

**Unified labor contract for private sector goes into effect**



**A look at long-fraught Saudi-Iran relations**



**Nose bandages symbolize Iran cosmetic surgery craze**



**Real Madrid sack Benitez, hire Zidane as coach**



## ALLIES FOLLOW SUIT AS SAUDI ARABIA CUTS TIES WITH IRAN

RIYADH ALSO SEVERES ALL AIR LINKS WITH TEHRAN AS TENSIONS BOIL



Min 04°

Max 15°

High Tide

08:23 &amp; 19:55

Low Tide

02:25 &amp; 13:25

### SUNNI MOSQUES BOMBED IN IRAQ, MUEZZIN KILLED

**HILLA, Iraq:** Blasts rocked two Sunni mosques in central Iraq yesterday, amid fears of renewed sectarian strife following Saudi Arabia's execution of a prominent Shiite cleric, police and medics said. As thousands demonstrated against the Gulf monarchy in Baghdad, Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi vowed to track down the attackers, whom he said were attempting to undermine national unity. After Saudi Arabia severed ties with Iran over the firebombing of its embassy and was followed by Bahrain and Sudan, the protesters demanded Baghdad break off relations with Riyadh.

A man was killed in one of the overnight attacks and a muezzin - the person appointed to recite the Muslim call to prayer - was gunned down in the same region south of Baghdad. In Hilla, about 80 km from the capital, a police captain said the Ammar bin Yasser mosque in Bakerli neighborhood was bombed after midnight. "After we heard the explosion, we went to its source and found that IEDs (improvised explosive devices) had been planted in the mosque," he said. "Residents said a group of people with military uniforms carried out this operation," he added.

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**SINJAR, Iraq:** An Iraqi policeman inspects the debris at the Sunni Al-Fateh Mosque, one of two mosques bombed overnight, in this village just outside Hilla yesterday. — AFP

**RIYADH:** Tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran erupted into a full-blown diplomatic crisis yesterday as Riyadh and its Sunni Arab allies cut or reduced ties with Tehran, sparking global concern. Following angry exchanges over Saudi Arabia's execution Saturday of prominent Shiite cleric and activist Sheikh Nimr Al-Nimr, Riyadh and then Bahrain and Sudan severed their relations with Tehran, the main Shiite power, while the United Arab Emirates downgraded its ties, recalling its envoy from Tehran. Somalia also issued a statement criticizing Iran, but the other Gulf Arab countries - Kuwait, Qatar and Oman - stayed above the fray.

As international worries grew, US Secretary of State John Kerry called his Iranian and Saudi Arabian counterparts, US officials said. "We are urging calm and de-escalation. The situation needs to be calmed," one official told AFP. London, Paris and Berlin also expressed concerns, amid fears the dispute could derail efforts to resolve conflicts across the Middle East, from Syria to Yemen. Moscow offered to act as an intermediary and the UN envoy for Syria was headed to Riyadh and Tehran in a bid to defuse tensions.

The crisis has also raised fears of an increase in sectarian violence, including in Iraq where two Sunni mosques were blown up overnight and two people killed. Saudi Arabia cut ties with Iran late on Sunday, giving diplomats 48 hours to leave the country, after protesters set fire to its embassy in Tehran and a consulate in second city Mashhad. Bahrain and Sudan followed suit yesterday, and the UAE also downgraded its ties.

Sunni Arab nations accused Tehran of repeatedly meddling in their affairs, with Saudi Foreign Minister

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### BAN ON SHRIMPING STARTS



**KUWAIT:** Kuwaiti shrimp are displayed at the fish market in Sharq yesterday. A ban on shrimp fishing in Kuwaiti waters goes into effect today and lasts until Sept 1, 2016. It is enforced to prevent overfishing and help the marine species reproduce in territorial waters. A similar ban on mullet (mayd), another popular seafood item in the Kuwaiti cuisine, has been in effect since Dec 1, 2015 and ends on June 1, 2016. A 45-day ban on fishing for zubaidi (silver pomfret) often starts on June 1 every year. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

### ASSEMBLY TO MEET TO DISCUSS TURMOIL

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem said yesterday he plans to convene the Assembly in an emergency and closed session to debate regional turmoil following tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran. He said the session will be held when he returns from a trip abroad to allow MPs to speak about the developments in the region, especially after the latest events between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

Riyadh severed its ties with Tehran in protest over attacks to its embassy and consulate after the kingdom executed Saudi Shiite cleric Nimr Al-Nimr. Bahrain followed suit and the United Arab Emirates downgraded its relations with Iran in protest. Kuwait has strongly condemned the attacks on Saudi missions and expressed total solidarity with the kingdom. Ghanem also condemned the

attacks, saying they represent a flagrant violation of Tehran's commitment to provide protection to diplomatic missions. The speaker announced in a statement total solidarity with Saudi Arabia.

The head of the Assembly's foreign relations committee MP Kamel Al-Awadhi also condemned the attacks on Saudi diplomatic missions in Iran, saying Iranian authorities have the responsibility of protecting diplomatic missions. He expressed support for Saudi Arabia and rejected any attempt to undermine its security. Kuwait and Saudi Arabia are members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), along with Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and UAE.

Awadhi said that Kuwait completely supports Saudi Arabia and stands by the kingdom under all circumstances, adding that all the GCC states are united, which means that any aggression on any

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## SWEDEN, DENMARK TIGHTEN BORDERS

### FRESH CONCERN FOR SCHENGEN

### JORDAN FREES BROTHERHOOD DEPUTY LEADER

**AMMAN:** Jordan yesterday released a top leader of the Muslim Brotherhood opposition group after he served over two-thirds of his 18-month prison term for criticizing the United Arab Emirates, an ally of the kingdom. Zaki Bani Rsheid's release comes at a time of growing divisions in the Jordanian branch of the pan-Arab Brotherhood, weakening its long-time role as the main political opposition. In 2015, the Jordanian branch split, with a breakaway faction emphasizing its Jordanian identity and seeking government recognition.

Rsheid is the deputy leader of the original Brotherhood, which retains ties to the regional parent movement. In another sign of internal turmoil, more than 300 activists, including senior members, resigned from the original Brotherhood branch in recent days, in part because of disputes over previous leadership elections, according to movement officials. The regional movement also suffered setbacks, including government crackdowns, since initially emerging as the main beneficiary of the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings.

Rsheid was released early yesterday, 13 months after his Nov 2014 arrest. He had been sentenced to 18 months after he criticized the UAE for labeling the Brotherhood a terrorist group. Dozens of well-wishers greeted Rsheid later yesterday at a large tent set up outside his home on the outskirts of Amman, the Jordanian capital. He struck a largely conciliatory tone, saying that "we forgive what happened in the past," an apparent reference to his arrest.

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Zaki Bani Rsheid

**COPENHAGEN:** Sweden yesterday imposed controls on travellers arriving from Denmark in a bid to curb an unprecedented influx of refugees, prompting knock-on measures from Denmark that triggered fresh concern for Europe's Schengen passport-free zone. Hours after the Swedish controls on a major bridge-and-tunnel link with Denmark went into effect, the Danish government, which fears being saddled with large numbers of migrants, announced it would implement spot checks on its border with Germany.

Alarmed by the restrictions, which come as both Germany and Sweden grapple with record migrant numbers, Berlin warned Europe's Schengen zone was "in danger". "Freedom of movement is an important principle - one of the biggest achievements (in the European Union) in recent years," German foreign ministry spokesman Martin Schaefer told reporters. "Schengen is very important but it is in danger," he said. Swedish Migration Minister Morgan Johansson defended his country's systematic controls, saying they

were aimed at "preventing an acute situation where we can no longer welcome asylum seekers properly".

The new measures mean travellers between the neighboring countries will have to show their ID cards for the first time since the late 1950s, when a Nordic agreement on passport-free travel came into force that predates the 20-year-old Schengen zone. Danish Prime Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen cited the Swedish checks to justify his own country's immediate introduction of random border controls. "We are simply reacting to a decision made in Sweden... This is not a happy moment at all," he told reporters.

Rasmussen warned that Sweden's controls could have a domino effect on Denmark, which received just 21,000 asylum requests in 2015, compared to Sweden's 163,000. "It's clear the EU is not able to protect its outer borders and other countries are going to be forced to introduce ... border controls," he said, adding: "Europe's leaders must react to this."

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**COPENHAGEN:** Security staff check passenger IDs at Kastrup airport's train station yesterday. — AFP

**SHOOT & WIN KUWAIT IN OUR EYES 2016**

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KUWAIT: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. —KUNA



His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets Acting Assembly Speaker Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi.

## CROWN PRINCE RECEIVES TOP STATE OFFICIALS

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled

Al-Hamad Al-Sabah at Seif Palace yesterday. His Highness also separately received Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-

Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Acting Minister of Oil Anas Al-Saleh and Acting

Assembly Speaker Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi. Moreover, His Highness received Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman

Sabah Al-Salem 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

## GHANEM CALLS FOR ARAB STANCE AGAINST ISRAELI BREACHES

**GENEVA:** Chairman of the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU) yesterday called for a unified Arab stance to try halt recurring "Israeli violations against the Palestinian brethren." Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem, also Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker, denounced Israel's detention of Palestinian legislators "in breach of international charters and covenants."

The AIPU chief and Speaker of the Kuwaiti Parliament was speaking during a meeting with member of the Palestinian National Council and the Palestinian Parliamentary Caucus, Azzam Al-Ahmad. "In view of the Zionist entity's continuous aggression on the Palestinians, pan-Arab coordination has become a pressing necessity to face the Israeli irresponsible acts at the international quarters," said Speaker Ghanem, who arrived in Geneva from Cairo on Sunday. He called for "encircling" Israel at international organizations and seeking to strip Tel Aviv of its membership in these agencies. He affirmed continuous support and commitment in favor of the Palestinian cause, calling for greater efforts against Israel to reclaim squandered Palestinians' rights.

Ghanem is currently leading diplomatic efforts to back up Arab causes at the international quarters. Israel has declined from implementing several UN resolutions that

call for restoring Palestinians' rights. It has encircled Gaza strip depriving its residents of various necessary resources and enforced stringent measures in most regions in the West Bank and in the Jerusalem region. Kuwait has supported the Palestinian cause, since a long time ago, recurrently urging Tel Aviv recognize the Palestinians' rights and implement the relevant UN resolutions.

### Egypt's membership

Earlier, Ghanem stressed the need of Egyptian People's Assembly resuming its membership in the IPU after the legislative elections in Egypt. Speaking upon his arrival from Cairo to Cointin Airport on Sunday, Ghanem said his visit aimed to restore the membership of the Egyptian parliament in the IPU.

"The absence of the Egyptian parliament left a big gap in the IPU which adopted a lot of Arab initiatives," he said, noting that the resumption of the Egyptian parliament's membership will give a great moral support to the Arab group of states in the IPU.

"Kuwait's National Assembly, as current presidency of the Arab Inter-parliamentary Union (AIPU), believes that it shoulders the responsibility for bringing back the Egyptian parliament to its normal position in the IPU," he went on. — KUNA



GENEVA: Chairman of the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU) Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem is pictured with member of the Palestinian National Council and the Palestinian Parliamentary Caucus Azzam Al-Ahmad. — KUNA

## CHIEF OF STAFF, INTERIOR'S UNDERSECRETARY MEET ENVOYS

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Mohammad Khaled Al-Kheder discussed yesterday with Djibouti's Ambassador to Kuwait Mohammed Ali several issues of common interest. Directorate of Moral Guidance at the Ministry of Defense said in a statement that the two officials tackled promoting bilateral ties. The meeting was attended by Mubarak al-Abdullah Joint Command and Staff College Director Real Admiral Abdullah Abdulsamad Dashti.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Interior's Undersecretary Lieutenant General

Suleiman Al-Fahad discussed with Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait Wang Di yesterday means of enhancing cooperation in various fields of security. The Security Media Department at the Ministry said in a statement that the meeting did not only tackle means of promoting security ties but also touched on a wide verity of common issues. The Chinese Ambassador expressed his appreciation to the Kuwaiti government and the people for their utmost care and support to the Chinese population in the country. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Kuwait Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Mohammad Khaled Al-Kheder meets with Djibouti's Ambassador to Kuwait Mohammed Ali. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah (second from right) chairs the cabinet's meeting yesterday. — KUNA

## CABINET CONDEMNS AGGRESSION ON SAUDI EMBASSY, CONSULATE IN IRAN

**KUWAIT:** The cabinet yesterday strongly condemned protesters' 'hostile acts' against the Saudi embassy and consulate in Iran, including storming, torching and sabotage. Yesterday's meeting, held at Seif Palace, was chaired by Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

The ministers stressed that these acts constitute "blatant violation of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961 on a country's commitment to the protection of diplomatic missions and their premises, as well as the safety of staff," said Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah. Holding the Iranian authorities fully responsible for this, the cabinet reiterated that Kuwait stands side by side with the Kingdom, supporting all measures Riyadh adopts to maintain its security and stability.

### Syrian refugees

As the meeting started, the meeting was informed of a message from the UN Development Program (UNDP) Administrator Helen Clark to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Clark highly appreciated Kuwait's contributions, initiatives and fruitful cooperation with the international community to assist the Syrian refugees.

Then, the meeting was notified of a message to His Highness the Amir from Mayor of the Japanese city of Hiroshima, Kazumi Matsui, who is also head of 'Mayors for Peace'. In his message, Matsui offered an account of the international organization, dedicated to the promotion of peace.

### Al-Sawaber Complex

Meanwhile, the cabinet entrusted the expro-

priation department and the Public Authority for Housing Welfare, in cooperation with the State Property Management Department at the Ministry of Finance with taking the legal and administrative procedures to evacuate the rest of the residential units at Al-Sawaber Complex, downtown Kuwait, setting a deadline of 31 March 2016.

Also, the cabinet tasked the Kuwait Municipality with rapidly taking the necessary measures to evacuate the site adjacent for expanding the Entertainment City, for the Touristic Enterprises Company. In the meantime, the cabinet approved a draft resolution on the issuance of by-law of child Law 21/2015. The cabinet concluded yesterday's customary meeting with a review of the political developments on the Arab and international scenes. — KUNA

## FORMER US ENVOY CONFIDENT IN FIRM TIES WITH KUWAIT

**KUWAIT:** Former US Ambassador to Kuwait Edward Gnehm said yesterday that he is 'confident' in the 'firm' relations between the US and Kuwait. Speaking at a roundtable press conference organized by the Public Relations Department at the US Embassy, Gnehm was joined by the current US Ambassador to Kuwait Douglas Silliman. Reflecting on his return to the country, a visibly emotional Gnehm, who served as US ambassador to Kuwait shortly after the country's liberation from Iraqi occupation in 1991, proclaimed, "Half of my heart is here." Calling Kuwait a special place, Gnehm reminisced on the sheer anxiety felt by many Kuwaitis as they pondered if their country will ever be liberated from the vicious Iraqi occupation. The former US Ambassador recounted echoing famous remarks made by former US President George H.W. Bush, saying, "We will not let this stand," an attempt to calm Kuwaiti concerns on the fate of their country.

### Jubilation

Shortly after liberation from Iraqi occupation, Gnehm arrived in Kuwait on March 1, 1991 to scenes of jubilation all over the country. The sight of vehicles adorned with national colors, speeding on roads which bore marks of battle, was ubiquitous, Gnehm said. Then, during their heyday, Kuwaiti and US relations were very close as there was a profound partnership between both countries. When asked if the relationship has lost some of its vigor, Gnehm said that relationships by nature, "are closer in time of crisis." Now, as both countries are preoccupied with their own issues, the former US Ambassador asserted that neither side has lost commitment to mutual concerns and values. Moreover, Gnehm highlighted the fact that Kuwaiti and US relations have survived for 25 years, a testament to the durability of a bond deep-rooted in history, he noted.

### Middle East

Meanwhile, while addressing the current state of the Middle East, a region where he had worked extensively, Gnehm said, "The region is in a horrendous way and I cry when I see the current state of the region." Having served as US Ambassador to Kuwait from 1991 to 1994, Gnehm was also Director of the US State Department's Kuwait Task Force. He had also served with US Foreign Service in Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Yemen. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Former US Ambassador to Kuwait Edward Gnehm (right) and current ambassador Douglas Silliman are seen during the press conference. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## INFO MINISTRY GETTING READY TO MARK NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Information is getting ready to celebrate national holidays by putting together a very well-planned program, the ministry said in a press release yesterday. Kuwait is soon to mark the 55th anniversary of the National Day, the 25th anniversary of the Liberation Day, the 10th anniversary of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's ascension to the throne, as well as the naming of His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as Crown Prince.

On his occasion, Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah urged the ministry's staff to exert all efforts to draft out innovative ideas to mark these days, the press release noted. It added that Sheikh Salman, who is also head of the supreme organizing committee for these celebrations, held a meeting to go through an outline for the national

holidays commemoration.

The celebrations will highlight His Highness the Amir's UN-honor as "Humanitarian Leader," the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's and the late Crown Prince Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah's political biographies, Kuwaiti martyrs who died during the Iraqi aggression of 1990, and expressions of gratitude to all nations that were part of the liberation operation of Kuwait in 1991.

Sheikh Salman expressed the importance of getting the private sectors and young initiatives to take part in these preparations. The first of these festivities will take place on January 8 at Al-Shaheed Park, in collaboration with the US embassy. Then, a reception will be held on January 24th onboard of a US carrier at Mina Shuwaikh, on January 28 a folkloric festival will also be held, and on February 26 another celebration will take place at Al-Shaheed Park. — KUNA



# UNIFIED LABOR CONTRACT FOR PRIVATE SECTOR IN EFFECT

## UNIONISTS PROTEST OUTSIDE MINISTER'S OFFICE

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** With the beginning of 2016, the Public Authority for Manpower has launched a new unified labor contract that regulates sponsor-worker relations after distributing copies in both Arabic and English to various labor departments. The new contract includes 16 clauses including a preliminary one defining both parties, the job a worker is hired to do in Kuwait, both sides' capacities, conditioning a 100-day probation period during which the contract could be terminated by either side without prior notice, a monthly payment that cannot be reduced during the contract duration, the contract duration and the date on which it takes effect and renewability for a maximum of five years.

The new contract also includes subjecting renewability to both sides' approval, conditioning a fully-paid annual leave after working for at least nine months in the first year, limiting working hours to eight hours including a one-hour break, mandating the sponsor to pay the expenses of returning a worker to his/her country on concluding the contract and departing Kuwait, mandating the employer to insure a worker against job hazards and paying health insurance, giving a laborer indemnity according to laws, defining the laws and courts applicable in case of disputes, possibility of adding special clauses, that Arabic is the reference language in case of legal disputes and making three copies of the contract - one for each party and one to be deposited with the manpower authority.

### Sit-in

A number of unionists plan to organize a sit-in at 11:00 am today outside the office of Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Dr Hind Al-Subaih to reject the new union work regulation charter. This comes a week after unionists staged a similar sit-in outside the Public Authority for Manpower. Tomorrow's sit-in will be attended by Kuwait Labor Union Chairman Salem Shebeeb Al-Ajmi.

Former chairman of the union Khaled Al-Ghobaishan stressed that the new rules were set for the best interests of all Kuwaiti workers, ends union monopoly and opens doors for all Kuwaiti employees to join unions and syndicates and take part in general assemblies. "The content of the new charter has been in use ever since unions were established in Kuwait and matches international regulations," he underlined, pointing out that the aim of activating the new charter was to supervise union work and not interfere in it, especially since those unions get two annual payments from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor. Ghobaishan added that the new charter had been prepared by former union chairman Thabet Al-Haroon to regulate and supervise union work in Kuwait, especially in the recent absence of union board elections.

### Court fight

Judicial sources said that a hearing has been set for Jan 6 to review the case filed after Sheikh Khaled, Dhari and Athbi Al-Sabah fought with lawyer Loai Al-Khorafi and his companions at the courts complex (Justice Palace).

### Fake doctor arrested

A 22-year-old citizen was arrested at Amiri Hospital for impersonating as an intern physician, said security sources, noting that the fake doctor had been showing up at the hospital for four months before Egyptian doctors suspected him and reported him. Security sources added that responding to the doctors' report, special investigations revealed that the suspect was a student at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training's (PAAET) commercial studies institute. The fake doctor, who had been introducing himself as a ruling family member and who fled the hospital when an Egyptian doctor asked for his ID, justified what he did by wishing to fulfill his childhood dream of becoming a doctor.

<p>Sample Form of an Employment Contract in the Civil Sector</p> <p>State of Kuwait Public Authority for Manpower/Labour Department</p> <p>On _____ corresponding to _____ the present contract was concluded by and between: 1. _____ Company/ institution _____ represented in signature in the present contract by: Name: _____ Civil card: _____ (First party)</p> <p>2. Name: _____ Nationality: _____ Civil card: _____ Residence: _____ (Second party)</p> <p><b>Preamble</b> The first party owns the facility entitled _____ working in the field of _____; whereas it wishes to conclude a contract with the second party to work for it in the profession of _____, whereas the parties acknowledged their capacity to conclude this contract, they agreed upon the following:</p> <p>The preamble above shall constitute an integral part of the present contract.</p> <p><b>Article Two</b> "Nature of the Work:" The first party concluded a contract with the second party to work for it in the profession of _____ in the State of Kuwait.</p> <p><b>Article Three</b> "Probation Period:" The second party shall be subject to a probation period for a term not exceeding 100 work days. Each party shall have the right to terminate the contract during the said term without notification.</p> <p><b>Article Four</b> "Leave Value:" For executing the present contract, the second party shall receive the wage of _____ dinars to be paid at the end of every _____. The first party may not decrease the wage during the term of the contract. It may not transfer the second party to daily wage without his approval.</p> <p><b>Article Five</b> "Contract Term:" The contract shall come into force on _____. The second party shall execute his work during the entire execution term thereof.</p> <p><b>Article Six</b> "Contract Term:" The present contract has a definite term. It shall come into force on _____ for a term of _____ years. The contract may be renewed with the approval of the parties for similar terms not exceeding five years. The present contract has an indefinite term and it shall come into force on _____. *Considering the contract as having a definite or indefinite term shall be subject to the will of the two parties.</p>	<p>نموذج عقد عمل استرادي في القطاع الأهلي</p> <p>دولة الكويت الهيئة العامة للقوى العاملة / إدارة عمل</p> <p>إنه في يوم _____ الموافق / / تحذر هذا العقد</p> <p>أ- شركة / مؤسسة _____ ويمثلها في التوقيع على العقد الاسم: _____ رقم مدني: _____ 2- الطرف: _____ الجنسية: _____ الجنسية: _____ الإقامة: _____ طرف ثان</p> <p><b>تشهير</b> يختلص الطرف الأول منشأة باسم _____ تعمل في مجال: _____ ويرغب في التعاقد مع الطرف الثاني للعمل لديه بمهنة: _____ وبعد أن أقر الطرفان باهليتهما في إبرام هذا العقد تم الاتفاق على ما يلي:</p> <p><b>المبدأ الأول</b> يعتبر التشهير السابق جزءاً لا يتجزأ من هذا العقد.</p> <p><b>المبدأ الثاني</b> "طبيعة العمل" تعاقب الطرف الأول مع الطرف الثاني للعمل لديه بمهنة: _____ داخل دولة الكويت</p> <p><b>المبدأ الثالث</b> "فترة التجربة" يخضع الطرف الثاني لفترة تجربة لمدة لا تزيد عن 100 يوم عمل ، ويحق لكل طرف إنهاء العقد خلال تلك الفترة دون إخطار.</p> <p><b>المبدأ الرابع</b> "قيمة الأجر" يتقاضى الطرف الثاني عن تنفيذ هذا العقد أجراً مقداره: _____ ديناراً يدفع في نهاية كل _____ ، ولا يجوز للطرف الأول تخفيض الأجر أثناء سريان هذا العقد ، ولا يجوز نقل الطرف الثاني إلى الأجر الواسع دون موافقة الطرف الثاني</p> <p><b>المبدأ الخامس</b> "نفاذ العقد" يبدأ نفاذ العقد اعتباراً من: _____/_____/____/ ويترجم الطرف الثاني بالقيام بإداء عمله طوال مدة نفاذه</p> <p><b>المبدأ السادس</b> "شروط العقد" هذا العقد محدد لمدة ويبدأ اعتباراً من: _____/_____/____/ ولدة _____ سنوات ، ويجوز تجديد العقد بموافقة الطرفين لمدة مماثلة بعد أقصى خمس سنوات ميلادية</p> <p>هذا العقد غير محدد لمدة ويبدأ اعتباراً من: _____/_____/____/</p> <p>..... * اعتبار العقد محدد لمدة أو غير محدد لمدة يخضع اختياره لإرادة الطرفين.</p> <p><b>المبدأ السابع</b> "الإجازة السنوية" للطرف الثاني الحق في إجازة سنوية مدفوعة الأجر مدتها: _____ يوماً ، ولا يستحقها عن السنة الأولى إلا بعد انقضاء مدة تسعة أشهر تحسب من تاريخ نفاذ العقد .</p>	<p><b>Article Sixteen</b> "Annual Leave" The second party shall have the right to a paid annual leave with a term of _____ days. It shall not be due on the first year save after the expiration of nine months to be calculated from the date of the contract coming into force.</p> <p><b>Article Eight</b> "Number of Work Hours" The first party may not require that the second party work for a term exceeding eight daily work hours with rest periods not less than one hour, except for the cases set forth in the law.</p> <p><b>Article Nine</b> "Ticket Value" The first party shall bear the expenses of the return of the second party to his country after the expiration of the work relationship and his final departure from the country.</p> <p><b>Article Ten</b> "Insurance against Injuries and Work Maladies" The first party shall insure the second party against injuries and work maladies. It shall also commit to the health insurance value in accordance with the law No. (1) of the year 1999.</p> <p><b>Article Eleven</b> "End of Service Benefit" The second party shall be due the end of service benefit as set forth in the regulating laws.</p> <p><b>Article Twelve</b> "Applicable Law" The provisions of the Labour code in the civil sector No. 6 of 2010 and the decisions executing the same shall apply for all matters not provided for in the present contract. Shall be considered null every condition agreed upon in violation of the provisions of the law, unless the same has a better benefit for the worker.</p> <p><b>Article Thirteen</b> "Special Conditions" 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____</p> <p><b>Article Fourteen</b> "Specialized Court" The court of first instance and its Labour departments, in accordance with the provisions of the law No. 46 of the year 1987, shall be competent to perse any conflicts resulting from the execution or interpretation of the present contract.</p> <p><b>Article Fifteen</b> "Contract Language" The present contract was made in Arabic and _____ . The Arabic texts shall prevail in the case of any conflict between them.</p> <p><b>Article Sixteen</b> "Contract Copies" The present contract was made in three copies, one for each party to work in accordance therewith. The third copy shall be deposited at the Public Authority for Manpower. First Party Second Party</p>	<p><b>المبدأ الثامن</b> "عدد ساعات العمل" لا يجوز للطرف الأول تشغيل الطرف الثاني لمدة تزيد عن ثماني ساعات عمل يومياً تتخللها فترة راحة لا تقل عن ساعة باستثناء الحالات للمرة قانوناً .</p> <p><b>المبدأ التاسع</b> "قيمة تذكرة السفر" يتحمل الطرف الأول مصاريف عودة الطرف الثاني إلى بلده عند انتهاء علاقة العمل ومغادرته نهائياً للبلاد.</p> <p><b>المبدأ العاشر</b> "التأمين ضد إصابات وإمراض العمل" يلتزم الطرف الأول بالتأمين على الطرف الثاني ضد إصابات وإمراض العمل ، كما يلتزم بقيمة التأمين الصحي طبقاً للقانون رقم (1) لسنة 1999 .</p> <p><b>المبدأ الحادي عشر</b> "مكافأة نهاية الخدمة" يستحق الطرف الثاني مكافأة نهاية الخدمة المتصوص عليها بالفوائين المنظمة</p> <p><b>المبدأ الثاني عشر</b> "القانون الواجب التطبيق" 6 تسري أحكام قانون العمل في القطاع الأهلي رقم 6 لسنة 2010 والقرارات المنفذة له فيما لم يرد بشأنه نص في هذا العقد ، ويقع باطلاً كل شرط تم الاتفاق عليه يخالف أحكام القانون ، ما لم يكن فيه ميزة الأفضل للعامل .</p> <p><b>المبدأ الثالث عشر</b> "شروط العقد" 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____</p> <p><b>المبدأ الرابع عشر</b> "المحكمة المختصة" تختص المحكمة الكلية ودوائرها المعالمة طبقاً لأحكام القانون رقم 46 لسنة 1987 ، بخلاف كافة المنازعات الناشئة عن تطبيق أو تفسير هذا العقد</p> <p><b>المبدأ الخامس عشر</b> "لغة العقد" جرس هذا العقد باللغتين العربية و _____ ، وبعدد _____ بنصوص اللغة العربية عند وقوع أى تعارض بينهما .</p> <p><b>المبدأ السادس عشر</b> "نسخ العقد" جرس هذا العقد من ثلاث نسخ بيد كل طرف نسخة للعمل بموجبها والثالثة تودع لدى الهيئة العامة للطرف الأول</p>
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## KPA FILES VIOLATION CASES AGAINST TWO COMPANIES AT SHUAIBA PORT

By A Saleh and KUNA

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Ports Authority (KPA) has filed a case against two national companies for violations committed in Al-Shuaiba port, one of three major commercial ports where KPA operates.

In a press statement, KPA said workers from the companies of KGL Holding and KGL International for Ports Warehousing and Transport brought operations to a halt on Sunday, when they blockaded the entrance and exit of Al-Shuaiba port with vehicles.

Calling the move unprecedented, the statement said that it led to a complete shutdown of business, leaving KPA with no choice but to enlist legal assistance to restore normalcy. If these violations are not ceased, then the transport of imports will be impeded, which will result in "complete paralysis", the statement added.

### Legal action

On December 17, KPA had issued a decree number 16/2015, which authorizes KPA to mount any necessary legal action to preserve company assets and business, the statement said. Moreover, the statement revealed that KPA Director General Sheikh Yousef Abdullah

Sabah Al-Nasser Al-Sabah has terminated the contracts of KGL Holding and KGL International for Ports Warehousing and Transport, with the termination in effect on December 31, 2015.

KPA has called on both companies to evacuate all property and staff from Al-Shuaiba port, the statement noted. KPA is looking forward to the resumption of duties in Al-Shuaiba port, the statement said. With a rich and deep-rooted maritime tradition, Kuwait relies heavily on the port business as a lucrative source of revenue for the country.

### Strict measures

Meanwhile, MP Mohammed Al-Jabri hailed the measures taken by Communications Minister Essa Al-Kandari against a company that violated public funds at ports: "I have repeatedly warned the ministry of being too soft in dealing with this particular company and he finally responded," Jabri said, noting that Essa had authorized KPA's director to take all needed measures to expel this company from the ports and refer it to the public prosecution. Jabri also demanded taking very strict legal measures against the company after it insisted on blocking traffic in and out of Shuaiba port.



## 'CIVIL DEFENSE' RAISES CAMPING SAFETY AWARENESS

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** The Interior Ministry's General Department of Civil Defense, in cooperation with the Relations and Security Information Department carried out a campaign to increase awareness regarding safety, security, first aid, and means of preventing danger. It was held on the occasion of the start of the camping season.

This was announced by Assistant Director General of the General Department of Civil Defense Colonel Jamal Al-Foudary who said the campaign was carried out at the instructions of Interior Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Operations Affairs Major General Jamal Al-Sayegh and supervised by General Department of Civil Defense Director General Major General Abdallah Al-Ali.

# STUDY RECOMMENDS LIFTING FUEL SUBSIDIES: OFFICIAL

ENERGY, OTHERS TO FOLLOW GRADUALLY

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** Finance Ministry's Undersecretary Khalifa Hamada said that a study about subsidy reform was still in progress pending referral to the government. "The study is being done to ensure continuation of the state's spending capabilities," he underlined. Hamada added that the study recommended lifting fuel subsidies first, then gradually lifting electricity, water and other subsidies. "The study began in 2013 and officially started by lifting diesel and kerosene subsidies," he noted, pointing out that the decision will be made by the Cabinet and not the finance ministry alone. Hamada expected the government to save around KD 0.75 to 1 billion after putting the new fuel prices in effect and stressed that the new prices would be applicable for both citizens and expatriates.

### Tax system

Responding to news stories about taxing Kuwaiti companies' profits, observers excluded the likelihood of imposing the taxes this year and said that the new tax system would be put into practice after rationalizing subsidies and preparing the needed infrastructure to do so by the beginning of next year.

### Privatization

Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) has decided to sell its share in Kuwait Public Transportation Company (KPTC), the Touristic Enterprises Company (TEC), Kuwait Clearing Company and Kuwait Livestock Trading and Transport Company (KLTT) this month. The authority recently received the four companies' strategic plans for 2016-2020 to study them to determine the financial support needed for each and decide on privatizing them. Notably, the investment authority had noticed that one of the four companies had already used up 75 percent of its capital and would eventually face problems on renewing its licenses with the commerce ministry.

### New runway

The Public Authority for Civil Aviation has invited relevant companies to file their bids to design and construct a new runway at Kuwait International Airport, setting Feb 7 as a deadline to submit their financial and technical offers. Notably, besides building the runway, the tender includes renovating and expanding the airport's western wing.

### Kuwaiti citizenship

MP Abdullah Al-Turajji yesterday inquired



from Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah about the veracity of information mentioned by Major General Mazen Al-Jarrah concerning selling Kuwaiti citizenships for KD 11,000. In his inquiry, Turajji asked the minister to provide him with details about the case including the names of the suspects in addition to a full census with the numbers of citizens and expatriates and a report on how citizens could register non-Kuwaitis as their children and grant them citizenship.

## COAST GUARD CONDUCTS LIVE AMMO EXERCISE

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Coast Guard carried out a practical exercise yesterday with live ammunition, using the weapons '50' 12 caliber, and M16 (5) - 56 caliber. The exercise took place at Um Al-Maradem island in cooperation with the Relations and Security Information General Department. It was held in order to improve the skills of boat team members to aim with high accuracy on sea targets, and deal directly with any attempts to penetrate sea borders or smuggle banned material through sea. The exercises will continue until January 6, 2016.

Yesterday's exercise was attended by Interior Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Sea Borders Security Affairs Major General Zuhair Al-Nasrallah, Director General of the Kuwait Coast Guard Brigadier Mubarak Al-Amiri, as well as Director General of the Relations and Security Information General Department Brigadier Adel Ahmad Al-Hashash.





In Brief

LIQUEFIED GAS PRICES

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) announced prices of liquefied gas (Propane and Butane) for January. Price of Propane gas will be \$345 per metric ton, down by \$115 compared to last December, where the price reached \$460. Meanwhile, Butane will be sold at \$390 per metric ton, down by \$85 compared to last December, where the price was \$475, KPC added. Prices of liquefied gases are affected by international oil prices, the performance of the US dollar against other main currencies, natural disasters, economic crises and geopolitical factors. — KUNA



ASC LAUDS KUWAIT

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait has played a pivotal role in developing the sport of shooting, President of the Asian Shooting Confederation (ASC) Sheikh Ali Bin Abdullah Bin Hamad Al-Khalifa said yesterday. In a statement after meeting with Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, Sheikh Ali Al-Khalifa said that Kuwait boasts a prolific record in the sport of shooting with numerous impressive international performances. The ASC President said that he is visiting Kuwait to review ways to further enhance the sport of shooting in the region. — KUNA



WIRELESS CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Science Club (KSC) will host the 2016 International Middle East Wireless Car Championship with participation of 60 contestants representing 28 countries, including Kuwait, KSC Chairman of the Board of Directors Ahmad Al-Manfouhi said yesterday. This international event which is held for the first time in the Middle East will be held in Kuwait on January 28, the only Arab state listed in the Asian and international wireless cars union, organized by the Kuwait Science Club, he said. Kuwait joined the Asian and international wireless car union in 2008. — KUNA



Feature

Photo



KUWAIT: Kites shaped as flags of Kuwait and Gulf states fly above a herd of camels in the Kuwaiti desert. — KUNA

FESTIVAL WITNESSES BIRDS' COMPETITIONS

**KUWAIT:** Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Heritage Village, where the Gulf Popular Heritage Festival is proceeding, has witnessed a birds' race, which is a popular hobby in Kuwait and other Gulf regions. The Kuwaiti falconer Abdullah Al-Tarqi came first in the 400-m race, followed by his fellow citizen, Ahmad Al-Nemran, then came Ahmad Al-Qloub, Mohammad Al-Dwailah while Meshaal Al-Azmi came fifth.

Sheikh Fahad Sabah Al-Nasser Al-Sabah, the deputy chairman of the festival's supreme committee, said in a statement the race of various

species of birds got started weeks ago, noting that the participants reached 4,000. The birds' races will proceed till end of February, involving particularly falcons' competitions.

He lauded His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for holding this grand heritage activity which depicts His Highness' keenness on enabling Kuwaiti and Gulf sportsmen to interact and manifest the cordial ties among them.

Yousef Al-Khayat, the deputy chairman of the Kuwaiti falconers team, said in a statement that

the group provides full support for the falconers, adding that there would be coordination with the winners to be enlisted in external competitions.

Sixth edition of the heritage festival kicked off last November, under sponsorship of His Highness the Amir. Competitions involve citizens and nationals of other GCC countries. Activities include animals' beauty contests, falcons' shows, exhibitions of horses to judge beauty and endurance in addition to the sea heritage competitions. — KUNA



TASHKENT: Kuwait's Ambassador to Uzbekistan Ahmad Al-Jeeran (left) is pictured with Uzbek First Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Rustam Azimov. — KUNA

UZBEKISTAN, KUWAIT  
DISCUSS BOOSTING TIES

**TASHKENT:** Kuwait's Ambassador to Uzbekistan Ahmad Khaled Al-Jeeran has discussed with Uzbek First Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Rustam Azimov means of boosting bilateral relations and mutual cooperation, particularly in the economic domain between the Republic and the State of Kuwait.

An embassy statement released yesterday quoted Ambassador Al-Jeeran as saying that economic cooperation is a basic factor for elevating level of the bilateral relations at the political and diplomatic levels between the two countries.

Ambassador Jeeran conveyed greetings from First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Deputy Premier and Finance Minister and Acting Oil Minister Anas Al-Saleh to Minister Azimov. The meeting, held on Monday at Minister Azimov's bureau at the Uzbek Premiership headquarters in the republic, aimed at boosting the bilateral relations between the two friendly countries.

Meanwhile, Minister Azimov affirmed that Tashkent is seeking to enhance mutual cooperation with Kuwait "to the level

aspired by the two countries' leaders." Underlining Kuwait's generous assistance, he disclosed that value of aid given to his nation by Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) reached \$135 million, underlining Kuwait's major support for multiple development schemes in his country.

Turning to oil prices, he said decline of the crude prices have resulted in diverse negative effects on concerned countries, however he noted that Kuwait "can surpass the crisis due to shrewdness of its leadership."

The republic puts out some 65,000 barrels of crude oil and derivatives per day. Kuwait produces three million bpd of the crude. Elaborating, Azimov said his country was seeking to lure entrepreneurs to launch businesses in the republic's various fields.

The State of Kuwait recognized independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan on December 30th, 1991, and diplomatic relations between two countries were established in July 1994. In 2001 the Embassy of the State Kuwait in Republic Uzbekistan was opened in Tashkent. — KUNA



# 76 PERCENT EMPLOYEES IN KUWAIT WOULD LEAVE CURRENT COMPANY FOR BETTER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES: SURVEY

## 81 PERCENT OF CLAIM CAREER DEVELOPMENT VERY IMPORTANT

**DUBAI:** According to a recent 'Career Development in the Middle East and North Africa' poll conducted by Bayt.com, the region's number one job site, a lack of career development prospects can radically make or break employee engagement.

On one hand, career development is of utmost importance to professionals in the MENA - even if it means rebooting their whole lives or taking their careers in a totally different direction. In Kuwait, 81 percent of respondents say that career development is "very

important". In parallel, 48 percent are prepared to move to another country to develop their career while another 58 percent are willing to change sectors completely.



important". In parallel, 48 percent are prepared to move to another country to develop their career while another 58 percent are willing to change sectors completely.

On the other hand, the results also show that in the eyes of MENA employees, companies' HR departments are not doing enough to provide them with the career development opportunities - including promotions, adequate appraisal performance systems, role enhancements, mentoring programs and advanced training seminars - that they need to ensure professional growth. All in all, the

that there is equal opportunity for advancement at their company; likewise, 29 percent strongly claim that job promotions are awarded fairly and without bias.

