Nicholas, and Orianne, after problems with alcoholism but he is now sober and in much better health. The Genesis rocker - who is also a father to actress Joely, 43, musician Simon, 39, and model Lily, 26 - revealed last month: "I'm back with my third wife - I haven't really talked about it. We've been together for a while, and nobody's noticed." Phil's re-marriage to Orianne will be his fourth wedding after he was married to first wife Andrea Bertorelli from 1975 to 1980, and second wife Jill Tavelman from 1984 to 1996. The star has paid out more than £42 million to his former wives after three divorces, including £17 million to Jill.



Banderas is not a 'party person'

The '33' actor has relocated to a peaceful village in Surrey, South East England with girlfriend Nicole Kimpel and loves the "simplicity and freedom" of their life together. He said: "This house gives me the simplicity and freedom I need in my life at the moment. "I find Surrey magical. I am not a party person any more so I have the space and peace to write and really get inside my own head - I am working on several scripts. "I go cycling in the woods and everyone is incredibly friendly. "Above all, I am surrounded by nature. I love watching the deer and foxes that come to my garden." But the 55-year-old star doesn't like everything about his new home and plans to "burn" some of the generically modern furniture that was already in place when he moved in so he and Nicole can choose their own pieces. He told Britain's HELLO! magazine: "Some things I will be burning in the back garden. "This place is going to evolve slowly, as we choose furniture together. "We have already bought a Banksy [painting]." —Bangshowbiz



In this March 7, 2010 file photo, director Kathryn Bigelow, center, holds her Oscars for best motion picture of the year and best achievement in directing for "The Hurt Locker" with hosts Alec Baldwin, right, and Steve Martin at the conclusion of the 82nd Academy Awards. —AP photos



Cast members from the film, "Mustang," pose for a portrait in West Hollywood. The 88th Academy Awards Best Foreign Language Film nominee "Mustang" is a unique case, being a Turkish language and made film submitted for consideration by France, and also for being the only narrative feature nominated from a female director.

Will women see a break in Hollywood's 'celluloid ceiling'?

Well, the time has come," announced presenter Barbra Streisand at the 2010 Oscars, revealing that Kathryn Bigelow had won the best director prize for "The Hurt Locker" - the first woman in history to win the award.

It was a watershed moment in Hollywood, and many were hopeful - if not certain - that it would usher in an era of increased opportunity for women directors. Six years later, though, the slate of best-director nominees is all male, as it has been every year since Bigelow won. In fact, women have been nominated only four times in the Oscars' 88-year history.

"Of course, the 'Bigelow effect' never materialized," says Martha Lauzen, executive director of the Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film at San Diego State University. The Center's latest annual study found that women comprised just 9 percent of directors on the top 250 films in 2015, the same as in 1998. Studies have shown similar disproportion for women in other key behind-the-camera roles.

'Lack of inclusion'

But is the tide turning? While recent attention has focused intensely on the #OscarsSoWhite campaign sparked by the lack of racial diversity in the Oscar nominations, some women in Hollywood are heartened - albeit cautiously - by recent developments that should benefit women and minorities, both behind the camera and in front.

"What we're seeing is an undercurrent of anger over the lack of inclusion in Hollywood," says Janice Min, a veteran industry observer who oversees both The Hollywood Reporter and Billboard. "That conversation can only have beneficial effects on women."

Min notes that the recent focus on unequal pay for women - sparked by Patricia Arquette's fiery Oscar speech last year, then intensified by high-profile comments from Jennifer Lawrence - has for the moment receded from the spotlight amid questions of racial diversity. But it's all part of the larger picture. "Yes, there will be some parts of the issue that will be resolved first, and some later," she says. "But the fact that discussion is happening at all is stunning. It's a real revolution in Hollywood."

A few recent developments have provided cause for some hope. The first, of course, is the pledge by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to double the number of women and people of color among its membership ranks by 2020. There is also an EEOC investigation under way into possible discriminatory hiring practices of women directors, prompted by the American Civil Liberties Union.

Only promises

More recently, Ryan Murphy, one of the more powerful figures in television, said he aims to have 50 percent of all director slots on his shows filled by women, people of color and members of the LGBT community. "I personally can do better," he told the

Hollywood Reporter. Still, cautions Lauzen, there is a huge gap between talk and action.

"While it appears to be a step in the right direction, at this point it is just a promise," she says of the Academy's move. And of the EEOC investigation, she says, "any hiring



This photo provided by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Charlize Theron as Imperator Furiosa in Warner Bros Pictures' and Village Roadshow Pictures' action adventure film, "Mad Max: Fury Road".

goals that may result will need to be mandatory, and there will need to be significant oversight. That would be a tall order and a move without precedent in the film industry."

Lauzen's report, "The Celluloid Ceiling," found that in 2015, women comprised 19 percent of all directors, writers, producers, executive produc-

ers, editors, and cinematographers on the top 250 domestic grossing films - an increase of 2 percentage points from last year, and the same as in 2001.

It also found that women in certain roles more traditionally identified with males - such as directors and cine-

also employ greater percentages of women in other roles. "On films with at least one female director, women comprised 53 percent of writers," Lauzen says. On films with male directors, women accounted for only 10 percent of writers. Films with female directors and writers also tend to have higher percentages of female characters, and especially female protagonists.