In addition, 46 percent of working professionals in Kuwait are satisfied with their current career development; another 54 percent admit that they are satisfied with the quality of orientation and training that they have received thus far. Also, 66 percent of those surveyed (in Kuwait) believe that their organization boasts the capabilities to cross-train their employees and teach them new skills.

Perhaps more noteworthy is that 61 percent affirm that their organization's training and development opportunities are explicitly linked to the company's overall strategic direction.

Interestingly, 38 percent of Kuwait respondents state that their company is more attractive than other companies in terms of career development. An overwhelming portion (76 percent) also say that they would leave their company for better training opportunities.

Based on the survey results, although almost half (45 percent) of Kuwait respondents have not formally set any development plans with their manager, the great majority (92 percent) would like to have a formal career development plan in place. On a related note, 50 percent of Kuwait working professionals are satisfied with their supervisor's efforts to identify their strengths and weaknesses; 25 percent, however, are "very dissatisfied". Similarly, 56 percent and 49 percent of employees in Kuwait are satisfied with the mentoring that they have received from senior peers and their current performance appraisal process, respectively.

### Growth opportunities

In Kuwait, 51 percent of job holders are satisfied with their professional learning and growth opportunities. Furthermore, over four out of five (88 percent) respondents are always trying to identify learning opportunities inside and outside of their company, and more than three out of five (64 percent) of those surveyed in Kuwait feel encouraged to take initiative in determining their own career development.

In the MENA, 43 percent of current employees claim that they are overqualified for their role, while another 55 percent state that their role is a good match to their abilities. Only 3 percent believe that they are under-qualified for their role. In Kuwait, employees have mixed feelings and perspectives when it comes to their responsibilities in proportion to their abilities. A total of 37 percent of Kuwait jobholders claim that they are overqualified for their role, while another 63 percent state that their role is a good match to their abilities. None (0 percent) of the respondent in Kuwait believe that they are under-qualified for their role.

In terms of knowing what their company needs and requires from its employees, 41

percent of Kuwait's working professionals admit to having a good idea.

### Professional development

"Today, employees in Kuwait are - understandably - eager to craft solid career trajectories and advance their professional development," said Suhail Masri, VP of Sales, Bayt.com. "Unfortunately, however, as evidenced by the survey results, many of them feel that their company is failing when it comes to equipping them with the well-rounded tools, blended learning approach, and tailored training needed to ensure their career growth and progression. And this leaves employees feeling stifled in their jobs - which in turn affects their loyalty, morale, and performance."

Masri also added, "At Bayt.com, as part of our steadfast commitment to building a strong, diversified workforce here in the region and meeting the talent demands of the future, we have, over the years, worked hand-in-hand with HR departments to help them devise an effective talent development strategy. Ultimately, our aim is to do our part to help HR departments spearhead employee retention efforts. How? By making

sure that they are laying out multi-phased growth and career development paths for employees - so workers can expand their expertise in key areas, fine-tune their skills, and chalk out a clear, well-structured career track for themselves. Companies and professionals across the various industry and career spectrums work with Bayt.com's career development products like Tests and Courses. They also partake in specialist discussions online on Bayt.com Specialties, greatly expanding their knowledge and the knowledge of others by sharing what they know."

### Equal opportunity

"Only about 3 in 10 current employees strongly believe that there is equal opportunity for advancement at the company," said Elissavet Vraka, YouGov. "Companies in the Middle East can stand to benefit from creating transparent systems where employees feel confident about their career development."

Data for the Bayt.com 'Career Development in the Middle East and North Africa' poll was collected online in October 2015, with 3,359 respondents covering 13 countries in the MENA region.

## KUWAIT AVIATION SHOW TAKES FLIGHT IN JANUARY 2017

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Aviation Show organizing committee announced the commencement of its efforts to organize the first ever show of its kind to take place in the State of Kuwait from January 23 through January 26, 2017 at Kuwait International Airport.



Ahmed Ismail Behbehani

Head of the organizing committee Ahmed Ismail Behbehani issued a press statement yesterday announcing the Aviation Show will host a high level of participation by both local and international companies in the field of aviation combining both civil and military aircraft manufacturers, private jets, medical air ambulance, helicopters, and supporting equipment manufacturers including jet engine manufacturers, navigation equipment, and products and services that serve both commercial and military aviation. The show will display the latest in air defense equipment as well as airport equipment that will cater to passenger convenience for the new era in Kuwait's aviation endeavors.

### Promising market

Behbehani continued his statement by highlighting that the global aviation market is a promising market at a steady growth and that private aviation is at a faster growth with the development of the regional aviation services it is expected that the GCC

private aviation sector will pose as one of the world's most lucrative and important focal points on a global scale.

Behbehani added that Kuwait pioneered the regional aviation market and that its current aggressive ambitions position it at the pinnacle of developing sectors in the region. When considering the global aviation economy, reports state that Kuwait is nominated to be one of the biggest beneficiaries of the regions expansive growth expecting to attract more than 237 million travellers annually making Kuwait a lucrative area that will be able to capture some of this traffic.

The Kuwait Aviation Show will host the most recognized personalities and authorities on aviation from around the globe which translates to the large confidence the global market has in the Kuwait aviation market with emphasis on attracting the local ministries and authorities that are serviced by this expo.

### Great beginning

Behbehani stated that the Kuwait Aviation Show signifies a great beginning to the already ambitious aviation master plan that the state of Kuwait has already embarked on both locally and internationally positioning the country in line with global aviation shows that take place across developed countries. This all takes place as Kuwait sets the foundations of both The New International Air Terminal and its supporting terminals.

With the open sky policy in full force, the regional privatization and private carriers catering to the regional market have catapulted the demand for aircraft and all of their supporting services to an unprecedented level making this show a valuable addition to the growth of the local industry.

It is expected that Kuwait Aviation Show will parallel global aviation show standards and become a reputable name in the International Aviation Show market.

## HEALTH INSURANCE COMPANY SIGNS CONTRACT WITH LONGWOOD CONSULTING

COMPANY TO BUILD HOSPITALS FOR EXPATS

**KUWAIT:** Daman Company for Health Insurance (DAMAN) has signed a contract with the Longwood Health Systems Consulting Inc, to draw up the firm's strategy and work plan for the coming period, DAMAN announced yesterday. Longwood enjoys long experience in the field, and has business with various health institutions in the Gulf, both from the public and the private sector, it added in a statement carried by Kuwait News Agency (KUNA).

### Best providers

President and CEO of Longwood Judith Mitchell expected Daman hospitals to rank among the best healthcare providers in Kuwait, and the region, according to the statement. Mitchell was quoted as saying that Longwood would draw up Daman's strategy and work plan as well as operational model, in addition to analyzing potential demographic changes in Kuwait over the coming years, and their expected healthcare needs.

According to the contract, Longwood will set operational plan for DAMAN's hospitals and clinics and the levels of healthcare and clinical connection policies with the Ministry of Health. It will also set the criteria for medical cadres to be appointed, doctors, nurses and technicians, in line with the acknowledged local and international rules and policies.

Longwood is a multidisciplinary team of healthcare professionals offering advisory services to health systems, public and private sector developers of new hospitals and schools in the health sciences and existing institutions striving to improve operational performance and enhance the quality of care they provide.

### Three hospitals

DAMAN was established by a cabinet resolution in 2014 as a joint venture between the public and the private sectors, with KD 230 million (\$759 million) capital. It was also granted land to build hospitals. The company's main task is to build three 700-bed hospitals and 15 polyclinics that provide integrated medical services to foreigners in Kuwait. The company was established as per the public-private-partnership (PPP). The government owns 24 percent of the company's shares, while 26 percent are owned by the strategic investor; won by Arabi Holding Group. The remaining 50 percent will be offered in an initial public offering.

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Rent: KD 500

• First and second floors for commercial use (institution - dub - clinic...)  
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## DESERVING GRATITUDE

By Saad Al-Motesh

I have no relation whatsoever with Health Minister Dr Ali Al-Obaidi. I have never met him in person or seen him face-to-face or talked to him over the phone. Syrian comedian Doraid Lahham, when asked about the dollar, said that he would never recognize it even if he sees it face-to-face, and this truly applies to me as Obaidi will never recognize me if we run into each other.

I have even criticized his ministry's performance more than once. But when I realize that he or any other person is being unfairly treated, one should criticize such persons the very same way I did with him, because I learned for sure that some people are trying to place the minister under pressure to get their own wishes.

**Unfortunately, some people support such pressures over social media networks**

Things are becoming more like "either do what I want (which is usually illogical) or I will get at you". Unfortunately, some people support such pressures over social media networks, especially those related or connected to those wanting the minister to yield to their demands. Obaidi has indirectly contributed to the flourishing signs and banners market thanking this or that lawmaker for helping them in certain issues, as if the lawmakers had done the service themselves.

Well, if I was in Obaidi's shoes, I would certainly explain to everybody the total number of transactions I signed for MPs, so that everybody realizes that it is the government, represented by the health minister, that really deserves gratitude!

—Translated by Kuwait Times



## UNIFIED MAIDS RECRUITMENT FEES, SALARIES PROPOSED

**KUWAIT:** Sources revealed a proposal on the cost of recruiting domestic helpers and their salaries. The list must be approved by the ministries of interior and social affairs before circulating it to offices. Prices vary according to nationality, with minimum and maximum limits according to experience and certificates.

**1- Filipino:** Recruitment cost is KD 270 and monthly salary between KD 110 and KD 120.

**2- Indian:** KD 160, with salary between KD 70 to KD 85.

**3- Sri Lankan:** KD 200, and salary KD 70.

**4- Ethiopia, Nepal, Eritrea, Ghana and Madagascar:** KD 100, and salaries between KD 70 and KD 80.

Sources said the circular will be announced in all media and concerned bodies dealing with domestic help and embassies. They said there will be strict punishment for anyone who manipulates prices, which may be a minimum of one year in jail and a fine of KD 5,000. — Al-Qabas

## ABOLISHING DEATH PENALTY A MUST

By Prof Ghanim Al-Najjar

To start with and making things perfectly clear, states have every right in maintaining their security and that of their citizens. They also have every right in passing whichever legislations to maintain such security including a deterrent penal system. However, this ought to be done within a framework of protecting people's dignity and rights and this includes banning torture and abolishing death penalties, which absolutely deserves wide scale discussions in view of its significance.

China, US and Saudi Arabia, countries with diverse intellectual, religious, political and economic tendencies that have nothing in common, top the world in terms of the number of death penalties executed in them.

Various bodies and organizations recently condemned Saudi Arabia's execution of 47

people including some that reject the execution in principle and others who rejected to executing certain individuals, like Iran, whose criticism sounded louder in this regard, though according to Amnesty International reports, both countries do not have very bright records in this regard. Amnesty reports showed that Iran executed 743 people in 2014 including 14 women and 13 juveniles. It also executed 694 others during the first six months of 2015.

Therefore, its objection is purely political. Before the recent executions, Saudi Arabia had remarkable increases in death penalties that brought the kingdom much criticism from the international community. There is also a lot of criticism for death penalties in China and the US because of many mistakes and tens of millions worth of compensations

the governments have accordingly paid. They have also executed juveniles and mentally disabled people. So, if this is happening in US where transparency, laws, defendants' rights and avoiding political measures in any death penalty are highly valued and respected, I do not believe the same applies in regional countries that lack transparency and highly value political considerations.

We are, of course, talking about death penalty sentences passed by courts of law, while 'non-judicial death penalties' are vastly practiced in regional countries including Israel, though in dissimilar levels. There is this illusion that death penalties lead to security and this illusion turns into an integral part of public speech during times of political tension when people find it easier to kill their opponents through passing some laws.

We still remember how three years ago and when a parliament assumed to be reformist and dominated by a majority and a new Cabinet were in office, a bill was passed allowing the state to execute people merely for posting a tweet, not for being terrorists, burglars, armed robbers or rapists....just for a tweet. So, imagine if such a bill was put into practice and the government allowed using it.

However, thanks to Almighty Allah, HH the Amir rejected such a constitutionally defective law.

Abolishing the death penalty is becoming a must in all countries and if this is not feasible, at least reduce the crimes legally accountable for by capital punishment and be very strict in using it!

— Translated by Kuwait Times

## OUR OLD WEARY BRIDGES

By Sami Al-Nisf

It is so easy to realize the huge difference between Turkish Sunni Islam, that is characterized by industrial advancement, scientific superiority and political achievements, and Arab Sunni Islam in Sudan that has led to tardiness, corruption and civil wars that continued for several decades and ended with South Sudan's secession.

The same huge difference exists between Shiite Islam in Iran that mainly relies on modern sciences such as nuclear power and others, and that applied in Iraq, where political leaders mainly focus on corruption and making wealth for themselves and their followers in addition to exaggerated rituals at the expense of secular scientific achievements.

The major difference between Arab and non-Arab Islam, such as the successful ones in Malaysia and Indonesia, is our clinging to the past as Arabs and Muslims without renovation, creation or development. This does not only apply to contemporary Muslim movements, it also applies to Arab nationalist unitary movements such as the past experiments of Saladin and Bismarck that were based on oppression as a tool to unite people instead of following modern unity concepts such as federalism and confederations.

The very same applies to Arab Marxism, communism and leftist that only revolved around Stalinist concepts based on worshipping individuals and nationalizing everything including camels, bakeries and groceries during their reign in Somalia and South Yemen. Solving the religious, political, economic and security problems our Arab nation is facing lies in relinquishing our old weary bridges dominating many minds and replacing them with stronger solid steel intellectual ones mainly depending on the latest human and spiritual sciences that can take our Arab nation to a brighter future so that we can catch up with other advanced nations that have almost disappeared ahead of us on the horizon.

The first thing Islamist, nationalist, liberal and leftist movements must do is to refer all their thinkers, politicians and media figures for retirement to limit their negative impact and give them a chance to enjoy the millions they have made by fooling their followers. Our Arab nation should get more enlightened by reformist minds that conform more with this modern age, otherwise, we should willingly bury ourselves under the sands of our vast deserts.

— Translated by Kuwait Times

## Crime

Report

### TODDLER KILLED IN FALL

**KUWAIT:** A toddler died after she fell in the bathroom of her Saad Al-Abdullah home. The three-year-old Kuwaiti girl was rushed to the hospital by her family, but was pronounced dead due to the head injuries she suffered. The parents were questioned about the death, while the case was referred to detectives to complete investigations.

### Fake detective

Detectives are looking for a man who claimed to be a detective, stopped a pedestrian, showed him an ID, then beat him badly before escaping. The victim, Indian, went to Fahaheel police station and reported the attack. A complaint was registered and police are looking for the imposter.

### Reckless driving

Qashaniya police arrested a citizen who appeared in a video clip driving recklessly in front of Abdaly co-op society. His vehicle was impounded at the traffic department.

### Addict caught

Mubarak Al-Kabeer police arrested a citizen using drugs in a public car park, and he was sent to the Drugs Control General Department (DCGD). A police patrol saw a man in the car, and when they approached the vehicle, they found him in an abnormal condition with drugs and paraphernalia.

### Obscene gesture

A citizen complained against a person for making an obscene gesture following a dispute over the right of way in Salmiya. The citizen gave police the suspect's license plate number as the case was referred to detectives to arrest the suspect.

### Property damage

A citizen accused her ex-husband of deliberately damaging her car by hitting it several times, in a complaint she filed against him at Ali Sabah Al-Salem police station. The woman said she ran into her ex-husband in the cooperative parking lot, and he hit her car several times due to previous disputes. Police are investigating. — Al-Rai

## AUSTERITY MEASURES RICOCHET ON MINISTERS, SENIOR OFFICIALS

**KUWAIT:** As lawmakers are about to revolt against lifting subsidies, it seems that the government will not be safe from suffering from its own austerity measures, said informed government sources, noting that these measures had already started. The sources explained that the state's budget for 2015-2016 would be KD 19 billion compared to KD 23 billion in 2014-2015. "The four billion difference will be achieved through lifting subsidies and rationalizing spending at government establishments," explained the sources, noting that payrolls and major development projects would not be affected by the new budget.

The sources explained that in a bid to reduce spending, the government decided taking some measures that are not declared yet, including cutting miscellaneous expenditures at ministers' and senior officials' offices, their special bonuses and allowances paid for travel, taking part in conferences, training courses and other missions inside and outside Kuwait.

Moreover, the sources noted that the Cabinet intends to stop paying ministers and senior officials allowances for cars, fuel, mobile phone bills, flight tickets and other expenses that would eventually reduce the government's spending. The sources also pointed out that the government has already started cutting its expenses before putting the recommendation made about lifting subsidies into practice so that the government can set an example for citizens. — Al-Rai

# BURGAN BANK ANNOUNCES STRATEGIC SPONSORSHIP OF SPARK MARATHON

## SHOULDERING INTEGRATION OF SPORTS, FITNESS INTO SOCIAL FABRIC

**KUWAIT:** Burgan Bank announced yesterday its sponsorship of 'SPARK Marathon 2016'; the largest and most anticipated charity race event of the year. The event, which is organized by Spark Athletic Centre and is set to take place on Saturday January 16th, 2016 at the Marina Crescent, aims at integrating sports and fitness into the very fabric of the Kuwaiti society as well as to highlight the positive role that local charities and non-profit organizations are playing through the Burgan Marathon Village in Marina Crescent.

The one-day race is open to the participation of families and people from all ages and will feature 4 categories; 5 km run, 10 km run, 21 km run, and 42 km run, while the event which has a full-fledged program of activities will continue running over a 3 days duration from 14-16th. The race which is happening on the 16th of January will be followed by a program of prizes and draws.

Commenting on the strategic sponsor-



**Loulwa Abdulla Al-Ayoubi - Manager of External Affairs at Burgan Bank Group, AbdulMohsen Al-Babtain - Chief Executive Officer of Spark Athletic Centre, and Mariam Al-Babtain - Public Relations Manager at Spark Athletic Centre.**

ship, Bashir Jaber, Group Head of Corporate Communications and Investor Relations at Burgan Bank, said: "Touching people's lives is a philosophy that the bank strives to implement by supporting local initiatives that contribute positively to the welfare of the society. Our sponsorship of SPARK Marathon falls under the bank's corporate citizenship spirit, and we believe that the outcome of this local event with international standards, will showcase Kuwait as a host for world class sporting events."

Burgan Bank's sponsorship of this unique event stems from its overall social responsibility and firm belief in supporting initiatives that help familiarize the public with the benefits of maintaining a healthier lifestyle and spreading this behavior in all parts of the society. For that reason, Burgan Bank will continue to welcome similar initiatives that create a positive impact on the society as a whole.

# AUTHORITIES PROBE FORGED GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

**KUWAIT:** A security source said the Interior Ministry represented by the residency detectives department and in cooperation with the Manpower Public Authority (MPA) is gathering several forged government contracts that were presented by individuals to the government contracts department to bring in the largest possible number of workers. The source said the bilateral cooperation resulted in referring several contracts to investigation authorities.

### New contracts

About new contracts, the source said more than 110,000 expats entered the country on work visas during 2015, while only 5,000 left. He said the new contracts included most nationalities and were distributed over government and private contracts. Meanwhile, a source at MPA said detectives offices started work at labor departments

two weeks ago, and their work is to follow up and supervise only, while transaction processing is the responsibility of MPA employees. The source said detectives' presence contributes to stopping criminally-minded people and violations of patrons and employees, especially since 80 percent of violations of the law at the labor departments are by some mandoubs (company representatives) and companies in the private sector.

### Annual increase

The source said a decision on annual salary increases in the private sector of KD 50 that should not exceed KD 600 per year applies to all job designations. He said if a company does not apply the annual increase, it can add the increase at the rate of two or three years, and should prove the employee did not receive an increase during those years. — Al-Qabas

# GOVT READY TO IMPOSE TAXES ON COMPANIES

**KUWAIT:** The government is getting ready to approve a proposed law to impose a 10 percent tax on national companies, and a similar percentage on individuals who do business, and they will not be taxed for the first KD 50,000 they make each year.

The draft law, prepared by the finance ministry with technical help from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), exempts oil companies, NGOs and other government authorities, and sets restrictions to prevent tax evasion, such as not exempting profits that are carried over to the reserves, or registering them as spendable allocations or future losses, yet it keeps the door open to create more

specific rules in the implementation rules of bank allocations and insurance companies' risks.

The draft tax law bans tax exemption on salaries, wages or allowances or other compensations paid or due to be paid to a related person to avoid leaking profits away from taxes in the form of bogus salaries. The draft exempts the transfer of assets from wholly-owned companies from taxes, and income resulting from dividends paid by a resident company to another resident company other than financial establishments, along with dividends paid by non-resident company (other than non-resident companies that are based in tax havens). — Al-Rai



**KUWAIT:** Following unconfirmed reports speculating that taxes on tobacco and cigarettes in Kuwait are set to increase by 100 percent, consumers reported that cigarette packs were missing from many stores around the country. Store owners blamed

suppliers, saying that they are 'storing' the products until the government announces the new prices. Meanwhile, other consumers reported that some shops have went ahead and increased cigarette prices independently, despite the lack of an official decision from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. — Al-Jarida





Southern Illinois battles flooding as Mississippi River builds downstream



ADEN: Fighters loyal to Yemen's President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi flash the sign of victory after they managed to secure completely and take control of the port of the southern city of Aden yesterday. — AFP

# CURFEW IMPOSED IN ADEN; FIGHTING KILLS 12

## QAEDA STONES WOMAN TO DEATH FOR ADULTERY

**ADEN:** Yemeni authorities announced a dusk to dawn curfew in Aden starting yesterday following a night of gunbattles between armed men and government forces that killed at least 12 people from both sides, a local government spokesman said. The government of President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi has been grappling with lawlessness in the southern port since militiamen, backed by a Saudi-led Arab alliance, drove the Iran-allied Houthis out in July. Nizar Anwar, spokesman for the Aden local government, said the clashes were concentrated around the cargo and container terminals in Aden, which the gunmen had sought to seize from security forces. Eight members of the security forces and four gunmen died in the clashes, Anwar said, adding that security forces managed to secure both terminals late at night on Sunday. "The security committee has decided to impose a curfew on all parts of Aden from 8 pm until 5 am," Anwar said, adding that the curfew would remain in place until further notice. "This is a precautionary measure to deny armed elements freedom of movement," he added.

Hadi toured the cargo terminal in the city's Mualla district yesterday, port sources said, indicating that the facility was under government control. Yemen descended into a civil war in March when the Houthis forced Hadi to flee to Saudi Arabia after they closed in on Aden, drawing in a Saudi-led coalition into the Yemen conflict. Tensions mounted further this weekend after the Houthis joined Shiite Iran in condemning the decision by Sunni Muslim power Saudi Arabia to execute a prominent Shiite cleric. Islamist militants, local tribesmen and criminals have exploited the fighting to spread chaos in the areas vacated by the Houthis.

A series of attacks have rocked Aden since July, including a booby-trapped car attack

that killed Aden's governor General Jaafar Mohammed Saad and six members of his entourage last month. In the latest attack yesterday, gunmen shot dead Sheikh Ali Othman Al-Gailani, a member of a Sunni Muslim Sufi group—a mystical school of Islam—after he left a mosque in the city's Crater district, witnesses said. No one claimed responsibility for the attack and the motive was not immediately clear, but the Islamic State and Al-Qaeda oppose the Sufi school and have attacked its members elsewhere in the Middle East in recent years.

**Woman stoned to death**

In another development, Al-Qaeda militants have stoned a woman to death in a southeastern Yemeni city they control after accusing her of adultery and prostitution, several witnesses said yesterday. The jihadists on Sunday "placed the woman in a hole in the middle of the courtyard of a military building and stoned her to death in the presence of dozens of residents" of Hadramawt provincial capital Mukalla, one witness said.

A local journalist at the scene confirmed the rare stoning, saying that the gunmen prevented photography of the execution. "This was the first time we have seen such a thing," another witness said. A copy of the purported verdict issued by the so-called Hadramawt court of Al-Qaeda's Ansar Al-Sharia in December said the married woman "confessed in front of the judges to committing adultery". Al-Qaeda's Yemen branch is considered by Washington to be the most dangerous affiliate of the global network. It has taken advantage of the state's weakness to expand its control in various areas, including the vast Hadramawt region. — AFP



MARYLAND: Marine One (left) flies with US President Barack Obama and family to the White House after arriving at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland. Obama and the First Family are returning from Hawaii after vacation. — AFP

# OBAMA EXPANDS MEDIA STRATEGY TO LONG-FORM CONVERSATIONS

**WASHINGTON:** The novelist tossed out phrases such as "religious humanism" and "the sinister other." The interviewer asked her about her upbringing and writing process. At an hour and 7,000 thoughtful words, the discussion sounded like a college seminar or an independent bookstore reading. But this was part of the White House's new media strategy. Even for a president well-practiced in using nontraditional media, the conversation in September between Barack Obama and writer Marilynne Robinson - and a few other conversations like it conducted in recent months - charted new territory in presidential communications.

Slow-paced, personal, nearly divorced from the news of the day and sometimes distributed by the White House, a series of "conversations" between Obama and prominent figures in arts, letters and entertainment captures a White House experimenting with ways to reconnect Americans to the president before they say goodbye to him. They also offer a glimpse of the president's interests and thinking as he looks at that next chapter. "We had this idea that why don't I just have a conversation with somebody I really like and see how it turns out?" Obama told Robinson, before diving into mutual rumination about Christianity, fear and politics that ran in two installments in The New York Review of Books.

**'WTF with Marc Maron'**

Not all the chosen conversationalists are quite so high brow: Obama recently cruised around the White House grounds in a 1963 Corvette Stingray coupe with Jerry Seinfeld for an episode of the Web series "Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee." He

sat for an hour in comic Marc Maron's garage in June for the podcast "WTF with Marc Maron." In March, the White House invited David Simon, a former journalist and writer of "The Wire" and urban dramas, to discuss criminal justice. British naturalist Sir David Attenborough met with Obama in July for a conversation that revealed a bit how Obama's Hawaiian and Kenyan roots have animated his fight against climate change.

"We want to give the president opportunities to talk in more expansive ways about big ideas and subjects," White House spokesman Eric Shultz said of some of these conversations. "Our goal is give people some insight into how he sees things that are not necessarily at the top of the news cycle at that moment. We believe when you feel like you really understand someone's thinking, you understand their decision-making."

Conducting nontraditional interviews is nothing new for this president. Where other White Houses dabbled in women's magazines or lifestyle interviews, the Obamas embraced late-night talk shows, celebrity magazines, sports media. Obama has sat for interviews with bloggers and YouTube stars, taken questions on Facebook and Reddit, and distributed content via the White House website, Twitter and YouTube.

Still White House officials put Obama's long-form sit-downs in another box. Obama's conversations aren't narrowly targeted at a single constituency and aren't typically organized around a single political message or timed to a policy rollout or debate. There tends to be a clear mutual interest—a peer-to-peer relationship, as one White House official described it. In some, Obama takes the role of interviewer. "I'm a huge fan of 'The

Wire," Obama said, sounding like one, opening his interview with Simon.

**'You only live once'**

That level of interest has given some of the conversations a "you only live once" feel to them, as though Obama were ticking through a list of people he always wanted to meet while he still had the staff to arrange the introduction. ("They contacted us through the website ... which immediately made me think this was fake," Maron noted on his podcast.) Obama recently noted that was one of the perks of the job. "It turns out you pick up the phone if somebody is doing something interesting, something that inspires you, you can usually get them to take your phone call," Obama told NPR. "You know, sometimes I do it to learn myself what is it that, you know, makes them tick and what can they teach me about the world. Sometimes I just want to shine a light on somebody who I think is extraordinary."

But White House officials say the ideas typically come from staff, based on the opportunity, the boss' known interests and the potential audience. For the most part, Obama has largely been talking to the circles that launched his career - upper- and middle-income, educated, liberal-leaning urbanites. This is the "liberal cognoscenti," said Tevi Troy, a historian and former George W Bush administration official who has written on both presidents and pop culture and intellectuals at the White House. "In that audience are the people who are going to be writing the books about him, the histories, the obituaries - the people who are going to help decide his legacy for him, cement his standing, and burnish his legacy for years to come." — AP



ADEN: Members of the Yemeni coast guard patrol on a boat off the port of the southern city of Aden after fighters loyal to Yemen's President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi managed to take control of it and secure it completely yesterday. — AFP





TEHRAN: In this undated 1979 file photo, Iran's new leader, Ayatollah Khomeini waves at the crowd at Qom, Iran. After the overthrow of the shah and takeover of the US Embassy in Tehran, Saudi Arabia quickly became America's top ally in the region.



In this March 10, 1984 file photo, Iranian troops advance despite obstacles set by Iraqi forces in the Manjnoon Islands, Iraq. Smoke in background rises from Iraqi armored units set afire by Iranian forces. After the overthrow of the shah and takeover of the US Embassy in Tehran, Saudi Arabia quickly became America's top ally in the region. In the ensuing 1980s war between Iran and Iraq, Saudi Arabia backed Iraq despite its concerns about dictator Saddam Hussein. That war would kill 1 million people. — AP photos

## A LOOK AT LONG-FRAUGHT RELATIONS BETWEEN SAUDI, IRAN

**DUBAI:** Diplomatic relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia have been tense since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, though there have been occasional thaws between the two rivals. The tensions have now sharply escalated with Saudi Arabia severing ties with the Islamic Republic following attacks on Saudi diplomatic missions in Iran. Here's a look at how relations between the two Mideast powers have shifted over the last decades:

### Pre-revolution relations

Under the rule of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Iran had rocky relations with Saudi Arabia, though they improved toward the end of his reign. Both were original members of the oil cartel OPEC.

### Post-revolution

After the overthrow of the shah and takeover of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, Saudi Arabia quickly became America's top ally in the region. In the ensuing 1980s war between Iran and Iraq, Saudi Arabia backed Iraq despite its concerns about dictator Saddam Hussein. That war would kill 1 million people.

### 1987 haj riots

The annual pilgrimage to Islamic holy sites in Saudi Arabia, required of all able-bodied Muslims once in their life, saw bloodshed when Iranians held a political demonstration. Iranian pilgrims later battled Saudi riot police, violence that killed at least 402 people. Iran claimed 600 of its pilgrims were killed and said police fired

machine guns at the crowd. In Tehran, mobs attacked the Saudi, Kuwaiti, French and Iraqi embassies, ransacking the first two.

### Severing ties

In 1988, Saudi Arabia severed ties with Iran, citing the 1987 hajj rioting and Iran's attacks on shipping in the Persian Gulf. Iranians responded by boycotting the hajj in 1988 and 1989. The two countries restored diplomatic ties in 1991.

### Easing tensions

Relations between the two nations improved after Iranian President Mohammad Khatami, a political moderate, took office in 1997. Ties warmed further after historic visits by Saudi

Crown Prince Abdullah to Tehran in December 1997 and Khatami to the kingdom in May 1999.

### Nuclear dispute

Worries about Iran resumed in Saudi Arabia amid international sanctions against Tehran over its contested nuclear program and the increasingly harsh rhetoric of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Iran and Saudi Arabia each backed opposite sides in Syria's civil war, as well as in the civil war in Yemen. Saudi Arabia also grows increasingly suspicious of Iran as it reaches a deal with world powers over its nuclear program.

### 2015 haj disaster

On Sept 24, a stampede and crush strikes the annual hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia. While the

kingdom says 769 pilgrims are killed, an Associated Press count shows over 2,400 people were killed. Iran says at least 464 of its pilgrims were killed and blames Saudi Arabia's "incompetence" for the deaths.

### Sheikh's execution

On Jan 2, Saudi Arabia executed Shiite cleric Sheikh Nimr Al-Nimr and 46 others - the largest execution carried out by the kingdom in three and a half decades. The execution of Al-Nimr, a central figure in Arab Spring-inspired protests by Saudi Arabia's Shiite minority, sparked protests across the Mideast and attacks on Saudi diplomatic facilities in Iran. Saudi Arabia responded by announcing it was severing diplomatic ties with Iran over the attacks. — AP



DIYARBAKIR: A woman covers her face as Turkish police use tear gas during clashes at the Sur district in Diyarbakir. Tensions are running high throughout Turkey's restive southeast as security forces impose curfews in several towns including Cizre in a bid to root out Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) rebels from urban centers. — AFP

## 2 CIVILIANS, 2 SECURITY FORCES DIE AS TURKISH TROOPS BATTLE ARMY REBELS

**DIYARBAKIR:** Two civilians, a soldier and a police officer have been killed in southeastern Turkey as military operations to root out armed fighters focused on urban centers across the mainly Kurdish region, security sources said. Violence in the three-decade war with Kurdistan Workers Party fighters flared in July after the collapse of peace talks. President Tayyip Erdogan said last week there would be no let-up in a military campaign that he said had killed more than 3,000 militants in 2015. A 35-year-old mother of three children were killed and another person was wounded on Sunday after a mortar hit their house in the district of Sur in the region's largest city of Diyarbakir, the sources said late on Sunday.

In the town of Silopi, east of Diyarbakir near the Syrian and Iraqi borders, a man was killed by gunfire and his wife and another relative were wounded after they attempted to venture out of their home, the sources added. A member of a special police unit in Sur was shot in the head on Monday, security sources said. On Sunday, a soldier was killed in a bomb attack by members of the outlawed PKK in Sur, the General Staff said in a statement on Monday. Sur, which boasts UNESCO World Heritage sites, has been under a round-the-clock curfew since Dec 2 as the army tries to push out PKK fighters who have dug trenches and built barricades there and in other resi-

dential areas in the region.

The military said on Monday 225 PKK fighters have been killed in Silopi and the nearby town of Cizre since operations began in both places on Dec 14. Hundreds of soldiers and civilians have also died in towns and cities across the region in the operations. Erdogan said at the weekend he supports a criminal investigation of the leaders of the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), a parliamentary group with Kurdish origins, over comments about self-rule. In the town of Cizre, tanks could be seen pounding buildings believed to contain PKK members on Sunday, Reuters TV footage showed.

Local residents, carrying homemade white flags on sticks, fled their houses, carrying their children and carting belongings in a wheelbarrow or suitcases. One man told Reuters TV that he and family members were leaving, because they are unable to find medicine to prevent his disabled daughter's seizures. "Every day they fire artillery and mortars," he said, without giving his name. "We must leave, but we don't know where we can go, how to leave." The autonomy-seeking PKK took up arms in 1984, and more than 40,000 people - mainly Kurds - have been killed in the violence. The PKK is designated a terrorist group by Turkey, the United States and the European Union. — Reuters

## DON'T FLIRT OR HOLD HANDS, SENIOR TURKEY CLERICS TELL SOON-TO-WEDS

**ISTANBUL:** Engaged couples should refrain from flirting, holding hands and "other behaviors that are not endorsed by Islam," Turkey's religious affairs agency declared yesterday. Answering the question "is it appropriate for those who are engaged to be married to be able to see each other?", the agency, known as Diyanet, set out where the limits lay for those who plan to tie the knot in overwhelmingly Muslim Turkey. "There is no harm in engaged couples meeting to get to know each other, as long as they follow the rules of privacy," it said in a statement on its website. "But engaged couples need to refrain from flirting, living together, staying together tete-a-tete in a way that could give rise to gossip, holding hands and other behaviors that are not endorsed by Islam," it added.

While many Turks embrace European lifestyles in Istanbul, the Aegean coast and Ankara, traditional Islamic values and religious conservatism hold sway in much of the coun-

try. In many areas, sex before marriage is not only a taboo but simply out of the question. Turkey's religious affairs agency Diyanet was established in 1924 to oversee religion in the modern secular Turkish Republic following the abolition of the Islamic Caliphate in the wake of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.

One of its duties enshrined in the constitution is to enlighten the public about religious values. It frequently issues directives on advice about moral behavior. But in the officially secular state these have no legal weight. Critics complain that Turkey has seen a creeping Islamisation under the Islamic-rooted rule of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, formerly prime minister, that has undermined the secular principles of the modern state set up by its founder Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. But the government insists it is merely allowing greater religious freedoms to devout Muslims that had been denied in the past. — AFP

## UN RIGHTS ENVOY RESIGNS ISRAEL ACCUSES MAIN UN HUMAN RIGHTS FORUM OF BIAS

**GENEVA:** The UN investigator for human rights violations in the Palestinian territories resigned yesterday, saying that Israel had reneged on its pledge to grant him access to the West Bank and Gaza. Makarim Wibisono, United Nations special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories, said that his repeated oral and written requests for access had gone unanswered over 18 months. In a statement announcing his resignation, Wibisono, who reports to the UN Human Rights Council, voiced "deep concern at the lack of effective protection of Palestinian victims of continuing human rights violations and violations of international humanitarian law".

Israel has long rejected the post of the independent investigator for the territories, accusing the 47-member state forum of bias against the Jewish state, a position backed by its main ally

the United States. "The Israeli decision was the consequence of the distorted and biased mandate given to the rapporteur," Emmanuel Nahshon, Israel's Foreign Ministry spokesman, said by email. "Israeli human rights are violated too, every day, by Palestinians and until ignoring this ends the council will not be taken seriously as a body that respects human rights," he said in a separate statement.

Israel captured the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem in the 1967 Middle East war and later annexed the latter, declaring it part of its eternal, indivisible capital, a move never recognized internationally. Palestinians seek a state in the West Bank and Gaza with East Jerusalem as their capital.

In 2005 Israel quit Gaza, now run by Hamas Islamists. Wibisono, a former Indonesian diplomat who took up the UN post in June 2014, said

in his first report to the council in March 2015 that Israel should investigate the killing of more than 1,500 Palestinian civilians, one third of them children, during the 2014 Gaza war, and make the findings public.

His resignation is effective on March 31, after his final report to the council. "My efforts to help improve the lives of Palestinian victims of violations under the Israeli occupation have been frustrated every step of the way," Wibisono said, adding the Palestinian government had cooperated fully.

His predecessor Richard Falk, an American law professor who is Jewish, long drew controversy in Israel. In 2008 Falk compared Israeli military strikes against Hamas in Gaza - during which 1,400 Palestinians were killed and there was widespread destruction in densely populated areas - to those of the Nazis. — Reuters



JERUSALEM: A poster bearing a portrait of Bahaa Allyan (center), a Palestinian who killed three Israelis in a shooting and stabbing attack with an accomplice on a bus in October, is plastered on a pillar inside the damaged interior of his home after Israeli forces used jackhammers to destroy the walls of the middle floor of the three-story building in the east Jerusalem neighborhood of Jabal Mukaber yesterday. — AFP

## ISRAEL DESTROYS ASSAILANT HOMES IN EAST JERUSALEM

**JERUSALEM:** Israeli forces yesterday destroyed the east Jerusalem homes of two Palestinians who killed four Israelis in one of the deadliest days in the recent surge in violence. In the neighborhood of Jabal Mukaber, the home of Palestinian Alaa Abu Jamal was filled with concrete and sealed off, an AFP reporter at the scene said. Abu Jamal had on October 13 rammed his car into people at a Jerusalem bus stop and jumped out with a knife, stabbing a rabbi to death before being shot dead.

Abu Jamal was also a cousin of two Palestinians who in November stormed a synagogue in Jerusalem's Har Nof neighborhood with meat cleavers and a pistol, killing five Jewish worshippers and a policeman before being shot dead. In another part of Jabal Mukaber, Israeli

forces used jackhammers to destroy the walls of Bahaa Allyan's home, the middle floor of a three-storey building. Allyan and another Palestinian, Bilal Ghanem, had on October 13 shot and stabbed passengers on a bus in Jerusalem, killing two Israelis and a US-Israeli dual national.

Allyan was shot dead while Ghanem was arrested. Hundreds of Israeli police and soldiers were on site for the home destructions, which took place without incident after residents were cleared from the area. "I don't have any other place to live," Allyan's father Mohammed said. "The army just said 'we are going to destroy the house, get out' - this measure punishes a father, a mother, a brother, a sister and (four) children" who were living in the house, he said. In a wave of Palestinian attacks since October 1 - including

stabblings, car rammings and gunfire targeting security forces and civilians - 22 Israelis, an American and an Eritrean have been killed.

At the same time, according to an AFP count, 138 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces, most while carrying out attacks. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in November vowed to expedite punitive house demolitions in the West Bank and east Jerusalem, which he said were "one of the most efficient tools" in discouraging Palestinian attacks. The controversial practice is widely used in the West Bank and resumed in east Jerusalem in November after a five-year hiatus. According to the United Nations, 19 homes of families and neighbors of Palestinian attackers were destroyed by Israel last year. — AFP



BILL CLINTON TO STUMP FOR HIS WIFE, BRINGING OLD CONTROVERSY

**KEENE:** Bill Clinton is back on the presidential campaign trail - and so is his baggage. For months, the former president has largely stayed out of the 2016 race, mentioned mostly in passing by Democratic front-runner Hillary Clinton. On Monday, he heads out for his first solo campaign events, with stops planned in New Hampshire - a key primary state that gave much-needed momentum to his struggling 1992 presidential bid. He'll do so after days of attacks over his impeachment and decades-old sex scandals from Republican front-runner Donald Trump.

So far, Bill Clinton has remained mum about Trump's slams - following the lead of his wife's campaign, which believes their candidate comes across as more presidential by rising above what they see as the Republican's crass political tactics. But the attacks seem to have struck a nerve. At a campaign event in New Hampshire on Sunday, Katherine Prudhomme O'Brien heckled Clinton about her husband's sexual history, accusing her of enabling him to mistreat women. "You are very rude and I'm not going to ever call on you," Clinton snapped at O'Brien, after repeated

shouted interruptions by the New Hampshire state senator.

The former president, too, has been known to become heated when he feels his wife is under attack, as he did during the 2008 primary with remarks about then-Illinois Sen Barack Obama that angered black voters in South Carolina. "I love my husband and, you know, he does get upset when I am attacked," said Clinton, in an interview with NBC's "Meet The Press" last year. "I totally get that." Just days after Clinton called her husband her "secret weapon" at a campaign event last month, Trump began aiming his fire at Bill Clinton, accusing the former president of mistreating women and his wife of enabling the abuse.

"If Hillary thinks she can unleash her husband, with his terrible record of women abuse, while playing the women's card on me, she is wrong," Trump tweeted last week. His accusations reverberated across the campaign trail, giving fodder to conservatives who want to use the issue in the 2016 campaign. "You see what's happened recently and it hasn't been a very pretty picture for her or for Bill," said Trump, in an interview on CBS' "Face the Nation." "Because

I'm the only one who's willing to talk about his problems."

Clinton supporters believe the attacks will backfire, particularly in the general election. Hillary Clinton had some of her highest approval ratings in the wake of disclosures about her husband's affair with White House intern Monica Lewinsky. The former president's public events in New Hampshire come as he moves into a more public role in his wife's effort. After months of having her husband focus on private fundraisers, Clinton said in a December debate that she would turn to Bill Clinton for advice should she win the White House, particularly on economic issues.

Their schedules on Monday showed the degree to which the ubiquitous political couple will be able to blanket the early primary states in the next two months as Democrats also hold contests in Iowa, Nevada and South Carolina. While the former president was drumming up support for his wife in New Hampshire, Hillary Clinton was starting a two-day "river-to-river" tour of Iowa, holding town hall meetings and organizing events across the state.

Bill Clinton's longstanding ability to



**PORTSMOUTH:** Democratic Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton speaks at South Church in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Clinton continues to poll strong in New Hampshire as the year comes to a close. —AFP

raise money will also be an asset in the weeks ahead, with fundraisers on the calendar in New York, Seattle, Phoenix, Albuquerque, NM, Cleveland and Fairfield, Conn. The finance events will allow Hillary Clinton to spend more time on the ground in Iowa and also in New

Hampshire, where polls have shown her trailing Sanders, who represents neighboring Vermont. The couple's daughter, Chelsea Clinton, was also getting into the act, headlining fundraisers of her own in Boston, Atlanta and Chicago next week. —AP

CRUZ SEEKING TO TURN IRASCIBLE PERSONALITY TO HIS ADVANTAGE

**MECHANICSVILLE:** Ted Cruz's reputation as an arrogant, grating, in-your-face ideologue has dogged him throughout the Republican presidential race. But it hasn't stopped the Texas senator's rise. Cruz is increasingly embracing his irascible persona, trying to turn what could be a liability into an asset. "If you want someone to grab a beer with, I may not be that guy," Cruz said at a Republican debate this fall when asked to describe his biggest weakness. "But if you want someone to drive you home, I will get the job done and I will get you home."

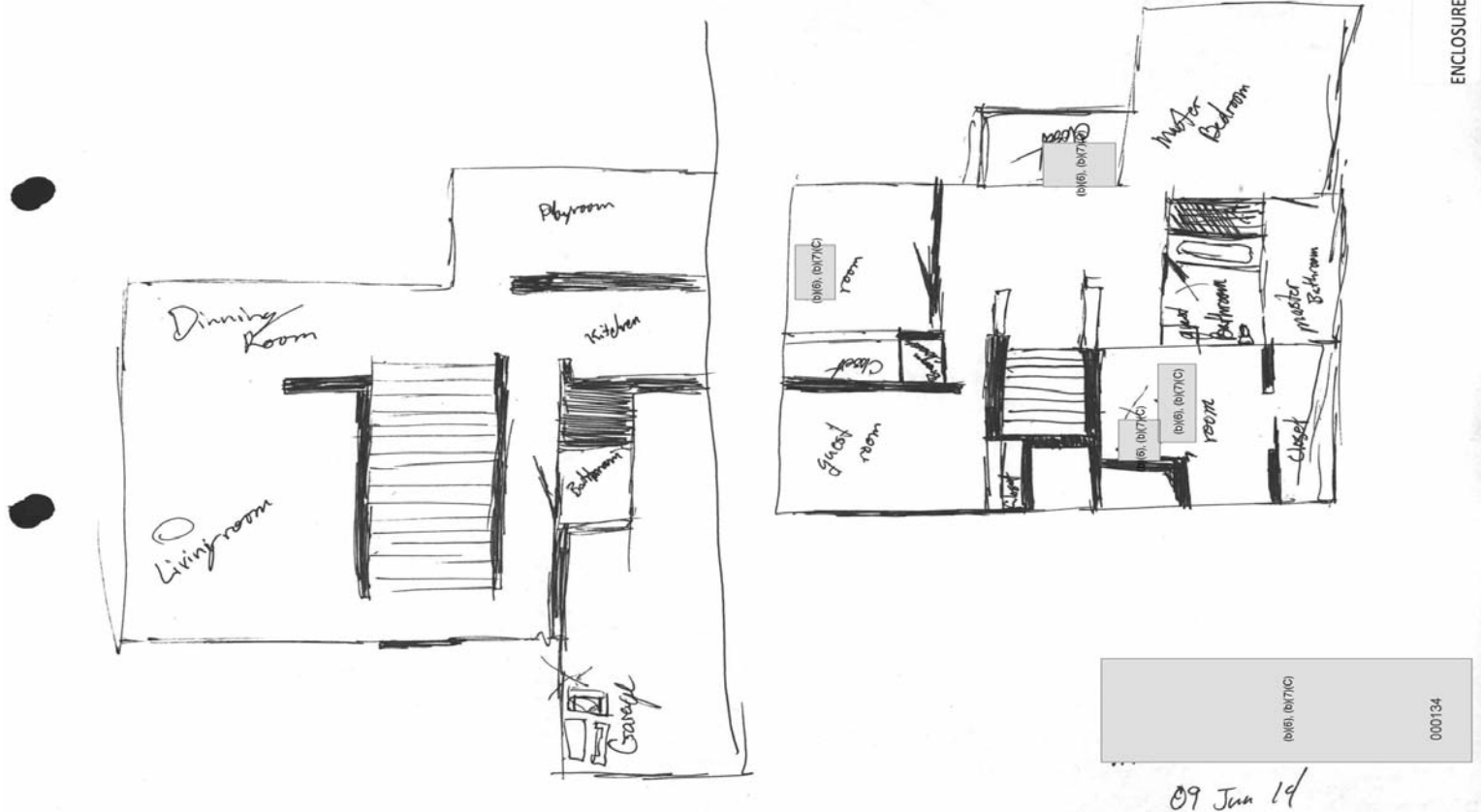
Cruz and his supporters relish his outsider status, highlighting his conflicts with fellow Republican senators. Not one has endorsed him for president. A group backing Cruz's candidacy sent out a fundraising email plea in December with the subject line "Washington hates Ted Cruz." Cruz frequently rails against the "Washington cartel," which he argues is scared that conservatives are uniting behind him, and says he's glad that "Washington elites" despise him.

Cruz supporters, including some who turned up for a large rally at an evangelical church near Richmond, Virginia, in December, are embracing the abrasiveness that's caused Cruz to clash with other Republicans. "They view him as a renegade in the GOP," said Carter Cobb, 56 and Navy retiree from Mechanicsville, Virginia. "He doesn't toe the party line. That's what we're

trying to get away from." To Cobb and others, Cruz is the only candidate willing to make anyone angry and stand up for what he believes in.

"It makes me like him all the more. I've always liked people who were on the outside," said Daniel Daehlin, 51, from Richfield, Minnesota. "Ronald Reagan never got along with the establishment. They hated him in 1976 and '80. I like Mr Smith Goes to Washington - someone who goes there, speaks his mind and doesn't try to cater to the inside-the-Beltway crowd." Myra Simons, a Cruz backer from Murfreesboro, Tennessee, agrees. "Are we going to elect someone just because you can't sit across the table and have dinner with them?" Simons said. "Or are you going to stand with someone who stands with the Constitution and is serious about the trouble our country is in?"

Cruz made his reputation in the Senate by refusing to compromise. He filibustered for 21 hours against President Barack Obama's health care law. The confrontational strategy he championed resulted in a 16-day partial government shutdown and alienated GOP leaders. But his reading of "Green Eggs and Ham" during that filibuster became a seminal moment for Cruz. He frequently refers to it, including in a recent television ad he ran in Iowa where he reads to his two daughters from reimagined holiday stories with a conservative bent such as "The Grinch Who Lost Her Emails." —AP



**This diagram taken from US Naval Criminal Investigative Service report, is of a drawing by Cpl Aaron C Masa during his interrogation showing the floor plan of the home, using X's and O's to show where the abuse occurred. — AP**

MILITARY KIDS SEXUALLY ABUSED HUNDREDS OF TIMES EACH YEAR

FIGURES OFFER GREATER INSIGHT INTO SEXUAL ABUSE

**WASHINGTON:** Cpl Aaron C Masa became fast friends with a fellow Marine during field training in North Carolina. But behind his buddy's back, Masa was sexually abusing his friend's 3-year-old stepdaughter. He also took sexually explicit photos of the girl and the Marine's infant daughter. A military judge convicted Masa last year of sexual abuse of a child and production of child pornography, according to court records and other documents detailing the case. Under the terms of a pretrial agreement, he pleaded guilty and received 30 years in prison.

In total, the children of service members, or military dependents, are sexually assaulted hundreds of times each year, data the Defense Department provided exclusively to The Associated Press show. The abuse is committed most often by male enlisted troops, according to the data, followed by family members. The figures offer greater insight into the sexual abuse of children committed by service members, a problem of uncertain scale due to a lack of transparency into the military's legal proceedings. With more than 1 million military dependents, the number of cases appears statistically small. But for a profession that prides itself on honor and discipline, any episodes of abuse cast a pall.

Barbara Boxer of California, Kirsten Gillibrand of New York and Mazie Hirono of Hawaii - told Carter in a Dec 8 letter they are concerned the department may be underestimating how many sexual assaults are occurring in the military.

could have occurred during the 2010 to 2014 period, involving a child who was victimized multiple times or a repeat abuser. The figures also account only for cases involving military dependents, which are the only child victims the department tracks.

**E-4 and E-6**

There were at least 1,584 substantiated cases of military dependents being sexually abused between fiscal years 2010 and 2014, according to the data. Enlisted service members sexually abused children in 840 cases. Family members of the victims accounted for the second largest category with 332 cases. Most of the enlisted

In Masa's case, military authorities first became aware of the alleged abuse in June 2014 after the 3-year-old told a neighbor that she did not like Masa because he touched her in certain places and "made it hurt," according to the Naval Criminal Investigative Service's investigation obtained through the Freedom of Information Act. NCIS blacked out all the names in the report, including Masa's. The AP identified him by the dates and events in the document that matched records from Masa's court-martial.



**OHIO:** This booking photo provided by the Washington County, Ohio Sheriff's Office shows Marine Corps Cpl Aaron C Masa of Whipple, Ohio. — AP

offenders were males whose ranks ranged between E-4 and E-6. In the Marine Corps and Army, for example, those troops are corporals, sergeants and staff sergeants. Officers were involved in 49 of the cases. The victims were overwhelmingly female.

Kathy Robertson, manager of the Family Advocacy Program, said in an emailed response to questions that the incident rates reflect the US military's demographics. Most of the cases involve the E-4 and E-6 ranks because they are the largest number of active-duty personnel and the largest number of parents in the military, she said. Duplications in the data indicate that as many as 160 additional cases of sexual abuse

**'Oddball'**

Masa, 24, admitted during questioning to at least five instances of sexually assaulting her, the NCIS report said. Investigators found nude photos of both girls on his cellphone and later discovered a pair of girl's underwear during a search of his mother's home in Ohio. The report depicted Masa as a loner with a troubled past. People interviewed by the Navy investigators described him as "oddball" who was picked on in high school in Marietta, Ohio. He graduated near the bottom of his class with a cumulative 1.782 GPA, according to his official transcript.

Masa watched a lot of sexually explicit Japanese animation known as hentai, the NCIS report said, and he had an intense interest in "furry porn," a genre of pornography in which animal characters with human arms and legs engage in sex. In 2008, Masa was arrested after threatening to bring a gun to school and shoot three other students, according to the NCIS report, which included details of the incident. Police didn't find a gun on him, but he had a knife. He pleaded guilty to a disorderly conduct charge.

He enlisted in the Marine Corps in June 2010, a month after graduating from high school. The arrest wasn't serious enough to bar Masa from enlisting. A Marine Corps spokesman said he was found qualified after a thorough screening process that involved physical, mental and moral evaluations. Stationed at Camp Lejeune, a sprawling installation on the North Carolina coast, Masa started a friendship with the Marine sergeant and his family in 2013, according to the 286-page NCIS report. They fished together and chopped wood for the sergeant's fire pit. Masa loaned the sergeant money to help the family through a financially difficult period and spent more and more time at their home, the report said. He babysat the girls and volunteered to give the older daughter a bath, the documents said. —AP

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS BATTLES FLOODING

**MISSISSIPPI:** Residents of flooded areas in far southern Illinois anxiously waited for the swollen Mississippi River to peak on Sunday, with hundreds electing to remain in their homes, as states downstream prepared for the rising waters. About 125 structures were flooded in hard-hit Alexander County, the southernmost point in Illinois, where three families near one breach stayed dry behind sandbag fortifications and private levees, county board Chairman Chalen Tatum said. The National Weather Service on Sunday canceled a flash flood watch for Alexander and two other Illinois counties, where record or near-record river levels have threatened levees.

Days of downpours totaling 10 inches or more in spots pushed the Mississippi and smaller rivers over their banks in several states. At least 31 people have died in Missouri, Illinois, Oklahoma and Arkansas, most of them after vehicles drove into flooded areas. Nine people have died in the Illinois flooding and a dozen counties have been declared disaster areas there, said Patti Thompson, spokeswoman for the Illinois Emergency Management Agency. In Alexander County, officials knocked on more than 500 doors to urge people to leave voluntarily, though many stayed, Tatum said. The voluntary evacuation could run another four days and no injuries or deaths have been reported, he said.

"The levees have a lot of pressure on them," Tatum said, adding that a breach two days ago in a levee west of Miller City in the county has reached a quarter-mile wide. "We hope they hold, but I don't want to bet someone's life on it." Tatum said many more homes were affected by a flood in 2011 and

expressed frustration that already approved buy-outs of more than 100 homes and small businesses related to that flooding have been stalled by an Illinois state budget impasse. The Mississippi receded further from dangerous levels at St. Louis and farther south at Thebes, Illinois, and Cape Girardeau, Missouri, on Sunday, the NWS said.

Significant flooding was expected into mid-January along the Mississippi River at points downstream, from Tennessee to Mississippi, Arkansas and Louisiana. "I hope it's going to slow down," said Kristy Morgan, an assistant manager of Little General Marathon Gas in Tiptonville, a small city in the northwest corner of Tennessee. "All I know is they have been working around the clock doing sand-bagging," Morgan said of city and county personnel and emergency agencies in the area. The river is expected to crest at the moderate flood stage on Thursday in Memphis, Tennessee, according to the NWS. In Louisiana, where crests at some points along the river are not expected until mid-January, officials are checking levees daily.

The river is expected to reach major flood stage from Arkansas City, Arkansas, to Natchez, Mississippi, the NWS said. Islands and camps inside the levee structures would be expected to flood, with some backup flooding from rivers that flow into the Mississippi, the NWS said. Exxon Mobil Corp said its 340,000 barrel-per-day refined products terminal in Memphis remained closed. On Friday the company decided to shut the terminal, just south of downtown, as flood waters threatened to inundate it. —Reuters



**MISSISSIPPI:** Boomtown Casino sits on the water in Biloxi, Mississippi. — AFP



## EL SALVADOR ISSUES TIPS FOR MIGRANTS AHEAD OF US CRACKDOWN

**SAN SALVADOR:** The government of El Salvador on Sunday offered advice to citizens living illegally in the United States, where immigration authorities have vowed to crack down on undocumented migrants. "Immigration agents have to present you with an order that has been signed by a judge in order to enter your home," read the information provided by the foreign ministry.

"If you are detained by an immigration agent, remain calm," the statement from the Salvadoran government continued. "If you have immigration papers, present them. If not, ask immediately to contact your attorney or the nearest consulate of El Salvador." The advice followed news reports last

week that President Barack Obama's administration is planning a vast operation to round up and expel undocumented migrants-including families who last year fled drought and violence in Central America.

News reports said the crackdown could begin as early as Monday and would target hundreds of families living in the US whose asylum requests had been rejected. Any such US action would be hugely controversial, with immigration one of the hottest topics in the 2016 presidential campaign and rights groups expressing grave concern at the planned deportations. Republican presidential frontrunner Donald Trump claimed on Twitter that the plans

were the outcome of pressure he had brought to bear on the migration issue.

In contrast, Democratic frontrunner Hillary Clinton's campaign said she had "real concerns" on the matter. The flow of Central American families and unaccompanied children crossing into the United States from Mexico slowed in early 2015, but the numbers surged again in October and November.

A Salvadoran foreign ministry source said that the nation's consulates in the US were bracing for an influx of requests for assistance from citizens residing in America. Refugee rights activists argue that migrants from Central America were fleeing

corruption, gang violence and drought and should be treated as refugees.

In El Salvador, a country of around six million, 6,065 homicides were reported between January and November last year, up from 3,924 for the whole of 2014. But a government spokeswoman on Immigration and Customs Enforcement said that Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson "has consistently said our border is not open to illegal immigration. "If individuals come here illegally, do not qualify for asylum or other relief, and have final orders of removal, they will be sent back consistent with our laws and our values," spokeswoman Gillian Christensen said. — AFP

## CHARLIE HEBDO 'FEELS ALONE' IN ITS FIGHT TO POKE FUN AT THE WORLD

**PARIS:** Charlie Hebdo, the French satirical weekly propelled to global notoriety when its cartoonists were shot dead by jihadist gunmen a year ago on Thursday, has been abandoned in its struggle to "laugh at everything", one of the survivors of the attack said. In the wake of the killing of eight of its staff on January 7, 2015, Charlie Hebdo became one of the best-known publications in the world and the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie flashed across social networks.

The newspaper was held up as a symbol of freedom of expression and an astonishing 7.5 million copies were sold of the first issue produced by its surviving staff just a week after the attack. But now those same staff feel they have been left to carry that torch alone, according to the newspaper's financial director, Eric Portehault, who escaped death by hiding behind his desk when the gunmen stormed in. "We feel terribly alone. We hoped that others would do satire too," he said. "No one wants to join us in this fight because it's dangerous. You can die doing it."

A month before the attack, Charlie Hebdo was close to shutting down as sales had dipped below 30,000. Its brand of provocative, no-holds-barred humor appeared to have gone out of fashion. Most people were unaware that its staff had been under police protection since it had published cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed in 2006. In 2011, its offices were firebombed and it was forced to move premises.

## Painful road

Despite the earlier threats, few people could have imagined an attack as bloody as that carried out by brothers Said and Cherif Kouachi in

the paper's modest offices in a quiet street in eastern Paris. The assault-claimed by Al-Qaeda's branch in the Arabian Peninsula—took the lives of Charlie Hebdo's top cartoonists, known by the nicknames Charb, Cabu and Wolinski, as well as nine other people, and sparked horror across the world. Donations poured in for the victims, and 200,000 people signed up for a subscription.

But that so-called "survivors' issue", featuring the Prophet Mohammed with a tear in his eye on the cover under the title "All is forgiven", also sparked violent protests in several Muslim countries. Despite losing many of its key staff, Charlie Hebdo has continued to produce a 16-page issue each Wednesday of cartoons and drawings that its creators take pains to point out-poke fun at all religions and politicians. But it has been an emotional experience for the staff left behind, including several who narrowly escaped death, such as cartoonist Laurent Sourisseau, known as Riss, who was seriously injured in the attack.

Riss, 49, took over the management of the paper and became its main shareholder. But some staff were unhappy with the new leadership and demanded more transparency in the management of the vast sums donated, to ensure they went to the victims and their families. The row calmed down, but one of Charlie's best-known cartoonists, Luz, resigned in September, saying he was too traumatized by the attack to continue. "Those we lost left an enormous, monstrous hole," said Portehault. "Others didn't want to work with us because they thought it was too dangerous, which is understandable. We have a Sword of Damocles hanging over our heads." — AFP



**BERLIN:** Migrants and refugees wait inside a separate tent for women and children at the central registration center for refugees and asylum seekers LaGeSo (Landesamt fuer Gesundheit und Soziales - State Office for Health and Social Affairs) LaGeSo in Berlin yesterday. — AP

## MERKEL ENTERS NEW YEAR UNDER PRESSURE TO CUT REFUGEE FLOW

## ANTI-IMMIGRANT AfD SHOOTS TO NEW HIGHS DESPITE INFIGHTING

**BERLIN:** For the past decade, German politics has been a relatively dull affair, with Angela Merkel dominating at the national level and the major parties in agreement on all the big issues, from euro zone bailouts and refugees to the phase-out of nuclear energy. But that may change in 2016, when five of Germany's 16 states hold elections in the build-up to the next federal vote a year later.

Not only is Chancellor Merkel looking more vulnerable than ever before because of her welcoming stance towards the hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing war in the Middle East, but the rise of the anti-immigrant Alternative for Germany (AfD) party has injected a new element of surprise into the political landscape. Add to that an unprecedented splintering of the electorate, which means that six parties have a legitimate shot of entering most state parliaments, and Germany's normally cozy, consensual politics begins to look a bit less predictable, and potentially more divisive, than it has in a long time.

The wild card is the threat of an attack by Islamist extremists on German soil, a risk highlighted on New Year's Eve when authorities received a tip that Iraqi and Syrian nationals were planning suicide bombings at train stations in Munich. It could be fatal for Merkel, officials in Berlin acknowledge in private, if such an attack were carried out successfully by people who entered Europe with the flood of migrants, as was the case with two of the men involved in the Nov. 13 attacks in Paris.

Even if Germany is spared such a horror, the refugee crisis will continue to dominate the political debate this year, polarizing voters and emboldening Merkel's opponents on the right and left. So far the most damaging attacks have come from her conservative sister party, the Bavarian Christian Social Union (CSU). "If we don't see success in limiting the tide of refugees, we could have a grassroots political tremor in Germany," said one senior government official, who declined to be named because of the sensitivity of the issue. "If Merkel doesn't deliver you could see the AfD approaching 20 percent in the polls," the official predicted.

## AFD on the rise

Currently the AfD is polling between 8-10 percent, roughly double the 4.7 percent the party won in the last federal election in 2013, when it narrowly failed to clear the 5 percent mark needed to enter the Bundestag. That seems relatively harm-

less if you compare it to other like-minded parties across Europe, like the National Front in France, the Freedom Party in Austria or the Danish People's Party, which enjoy more than twice as much support.

But the AfD's rise looks more significant when one considers that it has occurred against a backdrop of infighting and financial trouble within the party that might have crushed it. In the past half year, the party has weathered the departure of its founder, embarrassing slurs about African reproductive habits from one of its leading politicians, and a party financing law from the government that threatened to strip bare its coffers.

In response to the new law, the AfD asked its supporters for donations and raised roughly 2 million euros in just three weeks, a testament to its drawing power. In three state elections that are due to be held in March, the AfD's newfound strength will be on stark display. It is on track to win 7 percent in the western states of Baden-Wuerttemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate and roughly twice that in Saxony-Anhalt in the east. "In every one of these elections, the performance of the AfD will be key in determining what constellations are possible," Torsten Krauel wrote in a front-

page editorial in German daily Die Welt last week.

## More fragmented

The rise of the AfD and a nascent comeback by the Free Democrats (FDP), a business-friendly, socially liberal party that was the kingmaker of German politics for decades before imploding in the last federal vote, means that there are now three legitimate right-of-centre parties in Germany, including Merkel's conservative bloc. Add to that the three leading parties of the left, the Social Democrats (SPD), Greens and hard-left "Linke", and German politics looks more fragmented than at any time since reunification in 1990.

Merkel could yet emerge as the big loser from the new German political landscape if she is unable to stem the tide of refugees in the months ahead. If she is successful, it may be her coalition partner in Berlin, the SPD, who suffer most. The rise of the AfD and return of the FDP would make it more difficult for the SPD to form left-leaning majorities at the state or federal level, condemning it to second-tier status for the foreseeable future. And that weakness could turn the SPD into a more confrontational and unpredictable partner for Merkel as the next federal vote in 2017 approaches. — Reuters



**BERLIN:** A mother warms the hands of her little child in a tent at the central registration center for refugees and asylum seekers in Berlin yesterday. — AP



**PARIS:** An employee of a printing house near Paris looks at the cover of the latest edition of the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo bearing a headline which translates as "One year on: The assassin still at large" in an edition to mark the first anniversary of the terror attack which targeted the magazine's offices in Paris on January 7, 2015. — AFP

## MILITIA SPEND SECOND NIGHT IN STANDOFF AT US WILDLIFE RESERVE

**BURNS:** Scores of anti-government militia-men occupied a wildlife reserve in the US state of Oregon for a second night on Sunday, warning that their protest against the jailing of two ranchers, which has divided Americans, could last months. The group-thought to number up to 100 - began occupying the headquarters of the Malheur National Wildlife Reserve in southeastern Oregon on Saturday after a rally in support of ranchers Dwight Hammond, 73, and his son Steven, 46, who were jailed over fires on federal land in the area.

The local sheriff's department said in a statement on Sunday that the building's seizure was an effort by the group to instigate a confrontation with authorities.

"These men came to Harney County claiming to be part of militia groups supporting local ranchers, when in reality these men had alternative motives to attempt to overthrow the county and federal government in hopes to spark a movement across the United States," said the statement from David Ward, sheriff of Harney County, where the refuge is located. He added that efforts were under way to resolve the standoff "as quickly and peacefully as possible."

However, there was no visible police pres-

ence Sunday night at the reserve, where several militiamen in vehicles guarded the entrance while others kept watch from a lookout tower. There have also been no reports so far of any confrontation around the facility, which was closed when the militia moved in. The Oregonian news website reported that the FBI was handling the case. The protestors holed up inside the refuge-a loose-knit grouping of anti-government farmers, ranchers and survivalists-said they planned no violence but would not rule it out if authorities stormed the site.

They announced a press conference for Monday. School was cancelled in the area for the week and the county courthouse said it would be closed Monday "for security reasons." On the Internet, public opinion was divided about the #Oregonstandoff. "My instinct as conservative is law abiding," wrote a Twitter user under the handle @steph93065. "But when Fed Govt abuses people using the law, my instinct goes the other way." But others branded the takeover an act of domestic terrorism and called on the US government to deal harshly with the armed protesters. "Why aren't we calling the Oregon militia 'terrorists' - because they are white and Christian. that's why," @StephenDybas tweeted. — AFP



**OREGON:** A vehicle occupied by members of a small militia group enter the Malheur Wildlife Refuge Headquarters property some 30 miles from Burns, Oregon. — AFP

## SEEKING MOMENTUM ON GUN CONTROL, OBAMA TO TAKE CASE TO THE US PUBLIC

**WASHINGTON:** President Barack Obama will take his case for new gun control measures directly to the American people this week while proposing new executive actions in a final big effort to reduce gun violence during his last year in office. Obama meets with Attorney General Loretta Lynch on Monday to discuss his administration's options for tightening gun rules without going through the Republican-controlled Congress, which does not support the wide-ranging legislative changes that the Democratic president prefers.

Although the White House has not spelled out his plans specifically, they are expected to include measures that would require more gun sellers to become licensed dealers and conduct background checks on buyers. Guns are a potent issue in US politics. The right to bear arms is protected by the US Constitution, and the National Rifle Association, the top US gun rights group, is feared and respected in Washington for its ability to mobilize gun owners. Congress has not approved major gun-control legislation since the 1990s.

Republicans have roundly criticized the president's plans, calling them an overreach of his executive authority. "This president wants to act as if he's a king, as if he's a dictator," New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, a Republican presidential candidate, said on "Fox News Sunday."

"This is going to be another illegal executive action, which I'm sure will be rejected by the courts," Obama will take part in a one-hour town hall-style question-and-answer session on gun control broadcast on CNN at 8 p.m. EST on Thursday (0100 GMT on Friday), the White House said. The event, moderated by anchor Anderson Cooper, will give Obama a chance to respond to criticism and raise public support for the measures before his State of the Union address on Jan 12.

Obama launched a push to tighten US gun laws after the Newtown, Connecticut, school shooting massacre in 2012. But the push stalled in Congress. Last month's fatal shootings in San Bernardino, California, by a couple who authorities suspect were

inspired by Islamic State, gave further impetus to the White House to try again through executive actions. "It would be better for our security if it was harder for terrorists to purchase very powerful weapons," White House deputy national security adviser Ben Rhodes told reporters on Saturday in Hawaii, where Obama was concluding a two-week vacation. The president returned to Washington on Sunday.

Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the Democratic presidential front-runner who has said she would take executive action on guns if elected in the Nov. 8, 2016, election, praised Obama's anticipated move. "I applaud the president for taking a hard look at that and I believe he will take some actions to require more gun sellers to do background checks," Clinton said during a stop in New Hampshire, according to her campaign.

A Reuters/Ipsos poll last month showed 65 percent of respondents saying it was important that gun control be addressed in the United States, while 29.4 percent said it was unimportant. — Reuters



# 9 DEAD AS STRONG QUAKE HITS NORTHEAST INDIA

**GUWAHATI:** At least nine people were killed and scores injured yesterday when a strong 6.7 magnitude earthquake struck northeast India, sending panicked residents fleeing into the streets even hundreds of kilometers away in Bangladesh. Six were killed in India, the government said, while three people died in Bangladesh after suffering strokes or heart attacks following the early-morning quake. Anurag Gupta of India's National Disaster Management Authority said buildings had been damaged in Imphal, capital of Manipur state where the quake was centered.

"Six people are confirmed dead and 33 have been



**IMPHAL:** Indian woman Mina (left) is consoled by a family member after her mother and niece were killed in a 6.7 magnitude earthquake, in Leimakhong village on the outskirts of Imphal yesterday. — AFP

injured in Imphal. A six-storey building in the capital was partially damaged and some small structures have also developed cracks," he said.

An official at one of the main hospitals in Imphal however said more than 50 people had been admitted since the quake with head injuries and limb fractures. Imphal resident Deepak Shijagurumayum whose house was severely damaged described scenes of chaos after the quake. "Almost everyone was asleep when it struck and were thrown out of their beds," Shijagurumayum said by phone from the city.

"People were crying and praying in the streets and in open spaces. Hundreds remained outdoors for several hours fearing aftershocks." The US Geological Survey said the quake hit at 4:35 am (2305 GMT Sunday) 29 kilometers (18 miles) west-northwest of Imphal. The Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency said buildings had collapsed near the epicentre and the electricity supply had been cut in parts of Manipur, which borders Myanmar and has a long history of separatist unrest.

## 'State of shock'

Nearly 60 victims were being treated for their injuries in hospitals in Bangladesh, where the earthquake triggered panic on the streets of major cities. One 23-year-old Bangladeshi man died after suffering a stroke when he ran out of his house, while another two people—a farmer and a university official—died of heart attacks, police said. One of the wounded was a university student who jumped from a fourth-floor balcony and was in a critical condition.

There were similar scenes in the northeast Indian city of Guwahati, the main commercial city of the mineral-rich state of Assam, where an AFP correspondent said residents were "in a state of shock" after being woken by the shaking. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted that he had spoken to local authorities in Assam about the impact of the quake.

The tremors were felt as far away as Kolkata some 600 kilometers distant in the Indian state of West Bengal, where buildings shook. "Many people were seen coming out of their homes in panic," said local resident Rabin Dev.

India's seven northeastern states, joined to the rest of the country by a narrow sliver of land, are located in an area of frequent seismic activity. In 1950, dozens of villages were swallowed in a string of disasters generated by a powerful earthquake whose epicenter was in Tibet but which caused the greatest destruction to India's Assam state.

More than 1,500 people died in the quake, which had a magnitude of 7.6, and its disastrous aftermath of landslides and floods. There were no immediate reports of casualties on the Myanmar side of the border, a remote and sparsely populated area that suffered widespread damage this summer from landslides caused by torrential monsoon rains. The USGS has raised its assessment alert for casualties and damage to orange, meaning there is a 33 percent chance of between 100 and 1,000 fatalities. — AFP



**IMPHAL:** An Indian resident stands among damaged buildings in Imphal yesterday, after a strong 6.7 magnitude earthquake struck north-east India near the country's borders with Myanmar and Bangladesh. — AFP

# GUNFIGHTS NEAR INDIA'S AFGHAN CONSULATE AFTER AIR BASE ATTACK

## SUICIDE BOMBER STRIKES NEAR KABUL'S INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

**MAZAR-I-SHARIF:** Troops battled yesterday to end an hours-long gun and bomb siege near the Indian consulate in Afghanistan's Mazar-i-Sharif city, after a bloody weekend assault on an air base in India near the Pakistan border. Separately yesterday a suicide bomber struck near Kabul's international airport, underscoring the worsening security situation in Afghanistan. The lethal assaults on Indian targets appear aimed at derailing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's bold diplomatic outreach to arch-rival Pakistan following his first official visit to Afghanistan last month.

No group has so far claimed responsibility for the raid on the diplomatic mission in northern Afghanistan, the latest in a series of assaults on Indian installations in the country. Gunfights and grenade explosions echoed as commandos battled to flush out militants holed up in a building near the consulate, with powerful provincial Governor Atta Mohammad Noor overseeing the operation. "The attackers are enemies of Afghanistan who do not want peace," Noor told reporters. "We will suppress them as soon as possible."

But nearly 17 hours after the siege began, security officials said they were proceeding cautiously in the residential area to limit civilian casualties. An Indian official, who was hunkered down in a secure area within the diplomatic enclave, said all consulate employees were safe. "We are being attacked," the official said by telephone from inside the heavily guarded compound soon after the fighting erupted late Sunday evening. Local police said some consulate employees had been evacuated. The attack followed a raid over the weekend by sus-



**MAZAR-I-SHARIF:** An Afghan Quick Reaction Force (QRF) soldier fires a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) launcher during an operation near the Indian consulate in Mazar-i-Sharif yesterday. — AFP

pected Islamist insurgents on an air force base in the northern Indian state of Punjab. Seven soldiers were confirmed killed in the raid on the Pathankot base, which triggered a 14-hour gun battle Saturday and further firing Sunday.

It was not clear Monday whether any surviving attackers remained inside the base but troops were checking the area. "The operation continues at the base. (With) intermittent firing... we are moving step by step to sanitize the area," an army spokesperson in Pathankot said. "It's too early to say when the operation will be over." Officials suspect the gunmen belong to the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed,

the group that staged the 2001 attack on the Indian parliament that brought the two countries to the brink of war.

The brazen attack was apparently aimed at undermining the fragile peace process between the nuclear-armed rivals.

## 'Proxy war'

The spike in violence came about a week after Modi paid a surprise visit to Pakistan, the first by an Indian premier in 11 years. The visit immediately followed a whirlwind tour of Kabul, where Modi inaugurated an Indian-built parliament complex and gave three Russian-made helicopters to the Afghan government. India has been a key

supporter of Kabul's post-Taliban government, and analysts have often pointed to the threat of a "proxy war" in Afghanistan between India and Pakistan.

Pakistan—the historic backer of the Taliban—has long been accused of assisting the insurgents, especially with attacks on Indian targets in Afghanistan. The Taliban have also stepped up attacks on government and foreign targets in Afghanistan, a year after US-led NATO forces formally ended their combat mission in the country. "A suicide bomber in a Toyota sedan detonated his vehicle... near Kabul airport" on Monday, said interior ministry spokesman Sediq Sediqqi. "Fortunately only the attacker was killed," he added, clarifying an earlier ministry statement that the bomber was on foot. The latest unrest coincides with a renewed international push to revive peace talks with the resurgent militant movement.

On January 11 Afghanistan and Pakistan are set to hold a first round of dialogue also involving the US and China to try to lay out a comprehensive roadmap for peace. Pakistan, which wields considerable influence over the Afghan Taliban, hosted a milestone first round of talks in July. But the negotiations stalled when the insurgents belatedly confirmed the death of longtime leader Mullah Omar. The attack on the consulate in Mazar-i-Sharif was the latest on high-profile Indian targets in Afghanistan. In 2008 a car bomb at the Indian embassy in Kabul killed 60 people and the facility was again hit by a suicide strike in 2009. Nine civilians, including seven children, were killed in August 2013 when suicide bombers targeted the Indian consulate in the eastern city of Jalalabad. — AFP

## SRI LANKA'S TAMILS WELCOME LAND, DEMAND END TO ARMY OCCUPATION

**COLOMBO:** Sri Lanka's main opposition yesterday welcomed President Maithripala Sirisena's promise of land for 100,000 people who were forced from their homes during the long civil war, most of them Tamils. The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) said Sirisena's pledge to give displaced civilians new plots within six months was a "positive development", but demanded that the military vacate the private land it occupied.

"This is the first time he is giving a timeframe," TNA spokesman M A Sumanthiran told AFP a day after Sirisena made the offer. "We welcome this as a very positive development but our stand is that the military must vacate all private lands they are occupying." Sirisena, who was elected last January, has won praise for starting to hand back land after the end in May 2009 of one of South Asia's longest and bloodiest ethnic wars. But he is also under international pressure to do more to ensure reconciliation. The president told AFP in an interview Sunday he would give land to civilians displaced by war by the middle of this year.

He admitted it was an "ambitious target" but said it was necessary to end what he called an "unacceptable situation". The land will be in addition to the property being handed back by the military in line with an earlier election pledge by Sirisena. More than 100,000 people are still living away from their homes more than six years after the end of the war, Sumanthiran said, while another 168,000 live as refugees in neighboring India. The civil war pitted troops against guerrillas fighting for independence for the Tamil minority in the north and east of the island. The fighting claimed over 100,000 lives between 1972 and 2009. — AFP

# INDIAN AIR BASE ATTACK THREATENS PAKISTAN TALKS, 5TH GUNMAN KILLED

**PATHANKOT:** A rapprochement effort between India and Pakistan appeared to be in jeopardy yesterday, as Indian security forces battled for the third day to clear out militants who attacked one of its air bases and killed seven soldiers. The foreign secretaries of the nuclear-armed neighbors are due to meet for talks on Jan 15, building on a thaw in relations after a surprise visit by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif last month. But an Indian government official said India was now considering whether to go ahead with the talks or not, and that a final decision will be taken once the operations to secure the Pathankot Air Force base in Punjab state are over.

The government official, who requested anonymity, said it could take another 48 hours for the base to be secured, and by then the government hoped to have more information about the attackers and what links they may have to Pakistan, if any. Yesterday, the United Jihad Council, an alliance of more than a dozen pro-Pakistan militant groups based in Pakistan-administered Kashmir, claimed responsibility for the air base attack, according to a statement from the group's spokesman.

"The attack is a message by Mujahideen (militants) that no sensitive installation of India is out of our reach," said UJC spokesman Syed Sadaqat Hussain in a statement, a copy of which was seen by Reuters. The attack on the base, which started before dawn on Saturday, is a rare targeting of an Indian military installation outside of the disputed Kashmir region. Indian security forces have killed five militants involved in the attack, said Major General Dushyant Singh, of India's counter-terrorism force, the National Security Guard, at a briefing yesterday.

But gunfire could still be heard at the base on the third day of operations. It was unclear how many militants remained at large, if any. As well as the seven Indian security personnel killed, 22 had been wounded. "Operations will continue to be conducted until we can render the base fully safe," said Singh. Pakistan has condemned the attack and said it wanted to build on the goodwill created by the

impromptu meeting between Modi and Sharif last month. Separately, late on Sunday, the Indian consulate in the northern Afghan city of Mazar-i-Sharif came under attack.