Complex characters

Some high-profile Hollywood actresses have found they needed to become producers themselves to get the substantive roles they desired. "I was seeing a deficit in leading roles for women," Reese Witherspoon told The Associated Press in a 2014 interview. "It was just the lack of complex characters, of interesting, dynamic women onscreen." Witherspoon has produced both "Gone Girl" and, starring herself, "Wild," both films with complex female protagonists.

And Halle Berry said recently that she'd set up her own production company in 2014 partly because she had found it difficult, since becoming the first black best-actress Oscar winner in 2002, to find the right substantive roles.

Actresses of color face a tougher climb than anyone, says Chris Rock, who will host the Oscars on Sunday. "Black women get paid less than everybody in Hollywood," he recently told Essence magazine. "Everybody's talking about Jennifer Lawrence. Talk to Gabrielle Union ... talk to Nia Long. Talk to Kerry Washington. They would

love to get to Jennifer Lawrence's place, or just be treated with the same amount of respect."

What will it take to change? Lauzen says the issue is the mindset at the top. "Many of those with the power to shift the gender ratios - executives at the film studios, and leaders at the academy and at guilds - have not perceived women's under-employment as a problem. In other words, there has been little real will to change."

Attorney Melissa Goodman of the ACLU of Southern California, which last May asked the EEOC to investigate studios' "systemic failure to hire women directors," says she is hopeful for change. "I'm optimistic that with time, our most important cultural product - our films and television shows - will increasingly come to reflect the diversity and diversity in viewpoints in our society," she says. "In the meantime, Hollywood decision-makers must remember that they do not get a free pass to discriminate and violate civil rights laws."

As for Min, she notes that despite some evidence of "diversity fatigue" - people at lunches and dinners who are saying, "enough with all this already" - she still thinks things are looking up. "In a world where it's always been all talk and no action, it's pretty stunning to see action being taken." Besides, even where intentions aren't the best, there's always the fear of shame to get things moving. "One of the things you can count on in Hollywood is a climate of fear," Min says. "People will be motivated by fear of being shamed." —AP

PM to give DVDs of prize-winning migrant film to EU leaders



Gianfranco Rosi, director of 'Fuocomare' (Fire at sea), centre, is awarded a Golden Bear for Best Film, during the award ceremony at the 2016 Berlinale Film Festival in Berlin. —AP

Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi on Monday said he is planning to hand out copies of "Fire at Sea", a harrowing documentary about Europe's refugee crisis, to fellow EU leaders when they meet next month.

The film, directed by Renzi's compatriot Gianfranco Rosi, won the top Golden Bear prize at the Berlin festival Saturday for its unflinching look at life on the Italian island of Lampedusa, the landing point for thousands of asylum seekers from Africa and the Middle East. Renzi congratulated Rosi for the win in a regular news post on his website, saying: "I am for Italian cinema, which deserves all our attention. But so does the chosen theme."

Ahead of a special summit between the EU and Turkey on the migrant crisis in early March, Renzi said he would be travelling "with 27 DVDs for the 27 heads of state and government. I hope they will find the time to watch it, and that after having seen it, it will be possible to discuss immigration in a different way."

Eritrean-born Rosi spent several months on Lampedusa making the film. It is told through the eyes of a 12-year-old local boy, Samuele Pucillo, and a doctor, Pietro Bartolo, who has been tending to the dehydrated, malnourished and traumatized new arrivals for a quarter-century. In chilling footage, Rosi accompanied coastguard rescue missions answering the terrified SOS calls of people on boats, most of them arriving from Libya. Many of the vessels are packed with corpses of people who suffocated from diesel fumes. —AFP



A promotional banner advertising US singer Madonna's upcoming February 28 concert is seen hung on a lamppost in front of the National Stadium in Singapore. —AFP

Singapore archbishop warns against Madonna concert

Singapore's Roman Catholic archbishop has expressed concern at an upcoming concert by pop diva Madonna in the city-state and warned his flock against supporting those who "denigrate and insult religions".

Archbishop William Goh said in a statement posted on the diocese website on Saturday that he had met various government officials to express the church's concerns about the February 28 concert, part of her global Rebel Heart Tour. The concert, at the 55,000-seat National Stadium, will be Madonna's first-ever in largely conservative Singapore.

She was barred from performing in Singapore in 1993 after police said her performances bordered on the obscene and were "objectionable to many on moral and religious grounds". Goh said that in a multi-ethnic society like Singapore "we cannot afford to be overly permissive in favor of artistic expression at the expense of respect for one's religion".

Authorities have assured the archbishop that restrictions have been placed to ensure that content deemed offensive to religious beliefs would not be allowed on stage, the church statement said. The Media Development Authority has restricted the concert to those aged 18 and above

because of sexual references.

Local media reports said Madonna would not be performing a controversial tour segment called Holy Water, which includes dancers dressed as scantily-clad nuns performing on cross-shaped stripper poles. The church statement said many Roman Catholics have voiced outrage at Madonna's "disrespectful use of Catholic and other Christian symbols" in her performances.

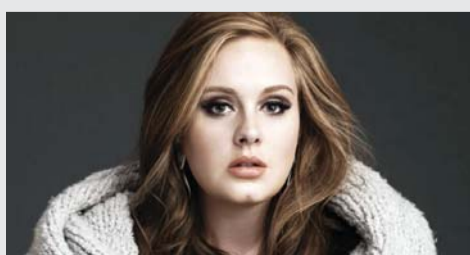
"There is no neutrality in faith; one is either for or against. Being present (at these events) is in itself a counter-witness," the archbishop said. He warned his flock against supporting "the 'pseudo arts' that promote sensuality, rebellion, disrespect, pornography (and) contamination of the mind of the young".