## Conflicting reports

Indian security officials have given conflicting accounts on whether the attackers at the Pathankot air base were

still active after Home Minister Rajnath Singh declared on Saturday evening that they had been "neutralized". The reluctance of officials to declare the mission complete appeared to reflect an abundance of caution until all the attackers' bodies had been accounted for. The sound of continuing gunfire from the base added confusion to the picture. — Reuters



**BANGALORE:** Indian Army personnel carry the coffin of slain National Security Guard Bomb Disposal Squad personnel, thirty-four-year-old lieutenant colonel Niranjan Kumar, who died while defusing a grenade at the scene of a terror attack in Pathankot, after family members paid their last respects at his residence in Bangalore yesterday. — AFP



## CHINA COMMUNIST PARTY REINFORCES BAN ON SUPERSTITION

**BEIJING:** China's ruling Communist party has tightened its ban on members believing in "feudal superstitions", state media said, as part of new regulations on discipline. President Xi Jinping, whose power derives from his position as the ruling party's general secretary, has been tightening his control on the organization in recent months alongside a much-publicized anti-corruption drive. Xi has demanded closer adherence to ideological teachings from its 88

million members and warned them against publicly questioning official policies.

Superstitious practices, such as reliance on fortune telling and the traditional Chinese practice of feng shui, go against the party's core belief in Marxism, which claims to be founded on the scientific method. A number of high-level party officials have been accused of participating in superstitious practices in recent years. Zhou Yongkang, the former

head of domestic security and the highest official to fall in the anti-graft campaign, sought advice from Cao Yongzheng, a fortune teller and master of the Chinese meditation practice of "qigong". Cao later testified against Zhou during his trial.

The new party rules, which came into force on January 1, threaten members who "organize" superstitious activities with expulsion, while those who merely participate in them face warnings, Xinhua

said Sunday. The language is stronger than a previous 2003 version of party rules, when "feudal superstition" was included under the broader heading of activities that "disturb productivity, work, or the social order". The new rules put "feudal superstitions" into its own category, making it a distinct violation of party discipline. But the organization has been seeking to purge it from its ranks since the days of Mao Zedong. — AFP

## AUSTRALIAN MINISTER SORRY FOR 'MAD WITCH' TEXT TO JOURNALIST

**SYDNEY:** Australian Immigration Minister Peter Dutton has apologized to a journalist for mistakenly sending her a message calling her a "mad witch". Dutton admitted that he sent the text after reading a column written by Samantha Maiden, political editor for News Corp's Sunday newspapers. "I apologized to her straight away which she took in good faith," the minister said in a statement late Sunday. "Sam and I have exchanged some robust language over the years, so we had a laugh after this."

Maiden said Monday she was not offended despite reports the message included some very strong language. News Corp's Daily Telegraph called the SMS text "blistering". "Certainly, he did call me a mad witch, that much is true," she told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. "I was more than happy to accept Peter Dutton's apology. As soon as he sent me that text saying 'Mate, she's a bit of a mad witch' I sent him a text saying

'Mate, you've sent the text to the mad witch.' 'Bit of a rookie error,' Maiden said, adding that Dutton should not be stripped of his portfolio.

The message was reportedly intended for the former cities and built environment minister Jamie Briggs in response to her coverage of his resignation last Tuesday. Briggs confessed to an "error of professional judgment" in a Hong Kong bar with a female public servant.

Media reports said he put his arm around a young consulate staffer and kissed her on the cheek. Dutton was also in hot water last September when a microphone picked up his attempted joke to then prime minister Tony Abbott about time-keeping on Pacific islands and the threat of sea flooding due to climate change. "Time does not mean anything when you are about to have water lapping at your door," Dutton quipped, before being told a microphone was still on. —AFP

## HK LEADER 'VERY CONCERNED' OVER MISSING BOOKSELLERS

**HONG KONG:** Hong Kong's leader said he was "very concerned" yesterday over the disappearance of five booksellers known for publications critical of the Chinese government after a prominent lawmaker accused mainland security officers of kidnapping the men. The booksellers all worked for the same Hong Kong-based publishing house and are feared to have been detained by Chinese authorities, adding to growing unease that freedoms in the semi-autonomous city are being eroded.

Under its mini-constitution, Hong Kong enjoys freedom of speech and Chinese law enforcers have no right to operate in the city. "I and related government departments are very concerned," Leung Chun-ying told reporters. "The government cares very much about Hong Kong residents' rights and safety." He added: "Only legal enforcement agencies in Hong Kong have the legal authority to enforce laws in Hong Kong." Democratic legislator Albert Ho said Sunday he believed the men had been kidnapped by Chinese security officers.

At a regular briefing yesterday, Beijing's foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said: "I'm not aware of the situation; I have nothing to offer," when asked about the latest bookseller to disappear, Lee Bo, who went missing last week. But an editorial in the Global Times newspaper, close to China's Communist Party, accused the bookstore run by the missing men of selling publications containing "maliciously fabricated content". "These books spread to the mainland by various means, becoming a source of political rumors, and creating negative effects," it said. "Although the... bookstore is based in Hong Kong, it maintains itself by causing trouble in the mainland."

The editorial, signed by Shan Renping, a pen name for the newspaper's editor Hu Xijin, said a "handful" of Hong Kongers were launching "political attacks". "In the era of the Internet, their impact is not limited to Hong

Kong, but also leaks into the mainland, and becomes a genuine problem facing the country," it said. When Leung was asked yesterday whether he thought the men had been taken to the mainland, he said there was "no indication" and appealed for anyone with information to come forward.

### Pressure on leader

Opponents criticized unpopular Leung, who is considered close to Beijing and a hate figure for Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement. "The Hong Kong government and Leung Chun-ying should express to the top level on the mainland Hong Kong people's concern, instead of awaiting a reply," said pro-democracy lawmaker Lee Cheuk-yan. Acting secretary for security John Lee said Sunday that Hong Kong police had made enquiries to their mainland counterparts and were yet to hear back, according to local media.

Lawmakers including Hong Kong's pro-Beijing former security chief Regina Ip have urged the government to investigate. All five men worked for publishing firm Mighty Current, which is rumored to have been about to launch a book on Chinese President Xi Jinping's former girlfriend. The latest employee to disappear was 65-year-old Lee, last seen in Hong Kong Wednesday. His wife said he had told her he was "assisting in an investigation" in a call made after he failed to come home for dinner Wednesday night.

She reported him missing to police on Friday. Hong Kong police are investigating the disappearance of Lee and of three co-workers who are believed to have gone missing in Shenzhen. The fifth, a Swedish national, was reported to have disappeared in Thailand. Sweden's embassies in Bangkok and Beijing are reportedly investigating his disappearance. Hong Kong is semi-autonomous after being handed back to China by Britain in 1997 and enjoys freedoms unseen on the mainland. — AFP



**TAIPEI:** Members of the youth group from the pro-independent Taiwan Solidarity Party (TSU) display placards to protest against the summit in Singapore between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Taiwan's President Ma Ying-jeou, in front of the presidential palace in Taipei. — AFP

## FRUSTRATED YOUTH PUSH FOR POWER IN TAIWAN ELECTIONS

### ANGER SWELLS AMONG A GENERATION OF DISAFFECTED YOUTH

**TAIPEI:** Young activists frustrated by Chinese interference and pessimistic about the future are standing for election in Taiwan this month, determined to shake up politics in a move set to alarm Beijing. The vote comes after Beijing-wary campaigners in Hong Kong won seats in recent elections, a further challenge to Chinese influence as anger swells among a generation of disaffected youth. In Taiwan, the dramatic occupation of parliament in 2014 by student-led protesters over a China trade pact reflected increasing resistance to Beijing as young Taiwanese seek to forge and protect their identity.

It was also borne out of more everyday frustrations-low salaries, fewer job opportunities and unaffordable housing as the economy stagnates. Although young Taiwanese had staged protests in the past, none had been on the scale of the Sunflower Movement's occupation of parliament. Now, in the first island-wide election since the protests, activists are determined to push for political power, saying standing for office is the best way to bring change.

"Social movements can't obtain real political influence because Taiwan's system is too closed and too conservative," said Tseng Po-yu, 24, a spokeswoman for the Sunflower Movement who is standing for the newly-formed Green Party-Social Democratic Party Alliance. Tseng would become the youngest ever member of parliament and said many of her policies revolve around improving life for young people. "It's impossible for young people to save money with low salaries and rising consumer prices, let alone

to afford the skyrocketing housing prices," said Tseng. "I want to speak up for young people who are concerned about their future... We deserve better lives."

### Hong Kong connection

Similar frustrations in semi-autonomous Hong Kong led to the pro-democracy Umbrella Movement, which brought parts of the city to a standstill in late 2014. The student-led rallies were sparked by Beijing imposing restrictions on leadership elections, but were also an expression of frustration in a city where salaries cannot keep up with soaring house prices. Former Hong Kong protesters recently took seats in district elections, although pro-Beijing forces dominated the polls in a key test of public sentiment. "Young people are an economic minority as both (Hong Kong and Taiwan) government policy focus is not on them; their dissatisfaction exploded in the movements," said William Niu, a political analyst at the Chinese Culture University in Taipei. "It is the awakening of many young people in Taiwan and Hong Kong who are fearful of being marginalized in society," he added.

### Beijing concerns

Taiwan is self-ruling after splitting with China in 1949 following a civil war but has never formally declared independence from Beijing, which regards it as a breakaway territory to be reunited by force if necessary. The vote on January 16 is likely to see the ruling Beijing-friendly Kuomintang (KMT) lose the presidency

and possibly their majority in parliament. The main opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) is expected to win the leadership, sweeping away eight years of KMT rule that saw a rapprochement with China.

Traditionally Beijing-sceptic, the DPP is treading a careful line over its China strategy, saying that it wants to "maintain the status quo". Young activists are far more vocal about their antipathy towards Beijing. Terrence Lin, 34, a former flight attendant who participated in both the Sunflower and Umbrella movements, will stand for lawmaker in the Taiwan elections. "I joined the rallies because I dislike Chinese propaganda in Hong Kong. I think Chinese propaganda in Taiwan is more subtle but more dangerous," he said. "If you really want to change things... run for office." The younger generation's newfound political ambitions will bother Beijing, according to analysts.

"I think Beijing is keeping a close eye and is concerned about the changes in politics," said Chang Wu-yuch, a China expert at Tamkang University in Taipei. Beijing "is enhancing its youth policy," focusing on the job and business opportunities China can offer, says Chang. But with young people growing more wary of Beijing's influence, China's overtures may fall on deaf ears. "I want a diverse parliament so different voices can be heard," said Wang Po-chieh, a 21-year-old college student and first-time voter in Taipei. Office assistant Cheng Li-Chun, 25, said it was time for a new direction. "If we don't support small parties this time, things will never change," she said. — AFP



**HONG KONG:** Police officers stand guard after protesters stick photos of missing booksellers during a protest outside the Liaison of the Central People's Government in Hong Kong. — AP

## PHILIPPINES FOLLOWS VIETNAM IN OPPOSING CHINA'S RUNWAY TEST

**MANILA:** The Philippine government said yesterday that like Vietnam, it opposes China's recent test of a newly completed runway on one of seven islands Beijing has constructed in the disputed South China Sea.

Department of Foreign Affairs spokesman Charles Jose said the government was considering protesting China's action, as Vietnam did, adding that the test at Fiery Cross Reef "adds to tension and uncertainties in the region." Vietnam last week protested the test, saying it violated Hanoi's sovereignty, and demanded that China stop such actions. China rejected Hanoi's protest and will likely dismiss Manila's concerns as well.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said Saturday that China deployed a "civil aircraft" on the island, which it calls Yongsu Jiao, to determine whether the new airfield in what she said was Chinese territory con-

formed to civil aviation standards. The early diplomatic tussle presages a continuation this year of tense exchanges, mainly among China, Vietnam and the Philippines, over long-disputed and potentially oil- or gas-rich offshore territories also claimed by Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei.

Tensions have risen in the last two years after China transformed disputed reefs in the Spratly Islands into islands that rival claimants fear Beijing could use to project its military might far from the Chinese mainland and threaten their territories. The United States has expressed alarm over China's island-making in the disputed waters and deployed a guided missile destroyer near Subi Reef in October to challenge Beijing's claim of sovereignty in the waters around the artificial islands. China blasted the US action and warned Washington not to repeat the maneuver. — AP

## JAPAN PM SEEKS TO BURNISH LEGACY AHEAD OF ELECTION

**TOKYO:** Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, stymied by a still sputtering economy, is seeking to burnish his legacy and shore up support ahead of an election in the summer. "Challenges, challenges and still more challenges," Abe said in summing up the coming year in a nationally televised news conference yesterday. Abe said he expects to make progress on sweeping reforms he has promised, likening himself to the 18th-century "Abarenbo Shogun," or "Rogue General" Tokugawa Yoshimune, a national leader renowned for his efforts to reduce waste, clean up corruption and instill samurai values of discipline and leadership.

Until July, Abe's focus is bound to be on ensuring victory in the election for the Upper House of parliament in July, said Michael Cucek, an expert on Japanese politics who teaches at Tokyo's Waseda University. Abe's position is strong, with backing by the coalition partner Komeito, and the opposition has failed to regain much traction after a resounding loss of power to Abe's conservative Liberal Democrats in December 2012. But local political superstition holds that every nine years a setback in Upper House elections forces the prime minister to step down.

"Observers will be watching closely to see whether he is able to break the jinx," the Jiji news agency said in a commentary yesterday. Given the slow pace of the economic recovery so far, with inflation still nowhere near the government's 2 percent goal and wages and spending still in the doldrums, Abe has been highlighting more obvious progress on the diplomatic front. Three years of relentless overseas travel have helped restore some of the stature Japan ceded during the past two decades of economic malaise, winning Abe widespread respect at home.

In an address to parliament's opening session yesterday, Abe pointed to concrete results from those travels, including the recent sale of Japanese high-speed train technology to India. Last week,



**TOKYO:** Japanese Finance Minister Taro Aso (right) delivers a fiscal policy speech while Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (top left) attends the start of a 150-day ordinary Diet session in Tokyo yesterday. The 190th ordinary session of the Diet convoked. —AFP

the government reached an agreement with neighboring South Korea on the issue of women forced into sexual slavery for Japanese troops during World War II. Abe also said yesterday that he hoped for talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin on a territorial dispute that, 70 years after the war's end, is still preventing Tokyo and Moscow from signing a peace treaty.

Abe said he hoped Japan's hosting in May of the summit of the Group of Seven industrial nations in Ise, scenic islands in central Japan, would prove a turning point for the global economy. Abe acknowledged that his efforts to get the economy fully into recovery mode were only "halfway there." The good news: Share prices are up nearly 77 per-

cent from early 2013, with a 9.1 percent gain for 2015. At about 120 yen per US dollar, the currency remains favorably weak for exporters, the jobless rate is near 3 percent and corporate profits have been surging to new highs.

But Japan narrowly avoided a recession in 2015 and the latest vital signs were weak: Factory output fell in November, as did household spending and incomes. The year started on a sour note, as the Nikkei dropped nearly 3 percent in its 2016 opening session. The prime minister's evolving pre-election strategy spans both short-term populist priorities and broader, longer-term aims meant to counter angst over Japan's aging and shrinking population. —AP



## ASSEMBLY TO MEET TO DISCUSS TURMOIL

Continued from Page 1

member country is an aggression against other members. The lawmaker however emphasized on the important roles of both Iran and Saudi Arabia and called for defusing tensions between them through dialogue in order to strengthen security and stability in the region. Awadhi said that if tensions escalate between Saudi Arabia and Iran, it will lead to instability and chaos in the region, adding that worsening ties between the two regional heavyweights will only benefit Israel.

MP Abdullah Al-Turaiji supported the Saudi action in severing ties with Tehran, saying the action is natural and comes from a country that respects its sovereignty

and rejects any foreign intervention in its internal affairs. He accused Iran of meddling into the affairs of several countries like Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Lebanon and others. Turaiji rejected Tehran's claims that those who attacked the Saudi embassy are individuals and accused the Islamic republic of trying to create problems in the region.

In another development, MP Fares Al-Otaibi has announced that he plans to file a request to grill Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh over reported government plans to hike prices of fuel and charges on public services. Otaibi did not give a date for filing the grilling. The government has announced that it is still studying the issue of reducing subsidies on fuel and services.

## JORDAN FREES BROTHERHOOD DEPUTY LEADER

Continued from Page 1

Rsheid called for genuine political reforms, suggesting that the government has not kept its previous promises. "We have heard a lot of talk about reforms, but we don't see any results," he said. Jordan's government spokesman, Mohammed Momani, said Rsheid "served his time after being sentenced by the court". Rsheid did not win early

release, said Momani. Under the Jordanian system, a year-long term means less than 12 months in prison, said Murad Adayleh, a Brotherhood spokesman. The charges against Rsheid came at a time of growing polarization in the region, with some Arab countries such as Egypt and the UAE adopting a harder stance against Islamist groups. The Muslim Brotherhood has been formally banned in Egypt and several Arab Gulf countries. — AP

## SWEDEN, DENMARK TIGHTEN BORDERS

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Under Schengen rules, countries are allowed to re-introduce border checks for up to six months in exceptional circumstances.

Yesterday, extra security staff were on hand at the Danish side of the Oresund crossing, a major entry point for migrants and refugees hoping to start a new life in Sweden. The controls proceeded smoothly but travellers were warned to expect longer queues and delays during the early evening rush hour when commuters with jobs in Denmark return home to Sweden. Tens of thousands of journeys are recorded on the bridge each day, including 8,600 people who commute between jobs and their homes in Copenhagen and the southern Swedish city of Malmö.

Under the new rules, all rail passengers now have to exit the train at Copenhagen airport's Kastrup station and clear checkpoints before boarding again. A private security company at the station could be seen checking and photographing traveller IDs before allowing passengers on trains. Officials at Danish train operator DSB confirmed a small number of people had been turned away, but would not specify if they were migrants or just commuters lacking proper ID. "If they don't have photo ID then we say sorry, we can't let you on board," DSB

spokesman Tony Bispekov said.

Temporary fencing has also been erected at Kastrup station to prevent people from trying to sneak onto Sweden-bound trains. "It's as if we are building a Berlin Wall here. We are going several steps back in time," said Michael Randropp, a spokesman for the local Kystbanen commuters' association.

The new measures come after Sweden - which has taken in more asylum seekers per capita than any other EU nation - said it could no longer cope with the unregulated flow of arrivals. More than one million migrants reached Europe in 2015, most of whom were refugees fleeing war and violence in Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, according to the United Nations refugee agency. Europe has struggled to respond to the continent's biggest refugee crisis since World War II, with several Schengen countries, including Germany, Austria and France, already re-imposing border checks last year.

Last week Norway, which is not an EU member but belongs to Schengen, announced it would start turning back refugees without visas arriving from elsewhere in the Schengen area, particularly Sweden. And Finnish border guards recently began requiring ferry operators to make sure that migrants have either visas or residency permits before being allowed to board, cutting off one of the last migrant routes to Finland. — AFP

## SUNNI MOSQUES BOMBED IN IRAQ, MUEZZIN...

Continued from Page 1

A witness said he saw gunmen shoot dead a young man displaced from his home town of Ramadi who had been living in the mosque with his family. "The armed men killed one of the displaced who lives in the mosque" with his wife and two children, the resident said on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals. A Hilla doctor confirmed the death. Ramadi is a Sunni city where Iraqi federal forces reclaimed the upper hand a week ago after months of battling the Islamic State group.

The Al-Fateh mosque in a village called Sinjar, just outside Hilla, was also destroyed overnight. A police captain said three or four men in military uniforms were involved in that bombing. "They took advantage of the cold weather, there was nobody outside," he said. A medical source in Hilla said three people were wounded in the explosions.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the blasts, nor for the killing of the muezzin from a Sunni mosque in Iskandariyah, a town about 40 km south of Baghdad, who was also shot dead overnight, several sources said. A local councillor identified the slain muezzin of the Mohammed Abdullah Jabbouri mosque in Haswa as Taha Al-Juburi. "He was ambushed by unknown gunmen near his house," a source in Iskandariyah police said. A doctor also confirmed his death.

Iskandariyah is part of a mixed Sunni-Shiite area south of Baghdad which was once dubbed "the triangle

of death" and was badly affected by sectarian violence last decade. Pushing back IS in this region after the jihadists took over large parts of the country in 2014 was one of the priorities of the government and allied Shiite militias. That was achieved in a few months and IS has been largely eradicated from the area but violence - of a sectarian nature and crime-driven - has remained frequent.

The weekend execution in Saudi Arabia of prominent Shiite cleric Nimr Al-Nimr sparked outrage in Iraq. Shiite politicians and clerics unanimously condemned the execution but several religious figures in the Sunni minority also denounced it. "We ordered Babil operations command to hunt down the criminal gangs of Daesh (IS) and their likes who targeted mosques to sow sedition and undermine national unity," Abadi said on Twitter.

Thousands of supporters of prominent Iraqi Shiite cleric Moqtada Sadr demonstrated near the foreign ministry yesterday, demanding all ties with Saudi Arabia be broken off. The protesters threatened to storm the so-called "Green Zone" where the newly reopened Saudi embassy is located but they were held back by organizers and riot police. Iran has accused Saudi Arabia of using Nimr's execution to stoke sectarian tensions in the region. Tehran has warned the Gulf monarchy it would pay a "high price" for the execution, which was one of 47 carried out on Saturday. The Saudi embassy in Tehran was firebombed by an angry mob, prompting Riyadh to respond by announcing it was breaking off diplomatic relations with Iran. — AFP



A zoo keeper poses with meerkats during the annual stocktake photocall at London Zoo in central London yesterday. The compulsory annual count is required as part of the zoo's license. — AFP

## ALLIES FOLLOW SUIT AS SAUDI ARABIA CUTS TIES...

Continued from Page 1

Adel Al-Jubeir saying "Iran's history is full of negative interference and hostility in Arab issues". Bahrain accused Iran of "increasing flagrant and dangerous meddling" in Gulf and Arab states, while the UAE said Iranian interference had reached "unprecedented levels". Sudan's Foreign Ministry announced an "immediate severing of ties" over the diplomatic mission attacks. The statement carried by its state-run news agency said it made the decision in "solidarity with Saudi Arabia in the face of Iranian schemes". Somalia also criticized the attack on Saudi diplomatic posts in Iran as a "flagrant violation" of international law.

Some 80 Saudis, including diplomats and their families, had already left Iran and arrived in Dubai yesterday, diplomatic sources said. The Saudi civil aviation authority said that as part of the cut in ties all flights to and from Iran were being suspended. The move was likely to affect the annual hajj pilgrimage. Lawmaker Mohammad Ali Esfanani, spokesman of the Judicial and Legal Committee of the Iranian parliament, said security issues and the fact that Iranian pilgrims wouldn't have consular protection inside the kingdom made halting the pilgrimage likely, according to the semi-official ISNA news agency.

Both Saudi Arabia and Iran have yet to make any formal announcement about how the diplomatic spat would affect the hajj, a pilgrimage to Islamic holy sites in Saudi Arabia required of all able-bodied Muslims once in their life. The hajj this year likely will begin in early September, though Muslims travel to the holy sites all year long. When Saudi Arabia severed ties with Iran from 1988 to 1991, Iran stopped its pilgrims from attending the hajj. With Saudi diplomatic missions closed in Iran, it will make it difficult for Iranians to get visas for the hajj.

Iranian officials denounced the Saudi moves as tactics that would inflame regional tensions. "Saudi Arabia sees not only its interests but also its existence in pursuing crises and confrontations and (it) attempts to resolve its

internal problems by exporting them to the outside," foreign ministry spokesman Hossein Jaber Ansari said. Iran and Saudi Arabia are on opposing ends of a range of crucial issues in the Middle East, including the war in Syria - where Tehran backs President Bashar al-Assad's regime and Riyadh supports rebel forces - and Yemen where a Saudi-led coalition is battling Shiite insurgents.

The UN peace envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, was due in Riyadh later yesterday for talks aimed at defusing tensions, ahead of a visit to Iran, the UN spokesman said. The spike in tensions comes after Iran last year secured a historic nuclear deal with world powers led by the United States, sparking major concern in Riyadh, a long-time US ally. The Cairo-based Arab League said it would hold an emergency meeting at Riyadh's request on Sunday to discuss the attacks on Saudi diplomatic premises and alleged Iranian interference.

British Prime Minister David Cameron said the tensions were "hugely concerning", Germany expressed its "dismay" and called for the restoration of diplomatic ties, and France urged a "de-escalation of tensions". Iran's President Hassan Rouhani, a moderate, on Sunday criticized those who attacked the diplomatic buildings, calling them radicals, and 50 suspects were arrested. But the country's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei warned Riyadh its rulers would face "quick consequences" for executing Nimr. Some 3,000 demonstrators gathered for a new rally in Tehran yesterday, chanting anti-Saudi slogans and burning US and Israeli flags.

Meanwhile, Nimr's family is holding three days of mourning at a mosque in Al-Awamiya village in the kingdom's Qatif region in predominantly Shiite eastern Saudi Arabia. The sheikh's brother, Mohammed Al-Nimr, told AP that Saudi officials informed his family that the cleric had been buried in an undisclosed cemetery. Early yesterday, the state-run Saudi Press Agency said a shooting targeting security forces in the village killed a man and wounded a child. It offered no motive for the attack, nor for another it said saw a mob beat and briefly kidnap a man driving through the area. — Agencies

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• Salmiya (Salem Al-Mubarak str.) • Farwaniya ( Behind police Station) • Fahaheel (Opp. General Parking) • Jahra ( Opp. Main Co-op.) • Airport (Departure Hall)

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## VIDAL WELCOMES END OF BARCA TRANSFER BAN

**BARCELONA:** A year-long ban on European champions Barcelona registering new players came to an end yesterday, finally freeing up summer signings Aleix Vidal and Arda Turan to make their debuts. Despite the ban imposed by FIFA for irregularities in the signing of foreign players under the age of 18, Barca recorded the second most successful year in their 116-year history. Luis Enrique's men claimed five trophies in all, including a treble of La Liga, Champions League and Copa del Rey. However, having drawn three of their last four La Liga games to fall two points behind Atletico Madrid at the top of the table, Vidal and Turan are expected to add some much needed depth to the squad for a potential run of 16 games before the end of February. "Finally, the sanction has ended," Vidal, who joined from Sevilla in June for a reported 20 million euro (\$21.7 million) fee, told Barca TV. And Vidal could make his debut against another of his former clubs Espanyol in the Copa del Rey on Wednesday.—AFP



## SAUDIS SEEK TO CHANGE IRAN FIXTURES OVER TENSIONS

**RIYADH:** Saudi football clubs in the Asian Champions League have appealed for their fixtures in Iran to be played elsewhere after a sharp escalation of tensions between the two rival nations.

Al-Ahli, Al-Hilal, Al-Ittihad and Al-Nasr called in statements on their respective websites for the matches against their Iranian counterparts to be played on neutral grounds. The clubs are expected to ask the Saudi Arabian Football Federation to officially submit the request to the Asian Football Confederation ahead of the next round of AFC Champions League fixtures in February.

Relations between Saudi Arabia and its regional arch-rival Iran dramatically deteriorated following the weekend execution of Shiite cleric Nimr Al-Nimr in the Sunni-dominated kingdom. Shiite Iran strongly condemned the execution and angry crowds in Tehran set the Saudi embassy on fire, prompting Riyadh to sever diplomatic links with its Gulf neighbour.—AFP

## ALVAREZ JOINS SAMP ON SIX-MONTH DEAL

**MILAN:** Sampdoria have announced the signing of Argentinian midfielder Ricardo Alvarez, who joins the Serie A club from Inter Milan following an unsuccessful loan spell with Sunderland in England's Premier League. Alvarez, 27, has joined the Genoa-based club on a six-month deal which expires on June 30, according to Sampdoria. "President Massimo Ferrero is happy to announce Ricardo Gabriel Alvarez is now officially a Sampdoria player and has signed a contract which expires on June 30 2016," said a statement from the club. Alvarez joins in time for the city derby away to Genoa on Tuesday, bringing to an end a period of uncertainty about his future. Alvarez, who has made nine appearances for the Argentina national side, joined Sunderland on loan from Inter in September 2014 but failed to make the move permanent. Sampdoria travel to Genoa looking to win a second consecutive game in Serie A for the first time since ex-Fiorentina coach Vincenzo Montella took over from sacked Walter Zenga. With only five wins in 17 games, Sampdoria have slipped to 14th in Italy's top flight although Genoa are four points further adrift in 17th.—AFP



# WILLIAMS OUT OF HOPMAN OPENER WITH SWOLLEN KNEE

**PERTH:** World number one Serena Williams suffered an early season injury setback yesterday as she withdrew from the United States' opening Hopman Cup tie with inflammation in her knee. Her withdrawal helped the Ukraine pairing of Elina Svitolina and Alexandr Dolgoplov record a 2-1 round robin opening win over the US in the mixed teams tournament.

Williams was replaced by American youngster Vicky Duval, on the comeback trail after being diagnosed with cancer in 2014, and the

20-year-old was no match for the world number 19.

The first set was competitive but Svitolina cruised past the tiring Duval 6-4, 6-1. Dolgoplov then secured the tie with a comfortable 6-4, 6-2 win over a disappointing Jack Sock. In the dead mixed doubles rubber, the US pair gained some consolation by winning 6-2, 6-3.

Williams, 34, was scheduled to play Svitolina in the women's singles to open the tie, but withdrew minutes before the start,

saying she had pulled up sore after a training session earlier in the day.

The match at the mixed-teams tournament would have launched Williams's preparations for her title defence at the Australian Open in Melbourne later this month. Williams, who has won 21 Grand Slam singles titles, sat out the tail-end of last season saying she needed "time to heal" after narrowly missing out on a rare calendar-year Grand Slam.

Her coach, Patrick Mouratoglou, conceded Williams's knees were troubling her in

November.

But the player said she hoped to be fit to play in the United States' second tie against Australia Gold, one of two teams representing the hosts, on Tuesday evening.

"I'm disappointed to not take the court in Perth today," Williams said. "I had every intention to play this morning."

"Unfortunately due to inflammation in my knee I need to rest and am confident to be out there against Aussie Gold tomorrow evening." Tournament organisers dismissed

suggestions the presence of Duval in Perth as an emergency player for the event indicated they were aware of concerns over the fitness of Williams.

Williams won her sixth Australian Open last January and was on target for the coveted calendar-year Grand Slam until she suffered a shock loss to Roberta Vinci in the semi-finals at the US Open in September. Duval only returned to tennis in August after overcoming Hodgkin's lymphoma and has a career high ranking of 87.—AFP

## STOSUR SURVIVES ANOTHER TRICKY OUTING IN BRISBANE

**BRISBANE:** Australian Sam Stosur narrowly avoided another disappointment on home turf as she battled through a wrist injury and three tough sets to claim an opening victory at the Brisbane International yesterday.

The former US Open champion recovered from 0-3 down in the final set to record a 6-4 3-6 6-4 victory over Slovakian qualifier Jana Cepelova to kick off her always intense Australian summer in positive style.

The 31-year-old has frequently failed to hit the heights on home turf, having never won a tournament or progressed past the fourth round at the Australian Open, and bemoaned on Sunday the unfair emphasis she received for her domestic form. The world number 27 looked set to give the critics another stick to beat her with before a spirited effort did for the world number 147 and set up a second-round clash with Spain's Carla Suarez Navarro on Tuesday. "I am really pleased to walk away with a win, especially being down in that third set and then find that ability to come back and play well and win it when you are down, to turn things around," Stosur said.

"There were lots of positives I could take out of that." Stosur needed treatment for a wrist problem midway through the second set but was not overly concerned about the injury. "I'm not freaking out about it," said the

right-hander, winner of eight WTA titles.

"I need to go see my physio and do whatever we need to do tonight. "Then tomorrow playing night match there is that little bit of extra time if it is a bit sore. I'm sure we'll come up with a plan and be out on court ready to go." Italy's Roberto Vinci, who ended Serena Williams' bid for a calendar grand slam at the U.S. Open semi-finals last year, also needed three tough sets to make the second round on the Brisbane hard courts.

The 32-year-old prevailed 3-6 6-2 6-4 over former world number one Jelena Jankovic, while Germany's world number 10 Angelique Kerber shook off the rust in a 5-7 6-3 6-0 victory over Camila Giorgi of Italy.

Russian Maria Sharapova is the tournament draw card and she will kick off her campaign on Tuesday against compatriot Ekaterina Makarova. On the men's side, 17-times grand slam champion Roger Federer will play Germany's Tobias Kamke.

Bulgarian Grigor Dimitrov had been touted as 'Baby Fed' but a disappointing 2015 season quelled those comparisons with the Swiss great. The Bulgarian, who has slumped from eighth to 28th in the rankings, started his new campaign in more upbeat fashion by recording a 6-3 7-6(10) win over fifth seed Gilles Simon of France.—Reuters



**PERTH:** Andy Murray of Britain hits a return against Kenny de Schepper of France during their fourth session men's singles match on day two of the Hopman Cup tennis tournament in Perth yesterday.—AFP

# MURRAY OFF TO FLYING START WITH EASY WIN AT HOPMAN CUP

**PERTH:** World number two Andy Murray blew away his training court cobwebs with a season-opening demolition of Frenchman Kenny de Schepper at the mixed teams Hopman Cup yesterday. Murray said his form in practice since arriving in Australia had been poor, but the dual Grand Slam winner looked in sparkling touch ahead of this month's Australian Open as he dismantled the 148th-ranked de Schepper in straight sets, 6-2, 6-2, in under an hour.

That gave Great Britain the early advantage in its tie with France, but the ledger was squared when Caroline Garcia overcame a gritty Heath Watson to win in three sets, 6-3, 5-7, 6-3, in the women's singles. The Brits then clinched the tie in a match tiebreak in a closely-fought doubles decider, 6-2, 5-7, 10-6.

Murray, 28, had barely played since guiding Great Britain to a drought-breaking Davis Cup win in November, and was pleased to have found form so quickly in the new year.

"I played well and everything was working pretty good," he said. "I hadn't been playing well in practice at all, I had been really struggling. "It's irrelevant really if I play like that in matches." Earlier, women's world number one Serena Williams suffered an early season injury setback as she withdrew from the United States' opening tie with inflammation in her knee.

Her withdrawal helped the Ukraine pairing of Elina Svitolina and Alexandr Dolgoplov record a 2-1 win over the USA. Williams was replaced by American youngster Vicky Duval, on the comeback trail after being diagnosed with cancer in 2014, and the 20-year-old was no match for the world number 19. The first set was competitive but Svitolina cruised past the tiring Duval 6-4, 6-1. Dolgoplov then secured the tie with a comfortable 6-4, 6-2 win over a disappointing Jack Sock. In the dead mixed doubles rubber, the US pair gained some consolation by winning 6-2, 6-3.

### 'TIME TO HEAL'

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**BRISBANE:** Victoria Azarenka of Belarus hits a return against Elena Vesnina of Russia in their women's singles match on the second day at the Brisbane International tennis tournament yesterday.—AFP



**BRISBANE:** Elena Vesnina of Russia hits a return against Victoria Azarenka of Belarus in their women's singles match on the second day at the Brisbane International tennis tournament yesterday.—AFP



# INDIA PANEL PROPOSES BCCI REVAMP AFTER SCANDALS

**NEW DELHI:** A panel appointed by India's Supreme Court yesterday proposed sweeping changes to the country's scandal-hit cricket board and said gambling should be made legal.

The panel headed by former chief justice Rajendra Mal Lodha was appointed after a string of corruption scandals at the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). Its report, seen by AFP, recommends barring politicians from the sport's governing body and introducing time limits on holding office.

It also suggests legalising betting after a popular Twenty20 tournament run by the BCCI, the Indian Premier League (IPL), was rocked by allegations of corruption, match-fixing and crooked umpires.

"As far as betting alone is concerned... it would serve both the game and economy if it were legalised," the report suggests, with several riders. Gambling is mostly illegal in India, but betting on cricket matches thrives through networks of underground bookies. Lodha's panel was formed in January

last year to recommend changes after the top court found two IPL franchise owners guilty of betting on the outcome of matches in 2013. In July it suspended the Rajasthan Royals and Chennai Super Kings (CSK) teams, triggering the resignation of former BCCI chief Narayanaswami Srinivasan.

He was found guilty of a conflict of interest for being at the helm of Indian Cements which owns CSK. The panel exonerated IPL chief operating officer Sundar Raman, citing lack of evidence, after it was tasked to investigate match-fixing allegations against him.

"I have heard that I have been given a clean chit and I appreciate it," Raman, who resigned in November, told the Press Trust of India news agency.

## MINISTERS BANNED

Lodha said the BCCI should bar ministers and government officials as well as anyone over 70 from holding office and impose a three-year maximum term for holding office.

The panel also suggests a separate

executive body for the IPL as well as the appointment of an independent ombudsman, and ethics and electoral officers to address grievances and conflicts of interest.

The BCCI, which generates huge revenues due to its vast television audiences, should also be brought under India's Right to Information Act to ensure accountability, the panel added.

Commentators welcomed the recommendations, saying they would help restore the BCCI's credibility and bring transparency.

"It might be tempting to term them radical, but the Lodha committee has basically recommended good corporate practices," Cricinfo editor Sambit Bal tweeted, calling them "well thought out and wide-ranging".

The BCCI enjoys a pre-eminent position in world cricket and effectively runs the International Cricket Council with its allies Australia and England. The top court will now rule on whether the recommendations should be legally binding.



**NEW DELHI:** The head of Supreme Court appointed committee Justice Rajendra Lodha poses for photographs during a press conference in New Delhi, India, yesterday. The court-appointed committee has urged a shake-up to the administration of the Board of Control for Cricket in India in the wake of a spot-fixing scam and alleged conflicts of interest. —AP

Former lawyer Shashank Manohar took charge of the BCCI in October, vowing a new era of clean governance. The

cash-rich but faction-ridden body has usually been run by politicians or industrialists with conflicting interests. — AFP

# RAIN SOAKS SYDNEY TEST

**SYDNEY:** Carlos Brathwaite provided some fireworks in a lively cameo as rain washed out all but 11.2 overs of the second day of the third Australia-West Indies Test yesterday.

The Barbados all-rounder clouded two massive sixes off one James Pattinson over on his way to a dynamic 69 after lunch at the Sydney Cricket Ground. Brathwaite smashed Pattinson over cover for his first powerful blow before flicking another off his pads for an effortless six over backward square leg. But Pattinson had the last laugh, bowling the hulking all-rounder in his next over.

Brathwaite's 69 runs came off 71 balls with seven fours and four sixes and further enhanced his reputation after his 59 on debut during the second Test in Melbourne.

"I just went out there and tried to play my game, thankfully I got from 30-odd overnight to 69," Brathwaite said.

"I'm not satisfied that I didn't carry on to get three figures or firstly to see out the day but I'm still happy in sense that I got my highest Test score," Brathwaite, who gave the 14,266 bedraggled fans some entertainment on a frustrating stop-start day, said he was disappointed to get out. "I was very, very upset. Not on the dismissal because I think it was a good nut (ball), but I was upset that once again I got a start and couldn't carry on and one of the main mantras in cricket is that when things are going good you maximise," he said.

## 'GOOD FEELING'

"Then reaching halfway off and hearing the crowd's applause and I even saw some people standing, I just took a step back and

said, 'You know what, just enjoy the feeling' raised my bat and looked around and it was a very, very good feeling."

Steve O'Keefe, one of two recognised spinners along with Nathan Lyon in an Australian team for the first time in a decade in a home Test, said there was still time for Australia to get a result.

"I think so. I think there's still a hell of a lot of cricket to go," O'Keefe said.

"If you can get three days in then that's close to 300 overs. "Hopefully, if the skipper sees that spin will play a big role then we might get more overs in towards the back end of the match if the wicket keeps spinning, it's spinning already."

Only four overs could be bowled in the first session and 7.2 in the second before another heavy squall forced the players to leave the field for a third and final time.

There was no further play after tea with large tarpaulins covering the pitch and wicket surrounds.

The West Indies were 248 for seven with Denesh Ramdin on 30 and Kemar Roach yet to score. "It (the rain) is annoying. It's hard for the guys to continually switch off and get back up," O'Keefe said.

"But we have got loads of good structure around us and support staff and they get us switched on and Smithy (Steve Smith) makes sure that with 10 minutes to go that we're ready and out there to do a job." Australia have already retained the Frank Worrell Trophy after huge wins in the first two Tests, and are chasing a 3-0 series clean sweep. The West Indies, who are playing in their first Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground in 15 years, have not won a Test in Australia since 1997. More rain was forecast for today. — AFP



**CAPE TOWN:** South African batsman and Captain Hashim Amla plays a shot during the third days play in the second Test cricket match between England and South Africa at the Newlands stadium yesterday in Cape Town, South Africa. — AFP

# AMLA STANDS FIRM AGAINST ENGLAND

**CAPE TOWN:** South African captain Hashim Amla defied England's bowlers and batted throughout the third day of the second Test at Newlands yesterday.

Amla made an unbeaten 157 as South Africa reached 353 for three at the close, still 276 runs behind England's first innings total of 629 for six declared. AB de Villiers was the only batsman dismissed during the day as South Africa, 1-0 down in the four-Test series, dug in on a pitch which offered no assistance to the bowlers. Steven Finn was the only successful bowler. He had De Villiers caught at midwicket shortly before tea after Amla and De Villiers had put on 183 in a third wicket partnership which lasted for two minutes short of five hours. Faf du Plessis, who like Amla had endured a lean spell with the bat, made 51 not out as he helped his captain put on an unbeaten 85 for the fourth wicket. It was a crucial innings for Amla, who was under pressure for both his captaincy and his batting.

South Africa have not won a Test since beating the West Indies at the same venue a year ago, while Amla had made only 150 runs at an average of 15.00 in 10 innings since that match. It was a triumph of technique and concentration as he made his first Test century since he hit 208 against the West Indies in Centurion in December 2014. By the close he had batted for nine hours and 26 minutes and had faced 371 balls. His innings included 21 fours.

After the worst year of his international career, Amla had two strokes of luck. He was dropped by James Anderson at slip off Joe Root when he was on 76 and by Nick Compton at backward point off Steven Finn when he had 120. With South Africa's batting having been fragile for most of 2015, the partnership between Amla and De Villiers, the side's two senior batsmen, was important for the team.

Both men batted solidly for the most part but had anxious moments which required decisions by television umpire Rod Tucker. Amla managed to get his bat down just in time after Finn deflected a drive by De Villiers into the stumps at the bowler's end. De Villiers was given out leg before wicket to Ben Stokes by umpire Aleem Dar when he had 85, but De Villiers immediately sought a review which showed the ball had gone off an inside edge onto his pad.

De Villiers scored only three more runs before he pulled a short ball from Finn hard but straight to Anderson at midwicket. He had defied the England bowlers for 298 minutes and 211 balls, hitting 12 fours and a six.

By contrast to the second day, when Ben Stokes and Jonny Bairstow thrashed 196 runs for England before lunch and 453 runs were

scored in the day for the loss of three wickets, it was attritional cricket, with only 212 runs scored in 87 overs. — AFP

## SCOREBOARD

**CAPE TOWN, South Africa:** Scoreboard yesterday at stumps on the third day of the second test between South Africa and England at Newlands:

### England 1st Innings

Alastair Cook c Morris b Rabada	27
Alex Hales c De Villiers b Morkel	60
Nick Compton c Bavuma b Rabada	45
Joe Root c De Kock b Morris	50
James Taylor c De Kock b Rabada	0
Ben Stokes run out De Villiers	258
Jonny Bairstow not out	150
Moeen Ali not out	0
Extras: (12b, 6lb, 13w, 8nb)	39
TOTAL: (for 6 wickets declared)	629
Overs: 125.5	

Did not bat: Stuart Broad, James Anderson, Steven Finn.

Fall of wickets: 1-55, 2-129, 3-167, 4-167, 5-223, 6-622.

Bowling: Morne Morkel 29-5-114-1 (1w, 1nb), Chris Morris 28-3-150-1, Kagiso Rabada 29-5-2-175-3 (4w, 7nb), Dane Piedt 25-5-112-0, Stiaan van Zyl 10-0-43-0,

### South Africa 1st Innings

Dean Elgar c Compton b Stokes	44
Stiaan van Zyl run out Compton/Bairstow	4
Hashim Amla not out	157
A.B. de Villiers c Anderson b Finn	88
Faf du Plessis not out	51
Extras: (3lb, 6w)	9
Total (for 3 wickets)	353
Overs: 130.	

Still to bat: Temba Bavuma, Quinton de Kock, Dane Piedt, Chris Morris, Kagiso Rabada, Morne Morkel.

Fall of wickets: 1-7, 2-85, 3-268.

Bowling: James Anderson 24-8-53-0, Stuart Broad 20-4-54-0, Moeen Ali 31-9-80-0, Steven Finn 26-3-82-1 (2w), Joe Root 5-2-12-0, Ben Stokes 21-3-67-1 (4w), Alex Hales 3-1-2-0.



**SYDNEY:** West Indies batsman Carlos Brathwaite, left, looks back as Australia's wicketkeeper Peter Nevill tries to stump him out during their cricket test match in Sydney, Australian, yesterday. —AP

# PAKISTAN TO APPEAL YASIR SHAH'S FAILED DOPE TEST

**LAHORE:** Pakistan will appeal against the decision to suspend Yasir Shah over a failed dope test, authorities said yesterday, as sources said the spin star told a panel last week he had taken medication for hypertension.

The 29-year-old leg-spinner was provisionally suspended by the International Cricket Council (ICC) on December 27 after testing positive for chlorthalidone, a diuretic used to treat hypertension that is listed on the World Anti-Doping Agency's banned list of masking agents. Shah, whose test was conducted on November 13 during the one-day series against England in the United Arab Emirates, has recently emerged as a match-winner in Test cricket and is the world's highest-ranking spinner in the format.

Sources within the Pakistan Cricket Board

(PCB) said Shah told the medical panel last week he had taken a tablet from his wife to treat hypertension. PCB chairman Shaharyar Khan said the board's medical panel had met on Monday after receiving more details from the ICC on Shah's case, and had decided not to request a second urine sample. "We have decided not to go for the 'B' sample test, and instead will appeal with the ICC," he told AFP.

Under the ICC rules Shah has until Sunday to challenge the suspension or plead guilty. If his appeal is rejected, he faces a possible ban of up to four years. Shah emerged as a match-winner for Pakistan in Test cricket after he replaced ace spinner Saeed Ajmal, who struggled with a remodelled bowling action after it was reported in 2014. Shah took 24 wickets in Pakistan's 2-1 series win in Sri Lanka in July and another 15 in a 2-0 Test win over England in November. — AFP



## SOUTH AFRICA'S FLANKER BURGER JOINS SARACENS

**LONDON:** South Africa flanker Schalk Burger signed a two-year contract with English Premiership champions Saracens yesterday. Burger, a World Cup winner in 2007, is scheduled to arrive at Allianz Park next season after he finishes spells at Japanese club Suntory Sungoliath and Super Rugby province Stormers.

The 32-year-old back row, who was a key player for South Africa during their run to the semi-finals of last year's World Cup in England, has been capped 86 times and was named world player of the year in 2004. "I'm delighted to be joining Saracens. I'm extremely excited to have the opportunity to play in both the Premiership and European Cup - two of the leading competitions in world rugby - for such a special club," Burger told Saracens' website.

"It's an exciting challenge for me and my family and hopefully I can add a lot of value on and off the field to an already successful group of players and coaches."

Recruiting Burger is a major coup for the Premiership leaders, who have been looking to strengthen due to this season's departure of Ernst Joubert and Jacques Burger. Burger holds the record for the most caps accumulated and most tries

scored by a Springbok flanker and can play across the back row, although he is most at home in the number six jersey.

South Africa built their gameplan around him at last autumn's World Cup, repeatedly using him at first receiver where he would either carry, clear out a ruck or feed the ball to his fly-half or wing.

He has been troubled by neck and knee injuries in the past, but his darkest hour came in 2013 when surgery to relieve pressure on a nerve resulted in him contracting a hospital bug that led to bacterial meningitis. A four-day spell in isolation in intensive care led to fears for his life, but he recovered and was able to play again by the end of the season. Director of rugby Mark McCall insists Saracens, the only unbeaten team in Europe this season, have signed one of the sport's outstanding players. "Schalk is a Springbok legend and will add a huge amount of experience and quality to our young English forwards," McCall said.

"We have always talked about having the right blend of experience and youth in our squad, so to be able to add one of the world's finest players to the group is extremely exciting news." —AFP

## PRICE WINS DAKAR RALLY

**TERMAS DE R O HONDO:** Australian Toby Price won the second stage to take the overall lead in the Dakar Rally yesterday, a 354km run from Villa Carlos Paz and Termas de Rio Hondo in Argentina.

Price, racing on a KTM, finished 20 seconds ahead of Portugal's Ruben Faria on his Husqvarna, while Slovak Stefan Svitko, also of KTM, was third at 1min 28sec.

The 28-year-old Price came third on last year's Dakar Rally where he clinched the 12th stage on his debut appearance. He now takes the overall lead by two seconds over Spaniard Joan Barreda Bort.

The second stage of the Dakar Rally yesterday was shortened because of poor weather conditions, race organisers confirmed.

Thunderstorms and heavy rain had already forced the cancellation of Sunday's opening stage because of safety concerns, a day after 10 people were injured when a

car crashed into spectators during the prologue.

The weather is again expected to have an impact on Monday's stage, with race director Etienne Lavigne confirming it would be shortened by at least 150 kilometres.

"It's going to rain for most of the night (Sunday to Monday) on the special, then it should stop to begin again in the afternoon," said Lavigne.

"We're going to do our best to ensure that the stage will take place in the best possible conditions."

The motorcyclists will cover the 354km timed special, instead of the planned 450km, with the cars racing 387km instead of 510km.

The second stage between Villa Carlos Paz and Termas de Rio Hondo in Argentina covers 787km in total for the motorcyclists and 847km for the cars. — AFP



**VILLA CARLOS PAZ:** Bikers are stopped by Dakar Rally personnel near the Argentine city of Villa Carlos Paz, after poor weather forced the cancellation of Sunday's opening stage. Thunderstorms and heavy rain prompted organisers to scrap the scheduled 600-kilometre plus route from Rosario to Villa Carlos Paz, with the conditions grounding safety helicopters and leaving parts of the course flooded. — AFP



**LOS ANGELES:** Los Angeles Lakers center Roy Hibbert, left, dunks as Phoenix Suns center Tyson Chandler defends during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, in Los Angeles. The Lakers won 97-77. — AP

## BUTLER ECLIPSES JORDAN'S RECORD, BULLS BEAT RAPTORS

**TORONTO:** Jimmy Butler broke Michael Jordan's team record for points in a half, scoring 40 of his 42 after the break to lead the Chicago Bulls over the Toronto Raptors 115-113 on Sunday. Jordan had 39, also in the second half, in a game against Milwaukee in 1989. Butler shot 14 of 19 in the final two quarters after a 1-for-4 start in the Bulls' fourth straight win. Pau Gasol had his 17th double-double of the season with 19 points and 13 rebounds as Chicago beat Toronto for the second time in a week and a seventh consecutive time overall. DeMar DeRozan led the way for the Raptors with 24 points.



**TORONTO:** Jimmy Butler #21 of the Chicago Bulls passes the ball as DeMarre Carroll #5 and Jonas Valanciunas #17 of the Toronto Raptors defend during an NBA game at the Air Canada Centre on Sunday in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. — AFP

### KNICKS 111, HAWKS 97

Arron Afflalo scored a season-high 38 points and the Knicks beat the Hawks. Afflalo was 14 for 17 from the field and 7 for 8 from 3-point range, making his first seven attempts and nearing his career best of 43 points. The Knicks improved to 8-2 when Afflalo scores 15 or more points. Paul Millsap scored 19 points and Kent Bazemore had 18 for the Hawks.

### HEAT 97, WIZARDS 75

Chris Bosh scored 23 points, Goran Dragic had 18 and the Heat dominated the undermanned Wizards. With just nine healthy players, Washington was outscored in the second quarter 25-7. The Wizards missed 20 of their 22 field goal attempts as the Heat took a 50-31 halftime lead. John Wall, who led Washington with 14 points, hit just six of his 21 field goal attempts. The Wizards shot just 34.1 percent and their 75 points were a season low. Miami allowed its fewest points of the season.

### TRAIL BLAZERS 112, NUGGETS 106

CJ McCollum had 25 points and seven assists, leading the Trail Blazers to a victory over the Nuggets. Gerald Henderson scored 19 points and Al-Farouq Aminu had 14 for Portland, which has won four of its last five. Danilo Gallinari led the Nuggets with 29 points in his second game back from a sprained left ankle. Denver has lost six straight, two off its season high.

### LAKERS 97, SUNS 77

Lou Williams scored a season-high 30 points, and the Lakers sent Phoenix to its ninth straight loss. The Lakers, coming off victories over Boston and Philadelphia, have won three in a row for the first time since Feb. 22-27. Rookie Larry Nance Jr. had 15 points and tied a season high with his second straight 14-rebound game. Kobe Bryant sat out his second straight game because of a sore right shoulder. Brandon Knight had 25 points, nine assists and three rebounds for the Suns, who shot 36 percent from the field and trailed by as many as 38 points. —AP

### NBA Results/Standings

Denver 106, Portland 112; LA Lakers 97, Phoenix 77; Washington 75, Miami 97; New York 111, Atlanta 97; Toronto 113, Chicago 115.

Eastern Conference					Western Conference				
Atlantic Division					Northwest Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB					
Toronto	21	14	.600	—	Oklahoma City	24	10	.706	—
Boston	18	15	.545	2	Utah	15	17	.469	8
New York	16	19	.457	5	Portland	15	21	.417	10
Brooklyn	10	23	.303	10	Minnesota	12	22	.353	12
Philadelphia	3	33	.083	18.5	Denver	12	23	.343	12.5
Central Division					Pacific Division				
Cleveland	22	9	.710	—	Golden State	31	2	.939	—
Chicago	20	12	.625	2.5	LA Clippers	22	13	.629	10
Indiana	19	14	.576	4	Sacramento	13	20	.394	18
Detroit	18	16	.529	5.5	Phoenix	12	25	.324	21
Milwaukee	14	21	.400	10	LA Lakers	8	27	.229	24
Southeast Division					Southwest Division				
Miami	20	13	.606	—	San Antonio	29	6	.829	—
Atlanta	21	14	.600	1	Dallas	19	15	.559	9.5
Orlando	19	15	.559	1.5	Memphis	18	17	.514	11
Charlotte	17	16	.515	3	Houston	16	19	.457	13
Washington	15	17	.469	4.5	New Orleans	11	22	.333	17.

## ZACH JOHNSON AMONG 8 PLAYERS MOVING TO PXG

**KAPALUA:** Bob Parsons conducts business to an extreme, and that now includes golf clubs.

The people he hired to build his golf clubs have no limitations and no deadlines. Money is no object, either, and that better be the case for the consumers. Parsons, the billionaire founder of GoDaddy, is selling his PXG clubs at about \$5,000 for the entire set.

"Making money is not what I have in mind," Parsons said. "My goal with this is to build some very incredible clubs without regard to cost, without regard to the process. I've been telling people what I'm doing and I've heard many times, 'You're nuts.' That's a very good sign."

Ryan Moore last year became the first PGA Tour to put them in play. Now, the Scottsdale, Arizona-based company is hopeful of making a big splash in 2016 by signing an additional eight players, men and women, to staff contracts at PXG. Topping the list is British Open champion Zach Johnson, who had been with Titleist his entire PGA Tour career that includes 12 victories and two majors.

Johnson, who is in the field this week at the Hyundai Tournament of Champions, did not want to discuss his switch ahead the announcement at Kapalua. He said in a release that he did not make the change lightly.

"My entire team, from caddie to coach, was part of the discernment process," Johnson said. "We all agree that PXG is undeniably the best equipment to help me achieve my goals on the course."

PXG also signed Billy Horschel, Chris Kirk, James Hahn and Charles Howell III on the PGA Tour, along with Cristie Kerr, Alison Lee and Gerina Pillier on the LPGA Tour. Already on board with the clubs were Moore, Rocco Mediate (Champions Tour), Sadena Parks and Beatriz Recari.

### GOLF FANATIC

Parsons describes himself as a golf fanatic and an equipment junkie. He didn't start playing seriously until he was in his 30s because he was too busy with work, first with Parsons Technologies for 10 years (which he sold in 1994 for \$64 million) and then with the GoDaddy

Group. He stepped down as GoDaddy executive chairman in 2014, though he remains on the board and is the largest shareholder.

By then, an affinity for golf turned into an addiction. "It got to the point three or four years before I started the PXG venture that I would spend about \$250,000 to \$300,000 a year on equipment," he said. "I bought pretty much everything and would hit it. I could tell you which irons, woods and all that ... were real and what wasn't. Most of it is gimmicky. You take any manufacturer and they say, 'This will give you an extra 10 yards and 15 yards.' If all that were true, we'd be hitting it a mile-and-a-half."

Eventually, Parsons was intrigued by building his own clubs. PXG stands for "Parsons Xtreme Golf," though a running joke in the industry is that it also stands for "Ping X-Guys." Among the Ping employees he hired were two engineers, former Bay Hill winner Mike Nicolette and Brad Schweigert, and Parsons turned them loose.

"We have no constraints on our engineers, no cost constraints, no time con-

straints," Parsons said. "The only thing they must do is the performance must be there before we release it. ... We're using as much technology as we can shake out as long as they conform with USGA rules."

The iron, which has the look of a blade, is a hollow body design that is filled with thermoplastic elastomer that allows for a thinner face. The signature look on the PXG clubs are what appears to be black dots. Those are tungsten alloy screws that enhance the perimeter weighting and increase forgiveness.

"Our iron is one of the few that is made to be adjusted weight-wise," Parsons said. "When the engineers were doing the initial development, they took one of our first prototypes - which was a train wreck - and put weights into it one way. I said, 'That looks good. It's going to be our trademark look.'"

The equipment industry is crowded, and the venture is a risk. Parsons doesn't mind that. "If we did exactly that TaylorMade and Ping was doing, and Callaway and on and on, we'd get our brains beat out," Parsons said.

He was behind the racy GoDaddy.com ads during the Super Bowl (he said PXG doesn't need to be as outrageous in its marketing). He also caused a sensation in golf circles when he bought what is now Scottsdale National Golf Club and wrote a letter to members outlining bold new rules - no more than 30 rounds a year without bringing a paying guest and a \$100 service fee every time a member plays. Those who didn't like the rules were given a refund on their initiation fee.

It was different. But that's what Parsons is all about. But is there a market for golf clubs that cost \$5,000 for a set? "There are 6.5 million avid golfers in the country, and 4.1 million of them have a household income in excess of \$125,000 a year, which means about 2 million have significantly higher than that in household income," he said. "If you ran across a set of clubs that you don't have to change a thing in your game and it would take you down to a 3 (handicap index) and you feel great hitting them ... you'd do what you could to buy them." —AP



## STRUGGLING GENOA LOOKING FOR DERBY BOOST

**MILAN:** Genoa host Sampdoria in the city derby hoping to show their current struggles are temporary as Serie A resumes today following a two-week festive break.

Gian Piero Gasperini's men have slipped to 17th in Italy's top flight to sit just two points above third-from-bottom Frosinone after a run of disastrous results leading up to Christmas.

Before then, Genoa had enjoyed a strong run which had left them firmly in the top half of the table and Colombian midfielder Tomas Rincon believes a win on Tuesday will show their league position is misleading. "We've had a good rest over the festive

break and we're determined to go out and show we don't deserve to be where we are in the table right now," Rincon told Sky Sport.

"The derby is a special game that is totally different from all the others, because there's only one thing that matters and that is victory." Genoa's last win at home came against Sassuolo at the end of November and since then Gasperini's men have suffered home defeats to struggling Carpi and Bologna while conceding defeat at title challengers Inter Milan and Roma. In the first Serie A game of 2016 and at the clubs' shared Luigi Ferraris stadium today, sparks are expected to fly.

Sampdoria have endured struggles of their own, only ending a run of four defeats with a draw away to Lazio and a 2-0 home win over Palermo in the week before Christmas.

That mediocre run of results led some to question the club's decision to sack coach Walter Zenga at the start of November and replace him with ex-Florentine handler Vincenzo Montella.

### 'RECHARGE BATTERIES'

Montella said the festive break has given him time to reflect on their strategy for the second half of the season, but admits Samp won't be taking Genoa lightly.

"We had time during the holidays to recharge our batteries so we're looking for a positive start to the new year. Mentally, we're ready," Montella said. "To win this game we'll need determination, but it won't be enough. We need to be lucid and have full respect for our opponents. "Genoa are a top side and at the start of the season were one of the more complete squads in the league before they suffered due to a number of injuries." While Genoa are hoping AC Milan striker Alessio Cerci will reply positively to their offer of a move to the club during the winter transfer market, Samp on Monday welcomed Argentinian midfielder

Ricardo Alvarez on a six-month deal from Inter Milan following a loan spell with Sunderland in England's Premier League. The remainder of the mid-week fixtures will be held on Wednesday when Inter travel to Empoli looking to protect their one-point lead over Fiorentina, who are away to Palermo.

Napoli, who sit in third also one point off the pace, host Torino while champions Juventus, in fourth at three points behind Inter, host Verona. Elsewhere, fifth-placed Roma are away at Chievo while AC Milan, in sixth at eight points behind Inter, are at home to Bologna. —AFP

## LEICESTER SIGN TEENAGER GRAY

**LONDON:** Leicester have signed promising Birmingham winger Demarai Gray from Birmingham for an undisclosed fee, the Premier League club announced yesterday.

England Under-20 international Gray, 19, agreed a four-and-a-half-year contract with the Foxes after emerging as one of the brightest young talents in the Championship. Claudio Ranieri's side have climbed to second in the top-flight table, just two points behind leaders Arsenal, after a superb run in the first half of the season.

Ranieri is keen to maintain Leicester's momentum by adding depth to his squad and Gray fits the bill after catching the Italian's eye with a string of fine performances in the second tier since making his Birmingham debut aged just 17.

"It's been my dream to play in the Premier League since I started playing football so I'm very happy to join the club," Gray told Leicester's website. "It's a great club. The facilities are great and for a player like

me it's an ideal place for me to improve.

"Meeting all the staff here, it seems like a nice family place, so I think that's perfect for me. "You can see how well the team has been doing this year and I watch a lot of football so I can see that the way Leicester City play suits my style. "I only hear good things about Leicester and I'm looking forward to starting."

Gray's signing came just hours after Leicester confirmed star striker Jamie Vardy is set to undergo a minor groin operation. The 28-year-old, the joint-leading scorer in the Premier League, requires surgery to repair a long-standing problem but he is only expected to miss one match.

The procedure will rule Vardy out of the FA Cup clash at Tottenham on Sunday, a game he would likely have been rested for anyway. The England international should be fit again when the Foxes return to White Hart Lane in the Premier League three days later. —AFP



**NEW YORK:** Jason Spezza #90 of the Dallas Stars scores a third period goal on Thomas Greiss #1 of the New York Islanders skates against the New York Islanders at the Barclays Center on Sunday in the Brooklyn borough of New York City. The Islanders defeated the Stars 6-5. —AFP

## PROLIFIC VARDY CAN REACH THE TOP: ELLIOTT

**LONDON:** Jamie Vardy is "something exceptional" who can play at any level and Leicester City have yet to see the best of the prolific striker who will have an "amazing career", according to former Foxes captain Matt Elliott.

Vardy, playing minor league football three years ago, has taken the Premier League by storm with his goals turning Leicester, in their second season back in the top-flight after a 10-year absence, into unlikely title contenders. Thai-owned Leicester have been the surprise of the season, carrying on the momentum from last year when they pulled away from relegation danger by winning seven of their final nine games.

They surprisingly axed manager Nigel Pearson, replacing him with Claudio Ranieri, and England international Vardy has flourished under the Italian who has deployed the 28-year-old in a more central role with a license to roam. "He's got the quality to pretty much play at any level with the ability he's got," Elliott told Reuters. "We're yet to see the best of him and I don't think even Leicester city utilise him enough. I don't think he gets enough of the ball," he added.

"He's something exceptional with the natural footballing ability he's got. Intelligence in a football sense... he's just got god given talent that not many possess. He'll go on and have an amazing career."

Last month Vardy became the first player to score in 11 successive Premier League matches and despite a three-game goal drought in which Leicester have failed to win, The speedy forward may have to undergo minor surgery, British media reported, but he is certain to be a target in

the January transfer window having been linked with a big-money move to Manchester City.

### GOLDEN ERA

Elliott, who played nearly 300 games for Leicester between 1997 and 2005 and was part of the club's golden era under now Ireland manager Martin O'Neill, does not believe they need to sell their top striker.

"I don't think Leicester need to sell, in terms of financial value, because what's it going to cost to replace Jamie Vardy?," he said.

"It's a pointless exercise for me. If their hand gets forced and he puts the squeeze on and he goes then ok. They need to have some reinforcements lined up."

Leicester sit second after 20 games, two points behind Arsenal, but Elliott, an uncompromising centre back who lifted the League Cup in 2000 after scoring twice in the final in a 2-1 win over Tranmere Rovers, said Ranieri needed to bolster his squad to stay in the mix for a top-four finish. "In my mind there are one or two areas to strengthen and if they did that it would really show their intent," he said. "Jamie Vardy needs support around the attacking areas, a little bit of extra quality there, and perhaps in the central defensive area as well... just back up."

Should they make one or two additions Elliott, who won 18 international caps for Scotland, is confident Leicester can push on, although landing their first ever English top-flight league title will be hard.

"They can achieve what many people consider to be nigh on the impossible," he said. "I think they can stay in the top region. Winning it is a long shot. Champions League is a possibility." —Reuters

## JAGR SCORES TWO GOALS, PANTHERS BEAT WILD 2-1

**SUNRISE:** Jaromir Jagr scored two goals, including the game-winner in the third period, and Al Montoya made 38 saves as the streaking Florida Panthers beat the Minnesota Wild 2-1 on Sunday. The victory was the ninth in a row for Florida and seventh straight at home, both franchise records. The nine-game winning streak ties Montreal, Washington and the New York Rangers for the longest in the NHL this season. Dmitry Kulikov had two assists for the Panthers (23-12-4). The 43-year-old Jagr has 735 goals, six behind Brett Hull for third on the league's career list. Jason Zucker scored for the Wild.

### BLACKHAWKS 3, SENATORS 0

Corey Crawford made 26 saves in his NHL-leading sixth shutout this season to lead Chicago past Ottawa for its third straight win. Duncan Keith and Artem Anisimov scored for the Blackhawks, who got an empty-net goal from Andrew Desjardins with 48 seconds left. Crawford wasn't tested consistently, but he was sharp when needed in earning his 18th career shutout in his 300th game. Ottawa's Craig Anderson stopped 27 shots, but the Senators lost their third straight and fifth in their last six.

### ISLANDERS 6, STARS 5

Kyle Okposo had two goals and an assist, Cal Clutterbuck scored twice and New York beat the NHL-best Dallas Stars. Anders Lee had a goal and an assist, and Mikhail Grabovski also scored to help the Islanders win for the fourth time in six games and improve to 4-0-1 in their last five against the Stars. Thomas Greiss finished with 36 saves. New York trailed 2-1 in the first period before scoring the next four goals and then held off Dallas in the third to improve to 12-4-1 against Western Conference teams. Valeri Nichushkin had two goals for Dallas. Vernon Fiddler, Patrick Sharp and Jason Spezza also scored, and Kari Lehtonen stopped 38 shots. The Stars, coming off an overtime defeat at New Jersey the previous night, lost consecutive games for the first time this season. Dallas was the last remaining NHL team without back-to-back losses.

### DUCKS 4, JETS 1

Kevin Bieksa and Ryan Kesler each scored a power-play goal, and Anaheim earned at least one point for the sixth consecutive game by defeating Winnipeg. Rickard Rakell and Corey Perry also scored, and John Gibson made 19 saves for the Ducks as they opened an eight-game homestand vital to their playoff hopes in the jumbled Pacific Division. Tyler Myers scored for the Jets, and Michael Hutchinson stopped 31 shots. After sweeping the Jets in the first round of last year's Stanley Cup playoffs, the Ducks won the first meeting this season. — AP



**DUBAI:** South Korea's Ku Hyun Jun, right, runs towards the goal followed by Mohamed Surour Masoud of the United Arab Emirates in the final minutes of a friendly match in Dubai, yesterday. — AP

### NHL Results/Standings

Florida 2, Minnesota 1; Anaheim 4, Winnipeg 1; Chicago 3, Ottawa 0; NY Islanders 6, Dallas 5.

Eastern Conference							Western Conference						
Atlantic Division							Pacific Division						
	W	L	OT	GF	GA	PTS							
Florida	23	12	4	106	85	50	Dallas	28	9	4	144	107	60
Montreal	22	15	3	116	99	47	Chicago	23	13	4	111	97	50
Detroit	19	13	7	100	106	45	St. Louis	23	14	4	101	100	50
Boston	20	13	4	116	102	44	Minnesota	20	11	7	101	90	47
Tampa Bay	19	16	4	100	95	42	Nashville	19	13	7	103	102	45
Ottawa	18	15	6	111	118	42	Colorado	18	18	3	109	110	39
Toronto	15	15	7	99	103	37	Winnipeg	18	19	2	104	114	38
Buffalo	15	20	4	91	105	34	Central Division						
Metropolitan Division							Los Angeles	25	11	2	104	83	52
Washington	28	7	3	121	83	59	Arizona	18	16	4	107	122	40
NY Islanders	22	13	5	113	99	49	Anaheim	16	15	7	73	90	39
NY Rangers	21	14	4	112	103	46	Vancouver	15	15	9	95	110	39
New Jersey	20	14	5	93	94	45	San Jose	18	17	2	101	106	38
Pittsburgh	19	15	4	91	93	42	Calgary	18	18	2	101	121	38
Carolina	16	17	6	92	110	38	Edmonton	16	21	3	101	122	35
Philadelphia	15	15	7	79	102	37	Note: Overtime losses (OT) worth 1 pt and not included in loss column (L).						
Columbus	15	22	3	103	127	33							



**ANAHEIM:** John Gibson #36 and Hampus Lindholm #47 of the Anaheim Ducks look back for the puck during a 4-1 win over the Winnipeg Jets at Honda Center on Sunday in Anaheim, California. — AFP



# COURTOIS HOPEFUL CHELSEA CAN SALVAGE SEASON

**LONDON:** Chelsea goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois believes the struggling Premier League champions can still salvage their season by qualifying for Europe and lifting a trophy.

Belgium international Courtois admitted the outlook was brighter now under interim manager Guus Hiddink, who earned his first win in his second spell as Chelsea boss following Sunday's 3-0 defeat of Crystal Palace. Chelsea are unbeaten in three games since the

Dutchman took charge following the sacking of Jose Mourinho last month, but the 14th-placed Blues remain nine points behind West Ham in sixth and 13 adrift of Tottenham in fourth.

However, Sunday's performance suggested Chelsea, who host Scunthorpe in the FA Cup third round this weekend, could still be capable of a late surge towards the European places and Courtois insists all is not lost. "Obviously if you win the FA Cup or the Champions

League maybe it will still be a positive (season)," Courtois said.

"Success is a big word if you play until now not very well except the last three or four games. "But still with the FA Cup or maybe the Champions League it could be a positive season if we end up in the top four or top six. "We have to go step by step. Some teams are close together. If we beat West Brom and Everton (in the league) we could be maybe eighth or ninth in a

few weeks.

"Everything can change very fast, we just need the results." Diego Costa and Oscar both scored at Selhurst Park at the weekend and showed signs of rediscovering their best form after struggling under Mourinho this term.

And Courtois said a slight change in mindset could be just what some of Chelsea's under-performing stars need to help them turn things around. "It's something psychological and some-

times it changes with little changes.

Maybe we needed a little change to pick up our level," he said. "In football it's always like that. When results are not good the first thing they look at is the manager. But I don't think it is only the manager, the players have to take responsibility as well.

"We were the ones who were not playing as well. With a new manager some things changed. Maybe with some players the mentality changed." — AFP

# ARSENAL HAVE RIGHT VIBE TO LIFT TITLE: WENGER

**LONDON:** Arsenal's victory over Newcastle United has left manager Arsene Wenger confident that his team's mental strength will help them mount a strong challenge for the Premier League title this season.

The Gunners beat Newcastle 1-0 on Saturday to move two points clear at the top of the Premier League table and the Frenchman viewed the victory as proof that his team have acquired a resilience they perhaps lacked in the past. Arsenal last won the league in 2004, two years before shifting from Highbury to the Emirates Stadium, and Wenger says the current crop have a charisma that sets them apart from his teams of the intervening decade.

"I think we are more experienced than the teams I had when I moved into the stadium here," the Frenchman told the club's website (www.arsenal.com).

"On our day we could play everybody off the park and when you had to dig deep you experienced it was a bit more difficult. It was different. "We were more questioned on that aspect than the way we played football. Now, (in terms of) the experience, the quality of their attitude, the team

always has the charisma. "If you look at the team as a unit, it is like a person. If you look at your team like a person and the vibes that are coming out-you can sense in this job if you feel it or not. "I must say (you see) another aspect of your team in a game like (against Newcastle). It is more the mental aspect-you fight, don't panic and wait for your chance." In Per Mertesacker, Mesut Ozil, Alexis Sanchez, Petr Cech and Olivier Giroud, Wenger has an experienced core of senior players who have won titles at their former clubs, which should stand Arsenal in good stead as the season builds to its climax. Giroud, Arsenal's top scorer with 10 league goals so far, says that experience will play a key part in whether the Gunners will win the league.

"To be a champion, I know (what it takes) because I was a champion with Montpellier," he said. "You need a bit of luck and sometimes you cannot play a fantastic game (but you need to win).

"We have a good mixture of experienced players and young players and the older ones bring confidence to the youngest and lead them." — Reuters



**VALENCIA:** Valencia's Paco Alcacer, center left, celebrates after scoring against Real Madrid during Spanish La Liga soccer match at the Mestalla stadium in Valencia, Spain, Sunday. — AP

# JUVE LOOKS TO PICK UP WHERE IT LEFT OFF

**ROME:** Juventus will want to pick up right where it left off when Serie A resumes this week following the holiday break.

Having started the season by winning only three of its opening 10 matches, the four-time defending champion then put together seven consecutive victories to surge up the standings.

After struggling to overcome the departures of Andrea Pirlo, Arturo Vidal and Carlos Tevez, Juventus is now firmly in the hands of pre-season signings Paulo Dybala, Mario Mandzukic and Sami Khedira.

"Our most dangerous opponent is Juventus," fullback Patrice Evra said, recounting how the club held a full-squad meeting following its last loss - 1-0 at Sassuolo on Oct. 28. "It was a psychological problem. Something wasn't working."

Entering Wednesday's home match against last-place Hellas Verona, Juventus is in fourth place, three points behind leader Inter Milan and two points behind Fiorentina and Napoli.

Inter, which was beaten 2-1 by Lazio in its last match before the break, resumes at Empoli.

Fiorentina visits Palermo and Napoli hosts Torino.

Fifth-place Roma, which is one point behind Juventus, travels to Chievo Verona.

The 18th round opens today with Genoa vs. Sampdoria in a derby. Wednesday's other matches are: Udinese vs. Atalanta; AC Milan vs. Bologna; Lazio vs. Carpi; and Sassuolo vs. Frosinone.

Here are a few things to know about the Italian league entering this week's matches:

**ETERNAL EVRA:** At 34, Patrice Evra

isn't ready to slow down yet.

The France international has been dividing playing time at fullback for Juventus with the Brazilian Alex Sandro, who is 10 years his junior.

Evra has made 14 appearances and Sandro eight so far.

"He's improved a lot but I like playing every match," Evra said. "As I used to tell (former Manchester United manager Alex) Ferguson, 'I'll rest when my career is finished.'"

**BALOTELLI'S BACK:** Mario Balotelli is preparing to return from a pelvis injury that has kept him out since September.

The AC Milan striker was operated on in November and will need a strong second half of the season to be called up to Italy's squad for the European Championship.

Balotelli has not played for Italy since the Azzurri were eliminated at the group stage of the World Cup.

Meanwhile, there are also questions over Balotelli's club future. Unless he displays rapid improvement, it's difficult to imagine that Milan will want to keep the striker when his loan deal from Liverpool concludes. Liverpool is not too anxious to reclaim Balotelli, either, after he scored only one Premier League goal last season.

**ROSSI'S FUTURE:** With the opening of the transfer market, Fiorentina is reportedly looking to loan out struggling forward Giuseppe Rossi.

After a series of serious knee injuries, the former Italy international has had a tough time regaining his scoring touch. While he has scored twice in the Europa League, the United States-born Rossi hasn't found the net in nine Serie A appearances and has become mostly a bench option. —AP



**BARCELONA:** Barcelona's Turkish midfielder Arda Turan (frontL) waits on the pitch with teammates during an open training session at the Mini Stadium in Barcelona yesterday. — AFP

# BENITEZ'S MADRID STUMBLES IN 2-2 DRAW AT VALENCIA

**BARCELONA:** Real Madrid squandered a great opening goal and a chance to catch Barcelona in the Spanish league standings when it slipped to a 2-2 draw at Valencia in a match it ended with 10 men on Sunday.

Madrid seemed set to romp to an easy victory after Karim Benzema finished off a superb move in the 16th minute, but Valencia's Dani Parejo leveled from the penalty spot just before halftime.

Gareth Bale headed Madrid back in front in the 82nd despite his team playing a man down after Mateo Kovacic saw a direct red card, only for Paco Alcacer to strike right back for the hosts a minute later to spark a thrilling finish by both teams.

Coach Rafa Benitez will face even more scrutiny after Madrid failed to capitalize on Barcelona's scoreless stalemate at Espanyol on Saturday and remained two points behind the defending champions, which have a game to play.

Madrid also fell four points behind provisional leader Atletico Madrid, the only title contender to win this round. Benitez said "I can't stop some people from speculating" about his future.

"What I can do is get the team to work hard like they did today," he said. "We missed an opportunity - only if you look at the result. But the effort that my team made deserves more praise than anything else." The struggling powerhouse, which has already been disqualified from the Copa del Rey for fielding an ineligible player, will also have to be careful not to be caught by fourth-place Villarreal after Bruno Soriano scored his second of two goals deep into stoppage time to grab a 2-1 victory at Deportivo La Coruna.

Benitez's latest stumble, which arrived after losses at home to Barcelona and away at Sevilla and Villarreal in the last eight rounds, came in his return to a Mestalla Stadium where he established his reputation with two league titles and a UEFA Cup trophy.

## WINLESS

Benitez's counterpart, Gary Neville, remained winless in his fourth league game since taking over at Valencia, but his team earned a morale-boosting result. "That was the best performance we have had over 90 minutes. It wasn't enough, but you have to be practical, Gareth Bale was on the other side," Neville said. Madrid's strong start provoked panic in Valencia, which was hemmed into its box until Madrid got what seemed to be the inevitable opener from an exquisite combination by its three star strikers.

Bale started the move with an audacious back-heeled flick to send Benzema's pass to Cristiano Ronaldo, who slid the ball back for Benzema to slot his shot into the corner of the net. But instead of going for a second goal to finish the hosts off, Madrid let complacency creep in and Valencia slowly began to push forward through midfielder Andres Gomes and forward Joao Cancelo.

Cancelo fired a warning shot across the far post of Keylor Navas' goal in the 31st, soon to be followed by Gomes and Aymen Abdennour forcing Madrid's backline to scramble.

Another Gomes incursion was only stopped when Pepe tripped him in the area, letting Parejo step up and level the score. Madrid recovered some of its attacking verve after the restart, but it was stalled by Kovacic's sending-off for a lunging tackle on Cancelo in the 70th.

Toni Kroos, however, placed a free kick for Bale to rise up and gracefully head in off the far post to momentarily restore Madrid's lead.

But Valencia charged right back down to score when Rodrigo Moreno headed down a pass for Alcacer to nod home. Both sides then had a chance to grab a last-gasp winner when substitute Alvaro Negredo failed to beat Navas one-on-one, before Bale fired high at the other end. At Deportivo, Soriano gave Villarreal a first-half lead, before Luis Alberto made it 1-1 three minutes after halftime.

The match was heading toward a draw when a rash foul by Fernando Navarro on Matias Nahuel gave Soriano a spot kick that he converted five minutes into injury time to secure Villarreal a fifth

straight win. Villarreal moved one point adrift Madrid. Also Sunday, it was: Athletic Bilbao 2, Las Palmas 2; Real Betis 0, Eibar 4; Granada 2, Sevilla 1; and Rayo Vallecano 2, Real Sociedad 2. —AP

# LOVREN RALLIES LIVERPOOL FOR LEAGUE CUP SEMI

**STOKE-ON-TRENT:** Dejan Lovren has urged Liverpool to show a stronger mental streak as they seek to recover from their latest disappointment in today's League Cup semi-final first leg at Stoke City.