Some Catholics said they supported the archbishop's decision and would not attend the concert. Student Kevin Koh, 24, said he would not go but would not pass judgment on fellow Catholics who attend. "Singapore as a society has to start being open to these things because we can no longer live in our own shells," he said.

Some online comments were critical, with one commentator saying the faithful should be allowed to make their own decisions. —AFP

Despite nightmare performance, Adele regains Billboard top spot

Adele may have cried all day after her shaky Grammy performance last week, but the British songstress reclaimed the top spot on the weekly Billboard 200 album chart on Monday as demand for her hit album "25" remained strong three months after its release. Adele's "25" climbed from No 2 after clocking a further 151,000 units across album and song sales and streaming activity, according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan. The album has sold a total of 8.3 million copies in the United States. It features the song "All I Ask," which Adele sang last week at the televised Grammy awards. But her performance was marred by technical issues when a microphone fell on the piano's strings and the singer uncharacteristically hit sharp and flat notes. Later in the week, Adele appeared on



Ellen DeGeneres' talk show and performed a flawless rendition of the song, accompanied by a candid interview in which she said she was "so embarrassed" and "cried pretty much all day" after the Grammys. Other Grammy performers that saw a boost in the top 10 of the Billboard 200 album charts included

Canadian pop star Justin Bieber, who won his first Grammy award and climbed three spots to No. 2 with his album "Purpose".

Country musician Chris Stapleton, who picked up four Grammy awards, saw his "Traveller" album climb to No 5 from No. 11; R&B star The Weeknd, who won two Grammys, had his "Beauty Behind the Madness" climb six spots to No. 6; while Taylor Swift, who won the coveted album of the year Grammy Award, saw her "1989" record climb 12 spots to No. 8. The only new entry to crack into the top 10 this week was "Hymns" at No. 4 by husband-and-wife country music duo Joey + Rory. On the Digital Songs chart, which measures online song sales, Flo Rida's "My House" held the top spot for a second week with 135,000 copies sold. —Reuters



Cattle are herded in front of ancient pagodas in Bagan. — AP photos

Bagan ban: Myanmar stops tourists scaling prized pagodas

Visitors to Myanmar's ancient capital Bagan will no longer be able to climb the venerated pagodas for a view of the country's most famous archaeological site, following a government edict railing against "disgraceful" tourist behavior.

The ban, which starts March 1, will end the daily ritual that sees hundreds of tourists and local pilgrims scaling the ancient structures to watch the sun set over a vast plain dotted with more than 2,500 Buddhist monuments. Myanmar's Ministry of Culture said the move would protect the buildings, considered holy sites by many locals, while also averting potential danger for those climbing.

"Furthermore, despite warnings, people who climb the pagodas often behave badly, in a way that is culturally disgraceful such as wearing inappropriate clothing, dancing and sleeping (on the monuments)," the ministry said in a post on its official Facebook page. "We would like to announce that no one will be permitted to climb on the pagodas for any reason from March 1

onwards," it included in the statement published on Monday.

Built between the 10th and 14th centuries as part of a powerful early kingdom, Bagan's temples are deeply revered in the Buddhist-majority nation and are also one of the country's most popular tourist destinations.

After years in the wilderness under an isolationist junta, Myanmar was quickly embraced as a hot choice for holidays after outright military rule ended in 2011. The country began appearing on lists of must-visit destinations, often accompanied by bird's eye view images of Bagan's pagodas scattered across a mist-drenched landscape. Even the Ministry of Tourism has declared that "a panoramic view of this land at sunset will leave you with a lingering sense of awe and wonder".

According to its figures, nearly half a million foreign tourists, including package tourists and independent travelers, arrived through Myanmar's main city gateway Yangon last year, more than double the number in 2011. Many

make a beeline for Bagan, a trend that is expected to continue despite the new rules. "Bagan can offer other pleasures for tourists," said Naung Naung Han, of the Union of Myanmar Travel Association, which represents private tour operators. But he said those not able to climb the structures to see a sunset at Bagan would be missing out. "For a foreign tourist, such an experience could be an unforgettable moment in their life," he said. Tour operator Phyo Wai Yar Zar, who heads the Myanmar Tourism Marketing industry group, said there was likely to be an impact on business.

"Tourism is a way to display our cultural heritage and this news of a ban in the way heritage is shown will affect the tourism business," he said. Myanmar is eager to see Bagan designated as a UNESCO world heritage site. But experts say haphazard renovation work on some of the temples under the junta, including building hundreds of new structures over ancient foundations, has irreversibly damaged the landscape. — AFP



This file picture shows hot air balloons carrying tourists as they fly above temples in Bagan.

'Fuller House' may please fans (but no one else)



This image released by Netflix shows, from left, Andrea Barber, Jodie Sweetin, and Candace Cameron Bure in a scene from, "Fuller House," streaming on Netflix beginning on Friday. — AP

If you like this kind of thing, odds are you'll want to cancel weekend plans and binge on "Fuller House." Meanwhile, everyone else is strenuously cautioned against Netflix's spin-off of the 1987-95 sitcom "Full House," whose arrival has been awaited with unaccountable waves of excitement from some quarters. Fair warning to the rest: "Fuller House" will be available - all 13 episodes - starting Friday.