Manager Jurgen Klopp's hopes of ending his first season in English football with a top-four Premier League finish and a place in next season's Champions League suffered a blow when Liverpool started the new year with a 2-0 defeat at West Ham United on Saturday.

The German was angered by his team's display, but his debut season at Anfield could yet end with silverware as Liverpool stand just two games from a Wembley meeting with either Manchester City or neighbours Everton. Lovren acknowledged that his manager had every right to vent his anger following the West Ham game, the Croatian centre-back saying: "We are disappointed. It wasn't the best performance from us and we need to be angry with ourselves.

"I don't know the reasons why, but we need to step up quickly from this because we don't have time to think about it now, because we have the game with Stoke on Tuesday. "We definitely need to change our mentality and we need to keep a better run of games and to fight more. It was two easy goals conceded, I would say. "We have a game in the cup against Stoke and it's a big chance for us to get to the final.

"So we need to stay calm and say tomorrow is a new day and we'll start to prepare for the Stoke game and try to be in the final." Liverpool, whose last major honour was the 2012 League Cup, also get their FA Cup campaign under way at Exeter City on Friday, but Klopp is adamant that a busy January schedule holds no fears for him.

## 'NOT THE FINISHED ARTICLE'

"I've never been worried about a football

game," Klopp said. "I'm the first to be excited when you have a chance to reach something big. "Of course we see this. But I can't say I've been waiting all my life for Liverpool v Manchester United or Liverpool v Arsenal. We must wait for the single game.

"The good thing in this moment is we have played different styles and adapted against special opponents. That is the next step. "It is not what we always want to do, but at a time like this football is not easy. But all clubs have their targets. Some are under pressure, some have confidence or lack of confidence.

"After the Sunderland game (which Liverpool won 1-0) the players were really intensive, rather than celebrating. They are thinking, 'Next game.' To say January is decisive? We will see."

Stoke will also be seeking to bounce back after league disappointment at the start of 2016, in their case a 2-1 defeat at West Bromwich Albion, which followed successive wins over Manchester United and Everton. "We'll check everyone and more often than not when we do disappoint, which we did on Saturday, we bounce back quickly," said manager Mark Hughes. "The Premier League is a tough league and you need everyone hitting good levels or you can't win games.

"Whatever the circumstance of the game are, we had too many at not quite where they needed to be. You can't carry anyone. "If we are going to progress as a team, we need to find a way to do it against the top teams and those in and around them. "It's a challenge for us. We're not the finished article. We do good things and at other times we let ourselves down. It's about minimising those things which disappoint us." Beaten FA Cup finalists in 2011, Stoke have reached the League Cup last four for the first time since they won the tournament in 1972. —AFP



**MADRID:** New Atletico de Madrid's Argentinian midfielder Matias Kranevitter poses with his new jersey during his presentation at the Vicente Calderon stadium in Madrid, yesterday. — AFP



# Sports

Murray off to flying start with easy win at Hopman Cup



India proposes BCCI revamp after scandals



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GREEN BAY: Green Bay Packers' Richard Rodgers gets into the end zone for a touchdown catch past Minnesota Vikings' Harrison Smith (22) and Xavier Rhodes during the second half an NFL football game Sunday, in Green Bay, Wis. — AP

## VIKINGS BEAT PACKERS TO CLINCH NFC NORTH

**GREEN BAY:** The Minnesota Vikings won the NFC North by holding on for a 20-13 win Sunday night over the Green Bay Packers. Adrian Peterson ran for a touchdown, cornerback Captain Munnerlyn returned a fumble 55 yards for a score, and Minnesota (11-5) claimed its first division title since 2009. The Vikings will host the Seattle Seahawks for a wild-card playoff game next weekend. The Packers (10-6) will travel to Washington after watching their four-year reign atop the NFC North end. The upstart Vikings survived despite a shaky finish in hostile territory. The defense knocked away a desperation pass in the end zone from Aaron Rodgers on fourth down as time expired. Packers kicker Mason Crosby forced a fumble on Cordarrelle Patterson's potentially field-flipping 70-yard kickoff return with 5:21 left. But the Packers' next drive ended with Rodgers' pass being intercepted in the end zone by Xavier Rhodes.

### BRONOS 27, CHARGERS 20

Peyton Manning replaced Brock Osweiler in the third quarter Sunday and led the Broncos to a victory over San Diego that wrapped up the top seed in the AFC playoffs for Denver. Combined with New England's loss at Miami, the Broncos (12-4) secured the No. 1 seed even as they head into the playoffs with a quarterback quandary on their hands. The Chargers (4-12) wrapped up what might have been their final season representing San Diego as ownership tries to move the team to L.A. The Broncos were facing the possibility of tumbling into the wild-card round because of Kansas City's 10th consecutive win, 23-17 over Oakland, when Manning came to the rescue.

### BILLS 22, JETS 17

Ryan Fitzpatrick threw interceptions on each of New York's final three drives and the Jets' playoff hopes were dashed. The Jets (10-6) would have made the postseason for the first time since 2010 with a win, but the defeat combined with Pittsburgh's win at Cleveland ended those hopes. New York had a five-game winning streak stopped, and the loss came against former Jets coach Rex Ryan - fired by New York and hired by the Bills (8-8) last January. Fitzpatrick, who had thrown just one interception in the Jets' winning streak, was picked off by Leodis McKelvin in the end zone early in the fourth quarter with New York driving. The game was decided when Fitzpatrick's side-arm pass over the middle was intercepted by A.J. Tarpley with 11 seconds remaining.

### STEELERS 28, BROWNS 12

Ben Roethlisberger threw three touchdown passes, Pittsburgh's defense dominated and the Steelers slipped into the AFC playoffs with the win over Cleveland, which fired coach Mike Pettine and GM Ray Farmer after the game. The Steelers (10-6) had to win and needed Buffalo to knock off the New York Jets to make the postseason. Pittsburgh did its part, then earned a wild-card berth when the Bills beat the 22-17. Pittsburgh will play at Cincinnati next weekend. Roethlisberger threw for 349 yards, 187 to Antonio Brown, who had 13 catches and a TD. The Browns finished 3-13.

### DOLPHINS 20, PATRIOTS 10

Tom Brady was sacked twice and knocked down at least half a dozen times, and New England missed a chance to clinch the No. 1 seed in the AFC playoffs. Brady watched New England's final offensive series from the sideline. With the Patriots eager to protect his health, he threw a season-low 21 passes, but even so was lucky to make it through the game in one piece. New England (12-4) ends up as a No. 2 seed after Denver defeated San Diego to earn the top seed. The Dolphins (6-10) wrapped up a disappointing season and are expected to embark on a search for their ninth coach since 2004.

### TEXANS 30, JAGUARS 6

J.J. Watt and Whitney Mercilus led the defense and Jonathan Grimes scored twice to help the Texans clinch the AFC South. Houston will host Kansas City next weekend in the a wild-card game. Grimes had a 12-yard touchdown reception and added a 3-yard rushing score in the second quarter to help Houston take a 20-3 lead by halftime. Kareem Jackson added a score on an interception return in the fourth quarter to pad the lead. Watt, playing without a cast for the first time since breaking his left hand Dec. 9, had had three sacks, forced a fumble and recovered another one to help the Texans (9-7) to their first division title and playoff berth since 2012. Blake Bortles threw for 239 yards with two interceptions for the Jaguars (5-11)

### BENGALS 24, RAVENS 16

AJ McCarron overcame a rough start and threw a pair of touchdown passes. The Bengals (12-4) matched the best record in franchise history - they also won 12 games during the 1981 and 1988 seasons when they reached the Super Bowl. Cincinnati will host Pittsburgh next weekend in a wild-card game. The AFC North champions wasted a chance to clinch the No. 2 seed when they lost in Denver 20-17 on Monday night. The Ravens finished 5-11.

### PANTHERS 38, BUCCANEERS 10

Cam Newton ran for two touchdowns and threw for two more, and Carolina captured the NFC's No. 1 seed for the first time. Newton tied Steve Young's NFL record for most career TDs rushing by a quarterback with 43. Young took 15 seasons to reach that plateau; Newton did it in five. Newton completed 21 of 26 passes for 293 yards as Carolina (15-1) overcame a slow start to build a 31-3 lead in the third quarter. Rookie Devin Funchess had seven catches for 120 yards and a touchdown and Cameron Artis-Payne ran for 44 yards and a score as Carolina won its 11th straight home game. Jameis Winston was intercepted twice, and the Bucs (6-10) finished last in the NFC South for the fourth time in five years.

### CHIEFS 23, RAIDERS 17

Alex Smith threw two touchdown passes, Kansas City sacked Derek Carr six times, and the Chiefs collected a franchise-best 10th straight win. The Chiefs are headed to Houston for a wild-card game next weekend after Denver won the AFC West with its win over San Diego. Regardless, the Chiefs (11-5) are somehow in the dance after a 1-5 start. The Raiders (7-9), who accounted for two of those victories, had the ball with 1:34 left. But Carr was sacked one last time, and the clock expired before they came close to a go-ahead touchdown.

### SEAHAWKS 36, CARDINALS 6

Russell Wilson threw three touchdown passes in a second-quarter outburst and Seattle snapped Arizona's nine-game winning streak. Seattle will play at either Washington or Minnesota in the wild card round next weekend, depending on the outcome of Sunday night's game between the Vikings and Green Bay. The Seahawks (10-6) dominated from their opening possession and led 30-6 at the half. It was a sour end to the regular season for the NFC West champion Cardinals (13-3), who already had clinched the NFC's No. 2 seed and a first-round playoff bye. Tyler Lockett set up three of Seattle's four first-half touchdowns - with punt returns of 66 and 42 yards and a 36-yard reception.

### EAGLES 35, GIANTS 30

The New York Giants suffered another tough loss in what may have been Tom Coughlin's final game. Former Giant

Walter Thurmond scored on an 83-yard fumble return in the third quarter and Philadelphia added to Coughlin's season-long frustrations. It was the third straight loss for the Giants (6-10) and finished a third straight losing season and a fourth straight year out of the playoffs. After meeting with Eagles interim coach Pat Shurmur at midfield, Coughlin walked off the field, waving to the crowd just before walking into the tunnel. Coughlin, who led the Giants to two Super Bowl titles in his 12 seasons, has a year left on his contract. His future is expected to be decided soon by co-owners John Mara and Steve Tisch. The 69-year-old might retire and end his 20-year NFL head coaching career.

### REDSKINS 34, COWBOYS 23

Kirk Cousins threw for three touchdowns before leaving late in the first half of a playoff tuneup. Cousins broke Jay Shroeder's franchise record for yards passing in a season, finishing with 4,166. Had the game mattered, he might have threatened Sonny Jurgensen's 48-year-old team record of 31 touchdown passes, instead settling for 29. The Redskins (9-7) won four straight to finish the season, their longest streak since winning the last seven the last time they made the playoffs in 2012. The NFC East champions will be the No. 4 seed on wild-card weekend. Kellen Moore had 435 yards passing and three touchdowns after throwing an interception and losing a fumble on a snap to help dig a quick 21-0 hole for the Cowboys (4-12).

### COLTS 30, TITANS 24

Recently signed Josh Freeman and Ryan Lindley each threw a touchdown pass in the first half and Jerrell Freeman scored on a 23-yard interception in the second for the Colts. The Colts (8-8) won their last two games to avoid the first losing season since 2011, but didn't get the help they needed - a Houston loss and seven other games to go the right way - to make the postseason. Josh Freeman was 15 of 28 for 149 yards and one interception while running Indy's regular offense. Lindley ran the 2-minute offense and gave Indy a 20-14 halftime lead with an 18-yard TD pass. Tennessee (3-13) clinched the No. 1 draft pick by losing its fourth straight. Quarterback Zach Mettenberger fell to 0-10 as a starter.

### SAINTS 20, FALCONS 17

Jamarca Sanford's interception at the Atlanta 25 with less than two minutes remaining set up Kai Forbath's 30-yard field goal as time expired. Sanford cut in front of Devonta Freeman for the interception with 1:47 remaining. It was the Saints' sixth sweep of the season series with the Falcons in 10 years under coach Sean Payton. Payton is 15-5 against Atlanta. The loss denied the Falcons (8-8) their chance to give first-year coach Dan Quinn a winning record. The Saints (7-9) avoided giving coach Sean Payton his first 10-loss season. Drew Brees threw for 323 yards, including a touchdown pass to Ben Watson. Julio Jones had nine catches for 149 yards for Atlanta.

### LIONS 24, BEARS 20

Matthew Stafford threw for 298 yards and three touchdowns, Calvin Johnson had 137 yards receiving for the Lions. Detroit (7-9) avoided a last-place finish in the NFC North with its sixth win in eight games.

Whether the Lions bring back coach Jim Caldwell for a third season remains to be seen. He led them to a rare playoff appearance last year, but a 1-7 start put his future in doubt. Caldwell survived a midseason purge that saw offensive coordinator Joe Lombardi get fired and ownership drop the ax on president Tom Lewand and general manager Martin Mayhew the following week. The Lions intercepted Jay Cutler three times.

### 49ERS 19, RAMS 16 OT

Phil Dawson kicked a 23-yard field goal 11:33 into overtime for his fourth of the game to lift San Francisco in Jim Tomsula's last game as coach. Tomsula was fired after the game. Dawson came through after Greg Zuerlein's 48-yard field goal attempt was blocked by Dontae Johnson, giving San Francisco the ball back with 4:49 to play. Blaine Gabbert passed for 354 yards and a 33-yard touchdown for the 49ers (5-11), who avoided their worst finish since 4-12 in 2005. Rams coach Jeff Fisher finished 7-9 for his fourth straight losing season running the team. — AP



MADRID: Real Madrid's new French coach Zinedine Zidane (left) poses with Real Madrid's president Florentino Perez at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium yesterday. — AFP

## REAL MADRID SACK BENITEZ, APPOINT ZIDANE

**MADRID:** Real Madrid have sacked coach Rafa Benitez after less than half a season in charge and promoted former France and Real great Zinedine Zidane from the B team to replace him, president Florentino Perez said yesterday. Perez announced the dismissal of Benitez, who had a contract until June 2018, following a board meeting and Zidane was present at the president's news conference at the Bernabeu stadium. "Firstly I would like to thank the club and the president for giving me the chance to coach this team," Zidane said. "We have the best club in the world and the best fans in the world," the Frenchman added.

Perez announced the decision a day after Madrid's 2-2 draw at Valencia deepened a crisis that started with an embarrassing 4-0 home loss to rival Barcelona in November. Madrid won seven of nine matches since that demoralizing defeat but fans continued to demand the departure of Benitez, whose Liverpool side won the Champions League in 2005.

Real Madrid is third in the Spanish league, four points behind leader Atletico Madrid and two behind Barcelona. France soccer great Zidane, who was Carlo Ancelotti's assistant in 2014 when Real Madrid won the Champions League, has been coaching Madrid's "B" team in the third division. — Agencies





SHANGHAI: Two investors chat in a stock firm in Fuyang, east China's Anhui province yesterday. Trading on the Shanghai and Shenzhen stock exchanges was ended early yesterday after shares fell seven percent, the first time China's new "circuit breaker" intervened to curb market volatility. — AFP

CHINA TRIGGERS GLOBAL STOCKS SLUMP

SHOCKING START TO 2016 AS SHANGHAI PLUNGES 7%

**LONDON:** Fresh evidence of China's economic slowdown sent world stock markets tumbling yesterday, with Europe and the United States following Asia sharply lower in a gloomy start to 2016. Shanghai equities plunged seven percent, leading an Asian meltdown, as more weak factory data fanned fears about the health of the world's second biggest economy.

In afternoon trading London stocks lost 2.0 percent with China-exposed mining companies falling the heaviest. In the eurozone, Frankfurt stocks dropped 3.7 percent, having been down more than 4 percent for a period, and Paris shed 2.1 percent. Wall Street also opened sharply lower, with the Dow dropping over two percent. "Equity markets have made a rather negative start to 2016, with China making an early appearance to remind us of global growth woes," said Mike van Dulken, head of research at traders Accendo Markets.

London's top fallers were mining giants Anglo American and Glencore, which both tanked by over five percent each on demand fears in leading commodity consumer China. Peer Antofagasta shed 4.3 percent.

Global markets were also spooked over the flare-up in tensions between Iran and Saudi Arabia, as investors returned to their desks after the Christmas and year-end holidays.

World oil prices edged higher as key crude exporter Saudi Arabia cut diplomatic ties with fellow OPEC member Iran after a row over the Saudi execution of a Shiite cleric.

"On the first trading day of 2016, the markets have got off to a shocking start," added analyst Manoj Ladwa at brokerage TJM Partners. "The problems in the Middle East have taken a turn for the worse with the Saudi-Iran stand-off. And China has only added to the

negative sentiment as their economy shows further signs of slowing," he told AFP.

"Not the best start to the New Year-but if the market is able to get the current bearishness out of the way, a recovery in stocks by the end of the week is a strong possibility."





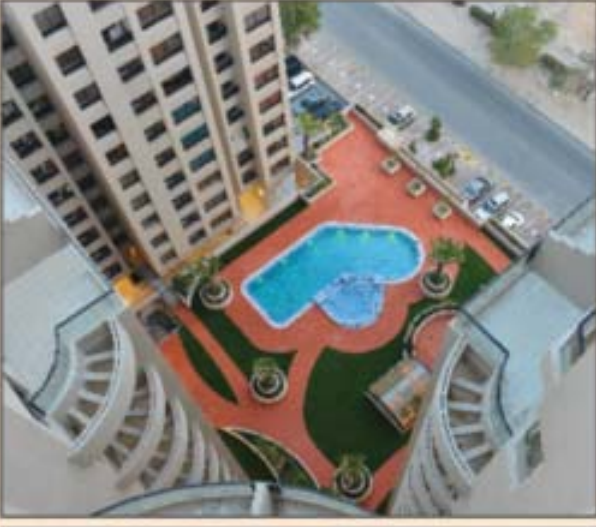

Authorities in China suspended trading on its stock markets in the early afternoon after shares collapsed. The drop in the CSI300 index-which covers the Shanghai and Shenzhen bourses-for the first time triggered an automatic early closure under a "circuit breaker" mechanism to curb volatility, after an earlier 15-minute trading halt failed to stem the declines.

The sharp losses revived memories of the summer rout that saw Shanghai crash about 40 percent and trillions of dollars wiped off valuations. Dealers began selling immediately after data from official and private surveys of manufacturing showed activity shrinking in December. The reports are the latest to highlight weakness in the economy, which is expected to have grown in 2015 at its slowest pace in a quarter of a century.

Adding to the selling is the looming expiration of measures brought in to curb last year's share slump.

China yesterday also cut the yuan's value against the greenback, making it weaker than 6.5 for the first time in more than four-and-a-half years, as pressure on the currency mounts from the country's growth slowdown.

"Despite the use of circuit breakers to pause trading amid aggressive falls, the halt failed to stop the downward momentum of Chinese stocks, after manufacturing PMI disappointed," said Rebecca O'Keeffe, head of investment at online broker Interactive Investor. "The extreme reaction of investors in China ... suggests that the market is highly risk averse and New Year cheer is in short supply." — AFP



For Rent

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★ 3 Bedrooms Apartments:

3 Bedrooms + 3 Bathrooms (2 Master) + Big Salon

★ Duplex Villas:

3 Bedrooms + 3 Bathrooms + Big Salon + Pool

★ Triplex Villas:

4 Bedrooms + 4 Bathrooms (2 Master) + Big Salon + Pool

All Master Bathrooms is Marble

- Volleyball Court

- Basketball Court

- Hotel Lobby

- Pools + Jacuzzi

- Billiard

- 213 Car Parking Areas

6 6 8 0 4 2 2 2

GLOBAL SELL-OFF, SAUDI-IRAN TENSIONS HIT GULF MARKETS

MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

**DUBAI:** Most Middle East stock markets tumbled yesterday in a global sell-off triggered by China, while growing tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran added to the gloom. Chinese stocks slumped by 7 percent after weak manufacturing data, causing emerging markets in general to suffer their biggest fall in four months.

"The broad market sell-off is part of the general weakness in global equity markets," said Muhammad Shabbir, head of equity funds at Dubai-based Rasmala Investment Bank. The lack of a catalyst that would support a market rally in the Gulf leaves the region vulnerable to volatile trade, he added. In past years, the region outperformed emerging markets because of its strong budget and current account surpluses, but most of those surpluses have now been erased by low oil prices.

"While rising geopolitical tension makes headlines and weighs on sentiment, weakness in oil and worries about Chinese demand remain the primary drivers of GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) stock markets," said Akber Khan, director of asset management at Doha's Al Rayan Investment.

Saudi Arabia cut diplomatic ties with Iran on Sunday in response to the storming of its embassy in Tehran. The attack came after the Saudis executed a leading

Shi'ite cleric, Nimr Al-Nimir, on terrorism charges, infuriating Iran. Local investors have largely ignored geopolitical tensions in the Gulf for some years. But the latest events marked an escalation, and foreign investors in particular may become more cautious about the region.

Reflecting that caution, the Saudi riyal fell to near a 16-year low against the US dollar in the forward foreign exchange market yesterday. Meanwhile, the cost of insuring Saudi sovereign debt against default rose to multi-year highs.

Riyadh's equities benchmark faced a heavy sell-off in the last hour of trade as investors dumped stocks across the board. The index sank 2.4 percent. Savola, one of the few Saudi companies with a presence in Iran, fell 3.2 percent. The food conglomerate has factories in Tehran; Iran provided 11 percent of its revenue in the third quarter of 2015 and the company's revenues from Iran totalled 2 billion riyals (\$534 million) in the first nine months of 2015, its financial statements showed. Islamic lender Alinma retreated 3.7 percent after rising in early trade. Health insurer Bupa Arabia, usually a favourite of foreign investors, plunged 9.6 percent. Petrochemical shares showed some early strength after being hit hard by higher natural gas feedstock prices in last week's 2016 state budget. But they succumbed in late trade, with Saudi Basic Industries losing 1.6 percent. — Reuters



# OIL RISES AS MARKET PONDERES SCALE OF FUTURE IRAN EXPORTS

## MARKETS JOLTED BY DEEPENING SAUDI-IRAN CRISIS

**LONDON:** Oil prices edged up yesterday after a breakdown in diplomatic ties between Saudi Arabia and Iran that some speculated could result in supply restrictions, although gains were tempered by data showing some of Asia's largest economies are struggling.

Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter, cut diplomatic ties with Iran on Sunday in response to the storming of its embassy in Tehran following Riyadh's execution of a prominent Shi'ite cleric on Saturday. Fellow Gulf producer Bahrain said on Monday it too would cut ties with Iran.

Benchmark Brent crude futures were last up 76 cents on the day at \$38.04 a barrel at 1115 GMT, near an intraday high of \$38.50. US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) futures were up 48 cents at \$37.52.

"The two questions the market is grappling with are - where next in the Saudi Arabia/Iran stand-off? I think President (Hassan) Rouhani on the Iranian side would like to calm things down and push for no further escalation," Energy Aspects analyst Richard Mallinson said.

"The second question for the market is is there any uncertainty over the exact timing and volume of the return of Iranian barrels?" he said. The clash between the two Middle Eastern countries comes as Iran, which holds some of the largest proven reserves, hopes to ramp up oil exports following the expected removal of sanctions against it. A series of Iranian officials vowed on Friday to expand Tehran's missile capabilities, a challenge to the United States which has threatened to impose new sanctions even as the vast bulk of its measures against Iran are due to be lifted.

"It's very confrontational. I don't think that's enough to derail (the broader lifting of sanctions), but it is prompting a few more questions about what would the timing of the return of Iranian barrels look like," Energy Aspects' Mallinson said.

"The statements at the weekend by (Iranian oil officials) that Iran would only increase production at the level of the



**KUWAIT:** In this Nov 3, 1973 file photo, a subcommittee of six Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) meet to study the prices of oil, in Kuwait. The meeting comprised Oil Ministers from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Abu Dhabi and Qatar. Under the rule of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Iran had rocky relations with Saudi Arabia, though they improved toward the end of his reign. Both were original members of the oil cartel OPEC. —AP

market can absorb seems to be a shift in rhetoric."

Iran plans to raise output by half a million to 1 million barrels per day (bpd) post lifting of sanctions, although Iranian officials said they did not plan to flood the market with its crude if there was no demand for it. Iran's oil exports have fallen to around 1 million bpd, down from a peak pre-sanctions peak of almost 3 million bpd in 2011.

The oil price surrendered earlier gains that boosted futures by as much as 2 percent after data showed Chinese factory

activity shrank for a 10th straight month, prompting a 7-percent fall on Chinese stock markets and for trading to be suspended.

Manufacturing activity in India, which the International Energy Agency believes will lead growth in oil demand this year, contracted for the first time in two years.

"Iran may decide to take more of a hardline stance against the Saudi-oriented policy of not cutting production. So far, they've been going along with it, but this renewed political vigour may prompt them to change a bit," CMC Markets analyst

Jasper Lawler said.

"Really, this is still a bear market and people are just selling the bounce because (the clash) is not going to affect production. Obviously it's just tensions in the region."

Oil prices are still down by two-thirds since mid-2014 on oversupply as producers including the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Russia and the United States pump between 0.5 million and 2 million barrels of oil every day in excess of demand. —Reuters

### News

in brief

#### OPEC oil price down by 28 cents to \$31.26 pb

**VIENNA:** The OPEC daily basket price went up by 28 cents to \$31.26 a barrel Thursday, compared with \$31.54 the previous day, the OPEC said yesterday. The yearly average of the OPEC's basket price hit \$49.64 pb in 2015, it said. The new OPEC Reference Basket of Crudes (ORB) is made up of the following: Saharan Blend (Algeria), Girassol (Angola), Oriente (Ecuador), Iran Heavy (Islamic Republic of Iran), Basra Light (Iraq), Kuwait Export (Kuwait), Es Sider (Libya), Bonny Light (Nigeria), Qatar Marine (Qatar), Arab Light (Saudi Arabia), Murban (UAE) and Meroy (Venezuela). During their recent meeting in Vienna, OPEC member countries had decided to maintain their production at 30 million barrels per day (bpd) despite a surplus in the market estimated at over a million barrels.

#### Ethiad launches appeal to German court

**DUBAI:** Ethiad Airways has filed an appeal against a German court's decision last week that revoked its rights to jointly sell tickets for 29 routes operated by Air Berlin, the Abu Dhabi-based airline said yesterday. "We will fight all the way to protect our investment, to protect our partnership with Air Berlin and to protect competitive choice in German air travel," Ethiad chief executive James Hogan said in a statement following the filing at the court in Lüneburg. A Braunschweig court on Wednesday said Ethiad may not continue to operate the code share flights between Jan. 16 and the end of the winter schedule in March because they were not covered by the current air traffic rights agreement between Germany and the United Arab Emirates.

#### US Dollar steady against dinar trading at KD 0.303

**KUWAIT:** Exchange rate of the US dollar against the Kuwaiti dinar remained unchanged trading at KD 0.303 yesterday, while the euro went down to reach KD 0.330 compared to Sunday's rates, said a statement by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK). Exchange rate of the sterling pound went down to KD 0.447, the Swiss to KD 0.304 and the Japanese yen was firm, trading at KD 0.002.

#### Egypt's 5-year, 10-year treasury bonds rise

**CAIRO:** Yields on five-year and 10-year treasury bonds rose at an auction yesterday, data from the central bank showed. The average yield on Egypt's five-year bond rose to 13.426 percent from 13.174 percent in the previous auction, on Dec 21, while yields on the 10-year bond also rose to 15.556 percent from 15.365 percent on Dec 21.

## POLL: STUBBORN OVERSUPPLY TO CURB OIL PRICE RECOVERY

**LONDON:** Crude oil prices are unlikely to rally much in 2016 as subdued demand growth looks unable to absorb rising supply from the likes of Iran and Iraq, even though non-OPEC output is expected to moderate, a Reuters poll showed yesterday. The average 2016 price for benchmark North Sea Brent crude futures was forecast at \$52.52 a barrel, \$5.43 below the previous month's poll, according to the survey of 20 analysts.

This is the seventh consecutive monthly Reuters poll in which analysts have cut their price. In May, analysts forecast Brent to average \$70.90 in 2016, but have been reducing their outlook ever since. Thirteen of the 18 respondents who participated in both the November poll and the most recent survey, conducted in December, cut their average 2016 price forecasts for Brent futures, which averaged \$53.79 in 2015.

Oil prices have been hovering around 11-year lows after falling to their lowest since mid-2004 in late December, as near-record-high production looks set to feed a global surplus.

"Even if non-OPEC production (USA, Brazil, Canada) declines by 0.6-0.8 million barrels per day (bpd) in 2016, an increase in production from Iran and Iraq will continue to keep the market in an oversupply situation in 2016," CRISIL Research director Rahul

Prithiani said.

Analysts said high inventory levels could persist well into 2017 as it may take a while to clear the overhang in unwanted stocks. "Demand growth will be impacted on account of the slowdown in Chinese demand growth, increase in efficiencies in the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) countries, substitution from natural gas and removal of subsidies in developing countries," Prithiani said.

Analysts were not unanimous over whether lower prices would force the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to cut production. A few believed OPEC might take some action if prices fell below \$30, while others said there was no sense in the group cutting production unless demand collapsed significantly.

"The only scenario in which it makes sense for OPEC to cut production would be a collapse in demand, so a hard landing in China could potentially trigger such a move," Capital Economics commodities analyst Thomas Pugh said.

Analysts saw US crude futures averaging \$49.75 a barrel in 2016, compared with \$53.73 forecast in November. West Texas Intermediate crude futures averaged \$48.90 in 2015.

## GOLD PRICES LOW AT END OF 2015: REPORT

**KUWAIT:** Gold prices ended the last session of 2015 at a low rate for the third year in a row, reaching \$1,060 per ounce at the US Commodity Exchange (COMEX), according to a specialized economic report released yesterday. Gold prices are affected by the inflation rate, the drop in oil prices, the rise in US profit rates and the continuous rise in international stock markets, said ICN online economic magazine.

The report noted that policies adopted by central banks around the world led shareholders to invest in assets despite the risks, rather than gold, which is considered a safe haven. The number of people investing in gold has decreased amidst the drop in inflation rates and the rise in US dollar exchange rate. The demand on gold will continue throughout 2016 as the US Federal Reserve is expected to raise the profit rate from quarter point to half of full point, it said.

Meanwhile, the report added that having an international economic crisis could allow gold to recover, however, having such crisis is not widely possible due to economy-boosting policies followed by central banks. Gold prices dropped by 10 percent in 2015, affected by a quarter-point rise in profit by the US Federal Reserve. —KUNA

## OMAN SEEKS PRIVATE CASH FOR WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT

**DUBAI:** Oman is planning a 500 million rial (\$1.3 billion) waterfront development around Port Sultan Qaboos in the capital Muscat that will be paid for by investment from the private sector, Oman News Agency reported yesterday.

The project is the first announced following the publication of the sultanate's five-year plan on Sunday, which highlighted an increased role for outside investment to help maintain development projects at a time of lower oil prices and squeezed state finances.

Financing will be arranged through pension funds and private sector investment, with no government cash involved, state news agency ONA quoted Minister of Transport and Communications Ahmed bin Mohammed Al-Futaisi as saying.

The project, due to be completed over four phases up to 2027, will be 51 percent state-owned through the Oman Tourism Development Company (Omran) and the remaining 49 per cent

will be held by investors, it added. Oman, one of the smaller members of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council, plans to cut its budget deficit to 3.3 billion rials this year from an actual 4.5 billion rials last year.

The shortfall, like in other GCC members such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, is primarily due to lower oil revenue and Oman is looking to amend economic policy to cover the gap, including cuts in spending and subsidies, as well as more borrowing.

The sultanate is targeting more infrastructure projects through public private partnerships (PPPs), with 52 percent of total investment to come from the private sector, according to the 2016-2020 economic plan, against 42 percent in the last incarnation.

The waterfront development will span 451,000 square metres, and will include hotels, as well as residential apartments and houses around the marina, ONA said. —Reuters

### EXCHANGE RATES

#### AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

COUNTRY	SELL DRAFT	SELL CASH
ASIAN COUNTRIES		
Japanese Yen	2.550	
Indian Rupees	4.593	
Pakistani Rupees	2.904	
Srilankan Rupees	2.118	
Nepali Rupees	2.873	
Singapore Dollar	214.915	
Hongkong Dollar	39.320	
Bangladesh Taka	3.878	
Philippine Peso	6.466	
Thai Baht	8.427	
GCC COUNTRIES		
Saudi Riyal	81.310	
Qatari Riyal	83.674	
Omani Riyal	791.190	
Bahraini Dinar	808.954	
UAE Dirham	83.016	
ARAB COUNTRIES		
Egyptian Pound - Cash	39.020	
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	38.948	
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.423	
Tunisian Dinar	151.240	
Jordanian Dinar	429.921	
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.032	
Syrian Lira	2.173	
Morocco Dirham	31.097	
EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES		
US Dollar Transfer	304.750	
Euro	333.091	
Sterling Pound	450.725	
Canadian dollar	220.115	
Turkish lira	104.116	
Swiss Franc	307.052	
Australian Dollar	221.553	
US Dollar Buying	304.450	

	GOLD
20 Gram	216.710
10 Gram	111.050
5 Gram	56.210

#### UAE EXCHANGE CENTRE WLL

Australian Dollar	213.03
Canadian Dollar	223.33
Swiss Franc	308.51
Euro	333.77
US Dollar	304.65
Sterling Pound	451.93
Japanese Yen	2.57
Bangladesh Taka	3.884
Indian Rupee	4.577
Sri Lankan Rupee	2.120
Nepali Rupee	2.862
Pakistani Rupee	2.904
UAE Dirhams	0.08290
Bahraini Dinar	0.8096
Egyptian Pound	0.03881
Jordanian Dinar	0.4333
Omani Riyal	0.7911
Qatari Riyal	0.08400
Saudi Riyal	0.08120

#### DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

GCC COUNTRIES	
US Dollar	304.400
Canadian Dollar	222.240
Sterling Pound	455.735
Euro	334.985
Swiss Frank	301.790
Bahrain Dinar	805.305
UAE Dirhams	83.120
Qatari Riyals	84.335

Saudi Riyals	81.850
Jordanian Dinar	428.810
Egyptian Pound	38.763
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.123
Indian Rupees	4.594
Pakistani Rupees	2.901
Bangladesh Taka	3.867
Philippines Peso	6.440
Cyprus pound	579.790
Japanese Yen	3.510
Syrian Pound	2.380
Nepalese Rupees	3.865
Malaysian Ringgit	71.725
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	47.470
Thai Bhat	9.415
Turkish Lira	104.405

#### BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

COUNTRY	SELL CASH	SELLDRAFT
Europe		
British Pound	0.441636	0.450636
Czech Korune	0.004241	0.016241
Danish Krone	0.040323	0.045323
Euro	0.325875	0.333875
Norwegian Krone	0.030407	0.035607
Romanian Leu	0.072998	0.072998
Slovakia	0.009102	0.019102
Swedish Krona	0.032043	0.037043
Swiss Franc	0.299001	0.309201
Turkish Lira	0.099852	0.110152
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.211034	0.222534
New Zealand Dollar	0.198940	0.208440
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.213525	0.222025
US Dollars	0.300350	0.304850

US Dollars Mint	0.300850	0.304850
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003479	0.004079
Chinese Yuan	0.045447	0.048947
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037186	0.039936
Indian Rupee	0.004226	0.004616
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002463	0.002643
Kenyan Shilling	0.002969	0.002969
Korean Won	0.000246	0.000261
Malaysian Ringgit	0.067219	0.073219
Nepalese Rupee	0.002886	0.003056
Pakistan Rupee	0.002656	0.002936
Philippine Peso	0.006399	0.006679
Sierra Leone	0.000070	0.000076
Singapore Dollar	0.210263	0.216263
South African Rand	0.013592	0.022092
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001750	0.002330
Taiwan	0.009073	0.009253
Thai Baht	0.008128	0.008678

Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.800669	0.808669
Egyptian Pound	0.034563	0.037689
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000201	0.000261
Jordanian Dinar	0.425414	0.432914
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000151	0.000259
Moroccan Dirhams	0.021564	0.045564
Nigerian Naira	0.001259	0.001894
Omani Riyal	0.784359	0.790039
Qatar Riyal	0.082913	0.084126
Saudi Riyal	0.080300	0.081250
Syrian Pound	0.001291	0.001511
Tunisian Dinar	0.147103	0.155103
Turkish Lira	0.099852	0.110152
UAE Dirhams	0.081909	0.083058
Yemeni Riyal	0.001376	0.001456



# US SHALE INDUSTRY IS WOUNDED BUT NOT DEAD

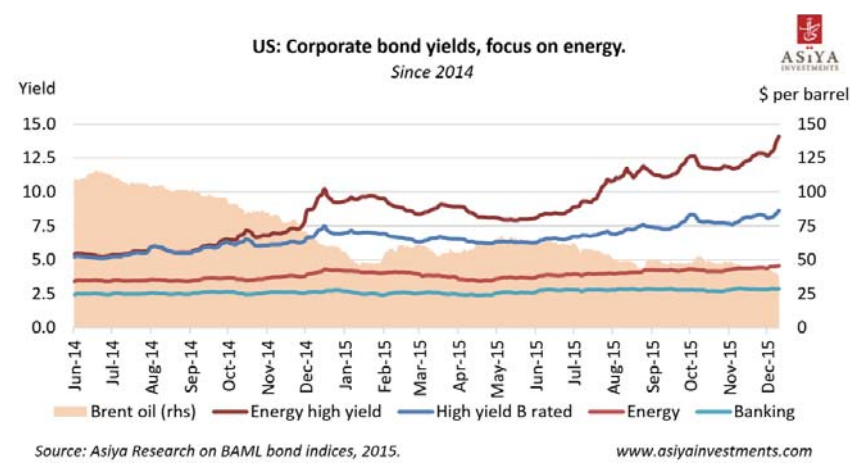
## ASIYA CAPITAL INVESTMENTS COMPANY ANALYSIS

By Jordi Ro

**KUWAIT:** Low energy prices are taking its toll in the American energy industry. The current environment affected negatively its revenue generating capacity. The cash-flow for a group of 46 leading oil companies tracked by the EIA shrank by 33 percent YoY due to lower income, notwithstanding expenditure cuts in important items such as capital expenditure and dividends. Producers have been able to withstand low prices in 2015 due to high levels of hedging (protection against volatility by locking prices in advance). However, hedging has fallen from 60 percent of production in 2015 to about 10 percent in 2016, according to IHS energy. Negative perspectives are also impacting their financial costs and borrowing capacity. Bond yields of energy companies increased, reflecting higher perceived risk in the industry, particularly in the most fragile and smaller companies

generally classified as "high yield". Moreover, the capacity to secure new financing decreased markedly, due to the depreciation of oil reserves, often used as collateral. For instance, the EIA reported asset write-downs worth \$38 billion in 2015 Q3 for the same set of companies.

The organization of the oil industry in the GCC is fundamentally different from the American. While American production is private and subject to market dynamics, production in the GCC is state-controlled. Lower production costs, below \$10 per barrel in Kuwait and Saudi compared to about \$40 in the US, explain the resilience of the GCC oil industry. However, Gulf countries are also suffering the effects of lower prices. ADNOC, Abu Dhabi's oil company, announced cuts of operating and capital expenditures by 25 percent. But the main consequence of the price shock is lower oil-related public revenue, which is causing large deficits.



The IMF projected negative public balances of 13 percent and 12 percent of GDP for the GCC in 2015 and 2016 respectively, with Saudi Arabia registering the largest one (22 percent and 19 percent). The OPEC is contributing to keep prices at record-lows by producing

at record-highs. However, oil exporters will eventually need to decrease production to raise prices and rebalance their public finance.

The OPEC and North America have driven oil production growth in the last five years. Before mid-2014, the US con-

tributed to increase global output, while the OPEC held prices by cutting production. However, the OPEC shifted its strategy, from keeping prices high to gaining market share by financially drowning the competition, mainly in the US. The cartel started pumping at record-highs, thereby creating a sizeable oversupply estimated to be about 1.5 to 2.0 million b/d. With a production of 37 million b/d according to the EIA, it is well within the OPEC's capability to close the supply glut. However, the strategy of the OPEC has not finalized yet. The US shale industry received a financial blow, but production remains high in spite of modest declines (400,000 b/d from April's peak) in main shale areas. Industry trends in the US and the entry of Iran suggest abundant competition in the oil market, pushing the OPEC to maintain its current strategy, at least for the time being and as long as it is able to withstand the self-inflicted damage.