Back when "Full House" was riding high on ABC, I engaged in the folly of criticizing a critic-proof series, publicly cringing at what, even then, was retrograde domestic comedy: a loving but wisecracking family anchored in a living room and propelled by saccharine story lines that concluded with life lessons, hugs, and appreciative awwws from the audience soundtrack. "Full House" was full of it, no question. But who could argue with success?

Since so much time has passed, the original conceit has been deftly warmed over for the 21st century. That is, the original "Full House" followed the adventures of widower Bob Saget after he recruited brother-in-law John Stamos and best friend Dave Coulier to share his San Francisco digs and help raise his three girls.

This go-around, Saget's widowed daughter DJ (Candace Cameron Bure), enlists her sister Stephanie (Jodie Sweetin) and her best friend Kimmy (Andrea Barber), a single mother with a sassy teenage daughter, to share that same house and help raise her three boys, ages 12 and 7 plus a newborn.

Copying itself

All this is established in the first episode, which sets the stage by reintroducing the three female characters (played by its all-grown-up "Full House" alumnae) along with reuniting Saget, Coulier and Stamos as well as Lori Loughlin, still happily wed to Stamos' character.

(Notably, twins Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen - who from toddlerhood swapped off playing Michelle, the youngest daughter of Saget's character - are not participating in the spin-off, apparently acknowledging, much to their credit, that they have outgrown this piffle. Their

absence is pointedly addressed by Saget when informing the others that "Michelle sends her love, but she's busy in New York running her fashion empire." With that, the entire ensemble pivots to the camera for a long, knowing pause.)

TV has never been shy about copying itself. ("Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery," as humorist Fred Allen famously declared more than 60 years ago.) And the current TV scene is clearly in repeat mode: "The X-Files!" "Heroes Reborn!" The forthcoming "Twin Peaks" and, headed for Netflix, a revived "Gilmore Girls" and a Latino "One Day at a Time" - from Norman Lear, no less!

Make no mistake: The original "Full House" triumvirate apparently won't have much of a presence in what's as much a handoff as a spin-off. After the all-star premiere, Stamos (whose character has now moved to Los Angeles) appears in just one episode, with Coulier (supposedly now a Las Vegas resident) seen in just one other, among the six half-hours made available for preview. But "Fuller House" revives the comfortably familiar formula of old.

The dialogue again seems generated by a comic algorithm: "I'm having an acid flashback," says Kimmy, amazed to see everyone. "But I never dropped acid. I did take an antacid once. I must be having an ANTACID flashback." (Cue the laughter.)

Force-fed cloying moments also remain part of the act - although the most heartrending sight is the guest appearance by erstwhile pop star Macy Gray, who is found headlining at a club where the girls land during a night on the town. "What am I doing here?" Gray asks herself with what might very well be genuine remorse. "I won a Grammy!"

Of course, that was way back when, which is where "Fuller House" resides. The show may be cloaked in the veneer of currency (the characters have smartphones and a Donald Trump joke is delivered). But this new show is designed to repeat sitcom history. Pressing forward by taking a big step backward, "Fuller House" picks up predictably where "Full House" left off. Soon to be installed in the Netflix gallery, it beckons to all viewers who want a sugar fix. You know who you are. — AP

ICONIC launches its Spring Summer 2016 Collection

Spring Summer 2016 at ICONIC presents an array of trends for the new season. ICONIC's women's collection recreates the 60's glam across the Spring Summer catwalks with this season's must-have.

The key trends in the women's collection this season include Retro Icon which is The 60's mod elegance and classic style personified with sharp and sleek 60's inspired silhouettes based on comfort and luxury. Icy blue, ivory and pale pink can be seen across the key pieces. Key pieces stand out with floral applique details along with sequins and scuba bow details for that ultra-feminine touch.

The eye-catching Optical Illusion collection is a must have with monochrome ruling the runways every season. This versatile and visually stimulation range is modern, bold and edgy. The use of illusion prints in a classic black and white color palette makes this collection effortlessly chic all day. Think contrast ombre knitting, contrast pleat knitting and illusion jacquard print to create that impactful look.

Inspired by royalty Centennial Amour is a rich collection which mirrors the decadence and beauty of the Victorian era. Soft delicate laces, ribbon and chord embroidery and embellishment makes key pieces like delicate tops, flowy evening dresses make a graceful statement. Marcela, Black and Ivory rule the collection with it understated charm.

The 70's bohemia mixes various elements to bring out the carefree boho vibe through the

Antique Folk collection. Camel, ivory, mustard, deep navy make this collection earthy which complements the spirit. Suede detailing, macramé crafting, lace applique and metal sequins on mix print make this collection an interesting mix.

Nautical chic takes the front row this season with old classic given a contemporary interpretation through the collection aptly named Under the Tuscan Sun. Clean and effortless silhouettes, these seafaring styles make for a perfect look for the spring. Beige, ivory, coral, blue and black make up this easy, fun collection all the more wearable.

ICONIC's men's collection comprises of five key trends; Primarily a nautical theme Nuovo cruise with a subtle surreal feel. Key pieces include jackets with contrast trim, striped sweaters and sweats which exude a modern and fresh vibe. Color palate is varied with black, tomato red and macadamia beige. Prints include nautical, stripes, polkas and patterns.

Subtle and rich the Classical boho collection is a visual treat with colors and texture. Boho prints like the paisley and florals are dominant in pieces linen jackets, laundered chinos and geo motif shorts. Black, green, blue and white constitute the palette.

Simplified yet futuristic approach in the Disturbed florals is key in this collection of soft one liners teamed with neoprene joggers. Smoke fluro disturbed graphics is the highlight



in colors like black, This tribal fashion trend is always a hit every other season with tribal elements seen very often on the runways known as Neo tribe. Luxury street wear is on the rise and the fashion conscious can be seen sporting printed sweatshirt jogger sets, shirts with conversa-

tional prints, mesh cut and sew and sublimation graphic tees. Classic Hawaiian florals and palm prints are the heroes in the Vintage Vacation collection with the vacation mode being turned up high. Updated color combinations and introduction of heavier more interesting base fabrics makes

this a relaxed collection. Signature pieces include poolside shorts, spread collar light weight sweatshirts and conversational tees in red, yellow, coral, green and blue. Head over to ICONIC and shop our latest Spring Summer collection available at The Avenues, The Mall, Level 1 and at Salam Mall in Salmiya

Luxury fashion world upending tradition to join digital age

Buying luxury clothes online right off the runway. Trying them on virtually. Not having to wait months for the new collection to ship. As the fashion world comes to London for its semi-annual round of minutely choreographed catwalk shows, luxury designers are shaking up the traditional show and rethinking the way they reach customers to adapt to the age of social media and e-commerce.

Fashion shows have long been about dictating taste, a chance for designers to court powerful magazine editors like Vogue's Anna Wintour in hopes of winning favorable reviews and, better yet, glossy photo spreads that fashionistas would pore over before going shopping. But in a digital world where trends rip through social media in an instant, bloggers and celebrities are increasingly deciding what's hot. And customers want it now. "There's been a general view that the way fashion shows have operated has become increasingly outdated, especially with fashion shows more open to the mass market on Snapchat, Instagram and Facebook," said Andrew Hall, a retail consultant with Verdict.retail. "People are able to see it instantly nowadays, when in the past they would be able to consume it only through fashion magazines." A host of designers are trying to reboot the system.

Rebecca Minkoff is selling the designs right away online. Her hashtag: #SeeBuyWear. Burberry has plans to ditch the time-honored tradition of showcasing clothes six months before the season they are meant for sale. Beginning this fall, it will increase its focus on seasonless clothes and make its designs available as soon as the models show it off. The company also plans to combine its men's and women's lines in a single show.

Huge moment for the industry

Diane von Furstenberg skipped the runway format altogether, offering an immersive experience that offers a vision of the shape of shows to come. She presented her latest collection with a party in her New York offices, featuring vignettes showing models wearing the clothes while traveling, working or getting ready for a party. Guests also got a chance to look up close at the garments - an effort at interaction with the public. "This is a huge moment for the industry," said Matthew Drinkwater, head of the Fashion Innovation Agency at the London College of Fashion. "The industry for some time has been moving in this direction."

The Council of Fashion Designers of America, a non-profit trade organization, has asked The Boston Consulting Group to study the future of fashion shows, "with the aim of fixing what many industry experts consider a broken system that confuses consumers." The council says the consultants will study more intimate presentations and larger "production shows that are consumer-facing and more closely aligned with retail deliveries." Drinkwater said all sorts of changes are on the table, including the possibility of virtual fashion shows where consumers would be able to digitally try on the clothes. The changing face of fashion is clear at Burberry, which shows in London on Monday. Christopher Bailey, who is both the company's CEO and chief cre-

ative, announced his plan to slash the time it takes for customers to obtain items they see on the runway.

Designers have broadened the audience for fashion using tools such as "livestreaming, Instagramming, or showing online," Bailey told the Business of Fashion, a website that covers the industry. "You're creating all this energy around something, and then you close the doors and say, 'Forget about it now because it won't be in the stores for five or six months,'" he said. "The reality is that, today, we're bombarded with images, film and music. To try to recreate the energy that you created five or six months ago, you've got to just question how relevant it is."

The clothes in Burberry's future shows will be immediately available both in store and online. The move into digital has been Bailey's trademark, and his success or failure in making it work could have big consequences for the business. While many luxury houses resisted embracing e-commerce because of fears the experience was not up to scratch, Bailey offered a counter-narrative. Bailey, who became CEO in 2013, made sure Burberry's shows were featured on a variety of sites - even ones with smaller audiences that are still extending their networks, like Periscope and Snapchat, said Anusha Couttigan, a retail expert at Oresa, an executive search firm.

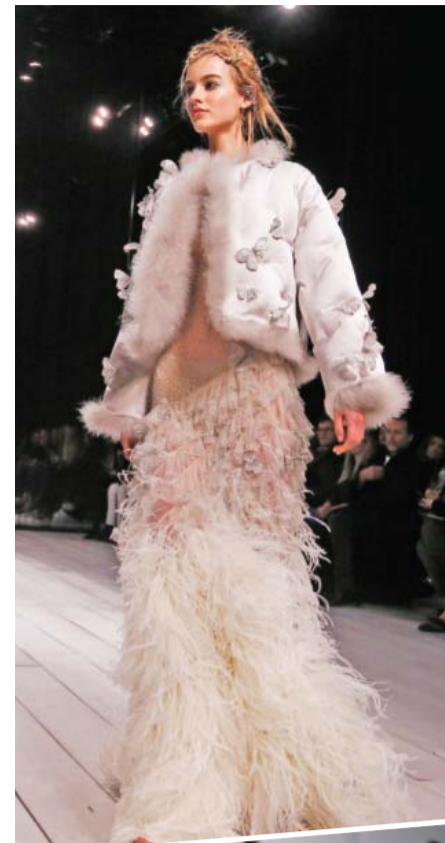
Worldwide exposure

"This has contributed to Burberry's worldwide exposure and created an immersive experience that keeps the brand front of mind, even among consumers who might otherwise be financially cut off from the brand," she said. "It stimulates a following not only among Burberry loyalists, but potential customers too, and this plays an important role in recruiting future custom."