**LONDON:** British Prime Minister David Cameron (left) and Conservative Party London mayoral candidate Zac Goldsmith (right) speak to Bellway Chief Executive Ted Ayres (center) during a visit to a Bellway housing development in Barking, east London yesterday. —AFP

## UK ECONOMY LEANS ON CONSUMERS AS MANUFACTURING SLIPS AGAIN

**LONDON:** Lending to Britons surged towards the end of 2015 at the fastest rate in almost a decade but manufacturing growth slipped, according to figures yesterday that underscored Britain's reliance on consumers to drive its economy. Net lending to consumers rose 8.3 percent in the year to November, the Bank of England said, in what was the fastest credit growth since February 2006. To date the bank has dismissed the idea that Britain's economic recovery is disproportionate-ly reliant on debt.

Stronger-than-expected lending growth and mortgage approvals helped lift sterling from a nine-month low against the dollar yesterday, a weakness that partly reflects concerns that the economy might be too weak to justify an interest rate rise this year.

Although Britain's economy probably ended last year as one of the fastest-growing in the developed world for a second year in a row, there are concerns that the growth is unbalanced and may be hurt by a likely in/out referendum this year on European Union membership.

News that growth in British manufacturing slowed more than expected in December, as export orders took a hit, was a reminder of Britain's reliance on domestic demand.

The Markit/CIPS manufacturing purchasing managers' index (PMI) dropped to a three-month low of 51.9 from 52.5 in November, at the bottom end of expectations in a Reuters poll that forecast a consensus reading of 52.7. Manufacturing failed to contribute to Britain's economic growth through the first three quarters of 2015, with the much larger services industry instead

driving the recovery.

"Looking ahead, manufacturing looks set to play firmly second fiddle to services in driving growth in 2016. That prediction is consistent with the household borrowing numbers for November," Martin Beck, economist at the EY ITEM Club consultancy, said.

"A further acceleration in lending may well make 2016 the year when the (Bank of England's) Financial Policy Committee really makes its presence felt."

In cash terms, unsecured lending to consumers was up 1.476 billion pounds (\$2.18 billion) from the previous month, beating economists' forecasts in a Reuters poll and showing a similar picture to industry figures released before Christmas.

Lenders also granted more home loans than expected, with 70,410 mortgages for house purchase approved in November, the highest number in three months. Net mortgage lending, which lags approvals, rose 3.873 billion pounds, the biggest monthly increase since April 2008.

In November, the BoE rejected the idea that Britain was in a debt-fuelled boom, and stimulative credit conditions are more likely to trigger lending curbs by the bank than a rise in interest rates.

The central bank has said it is watching consumer credit and mortgage lending closely, and in 2014 regulators tightened mortgage rules, temporarily cooling house price rises.

EEF, a business group for manufacturers, said it hoped that signs of improvement in continental Europe would benefit British exporters, although weakness in China could counteract this. —Reuters

## BURGAN BANK ANNOUNCES YAWMI ACCOUNT WINNERS

**KUWAIT:** Burgan Bank announced yesterday the names of the lucky winners of its Yawmi account draw, each taking home a prize of KD 5,000.

The lucky winners for the daily draws took home a cash-prize of KD 5,000 each, and they are:

1. SHAKIL RAHMAN ABDUL-RAHMAN GONDAL
2. BIVIN THOMAS PALATHINGAL
3. ALI HUSSAIN ALI HAJEYAH
4. AWADH MEJBEL BJAD ALDAIHANI
5. REEM ABDULMAJEED FARHAN ALFARHAN

To further add to the anticipation of Yawmi account customers, Burgan Bank now offers a Quarterly Draw with more chances to win higher rewards, entitling one lucky customer to win KD 125,000 every three months. The Yawmi Account now offers Daily and quarterly Draws, the Quarterly Draw requires customers to maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 in their account for 2 months prior to draw

date. Additionally, every KD 10 in the account, will entitle customers to one chance of winning. If the account balance is KD 500 and above, the account holder will be qualified for both the quarterly and daily draws.

Burgan Bank encourages everyone to open a Yawmi account and/or increase their deposit to maximize their chances to becoming a winner. The more customers deposit, the higher the chances they receive of winning.

For more information on opening a Yawmi account or about the new quarterly draw, customers are urged to visit their nearest Burgan Bank branch and receive all the details, or simply call the bank's Call Center at 1804080 where customer service representatives will be delighted to assist with any questions on the Yawmi account or any of the bank's products and services. Customers can also log on to Burgan Bank's www.burgan.com for further information.

# DROUGHT-HIT INDIAN FARMERS SEEK SUPPORT IN BUDGET

**NEW DELHI:** India will need to increase budgetary allocations for irrigation projects and offer higher procurement prices for crops to support farmers hit by two years of drought, farmer associations said yesterday. Drought in many parts of the country has hit production of rice, cotton and other crops, hurting the popularity of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, whose party recently lost village council elections in Gujarat, a state he ran for over a decade.

In a pre-budget meeting with Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, farm leaders urged him to implement Modi's promise of ensuring higher income for farmers. During his victorious 2014 election campaign, Modi promised to raise public investment in the farm sector to ensure a minimum profit margin of 50 percent over the cost of production.

Jaitley, who will present his 2016/17 budget at the end of February, has promised to spend nearly 500 billion rupees (\$7.5 billion) on irrigation projects over a period of five years.

"A bad monsoon and low international commodity prices have aggravated the misery of farmers," Ajay Vir Kakhar, Chairman of the Farmers' Forum India, told reporters after the meeting.

Growth in farm output, which contributes nearly 13 percent to India's \$2 trillion economy, fell to 2 percent in the first half of the current fiscal year from 2.4 percent a year ago.

Kakhar said more funds should be allocated to improve weather forecasts for farmers besides a state-funded insurance scheme for all crops. Farm experts say profit margins for producing major crops have fallen to less than 5 percent

following a collapse of global commodity prices, from around 20-30 percent about three years ago. Last month, the government slashed its economic growth forecast to 7-7.5 percent for the fiscal year ending in March 2016, citing lower farm output and weak global demand. That was sharply lower than an 8.1-8.5 percent growth estimated last February.

Farm experts also favored the transfer of fertiliser subsidies - estimated at nearly 700 billion rupees a year - directly into farmers' bank accounts to cut down leakages in the system.

"Farmers are feeling short changed by the Modi government," said Satnam Singh Behru, president of the Indian Farmers' Association, adding that more than 15,000 farmers had committed suicide in the last year. "Many farmers have lost faith in the government." —Reuters



**SINGAPORE:** Figurines to mark the lunar year of the monkey are displayed over a street in Singapore yesterday. Singapore's trade-dependent economy grew by an estimated 2.1 percent in 2015, its worst performance since the 2009 recession, as global demand for Asian exports slumped, official data showed yesterday. —AFP

# SINGAPORE GDP GROWTH DROPS TO 2.1% IN 2015

**SINGAPORE:** Singapore's trade-dependent economy grew by an estimated 2.1 percent in 2015, its worst performance since the 2009 recession, as global demand for Asian exports slumped, official data showed yesterday. The gross domestic product expansion figure, down from 2.9 percent in 2014, was based on advance estimates that GDP in the fourth quarter of last year rose 2.0 percent year-on-year. The 2015 growth estimate was in line with the government's latest revised forecast for GDP to expand "close to 2.0 percent". Singapore's GDP contracted by 0.6 percent in 2009 during the global financial crisis, but rebounded the following year with exceptional growth of 15.2 percent. The trade ministry has projected GDP growth of between 1.0 and 3.0 percent in 2016. Singapore's manufacturing sector, which makes up about a fifth of the economy, contracted 6.0 percent in the December 2015 quarter, marking its fourth consecutive quarterly decline.

In 2015, manufacturing sank 4.8 percent, the ministry said, due to weak demand for key exports like semiconductors and precision engineering products. Demand for oil drilling rigs has also been dented as exploration activities dwindled due to the prolonged slump in crude prices. Singapore is the largest manufacturer of jack-up rigs, accounting for 70 percent of the world market.

Construction and services cushioned the impact of the weak manufacturing sector in 2015. Construction expanded 7.0 percent and services climbed 6.5 percent year-on-year in the fourth quarter but manufacturing remains a drag. "Singapore's manufacturing sector is still mired in recessionary conditions, reflecting moderating Chinese growth, the broader regional slump in East Asian exports and transmission effects to the industrial supply chain," said Rajiv Biswas, Asia-Pacific chief economist at IHS Global Insight. —AFP

## AL-TIJARI ANNOUNCES THE WINNERS OF AL-NAJMA ACCOUNT

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

### The winners of the Al Najma daily draw are:

Rahat Tanweer Mohammed Ismail — KD 7000, Arowah Khalil Al-Saleh — KD 7000, Ahmed Mohammed Al-Esami Hassan Hasaneen — KD 7000, Shahad Tareq Mezel — KD 7000, Abdulrahman Mohammad Al-Nassar — KD 7000.

The Commercial Bank of Kuwait announces the biggest daily draw in Kuwait with the launch of the new Najma account. Customers of the bank can now enjoy a KD 7,000 daily prize which is the highest in the country and another 4 mega

prizes during the year worth KD 100,000 each on different occasions: The National Day, Eid Al-Fitr, Eid Al-Adha and on the 19th of June which is the date of the bank's establishment.

With a minimum balance of KD 500, customers will be eligible for the daily draw provided that the money is in the account one week prior to the daily draw or 2 months prior to the mega draw. In addition, for each KD 25 a customer can get one chance for winning instead of KD 50.

Commercial Bank of Kuwait takes this opportunity to congratulate all lucky winners and also extends appreciation to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for their effective supervision of the draws which were conducted in an orderly and organized manner.



EL NINO, SLOW FREIGHT UPEND US HEATING OIL MARKET

LONDON: Heating oil prices in the United States are trading as if it was mid-summer rather than winter, as warm weather and sluggish demand from freight companies combine to make heating oil cheaper than gasoline. Heating oil normally trades at a substantial premium to gasoline in winter and then moves to a discount during the second and third quarters as heating demand fades and the summer driving season ramps up.

But this winter, heating oil is trading at the sort of discount normally only seen between March and July as heating demand fades away and refiners prepare for the summer gasoline campaign.

On Dec. 31, the front-month futures price of heating oil closed at \$1.10 per gallon, a discount of almost 17 cents to the futures price of gasoline. It was the largest seasonal dis-

count for more than a decade and compares with a normal premium of around 26 cents per gallon at this time of year.

Consumption of distillate fuel oil, used in trucks, trains and ships, and to heat homes and office buildings, is down by more than 450,000 barrels per day, 11 percent, compared with the end of 2014.

Warmer-than-normal weather since October due to El Nino has cut heating demand by around 25 percent according to the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. And freight movements by road, rail, barge and pipeline have been essentially flat for the last 12 months after five years of strong growth, according to the US Bureau of Transportation Statistics.

Freight is being hit by the shift from coal to gas in power production, the end of the US

oil drilling boom, and over-ordering by retailers and wholesalers earlier in the year, which has left them trying to cut excess stocks. Despite weak demand, the supply of distillate fuel oil is increasing because US refineries are processing crude oil at a seasonal record high to meet strong demand from motorists for gasoline.

Strong gasoline margins are incentivising refiners to produce as much as possible, making excess distillate as an unwanted co-product. US refiners produced 5.5 million barrels per day of distillate in the four weeks leading up to Christmas, up from 5.25 million in the prior-year period, according to the US Energy Information Administration.

Since the beginning of the oil boom, US refineries have increasingly turned to exports to dispose of excess production of distillate

fuel oil. But with warmer-than-normal weather across most of Europe and northeast Asia, it is proving difficult to export any more of the surplus.

Distillate stocks are 27 million barrels, 22 percent higher than at the same point last year. Distillate fuel oil is the most oversupplied part of the fuels market. With the effects of El Nino likely to linger well into the first half of 2016, that overhang looks set to remain for some time. In contrast, gasoline stocks are more than 7 million barrels, or 3 percent, lower than at the end of 2014, and the market looks balanced.

year on year. "The industry-wide focus on improving production efficiency coupled with investments of more than 50 billion pounds over the last four years to bring new fields on stream across the last twelve months is paying off and yielding a better result," said Oil and Gas UK chief executive Deirdre Michie in a statement.

Final production figures, released by the government, were not yet available but Oil and Gas UK said it had based its estimate on data for the first 10 months of 2015 and average production assumptions for November and December. Britain is estimated to have another 200 billion pounds (\$295.38 billion) worth of oil and gas trapped in the North Sea and to tap these resources the government has issued a series of tax incentives and tasked a new regulator with helping companies squeeze as much as possible out of the ground.

The rise in oil and gas production comes as a global supply glut has led to a crash in oil prices to the lowest level in seven years. Major oil producers active across the world ramped up crude output in 2015 as investments in new technologies brought new fields on stream.

While many new fields in the North Sea were approved at a time when oil was trading globally at more than \$100 a barrel, operators are currently facing prices of around \$38 a barrel.

Michie warned that many more North Sea oil and gas workers will lose their jobs this year as companies continue to rein in costs. — Reuters

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report										Global	
Monday 02 January 2016											
Index		Change	Closing		Last Closing		High	Low			
Price Index		▼ -49.82	5,593.30		5,615.12		5,622.15	5,563.45			
Weighted Index		▼ -3.26	378.44		381.70		382.42	379.15			
KSX 15		▼ -7.62	592.51		590.43		592.54	589.51			
Trades											
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change				
VARIN	114	114	200	23	1	114	▲ 8.8				
KARUS	90	87	156,880	13,665	9	87	▼ -3.0				
IPG	320	320	477	153	1	320	▲ 5.8				
NAFESOO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	590	— 0.0				
ENERGYH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	40.6	— 0.0				
QFI	52	50	877,585	49,907	45	51	— 0.0				
ABAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	124	— 0.0				
Oil & Gas			1,133,953	53,752	55	823.86	▲ 5.12				
KFOUC	214	214	90	19	1	214	▼ -8.0				
BPCC	520	510	5,642	2,911	4	520	▼ -10.0				
ALKCUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	510	— 0.0				
ALQURAIN	186	186	85,643	16,675	9	186	▼ -2.0				
Basic Materials			95,389	19,606	14	966.62	▼ -29.39				
KCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	395	— 0.0				
REFRI	320	315	32,077	10,225	8	320	— 0.0				
CABLE	375	375	9,000	3,375	1	375	— 0.0				
SHIP	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	148	— 0.0				
PCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,030	— 0.0				
PAPER	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	390	— 0.0				
VRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	79	— 0.0				
ADICO	265	275	22,805	6,367	6	275	▼ -20.0				
GGVC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	490	— 0.0				
KCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	132	— 0.0				
KPAK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	360	— 0.0				
KBMVC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	250	— 0.0				
KDCM	238	238	10	2	1	238	▲ 4.8				
EQUIPMENT	58	57	150,000	8,600	4	58	— 0.0				
KCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	99	— 0.0				
GYFSJM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	102	— 0.0				
SALBOORH	83	81	336,033	27,594	35	81	▼ -1.0				
AGLTY	476	460	2,361,642	1,105,495	82	466	▼ -16.0				
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	210	— 0.0				
CLEANING	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	40.6	— 0.0				
CITYGRCJP	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	405	— 0.0				
KCL	42.5	42.0	325,845	13,720	13	42.0	▼ -0.5				
KCFG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	218	— 0.0				
KHAMSOFT	950	950	5,436	5,154	1	950	— 0.0				
NAFAS	164	174	910	158	2	184	— 0.0				
SARVAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	320	— 0.0				
GFC	33.5	32.5	3,001	98	3	33.5	▼ -1.5				
MAYADEEN	21.0	20.5	836,538	13,307	24	20.5	▼ -1.0				
DGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	790	— 0.0				
VTCC	57	56	293,480	19,400	18	56	▼ -1.0				
JPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	950	— 0.0				
ALAFOD	210	204	37,029	7,554	4	204	▼ -6.0				
VUBARRAD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	77	— 0.0				
LOGIST CS	56	55	319,009	17,616	17	55	▼ -3.0				
KCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	87	— 0.0				
KCEV	75	75	219,000	16,426	3	75	▼ -5.0				
KCEV	75	75	84,212	4,815	4	75	▼ -5.0				
KDEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	75	— 0.0				
KRWV	102	96	50,203	5,000	3	99	▼ -1.0				
SPCC	89	83	5,100	424	2	89	▲ 1.0				
Industrials			4,873,128	1,265,384	211	1033.57	▼ -9.45				
KSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	220	— 0.0				
KSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	62	— 0.0				
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	112	— 0.0				
CATTL	124	124	34,703	4,303	3	124	▼ -4.0				
DANAH	81	76	21,414	1,710	5	81	▲ 1.0				
PCULT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	196	— 0.0				
FOOD	2,040	2,020	314,965	636,278	6	2,020	▲ 20.0				
Consumer Goods			371,069	642,291	14	1095.42	▲ 0.51				
VHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	180	— 0				
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	320	— 0				
YIACO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	142	— 0				
Health Care			0	0	0	925.34	— 0.00				
KCHN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	320	— 0				
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	220	— 0				
SULTAN	57	56	70,000	4,600	5	56	▼ -2				
CABLETV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	25.8	— 0				
EYAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	330	— 0				
PAWR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	204	— 0				
QULAFUEL	112	110	85,824	9,893	9	110	— 0				
MUNTAAZAH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	99	— 0				
JAZERA	850	880	15,933	16,846	4	890	▼ -10				
SCOR	110	110	12,849	1,413	9	110	— 0				
FUTURKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	110	— 0				
ALNAWADI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	83	— 0				
ALRAI	144	138	17,015	2,300	5	138	▼ -6				
ZMAH	118	116	436,565	51,002	40	116	— 0				
JRIG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	140	— 0				
KCUTFOOD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	540	— 0				
Mizan	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,190	— 0				
Consumer Services			546,867	36,172	75	1002.71	▼ -5.17				
ZAIN	355	350	430,485	150,532	31	355	▲ 5				
QOREDOO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,100	— 0				
HTSTELEC	28.5	28.0	492,100	13,515	7	28.5	— 0				
VIVA	990	990	195,379	168,285	57	990	— 0				
Telecommunications			1,621,984	272,636	135	600.09	▲ 1.46				
MBK	600	790	191,440	128,088	13	790	▼ -10				
GRK	280	280	5,803	1,497	1	280	— 0				
CBK	500	500	130,000	65,000	3	500	— 0				
ABK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	375	— 0				
ALMUTAHED	520	520	990	518	1	520	▼ -10				
KB	224	224	3,642	516	1	224	▼ -2				
BURG	375	375	376,331	141,124	30	375	▼ -10				
KTN	540	530	2,610,890	1,079,581	58	530	▼ -10				
CBUSYAN	440	435	292,727	114,289	23	435	▼ -5				
ALU	206	204	953,060	186,068	11	204	▼ -4				
THAR	46.0	43.5	32,982,148	1,405,583	324	43.5	▲ 2				
WARSABANK	154	194	301,721	58,554	76	194	▼ -2				
Banks			37,187,636	3,272,685	532	980.69	▼ -6.99				
KNS	315	315	10,000	3,150	2	315	▲ 10				
KNS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	750	— 0.0				
AKNS	530	510	22,854	11,910	3	530	— 0.0				
WNS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	108	— 0.0				
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200	— 0.0				
FTI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	56	— 0.0				
WETHAQ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	41.0	— 0.0				
BKHVT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	365	— 0.0				
Insurance			32,954	15,066	5	1132.35	▲ 5.36				
Global											
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change				
SOKOUR	49.5	46.5	171,5051	80,565	31	46.5	▼ -0.5				
KRE	54	52	782,000	41,514	12	53	▼ -1.0				
JRC	55	54	96,123	8,512	4	54	▼ -1.0				
NRE	50	46	309,120	26,562	22	47	▲ 1.0				
SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	379	— 0.0				
TAV	650	550	6,000	3,900	2	650	— 0.0				
AREEC	148	146	114,530	16,729	14	145	▼ -0.0				
MASALEH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	56	— 0.0				
ARABREC	29.5	29.0	353,436	10,540	8	29.5	▲ 0.5				
ERESOD	60	58	185,790	10,552	14	60	— 0.0				
MMANEE	530	520	44,505	41,234	5	520	▼ -20.0				
NUZZAT	79	79	50,100	3,958	3	79	▼ -3.0				
INVESTORS	25.0	24.5	438,858	11,028	13	24.5	▼ -0.5				
RC	29.0	27.5	90,595	1,657	4	27.5	▼ -1.5				
ALTUARIA	61	70	1,802,600	144,567	28	81	▲ 2.0				
SANAM	43.0	42.5	2,000	86	2	42.5	▼ -2.0				
KAYANRE	76	76	16,000	700	1	76	▼ -2.0				
AQAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	75	— 0.0				
ALAQAR A	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	24.5	— 0.0				
MAZAYA	102	100	354,500	39,739	4	100	▼ -2.0				
ADNC	25.5	25.5	3,717,500	98,104	56	26.0	▼ -1.0				
THEMAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	— 0.0				
TIJARA	42.0	41.5	36,100	3,324	4	42.0	▼ -0.5				
TAMEER	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	24.5	— 0.0				
ABGAN	110	110	252	32	1	110	— 0.0				
ABGAN	180	176	12,500	2,210	2	175	▼ -0.0				
ASYAR	29.5	28.5	212,135	6,046	8	29.0	— 0.0				
MUNSHAAT	87	84	6,305	534	4	84	▼ -3.0				
FIRSTDUBAI	48.0	46.5	452,130	22,122	18	46.5	▼ -2.5				
KBT	43.0	42.0	1,627,251	68,580	62	42.0	▼ -1.0				
REMI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	132	— 0.0				
MENA	23.0	22.0	126,970	2,802	5	22.5	▼ -0.5				
ALMUDON	32.0	31.5	638,155	20,319	17	31.6	▼ -0.6				
MARAKEZ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	23.5	— 0.0				
REMI	34.0	32.5	140,215	4,672	7	32.5	▼ -1.0				
MASHAER	104	104	5,000	570	1	104	— 0.0				
Real Estate			13,467,031	70,567	346	925.21	▼ -15.55				
KYV	102	102	1,600	163	2	102	▲ 2.0				
FACIL	108	106	127,739	18,389	6	108	▼ 6.0				
FA	29.5	28.5	2,695,137	78,378	46	29.5	▲ 0.5				
NIN	90	86	651,294	60,799	27	86	— 0.0				
KPROU	580	580	25,000	14,500	3	580	— 0.0				
QDAST	31.5	31.5	124,000	3,906	5	31.5	▼ -0.5				
SECH	38.0	34.0	2,565,308	87,011	64	34.0	▼ -2.5				
SOC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	195	— 0.0</				



## GCC MARKETS ENDURE VOLATILITY IN 2015

## KAMCO EQUITY MARKETS REPORT: THE YEAR THAT WAS

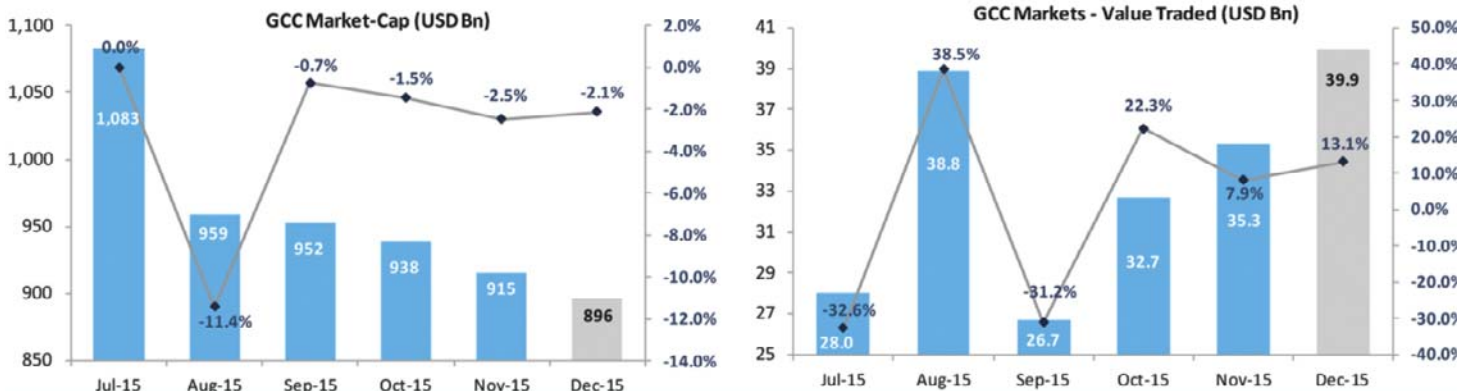
**KUWAIT:** The year 2015 was characterized by severe market volatility due to a number of moving parts that included an extended slump in commodity prices coupled with concerns over global growth. The year also witnessed the worst quarterly performance since 2011 during Q3-15 as the world lost more than \$ 11 trillion worth of market capitalization owing to a prolonged bear run due to commodities weakness, China's currency devaluation during August-15 and cautiousness surrounding a US rate hike.

Oil prices touched historical low levels close to the \$ 30/b mark and ended the year with a decline of more than 30 percent that gave some extra fiscal space for oil importing countries. US markets ended flat by year end with minimal volatility although it faced some downward pressure during September-15 led by speculations surrounding policy announcement. European markets (excluding UK) saw a short bull run until mid-April-15 powered by the European Central Bank's economic stimulus program. However, the market could not sustain the momentum as concerns over a slowdown in China affecting European exporters and commodity producers resulted in a commodity-led sell-off affecting emerging markets indices. Moreover, the uncertainty surrounding the timing of the US rate hike made investors cautious. Nevertheless, previous gains helped the European (ex-UK) index to close the year with a full year return of close to 9 percent. In the Asia-Pacific region, Japan also witnessed a stimulus-led market run that made it one of the best performers of 2015, whereas a more than 18-month bull run in China ended in June-15 after valuations surged to 2007 levels after a more than 50 percent return during 2014. Nevertheless, the China's benchmark index saw late year recovery resulting in a more than 9 percent return for the full year 2015.

Oil and commodity indices remain the most battered asset classes during 2015 due an overall weakness in commodity markets across the globe. Within commodities, price of iron ore declined for the third consecutive year by almost 37.9 percent during 2015, whereas price of copper declined for the second consecutive year by 14.1 percent. A majority of the weakness in the commodity products, especially iron ore, is due to an economic slowdown in demand in China, although the country is expected to post real GDP growth of more than 6 percent until 2020, according to IMF. MENA equity markets were some of the worst performing markets in the world during the year due to escalated geopolitical issues that effected the overall region coupled with oil price weakness. The MSCI MENA index declined by 22 percent during the year followed by the MSCI Emerging Market index that declined by 17 percent.

All the equity markets in the GCC ended in the red zone with Saudi Arabia reporting the steepest decline of 17.1 percent followed by Dubai with a decline of 16.5 percent. The Abu Dhabi market was the most resilient market in the GCC falling by merely 4.9 percent. It was the second consecutive year of decline for Saudi Arabia after a 2.4 percent decline in 2014. Oil

GCC Equity Markets	Index Closing	MTD Chg%	YTD Chg%	M-Cap (USD Bn)	Monthly Value Traded (USD Mn)	P/E (x) TTM	P/B (x) TTM	Div. Yield
Kuwait - Weighted Index	381.7	(2.9%)	(13.0%)	86.6	800.1	14.0	1.1	4.4%
Kuwait - 15 Index	900.4	(3.1%)	(15.0%)					
Kuwait - Price Index	5,615.1	(3.2%)	(14.1%)					
Saudi Arabia	6,911.8	(4.5%)	(17.1%)	421.5	33,688.5	12.3	1.5	4.3%
Abu Dhabi	4,307.3	1.7%	(4.9%)	116.6	1,393.7	10.4	1.4	5.1%
Dubai	3,151.0	(1.7%)	(16.5%)	82.0	1,824.1	9.2	1.2	3.5%
Qatar	10,429.4	3.4%	(15.1%)	152.0	1,608.4	11.2	1.6	4.8%
Bahrain	1,215.9	(1.4%)	(14.8%)	19.1	192.0	9.0	0.9	5.1%
Oman	5,406.2	(2.6%)	(14.8%)	18.0	401.7	9.7	1.2	5.0%
Total GCC				895.7	39,908.6	11.6	1.4	4.4%



traded during 2015 as compared to 71.8 percent during 2014, the increase in this share was solely due to a steeper decline in value traded in other markets.

The year witnessed key policy developments across the GCC that is expected to have significant repercussions on future growth. The implementation of VAT is one of the key areas being seriously discussed at the GCC level followed by a cut in subsidy on fuel in a majority of the markets. Further economic reforms are expected as we move ahead in 2016 as the countries rationalize spending only on key infrastructure projects and make sincere attempts to diversify the economy away from the oil sector and build a sustainable non-oil economy.

market capitalization saw minimal impact from these delistings (a decline of 11.9 percent during 2015) due to the marginal size of these companies as well as due to the listing of Mezzan Holding during June-15. Meanwhile, GFH, which was mulling to delist from the KSE, decided to cancel its delisting plans after recent amendments to CMA rules to disclosure and transparency, making the rules more in line with other exchanges where GFH is listed.

In terms of sector performance, all the sectoral indices, with the only exception of the Insurance Index, declined during the year. The Oil & Gas index saw the steepest yearly decline of 32.7 percent owing to the depressed fundamentals surrounding the oil and gas industry and related companies. The Financial Services Index saw the second highest decline of 24.6 percent followed by the Telecom and the Consumer Goods indices, which declined by 22.7 percent and 18.2 percent, respectively. The aforementioned top four sectors by yearly decline accounted for almost 25 percent of the total market capitalization of the KSE as of the year end, whereas, the largest sector on the exchange, the Banking sector, declined by 10.1 percent. On the other hand, the Insurance Index gained 9.8 percent during the year as five out of the eight stocks reported positive yearly performance.

Trading activity during the year also declined to historical low levels on the back of negative investor sentiments. Total volume of shares traded on the exchange declined by 22 percent to 41.5 billion shares whereas value traded declined by 35.2 percent to the lowest level since the financial crisis to KD 3.96 billion. Total trades also declined by 19.7 percent to 961.6 thousand deals during the year. Prominent gainers for the year included Viva (+52 percent), Tamdeen Real Estate (+50 percent) and Gulf Insurance Group (+25 percent). On the other hand, prominent decliners included Energy House (-53.4 percent), Gulf Cable (-45.6 percent) and KGL Logistics (-44.2 percent).

#### Saudi Arabia (Tadawul)

The Saudi stock market saw the steepest yearly decline in the GCC recorded at 17.1 percent primarily led by the sentiments surrounding oil prices. The yearly decline was also the highest since the financial crisis when the index had tumbled 56.5 percent in 2008. The year started on a positive note for the Tadawul exchange but as oil prices failed to maintain the initial positive momentum so did the stock market as it plunged almost 30 percent from the peak point during the year. In terms of sector performance, the Media & Publishing index saw the best yearly return of 57.3 percent followed by the Transport Index at 7.5 percent and the Energy & Utilities Index at 1.4 percent. The real estate sector also recorded marginal positive return of 0.8 percent, whereas the rest of the sector indices ended the year on the negative note. The Cement Index declined the most during the year with a fall of 33.7 percent followed by the Building & Construction and the Petrochemical indices with yearly returns of 30.4 percent and 27 percent, respectively. Domestic

IPOs on the exchange raised almost \$ 1 billion during the year which helped in curbing the decline in market capitalization. Trading activity on the exchange also took a hit in line with the rest of the GCC markets.

#### Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange

ADX General Index ended 2015 as the best performing market in the GCC, as it remained the lone market in the GCC to stage off double digit declines. The index nevertheless declined by 4.9 percent to end at 4,307.26 points; however higher declines were largely mitigated by the Telecom index which rose by over 61 percent for the year, as behemoth Etisalat buoyed the sectoral index with similar gains as the index for the year. Consumer staples was the other industry

second-worst performing market in the GCC, declining by 16.5 percent year-on-year. The index closed at 3,151 points after seeing a strong support at the psychological point of 3,000 points. The total decline in market capitalization stood at close to \$ 9.3 billion to end the year at \$ 82 billion as compared to \$ 91.3 billion at the end of 2014. In terms of sector performance, the real estate and construction index reflected investors' cautious stance through the year as the sector recorded the steepest yearly decline of 39.8 percent. Within the sector, Emaar Properties declined by almost 22 percent during the year whereas Union Properties and Arabtec witnessed even higher declines of 38.7 percent and 57.3 percent, respectively. The Industrial and Financial Services recorded the second and third worst performance during the year with yearly declines of 22.7 percent and 19.1 percent, respectively. On the other hand, indices which closed the year on a positive note were defensive sectors such as Telecoms, Consumer Staples etc. Consumer Staples sector recorded the highest return during the year with the index up by almost 40 percent primarily on the back of 54.8 percent yearly return for the largest company within the sector, Dubai Parks and Resorts. The Services sector also reported positive yearly performance with a return of almost 6 percent followed by the telecommunication sector with a return of 1.2 percent.

On the economic front, in December-15, Dubai approved a zero-deficit budget of AED 46.1 billion for 2016, with a major portion of expenditure allocated towards social development and infrastructure. The budget represents a growth of 12 percent as against the AED 41.77 billion spent in 2015. Authorities also expect to cut energy demand by 8-10 percent by 2020.

#### Qatar Exchange

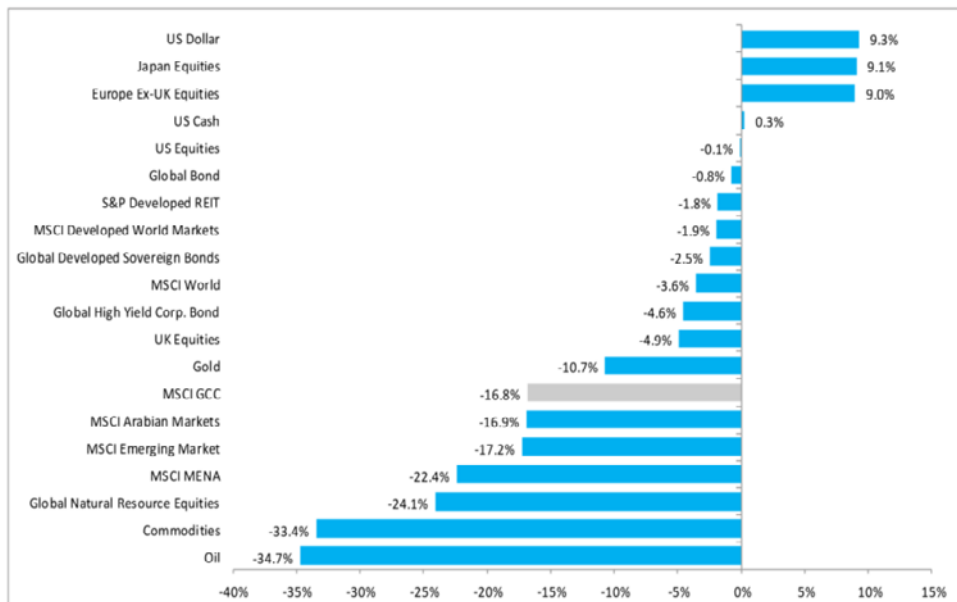
Qatar Exchange, which was the best performing market in 2014, saw contrasting trends in 2015, ending the year as the third worst performing market, plunging by 15.1 percent to close at 10,429.36 points. The year 2015 saw 9 out of the 43 listed companies ending the year higher, while 34 lost ground.

The move down was led by the Telecoms which lost ground by 33.6 percent for the year as both stocks in the sector Ooredoo & Vodafone Qatar severely underperformed, declining by over 39 percent and 22 percent respectively. Heavy-weight sectoral indices such as Industrials and Banking & Financial Services further dragged down the index declining by over 21 percent and 12 percent respectively. The Consumer Goods & Services index also closed lower by over 13 percent for the year of 2015. Sectoral indices that closed in the green for 2015 were led by the Transportation sector which gained by 4.9 percent for the year, followed by the Real Estate sector which went up by 3.9 percent and the Insurance index which moved higher by 1.9 percent during 2015.

#### Bahrain Bourse

After ending 2014 on a positive note, the Bahrain All Share Index moved southward in

Global Asset Class Performance - 2015



price weighed heavily on the markets and with Saudi Arabia being the largest oil producer in the world, suffered the maximum loss. Moreover, this decline came despite the Saudi Arabia CMA opening the market to foreign investors during mid-2015. The impact of the market opening was overshadowed by negative investor sentiments as investors largely remained on the sidelines awaiting oil markets to recover. In fact it was only the second half selloff that that wiped off all the gains seen during the first half of the year.

There was significant volatility in stock markets across the GCC marked by positive performance during the first half of the year followed by a steep decline during the latter half. The Tadawul All Share Index reached a peak of 9,834.49 points but faced a strong resistance at the psychological mark of 10,000 points. The decline from this peak till the year end stood at 29.7 percent, the highest in the GCC followed by DFM General Index that declined by 25.5 percent from its April-15 peak of 4,229.04 points. Kuwait market was trailing other regional markets and saw almost 40 percent decline in trading activity.

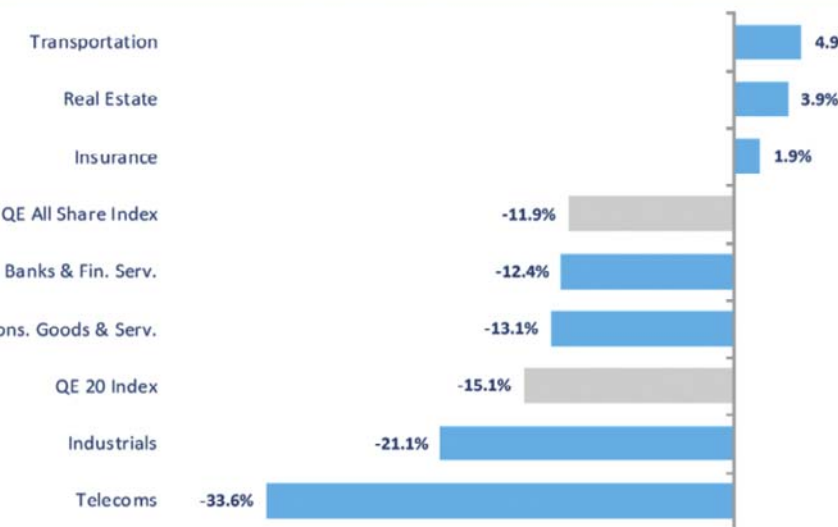
In terms of the size of the GCC markets, the rout during 2015 wiped off almost 13.4 percent or \$ 138 billion in market capitalization from the GCC markets during the year after a \$ 73 billion or 7.5 percent increase during 2014. The decline during 2015 came despite six listings on the stock market (primarily dominated by Saudi Arabia) as the overall direction of the market was negative. On the other hand, the increase in market capitalization in 2014 was on the back of a higher number of market listings, both in terms of the number of companies as well as the size of the offering. In terms of trading activity, total value traded on the GCC exchanges declined by almost \$ 268 billion or 33.6 percent to \$ 528.6 billion, the highest decline in over six years. Saudi Arabia continued to account for the lion's share of the total trading activity accounting for almost 81.5 percent or \$ 431 billion in value

#### KSE: Decline from 2015 peak

Kuwait indices declined during the last month of the year in line with the rest of the GCC markets as sentiments failed to recover in addition to a steep decline in trading activity. The KSE Weighted Index declined by 13 percent during the year, slightly less than most of the other GCC markets. Meanwhile, the KSE Price Index declined by a steeper 14.1 percent whereas the large-cap KSE-15 index declined by an even higher 15.0 percent. Within the Kuwait-15 index, Agility witnessed the steepest decline during the year recorded at 27 percent followed by Zain and Americana with yearly declines of 26.4 percent and 25.4 percent, respectively. On the other hand, out of the four gainers in the 15-company index, shares of Viva surged more than 50 percent during the year, especially after STC made an offer to buy the remaining shares it does not own in the company, followed by Mezzan Holding (+18.4 percent), Mabaneer (14.2 percent) and Boubyan Bank (+13.9 percent).

The KSE stock market is undergoing a structural change with some of the illiquid stocks being delisted during the year; however, total

#### QE Yearly Sector Performance



which closed in the green for the year, gaining by 22 percent.