That foothold in digital has helped bolster Burberry's global reach and is important as it tries to boost sales overseas, particularly in China - where only the hippest and quickest are likely to survive the economic downturn and anti-corruption laws have curtailed the gift-giving that once buoyed the luxury market. Brands like Burberry have invested heavily in Asia on expectations that an increasingly wealthy population would drive sales.

The digital revolution is difficult for the luxury world, which has been wary of courting a broader audience for fear of losing the mystique that fashion houses market along with their garments. The efforts to change the fashion show aren't an attempt to undercut mid-range brands like Zara, but a reflection of the luxury houses' desire to emulate the ability of such brands to deliver - fast - on what their customers want.

The change is a big risk for houses like Burberry as the strategy assumes complete confidence that Bailey will be able to come up with the designs people want to buy without the adjustments fashion houses often make in the months between the shows and the time the clothes appear on the rack, Hall said. Those months were used to talk to buyers, gauge response to products and give clothing-makers a good idea of what was going to sell - and to prepare their stock to suit. "There's going to be some big gambles on product," Hall said. — AP



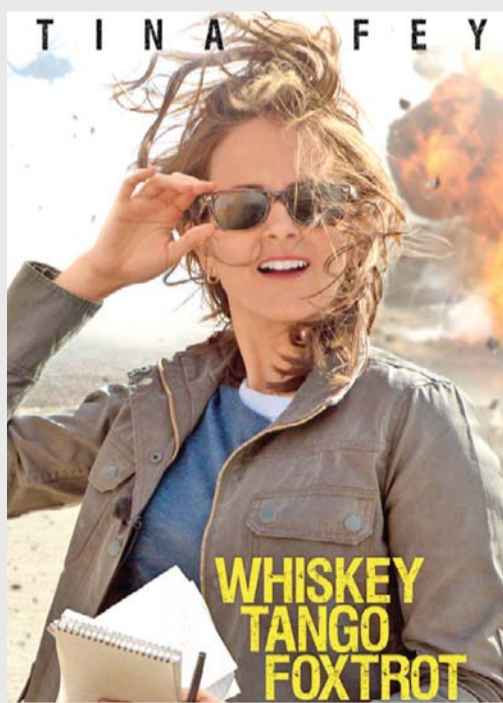
Models display the designs of Vivienne Westwood, Alexander McQueen, Burberry and Fyodor Golan during the Autumn/Winter show at London Fashion Week. — AP photos

Carry On Up the Khyber: Afghan war comedy hits cinemas

War in Afghanistan may be no laughing matter but a new comedy starring Tina Fey based on the memoir of an American war reporter opens next week as a modern-day "Carry on Up the Khyber." "Whiskey Tango Foxtrot" shortened euphemistically to "WTF" recounts the exploits of a cable news producer who swaps office drudgery and a lackluster boyfriend in New York for life on the front line.

It opens at cinemas on March 4, starring Fey as heroine Kim, Australian actress Margot Robbie as beautiful TV reporter Tanya, Billy Bob Thornton as a gruff US colonel, and British actors Martin Freeman and Alfred Molina as Fey's hapless love interest and long-suffering Afghan fixer. The action is based loosely on "The Taliban Shuffle," a pithy 2011 memoir written by journalist Kim Barker of her time as South Asia bureau chief for The Chicago Tribune from 2004 to 2009.

The book is a hilarious romp round Afghanistan and Pakistan by a ballsy reporter dropped in at the deep end to confront war and cultural differences, party with the expat set and juggle unsatisfactory romantic entanglements. "There actually are so many great war comedies," Fey told reporters, defending the decision to make Hollywood entertainment out of a conflict that last year recorded 11,002 civilian casualties - the highest number since 2009. "This movie at its core I think is a human story, it's about relationships," said Fey. "It's about a woman who's sort of making a choice to blow up her existing life and go on this adventure, for lack of a better word." The movie focuses on Afghanistan, deleting Barker's adventures in Pakistan and her account of being romantically



Whiskey Tango Foxtrot

pursued by former Pakistani prime minister Nawaz Sharif, who was re-elected two years after the book was published. **Amorous Afghan** "WTF" changes Barker's name to Baker, re-packages her as a TV producer and inserts an amorous Afghan attorney general who has a crush on her.

Much of the script is made-up-including a rescue of her kidnapped boyfriend-but the movie captures the spirit of the memoir before accelerating Taliban attacks shut down much of Kabul's high-octane, expat scene.

In a sequence of events that would make any journalist green with envy, the film came about after Fey read a New York Times review of the book comparing Barker to "a sort of Tina Fey character." "Because I'm an egomaniac and a moron, that really spoke to me... so I got hold of the book," Fey said. She "loved" it and quickly set about getting it adapted. Barker said it was exciting to be played by one of America's most acclaimed female comedy stars, and appeared philosophical about the changes inevitable in adapting a book to the big screen. "It's Hollywood," she said. "You can't get too wrapped up in it."

Filming in Afghanistan was never an option, so the production team scoured locations in Israel, India and Abu Dhabi before settling on New Mexico, home to hit TV narcotics thriller "Breaking Bad." One success of the movie is the believable set. Street scenes resemble those in Kabul. Fey's interactions with the military also ring true. A US para jumper who lost a leg in Helmand and an Afghan former translator for the US military, worked as advisors. Military personnel helped build the remote outpost where Fey goes to report and actors filmed a scene on UH-1 Huey helicopters. Iranian-born filmmaker Gelareh Kiazand travelled to Kabul to capture footage, and so the staging was a mix of digital tricks and giant sets, including parts of New Mexico's state penitentiary turned into Kabul airport. —AFP

Flagship gallery show raises fears for Hong Kong arts

Hong Kong yesterday got its first glimpse of the collection at the heart of its new flagship gallery, with an exhibition that has highlighted fears Beijing's influence in the city is infecting the arts. The M+ Sigg show features 80 works by famous Chinese names including Yue Minjun-known for his paintings of laughing faces-and surrealist Zhang Xiaogang.

It is billed as the first ever chronological exhibition on the emergence of Chinese contemporary art and gives a taste of a much wider collection that will eventually go on show at Hong Kong's new M+ gallery. The massive 60,000 square-meter art venue, set to open in 2019, aims to rival Western contemporary heavyweights like London's Tate Modern. But the Hong Kong government-sponsored gallery has been criticized for failing to fully represent the local art scene and faces questions over its curatorial independence.

Some in the art community ask why it spent none of its HK\$1.7 billion (\$220 million) acquisition budget on creations that blossomed on Hong Kong's streets during the pro-democracy Umbrella Movement of 2014. Others question whether this week's exhibition-on display at a smaller gallery as M+ awaits completion-has been pared back, pointing out its touring title, "Right is wrong," has been dropped.

There have been queries over whether some more controversial works were excluded, and whether there was pressure to tone down the narrative of Beijing's crushing of the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests. M+ chief curator Doryun Chong defended the new exhibition, saying it is a "whole, full historical survey" of Chinese modern art-one that includes works by Beijing's bete noir Ai Wei Wei. He also insisted M+ has not been subject to political pressure, but admits the gallery takes a conservative approach to its collection and exhibitions. "There might be certain institutions or curators who believe in the idea or the power of provocation, but I don't

believe in that," Chong said. The questions swirling around M+ come as concern grows in Hong Kong over interference from Beijing in the semi-autonomous city's politics, education and the press. Those fears have been exacerbated by the recent disappearances of five Hong Kong booksellers known for publishing titles critical of the Chinese government. Four are now under criminal investigation on the mainland.

Some connected to M+ say self-censorship is becoming a bigger problem in the city. "In Hong Kong, we do feel like there is a big tightening of the public sphere over the past two or three years, whether it's in publishing, in theatres, in exhibitions," said Ada Wong, a local arts advocate and a member of the M+ museum committee. "I think this administration in-



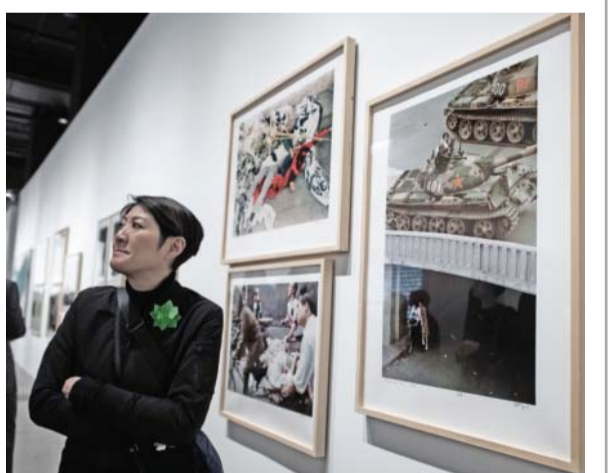
In this picture taken on February 22, 2016 visitors stand by an artwork by Chinese artist Zhang Guangyi titled "Mao Zedong: red Grid No. 2" during the preview of the M+ Sigg art show in Hong Kong. — AFP



A man stands by an artwork by Chinese artist Zhang Huan titled "Family Tree".

ticular, they are very cautious as to what would upset Beijing," adds Wong, referring to the government of Hong Kong's chief executive Leung Chun-ying, seen as a staunch ally of China. Wong said local artists have even begun to tone down their work for fear of upsetting the authorities. "Self-censorship... it's happening, it's just still under the table," she said. "The fear is here, and the tightening of control is definitely here."

Artistic ambitions The harbor front M+ gallery venue in Hong Kong's West Kowloon remains a sprawling construction site 20 years after it was first dreamt up. Political interference has been blamed for delays that have eaten up the project's entire HK\$21.6 bil-



A woman walks past pictures depicting the Tiananmen events by Hong Kong born photographer Liu Heung Shing.

lion government grant and prompted senior figures including M+'s executive director Lars Nittve to step down.

West Kowloon Cultural District Authority head Duncan Pescod admits the full complex-which will eventually also include a theatre and public parks-could take another 10-15 years to complete. He told AFP the authority is considering working with several developers at the same time to speed things up. But despite concerns, there is still hope that M+ will draw attention to the city's undernourished creative industries. "For a long time Hong Kong has perhaps not been the most hospitable city for emerging artists," said Pearl Lam, who runs a prominent private gallery, pointing to the high cost of living and rental space.

"M+ will be exceptionally important for Hong Kong when it opens." Hong Kong is already a burgeoning art hub, the world's fourth-largest art market and hosts major international show Art Basel. There has been a recent explosion of galleries, with major Western brands like White Cube and Galerie Perrotin opening offices in the past five years, and smaller local art studios setting up home in former industrial heartlands. —AFP



A model presents a creation from Maria Escote's Autumn / Winter 2016-2017 collection during the Mercedes-Benz Madrid Fashion Week in Madrid. —AFP

Bugs are recipe for success for French pasta maker



An employee of the factory "L'Atelier a pates" ("The pasta shop") makes a special pasta with insects flour made with locusts or crickets on February 8, 2016 in Thieffosse.



Packages of pastas made with flour of insects (locusts or crickets at the factory "L'Atelier a pates" — AFP photos



An employee of the factory "L'Atelier a pates" makes a special pasta made with flour of insects.

An artisanal pasta-maker in northeastern France is struggling to meet demand after adding a crunchy, protein-rich ingredient to the noodles: insects. "The name of the ingredient may be a turnoff, but it's really delicious, especially with game meat," smiles Alain Limon as he spreads cricket-flavored fusilli on a drying rack.

Limon, 52, is the only employee at the Atelier a Pates (Pasta Workshop) in Thieffosse, northeastern France. His boss Stephanie Richard began her homemade pasta business in 2012, and is now hiring again thanks to the success of her latest creations made from insect flour. "The insect is the protein of the future," Richard says. "It's protein of high quality that is well digested by the body."

In fact, a 2013 by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) noted the "huge potential" of insects, for feeding not only people but also livestock. Insects are already a common food in many developing countries across Asia, Africa, Latin America and Oceania. Some European cheeses also contain or use insects, like France's mimolette, whose grey crust is the result of cheese mites intentionally introduced to add flavor, or the Sardinian casu marzu, which contains live insect larvae.

'Kind of nutty'

For Richard's unique pastas, she uses pulverized crickets and grasshoppers, sometimes mixing the two, and sometimes mixing ground cepes with cricket flour. "There's a kind of nutty taste thanks to the cepes, making it taste more like whole wheat pasta," Richard says. She was developing a high-protein pasta for athletes when an insect distributor in eastern Lyon contacted her.

Sold on the idea, she began producing pasta made from insect flour in time for the December holidays, and around 500 packages flew off her shelves. "The product piqued the curiosity and had great success," says Richard, who is also a part-time French teacher.

Whole eggs are added to a mixture of seven percent insect flour to 93 percent organic spelt wheat flour, producing a brownish pasta that is shaped into radiatori, fusilli, spaghetti and penne. At first Richard made plain fresh egg pasta before diversifying her production while keep-

ing it strictly within the culinary traditions of the Lorraine region, using wild garlic, nettles and safran, for example.

All of her ingredients were from Lorraine except durum semolina, which Richard says is incompatible with the climate. Four years on with the addition of insect flour to the mix, "it's working so well that we will soon be able to hire a second person," Richard says, proud of her weekly production now at some 400 kilos.

And she does not plan to stop there: she is working on a new recipe using Maroilles cheese from northern France, and plans to start making stuffed pastas. At a little over six Euros (\$6.60) for a 250 gram package, insect flour pastas are more expensive than standard kinds, but Richard notes that they can replace meat for vegetarians-or for people who prefer crickets. "People with iron or magnesium deficiencies will also eat these products," she says. — AFP



The locusts used to make a special insects flour to make pasta at the factory "L'Atelier a pates" ("The pasta shop").

Spud-only diet a mash hit for Australia's Mr Potato Head

An Australian man who plans to eat nothing but potatoes for an entire year said yesterday that despite his strange diet he was not only feeling better, but surprisingly enjoying his meals. Unlike Matt Damon's character in "The Martian," who is stranded on the Red Planet with little else to eat, Andrew Taylor, 35, made a deliberate decision to eat only the starchy staple for 12 months, to break what he termed his "food addiction."

While addicts can go "cold turkey" on their vice, such as alcohol or cigarettes, it is impossible to do so with food, so Taylor settled on making his diet as boring as possible. "The next best thing was to find one thing that sustained me healthily," he told AFP, saying that besides potatoes, he also considered mangoes, bananas and watermelon.

After deciding there were more options with the humble spud, Taylor now eats as many as he wants each day, boiled, mashed and even made into pancakes, occasionally flavoring them with seasonings such as garlic and salt. "I'm not having any fats, no butter, no meat, no dairy... no oil either," the stay-at-home dad said, adding he was coping well on day 54.

Taylor is documenting his experience on his Spud Fit Facebook page, which has more than 6,000 likes, and says while losing weight was not his ultimate goal, he has so far shed 17 kilograms. "I'm sleeping better and have better mental clarity and focus," he said, adding that his joint pain from playing football had also disappeared.

Taylor shrugged off the idea that he is not getting enough nutrients, saying he is taking vitamin B12 tablets and is under medical supervision. "People assume that I am going to be sick and die," he jokes. "If I feel sick, I'll just eat something else." While he's no food activist, and insists he is not trying to make people follow his diet, Taylor believes the potato is vastly underrated. "Potatoes are a real powerhouse," he said, adding that he was amazed at how his radical eating plan had attracted media interest worldwide. "The biggest surprise of all is that I'm enjoying it." — AFP



This undated picture provided on February 23, 2016 by Melbourne man Andrew Taylor shows him posing for pictures with potatoes in Melbourne. —AFP