In terms of sectoral indices, Telecoms and Consumer Staples were the only sectors, which ended 2015 in the green. All companies in the Consumer Staples sector gained except for FOODCO holding which saw its price recede by 7.4 percent. The industrial sector remained relatively resilient as well, witnessing lower declines than the overall market at 3.3 percent. The laggards for the year were mainly the Financials pack led by Insurance (22 percent), followed by Investment & Financial Services (-21 percent), and Banks (15.4 percent). The Real Estate index lost 12.2 percent for the year as all of the companies lost ground for the year, as overall negative sentiment prevailed in the sector. The Services sector also declined by close to 15 percent for the year, as all but one stock Gulf Medical Projects Company (+31.3 percent) were in the red.

#### Dubai Financial Market

The effects of plunging oil and commodity prices rattled Dubai's stock markets and shook the Emirate's real estate investors during 2015. As a result, the benchmark Index remained volatile throughout the year and closed the year as the

2015, dropping by c.15 percent y-o-y, to end the year at 1,216 points, as overall negative sentiment from lower oil price concerns and the economic worries weighed on the index and trading activity. Market capitalization went down 11.4 percent to close the year at BHD 7.2 Bn for 2015. 11 stocks closed in the green while 19 stocks ended the year with negative returns.

In terms of sectoral performance, only the Hotels & Tourism index was able to close the year in the green gaining by 2.5 percent. The Investment & Industrials sectors were the worst performing sectors plunging by over 27 percent each, while Insurance and banks followed, receding by 10.4 percent and 9.5 percent respectively.

#### Muscat Securities Market

The MSM30 Index declined by 14.8 percent during 2015 following the decline in all of the sectoral indices on the MSM. The Industrial index led the decline with a fall of 19.1 percent followed by the Financial index which declined by 16 percent during 2015 whereas the Services index saw the smallest yearly decline of 12.1 percent. Trading on the exchange remained mostly depressed throughout the year with the highest end of day peak level recorded during the year was at merely at 6 percent, one of the smallest in the GCC. In terms of trading activity, yearly value traded declined by almost 40 percent to a three-year low level of OMR 1.2 billion in 2015 as compared to OMR 1.9 billion during the previous year. Total shares traded in the regular market also declined by 12.8 percent to 4.6 billion shares as compared to 5.2 billion shares during the previous year, whereas the total number of trades fell by 37.7 percent to 182,359 trades as compared to 292,486 trades in 2014. Omanis continued to account for the bulk of the trades on the exchange accounting for 71 percent of buy trades and 65.9 percent of sell trades during year in terms of value traded. Participation by other GCC nationals stood at 9.4 percent and 7.5 percent for buy and sell trades, respectively, during the year.





## WARBA BANK ACQUIRES EQUIPMENT LEASING PORTFOLIO IN UNITED STATES

**KUWAIT:** Warba Bank, a leading bank in Kuwait, yesterday announced the acquisition of equipment leasing portfolio managed by ATEL Capital Group, an independent equipment lessor based in the United States of America becoming the first Kuwait enterprise to invest with the company.

The acquisition of portfolio is in line with Warba Bank's strategy of capturing attractive sharia compliant investment opportunities regionally and internationally, while diversifying its asset base and enhancing the global scale. As part of the transaction, the Bank

has initially invested US\$8.2 million in a diversified portfolio of Operating leases comprising of high-quality low-tech low-obsolescence mission-critical equipment leased to investment grade corporations in United States.

Established in San Francisco, California, in 1977, ATEL has originated and managed over \$2 billion of equipment leased to primarily investment grade US corporations. Over the last three decades, ATEL has built a reputation as one of the largest independent equipment leasing enterprises in the United States.

The acquisition also brings ATEL together with Warba Bank's expertise in providing innovative sharia-compliant financing solutions to its customers. This acquisition is also an important step in adding high quality and innovative assets to Warba Bank's portfolio while strengthening its competitiveness in the local marketplace.

"This is a very exciting opportunity for Warba Bank and enables us to further extend our leadership position in marketplace," said, Shaheen Hamad Al-Ghanim, Deputy CEO for Investment & Treasury, Warba Bank. "ATEL Capital

Group is a globally respected equipment leasing firm with a dedicated team of investment professionals who have extensive experience and knowledge of the US market, with an ambition to expand its geographical footprint."

"The bank's strong reputation in Kuwait, combined with ATEL's global expertise in the equipment leasing sector undoubtedly provides a strong foundation for a successful partnership. This acquisition is an important step in our strategy of seeking international exposure and diversifying the assets and a new chapter in the

Warba Bank story."

Warba Bank, an Islamic Bank established by virtue of an Amiri Decree, was officially registered in the Central Bank of Kuwait's register of Islamic Banks on April 5th, 2010. The State of Kuwait, Warba Bank offers a wide range of customized Sharia compliant services and solutions which are available through the Bank's three Business Groups: Retail Banking Group, Corporate Banking Group, and Investment and Treasury Group. Branching out in 8 strategic locations, Warba Bank has over 300 employees.



Shaheen Hamad Al-Ghanim



## TWO DAYS FOR RED & SALARY DRAWS: CASH PRIZES AND A CADILLAC SRX

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Bank will be holding its monthly Salary Account draw and Red Account draws, on 7 January 2016 at 7 pm, in The Grand Avenues at The Avenues Mall. Gulf Bank invites you to attend this exciting event.

The Salary & Red Account draws include a brand new Cadillac SRX and cash prizes of up to KD 1,500. In addition, a yearly salary draw will also take place with 2 cash prizes each of KD 25,000. As always, these draws will be held under the supervision of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Both Red Account or Salary Account customers who opened an account and transferred their student allowance or salary are eligible to enter the monthly cash draws for a chance to also win up to KD 1,500. The Bank's monthly cash draw will have six winners. First prize is KD 1,500; second prize is KD 1,000; third prize is KD 800; fourth prize is KD 600; fifth prize

is KD 400; and sixth prize is KD 200. In addition, the quarterly car draw will be for 1 lucky winner who will have a chance to win a new Cadillac SRX 2015. Plus, 2 Salary winners will also be announced during the yearly salary draw who will each win a cash prize of KD25,000.

Through Gulf Bank's Red program, customers can also watch movies at all Kuwait National Cinema Company (KNCC) cinemas during weekends (every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday) for KD 1.750 instead of KD 3.5, which is a 50 percent discount on the normal price.

Gulf Bank is the only bank in Kuwait presenting both Salary and Red customers with these one-of-a-kind offers. For more information about Gulf Bank's Salary account, Red account or any other draws, visit one of Gulf Bank's 56 branches, call the Customer Contact Center on 1805805, or go online at [www.e-gulf-bank.com](http://www.e-gulf-bank.com).

## TOP SAFETY DESIGNATIONS TO KEY NISSAN MODELS FOR 2016

**DUBAI:** The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) recognized four Nissan vehicles with Top Safety Pick Plus (TSP+) or Top Safety Pick (TSP) designations for 2016. These latest announcements underscore Nissan's commitment to continuous improvement to passenger safety across its entire lineup.

IIHS awarded the all-new 2016 Nissan Maxima a "Top Safety Pick Plus" (TSP+) safety rating, which is the group's highest designation. The 2016 Nissan Maxima joins the previously announced 2016 Murano with the TSP+ rating. The Maxima scored "Good" in all five TSP categories and earned TSP+ status with a "Superior" rating for front crash prevention for those models equipped with Forward Emergency Braking.

The 2016 Nissan Sentra joins the 2016 Rogue in earning an IIHS "Top Safety Pick" rating. The 2016 Sentra will offer Forward Emergency Braking. Once that system is tested by IIHS the Sentra has the potential to be upgraded to a TSP+ rating. Nissan's top selling 2016 Altima will undergo IIHS testing this month with the possibility of achieving a TSP+ rating as well.

"Nissan is proud to again have our core vehicles recognized by IIHS for vehicle safety," said Pierre Loing, vice president, Product Strategy and Planning, Nissan North America, Inc. (NNA). "The new Maxima, like the Murano, is setting high standards in its class for styling, performance and interior refinement. The 2016 Nissan Rogue and Sentra demonstrate Nissan's commitment to high quality and safety standards, and we are gratified that these outstanding vehicles have been recognized for excellent design."

For this year, IIHS has tightened its standards by requiring a "Good" or better rating in all five of the crashworthiness categories to earn a "Top Safety Pick" and making an available front

crash prevention system mandatory for all awards. To earn the IIHS "Top Safety Pick Plus" designation, a vehicle must earn a "Good" or better on all five crashworthiness categories and also receive an "Advanced" or "Superior" rating for front crash prevention.

### All-New 2016 Nissan Maxima Safety and Security Features

Standard safety and security

LATCH System (Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children).

Every Maxima also offers child safety rear door locks; Zone Body construction featuring front and rear crumple zones and occupant zone; Nissan Immobilizer system and anti-theft alarm system. Maxima offers a variety of advanced technologies that are standard on three trim levels include Intelligent Cruise Control (ICC), Blind Spot Warning (BSW),

table split-screen close-ups of the front, rear and curb views, helping the driver maneuver the car in or out of tight spots. Rear Cross Traffic Alert helps alert the driver of an approaching vehicle when backing out of a parking spot.

Moving Object Detection builds on the capabilities of the AVM system, helping enhance the driver's situational awareness by providing visual and audible warnings (front, side or back



features on all 2016 Maxima trim levels include the Nissan Advanced Air Bag System (AABS) with supplemental front air bags with seat belt and occupant classification sensors; front seat-mounted side impact supplemental air bags; roof-mounted curtain side impact supplemental air bags with rollover sensor for front and rear-seat outboard occupant head protection; front seat belts with pretensioners and load limiters and adjustable upper anchors; and

class-exclusive Predictive Forward Collision Warning (PFCW), Forward Emergency Braking (FEB), and Rear Cross Traffic Alert (RCTA).

Maxima offers Around View Monitor (AVM) with Moving Object Detection (MOD) system that features four small super-wide-angle cameras mounted on the front, sides and rear of the vehicle that provide a "bird's eye" virtual 360° view around the vehicle. It provides additional selec-

range object detection) if the system detects moving objects (such as another vehicle) within the displayed image in situations such as pulling out of a parking space. Using sophisticated image processing technology, the system detects moving objects within the virtual "bird's eye view" (when the vehicle is in Park). When starting off or backing up, it detects moving objects crossing within the front or rear views, respectively.



Barcelona



Colosseum, Rome



BA cabin crew with double decker bus and Big Ben in London.

## TOUCHDOWN AT YOUR FAVOURITE HOLIDAY HOTSPOT WITH BRITISH AIRWAYS IN 2016

**KUWAIT:** According to a survey conducted by British Airways, taking part in fun family oriented activities, visiting historical landmarks and discovering entertainment venues are among the top activities that residents in Kuwait look forward to when they travel.

British Airways' first special fares campaign of 2016 offers residents of Kuwait the opportunity to plan ahead to their next holiday and explore a new destination. For a limited time until 18 January 2016, customers in Kuwait can take advantage of the special fares to cities across Europe and North America with travel valid until 15 June. For example, return flights to London start from as little as KWD 178, flights to Rome for as little as KWD 178 and to New York from as little as KWD 242.

Later this year, British Airways will launch direct

flights from London to Inverness in Scotland, San Jose in California, Menorca in Spain, Palermo in Sicily, San Jose in Costa Rica and Lima in Peru among other new routes. "Travel today has become more affordable allowing families to plan more than one holiday a year," said Paolo De Renzi, Head of Middle East, Africa and Central Asia Sales for British Airways. "We fly daily between Kuwait and London offering our customers excellent connections to 188 destinations across our network. We hope this latest offer encourages people to create memories as they discover new places with us."

For residents unable to decide which destination is the right choice for their next holiday, a visit to [highlife.ba.com](http://highlife.ba.com) - the website for the British Airways' inflight magazine - can help steer travellers in the

right direction through an interactive quiz, which is available by clicking here.

For travellers from Kuwait looking to simply explore the European continent and visit popular landmarks, London provides an excellent starting point with its many historical sites. Visit Big Ben, the nickname for the Great Bell of the clock at the Palace of Westminster or The Shard, a twenty-first century landmark offering the highest and best views of the capital.

From London, British Airways passengers can choose to fly to over 97 destinations in Europe and visit famous landmarks ranging from The Colosseum in Rome to the Eiffel Tower in Paris to the Sagrada Familia and Montjuïc Hill in Barcelona. Another must visit European country is Belgium, the country

may be small but it is rich in landmarks and has been at the forefront of European history. Bruges is a major highlight here with its perfectly-preserved medieval streets and tranquil canals that lure flocks of travellers every year.

For those looking to see landmarks across North America, a holiday adventure can start with a visit to the Big Apple. In New York, travellers could start with a visit to the Statue of Liberty, a historic gift from France to the USA designed by Alexandre-Gustave Eiffel. Tourists from Kuwait can also plan a trip to the once tallest building in Manhattan, the Empire State building, which was built in 1930. Another must visit venue is the Independence Hall in Philadelphia. In this building, the Declaration of Independence was signed and George Washington was appointed

Commander in Chief of the Continental Army, making it a structure loaded with historical significance. Not to be missed is the capital of the USA - Washington D.C. - home to several landmarks including the Thomas Jefferson Memorial, the Lincoln Memorial, the White House and countless others. Moving to the West Coast and situated on Mount Lee in the Hollywood Hills, is the universally famous Hollywood Sign overlooking all of Los Angeles.

For additional information and travel guides, British Airways Holidays offers insider tips and holiday guides to destinations around the world. A full timetable of British Airways' flights to London and beyond is available online here where customers can find the lowest fares and book, pay and check-in online for their flights.



## GOOGLE HELPS ANALYZE IF ROOFTOP SOLAR PANELS ARE GOOD DEAL

**RALEIGH, NC:** The company that lets you compare air fares and translate foreign languages online wants to make it easier to weigh the costs and benefits of installing solar panels on household rooftops. Google is rolling out a new online service that quickly tallies up considerations of going solar and whether homeowners should consider buying or leasing photovoltaic panels costing thousands of dollars. Google's Project Sunroof combines the eye-in-the-sky images behind Google Earth with calculations on how much shade trees cast over a rooftop, data on local weather patterns, industry pricing and available subsidies to arrive at its bottom line.

The service expanded in December to analyze properties in the Raleigh area, as well as 15 other metro areas in Arizona,

Nevada, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Colorado.

Interested potential customers are referred to solar-panel installers for further follow-up, cutting their marketing costs, said Carl Elkin, the senior software engineer behind the service.

"We at Google believe in solar energy. The solar industry needs our help," he said. Google has invested more than \$1 billion in recent years into solar energy, including \$300 million earlier this year into a fund that finances residential rooftop projects installed by SolarCity Corp.

Google invested \$280 million in the publicly traded company in 2011. Project Sunroof launched this summer in San Francisco and Fresno, California, and Boston, where Elkin works. The metro areas were

picked based on several criteria, including Google's available satellite imagery and local market conditions including government incentives, Elkin said.

Google's proposition is a faster, simpler way of sizing up possible pros and cons of solar than calling out someone for a site evaluation or using the more complex calculator offered by the US Energy Department. An Associated Press reporter who plugged in his Raleigh home address was informed that installing solar panels would likely be a money-loser based on the amount of usable annual rooftop sunlight, shading from surrounding pine trees, and current household power use. But if the reporter chose to pursue the idea further, buying rather than leasing or a loan would be the better deal.

Google's increased involvement in solar

comes as some states begin to re-evaluate policies that have helped stimulate the rapid growth in turning the sun into electricity.

All but a handful of states have laws allowing what's called "net metering" for homes or businesses - basically selling power from rooftop cells they don't use themselves, usually to the local electric utility, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. In December, Mississippi became the 46th state to adopt broad rules promoting solar power.

In Texas and some of the remaining states, individual utilities may offer similar solar-purchase options, according to the Solar Energy Industries Association, a national trade group.

Solar accounts for about 1 percent of the country's total reported electricity genera-

tion, according to the US Energy Information Administration. About two-thirds of that is from utility-scale solar arrays that are often spread across rural tracts.

But as many as two dozen states are considering changes that would reduce the incentives for solar customers under the theory they too should pay for the broader power grid.

Nevada utilities regulators last week adopted a policy to reduce by 75 percent over five years the amount Las Vegas-area electric company NV Energy pays customers for extra power their solar panels produce. The change means rooftop solar customers will pay more of the costs now shifted to non-solar customers to maintain the utility's transmission lines and power generation. —AP



**SAN FRANCISCO:** Logan Green, co-founder and chief executive officer of Lyft, displays his company's "glowstache" during a launch event in San Francisco. Yesterday, General Motors Co announced it is investing \$500 million in ride-sharing company Lyft Inc. GM gets a seat on Lyft's board as part of the partnership, which could speed the development of on-demand, self-driving cars. —AP

## GM INVESTS \$500 MILLION IN LYFT, FORMS PARTNERSHIP

DEAL COULD HELP BEAT RIVALS TO SELF-DRIVING FUTURE

**DETROIT:** General Motors Co and ride-hailing company Lyft Inc. are forming an unprecedented partnership that could help them beat their rivals to the self-driving future. Lyft said yesterday that GM invested \$500 million in the company as part of a round of a \$1 billion round of fund-raising.

GM gets a seat on Lyft's board and access to the three-year-old company's software, which matches riders with drivers and automates payments. It also becomes a preferred vehicle provider, with the chance to get many more people behind the wheel of a Chevrolet, Buick, GMC or Cadillac.

San Francisco-based Lyft gets the expertise of a 108-year-old automaker with decades of experience in making connected and autonomous vehicles. Detroit-based GM also has an enviable global reach; it sells almost 10 million cars each year in more than 100 countries. Lyft operates in 190 US cities, although it recently formed partnerships with ride-sharing services in China and India.

Together, the companies plan to open a network of US hubs where Lyft drivers can rent GM vehicles. That could expand Lyft's business by giving people who don't own cars a way to drive and earn money through Lyft. It will also give GM a leg up on competitors like Daimler AG and Ford Motor Co, who are developing their own ride-sharing services.

Longer term, GM and Lyft will work together to develop a fleet of autonomous vehicles that city dwellers could summon using Lyft's mobile app. Partnering with GM could give Lyft a boost over its arch-rival, Uber Technologies Inc., which is working on its own driverless cars.

Lyft Co-Founder and President John Zimmer and GM President Dan Ammann say the two companies began serious discussions about three months ago. Both see big changes coming in the traditional model of car ownership, and they had similar ideas about how to address it.

"It felt very natural very quickly,"

Zimmer said. Ammann said the resulting partnership is unlike any other in the auto and tech industries. "Do we want to deploy the resources and people to do everything ourselves, or get there faster by working in partnership?" Ammann said. "We see a really compelling, complementary set of capabilities."



**General Motors President Dan Ammann speaks during a press preview at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit, Michigan. —AFP**

Following its latest round of fund-raising - which also included a \$100 million investment from Saudi Arabia's Kingdom Holding Co. - privately-held Lyft set its value at \$5.5 billion. The company expects revenue of around \$1 billion this year. By comparison, GM is valued at \$53 billion and earned \$153 billion in revenue in 2014.

But neither company can afford to rest. Uber's value could soon surpass GM's, and newcomers like Apple and Google are also eager to disrupt the traditional auto industry. "We see the world of mobility changing more in the next five years than it has in the last 50," Ammann said. —AP



**Sergio Marchionne (L) looks on during the ceremony to launch the sale of shares in Ferrari at the stock exchange in Milan yesterday. —AFP**

## HONEYWELL LAUNCHES NEW GAS SAFETY CONTROL SYSTEMS

**KUWAIT:** Representing the next evolution in industrial safety, Honeywell (NYSE:HON) recently launched its new generation of gas control systems - Touchpoint Pro and Touchpoint Plus that deliver increased flexibility, cost savings and greater data intelligence to wide range of sectors.

According to a new market report published by Transparency Market Research, the global gas detection equipment market is forecast to reach \$ 3,372.0mn by 2022 and a key factor driving the growth of global gas detection equipment market include increasing concerns about occupational health and safety.

Honeywell Analytics' Touchpoint Pro and Touchpoint Plus deliver up to 64 channels of gas detection, offering a gas safety solution that is suited to cater to a range of industries such as oil & gas, pharmaceutical, and building automation.

Both Touchpoint Pro and Touchpoint Plus feature intuitive touchscreens which are simple to operate and easy to maintain, making safety, reliability and efficiency easier than ever to achieve.

### Touchpoint Pro

The Touchpoint Pro is a complete integrated gas and logic safety control system ideal for small to mid-sized operations. Touchpoint Pro's flexible architecture enables the exact system to be built to customer requirements - optimising operations and cost. Thanks to a unique modular approach, Touchpoint Pro is the only control solution that enables the customer to build a centralised system, distributed system or a combination - all with the same components. The unique architecture of Touchpoint Pro can significantly reduce cabling costs and installation time and is easily expanded or integrated into an emergency gas shutdown system.

"Touchpoint Pro can save customers as much as 50 percent on the total cost per channel when you factor in all of its cost-saving aspects, including equipment,

installation and cabling," said Steve Forrest, Global Marketing Director for Honeywell Analytics. "This makes it a highly attractive solution for today's cost-conscious customer."

Touchpoint Pro delivers maximised system uptime with 24/7 operational availability. It is the only control system in its class to offer a web server interface, which allows gas status, and data, event history to be monitored away from

ed settings for a simple three stage setup.

### Touchpoint Plus

Honeywell Analytics also launched the Touchpoint Plus which is a highly configurable, easy-to-use, wall-mounted controller that supports up to eight channels of gas detection for industrial and light industrial sectors, making it easier for operators to monitor the safety of their

can configure, operate and maintain their gas detection system simply and efficiently by simply touching the screen. The multilingual interface simplifies operation, reducing training requirements and costs. Real-time data is presented in an easy to navigate menu system, whilst historical data can be downloaded to monitor developing threats.

"With everything at your fingertips, Touchpoint Plus allows you to



the intuitive touch-screen panel - and even remotely from the site. Low cost, end-to-end testing of the entire system can also be carried out using a mobile device.

At the heart of Touchpoint Pro is the central controller that can be mounted in either a rack or cabinets. The central controller also includes a preloaded sensor catalogue, which contains a complete listing of gas detectors from Honeywell, each with recommend-

sites and staff.

Touchpoint Plus provides a reliable safety solution for small scale gas detection systems across a wide range of applications and industries. It is designed to work with Honeywell's industry leading gas detectors and drive actuators, audible and visual alarms to provide a complete end-to-end, highly configurable safety solution.

Built around its intuitive, ergonomic touchscreen, operators

take ownership of your system and operate it with confidence. The simplicity and intuitive user interface gives you confidence that the safety of your people and productivity of your site is maximised," said Steve.

Housed in a high impact polymer plastic, Touchpoint Plus is designed to stand up to the challenges of industrial environments, from chemical plants to manufacturing.

## APPLE RAISES IPHONE PRICES IN GERMANY OVER NEW CONTENT LEVY

**BERLIN:** Apple raised the prices for hand-held devices in Germany at the start of the year, following a deal between the tech industry and content producers that will benefit a range of creative professionals including musicians, actors and pornographic filmmakers.

The Cupertino, California-based company confirmed in a statement Sunday to The Associated Press that the price increase affecting iPhones and iPads is linked to the new copyright levy.

Apple Inc., Samsung and others agreed last month to pay about 5-7 euros (\$5.50-\$7.70) for each smartphone or tablet imported to Germany. A basic version of iPhone 6s now retails for 744.95 euros (\$811.03), compared with 739 euros last year. The agreement matches similar arrangements already in place for other consumer electronics and consumables such as blank CDs. It is based on a 1965 German law that allows consumers

to make private copies of sound, images or texts in return for a small surcharge when they buy the device.

Markus Scheufele, a copyright expert at the tech industry lobby group Bitkom, said the deal includes back payments for phones

sold after 2008, and tablets sold after 2012.

In the long term, the industry wants to move away from adding a fixed surcharge on devices to subscription services and pay-per-use models, where consumers only pay for what they actually download, he said. But Juergen Becker, a spokesman for the umbrella organization ZPUe that negotiated the deal on behalf of content producers, said past experience had shown that consumers would always find ways to copy material for free, without paying for it, making the up-front surcharge on devices fairer.

All forms of content are covered by the deal, meaning that proceeds from the new levy will also be shared with a group representing "creators, producers and acting artists of erotic and pornographic films." "Since it's assumed that these are copied too, they get a share," Becker said. —AP



**BERLIN:** A shopper tries out the new Apple iPhone 6 at the Apple Store on the first day of sales of the new phone in Germany on September 19, 2014 in Berlin.

## ZUCKERBERG UNVEILS 2016 PLANS FOR ARTIFICIALLY INTELLIGENT BUTLER

**NEW YORK:** Mark Zuckerberg wants to build an artificially intelligent assistant in 2016 to help run his home and assist him at work, the Facebook Inc founder and chief executive said yesterday.

Zuckerberg, who commits to a new personal challenge every year, revealed his plan in a Facebook post. "You can think of it kind of like Jarvis in Iron Man," Zuckerberg wrote, referring to an artificially intelligent butler who appears

in the Marvel comic books and movies.

Zuckerberg will start the project by exploring existing technology, he wrote. He will then begin teaching the technology to understand his voice so that it will learn to control everything in his home, such as music, lights and temperature.

His plans also include teaching the assistant to let friends into his home by looking at their faces when they ring the doorbell, Zuckerberg

wrote. The assistant will visualize data to support Zuckerberg at work, he wrote. "This should be a fun intellectual challenge to code this for myself," Zuckerberg wrote. "I'm looking forward to sharing what I learn over the course of the year."

Other challenges Zuckerberg has taken on in recent years have included reading two books every month and learning Mandarin. —Reuters





TEHRAN: Iranian surgeon Javad Amirizad (center) operates on a nose job at his private clinic in the capital Tehran. Despite Iran's conservative society where all women in public must wear at least a scarf over their hair and neck, plastic surgery operations have boomed, with a nose job seen as a way to perfect their most visible asset. —AFP



TEHRAN: Iranian surgeon Javad Amirizad operates on a nose job at his private clinic in the capital Tehran. —AFP

## NOSE BANDAGES SYMBOLIZE IRAN COSMETIC SURGERY CRAZE

**TEHRAN:** Lying on an operating table in northern Tehran, Nazanine says she wants it all: a third nose job, her eyebrows tattooed and liposuction on her thighs to “fix” her figure. The patient in her 40s “had two nose jobs with another doctor, but wasn’t happy and asked us to do it again,” says her doctor Javad Amirizad, the latest surgeon to take her under the knife. In a conservative society where all women in public must wear at least a scarf over their hair and neck, such operations have boomed, with a nose job seen as a way to perfect their most visible asset.

But the quest to look better goes much further: in two nearby rooms at Amirizad’s private clinic, women were having their breasts enlarged. Liposuction is another procedure on the rise and Iranian women—not just the wealthy in the capital—are also paying for less invasive cosmetic changes. Botox injections in

cheeks or foreheads to conceal wrinkles, collagen in lips to make them fuller, or eyebrow tattoos to replace painful plucking or threading—removing eyebrow hairs with a piece of string—are becoming common.

According to official figures, up to 40,000 cosmetic surgeries take place in Iran each year, says Amirizad, a member of the Iranian Association of Cosmetic and Plastic Surgeons. More than 60 percent are nose jobs. But he says the actual number is much higher as official statistics do not include operations by non-specialist surgeons who are cashing in on people’s desire to improve their looks. In Iran’s largest cities it is easy to spot women—but also men—with bandages on their noses, flaunting the fact they recently went under the knife. The trend has seen the Islamic Republic jump into the world’s top 10 countries performing plastic surgery. In 2013 it ranked fourth world-

wide—after Brazil, Mexico and the United States—for nose jobs, the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery reported.

### Not just for women

The cost of a nose operation starts at around \$1,500 (nearly 1,400 euros) more than five times the minimum Iranian monthly salary of \$270. Mehnaz Mehri, a 27-year-old manager at a food trading company in Tehran, says she paid closer to \$1,800 but considered it good value. “I know some famous surgeons ask for up to \$6,000 for a simple nose job,” she says. “I never thought I’d have an operation, but when my mother and sister got their noses done, it was contagious.”

Television is playing a part in the cosmetic surgery craze. Hugely popular South American and Turkish soap operas, beamed into homes via banned satellite dishes, show

actresses looking beautiful after plastic surgery. Such channels, watched by more than half of the population, broadcast round-the-clock advertisements for nose jobs, slimming creams and stomach-sucking corsets. Patients also fly in for cosmetic procedures, Amirizad says. “We get them from Iraq and Azerbaijan, but we mostly get Iranian women from abroad who know an operation is much cheaper in Iran than in the United States or other European countries,” he says. And these days, plastic surgery is not just for women. “Twenty years ago, about five percent of men wanted nose jobs,” says the surgeon. “Today it’s 35 percent.”

### Nose ‘like a doll’

Mostafa Khashani, in his early 30s, is one of them. “I broke my nose in an accident, and after I got married my wife insisted I get it

fixed,” he says. “I refused, but then my sister had it done and it motivated me.” Amirizad sees this as a sign of progress: “It shows our society is modernizing.” But some Iranians are saddened by what they see as a Western cultural trend that may be going too far.

Earlier this year a Facebook page called “Iranian Women Up Close” asked followers to post pictures of their noses to push back against beauty being defined as a surgically enhanced concept. Several hundred women did so under the heading “Pictures of My Natural Nose”. Some women who have had surgery understand the debate. Slomaz, 27, had wanted her nose redone since being a teenager and was just 20 the first time she went under the knife, but now says she wouldn’t do so again. “Girls now all have the same type of nose—a very thin one with an upturned end like a doll!” —AFP



TOKYO: Fish store vendors sell fresh seafood to shoppers who look for ingredients for ‘osechi’ or Japanese traditional New Year dishes, near Tsukiji fish market in Tokyo. —AP

## 80-YEAR-OLD TOKYO FISH MARKET HOLDS FINAL NEW YEAR AUCTION

JAPANESE EAT 80% OF ALL BLUEFIN TUNA CAUGHT WORLDWIDE

**TOKYO:** It’s among the biggest of Japan’s many New Year holiday rituals: Today, a huge, glistening tuna will be auctioned for a lot of money at Tokyo’s 80-year-old Tsukiji market. Next year, if all goes as planned, the tradition won’t be quite the same. The world’s biggest and most famous fish and seafood market is due to move in November to a massive new complex further south in Tokyo Bay, making way for redevelopment of the prime slice of downtown real estate. The closure of the Tsukiji market will punctuate the end of the post-war era for many of the mom-and-pop shops just outside the main market that peddle a cornucopia of sea-related products, from dried squid and seaweed to whale bacon and caviar.

The new year auction is typical of Japan’s penchant for fresh starts at the beginning of the year - the first visit of the year to a shrine and the first dream of the year are other important firsts - and it’s meant to set an auspicious precedent for the 12 months to come. Sushi restaurateur Kiyoshi Kimura has prevailed in most of the recent new year auctions. In 2013, a bidding war drove his record winning bid to 154.4 million yen (at today’s exchange rates about \$1.3 million) for a 222-kilogram fish. That drew complaints that prices had soared way out of

line, and the winning price in 2014 was dramatically lower. Last year, a 180.4-kilogramme (380 pound) tuna caught off Japan’s northern region of Aomori fetched a winning bid of 4.51 million yen (\$37,480).

### Bluefin tuna

Japanese eat about 80 percent of all bluefin tuna caught worldwide, and stocks of all three bluefin species - the Pacific, Southern and Atlantic - have fallen over the past 15 years amid overfishing. But while the new year and daily tuna auctions are Tsukiji’s best known events, the market is about much more than just tuna. On a recent year-end day, shop owners in rubber boots and aprons were rushing to clean up and sell off the last of their inventory, as the last few hundred shoppers milled around hunting for bargains.

Already, some shops outside the market have been razed and a new building that will house a smaller “outer market” is under construction. Conceptual drawings from the Tokyo city government show the 23-hectare (nearly 57-acre) market site that fronts the Sumida River’s outlet into Tokyo Bay being transformed into an open waterfront park surrounded by greenery, with a wide shopping plaza and a passenger terminal for

tourist ferries traversing the bay and river. “We are contributing with all our efforts to the revitalization of our historic Tsukiji,” said a banner emblazoned with the logos of the architect and other contractors hanging from scaffolding of the new building. Tsukiji’s predawn auctions are a fixture on the tourist circuit, and since it was not set up to accommodate large crowds the management has gradually limited access for safety’s sake.

Planning for the move began nearly 20 years ago. But the shift was delayed for years due to toxins found in the soil at the new location, the former site of a coal gasification plant run by Tokyo Gas. The city announced in 2001 that the market would be moved by 2012. But cleanup work dragged on, and in 2013, Tokyo Gas disclosed it had found more toxins at the site. Critics of the move said city authorities were swapping worries over cramped and some say unhygienic conditions in Tsukiji for a new set of health problems: unsafe levels of lead, arsenic, hexavalent chromium and other toxins. Cleanup of the tainted site required the removal and replacement of 2 meters (6 feet) of topsoil, construction of retaining walls, pumping out of polluted ground water and injection of fresh water.—AP



TOKYO: A dealer cuts tuna in Tsukiji fish market in Tokyo. It’s among the biggest of Japan’s many New Year holiday rituals. —AP

## SOUTH AFRICAN GROUP REPORTS SLIGHT DROP IN RHINO POACHING

**JOHANNESBURG:** The number of rhinos poached in South Africa in 2015 was slightly lower than in the previous year, representing modest progress by law enforcement in countering poachers who have killed rhinos in record numbers, according to a conservation group. Citing unidentified sources, Elise Daffue, founder of StopRhinoPoaching.com, said there were about 1,160 reported cases of rhino poaching last year, down from 1,215 in 2014. If the statistic is confirmed, it would be the first annual drop in numbers since rhino poaching surged around 2008 in South Africa, home to most of the world’s rhinos.

Other conservationists, however, believe the number of rhinos killed last year was higher. During a visit to South Africa in early December, Britain’s Prince Harry said poachers had killed 1,500 rhinos there in 2015. He did not cite a source. The South African government plans to release its own 2015 statistics on rhino poaching early this year. Conservationist

Allison Thomson, who believes the number of rhinos poached in 2015 is higher than 1,160, wrote in an email to The Associated Press on Saturday that there was an increase in rhino orphans whose mothers were killed by poachers.

“The stats do not reflect the collateral damage of rhinos that died subsequent to being a victim of an attempted poaching and all the carcasses that lie in the bush yet to be found,” Thomson said. She speculated that the government sought to downplay the rhino poaching problem by issuing less frequent updates on poaching statistics. Edna Molewa, South Africa’s environment minister, said the government is committed to providing accurate, timely information. Poachers have targeted rhinos to meet rising demand for their horns in parts of Asia, particularly Vietnam. Consumers believe rhino horn has medicinal benefits, but there is no scientific evidence to support the belief. —AP



HLUHLUWE: Rhinos at a mud bath in the Hluhluwe game reserve on the outskirts of Hluhluwe, South Africa. —AP





ALBANY: Shoppers fill containers in the bulk department at Honest Weight Food Co-Op in Albany, NY. Food cooperative programs that allow members to scoop rice, sort organic vegetables and ring up sales in return for grocery discounts are fading fast. (Center) A shopper looks at produce at Honest Weight Food Co-Op in Albany, NY. (Right) Workers attend a quarterly produce staff meeting at Honest Weight Food Co-Op in Albany, NY. — AP photos

## WILL WORK FOR FOOD? CO-OP PROGRAMS END AMID LABOR-LAW FEARS

**ALBANY:** Food cooperative programs that allow members to scoop rice, sort organic vegetables and ring up sales in return for grocery discounts are fading fast amid a changing marketplace and fears of violating labor laws. The member labor or volunteer programs are intertwined with the do-it-yourself idealism that launched a wave of co-ops in the '70s. But they have become rare. At Albany's Honest Weight Food Co-Op, an effort to drop its volunteer program has riled members, illustrating its cherished place in co-op culture.

Supporters say the involvement of member-owners differentiates co-ops in an age where even strip-mall supermarkets sell locally grown arugula. "It changes people's relationship with the store," said Nate Horwitz, a 28-year member who became board president last month. "Where people work together, you have a very different feeling in the store. You have a very different loyalty to the store."

Working member programs were a basic feature of co-ops, launched decades ago during a flush of interest in natural living and alternatives to big capitalism. The programs offered cheap labor for stores with little capital and fit in snugly with co-op principles like open membership and democratic control. "Everybody pitched in - 'Let's make the staff!' - and they did it with almost no money to start these businesses," said Stuart Reid, of the Food Co-op Initiative, which helps groups organize food co-ops. "And that's evolved a lot. Now we're competing against very sophisticated natural food marketers. And we're not running out of a cigar box on the counter anymore."

Early co-ops foreshadowed the wider public's interest in local, wholesome food and then benefited once the wave hit. Honest Weight began in a cramped side-street store and is now a bright, modern market that rings up about \$25 million annually in sales. It is among

more than 200 co-ops nationwide that have combined sales of over \$1.8 billion, according to a trade group. Honest Weight's former board president mentioned the inefficiency of having roughly 1,200 working members cover shifts in explaining a board vote this fall to discontinue the program on the store's floor. Board members rescinded that vote after being told they overstepped their authority. But the initial uproar led to a shake-up of the board that cost the president his position.

The larger issue weighing on the board at Honest Weight and other co-ops is the fear that labor officials could classify their working members as employees rather than volunteers, leaving them open to charges they are violating minimum-wage rules. A small number of co-ops nationwide have settled complaints over the decades instead of testing that interpretation, according to longtime observers. At Honest Weight, Horwitz believes there's no real

evidence of a threat until labor officials go after co-ops. His belief is: Why change now? But Honest Weight representatives who met with state labor officials this month said they were told that "the potential risks of being found out of legal compliance were high." "The time to make a change is now, before we have a complaint filed against us," said board member Deborah Dennis. "And I don't think our membership is there yet. I don't know what's going to happen." It's not clear how many food co-ops still maintain their programs, though the list gets shorter each year.

City Market in Burlington, Vermont, this year finished phasing out of its traditional member work program in favor of one that gives members credit for out-of-store community volunteering. East End Food Co-op in Pittsburgh ended its volunteer program last September. Bloomingfoods of Bloomington, Indiana, ended its limited program recently

after implementing its first union contract for employees. One big exception is the 16,700-member Park Slope Food Coop in Brooklyn, which requires most of its members to work. The Brooklyn co-op is structured a bit differently from many others; significantly, members don't get discounts, and the store is not open to non-members.

General coordinator Ann Herpel said the program has never run into trouble. "It's a cultural value we have," Herpel said. "We think that cooperatives are about working together." In Albany, the co-op board with Horwitz and two other new members is discussing what to do next. The program's fate will ultimately be up to members, but that is not expected to happen soon. "I really expect that the board will be wrestling with this for the next few months," Dennis said. This story has been corrected to show Horwitz became president last month, not this month. — AP

### GENE-EDITING TECHNIQUE HEALS MICE WITH MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY

**WASHINGTON:** Researchers have succeeded for the first time in reversing a degenerative illness in mice, using a revolutionary gene-editing technique that one day may help cure similar diseases in humans. Three studies published in the journal Science said researchers employed a technique known as CRISPR-clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats-to cure an adult mouse model suffering Duchenne muscular dystrophy, a disorder that affects one in every 5,000 baby boys.

"This marks the first time that CRISPR has successfully treated a genetic disease inside a fully developed living mammal with a strategy that has the potential to be translated to human therapy," researchers said. Duchenne muscular dystrophy causes progressive weakness because of genetic mutations that interfere with the production of dystrophin, a protein needed to form healthy muscle.

The novel gene-editing technique fixes mutations that cause genetic diseases by making precise changes to the DNA of the ailing subject, using non-pathogenic viruses as delivery vehicles for the modified genes.

Charles Gersbach, associate professor of biomedical engineering at Duke University and the leading scientist on one of the studies, recently began focusing on CRISPR/Cas9 - a modified version of a bacterial defense system that targets and slices apart the DNA of familiar invading viruses.

After refining the technique, Gersbach and his team first delivered the therapy directly to a leg muscle in an adult mouse, resulting in an increase in muscle strength as well as some correction of muscles throughout the body, including in the heart. "There is still a significant amount of work to do to translate this to a human therapy and demonstrate safety," Gersbach cautioned. "But these results coming from our first experiments are very exciting." — AFP

## CONSUMERS WON'T KNOW MEAT ORIGIN AS US ENDS LABELING LAW

**WASHINGTON:** It's now harder to find out where your beef or pork was born, raised and slaughtered. After more than a decade of wrangling, Congress repealed a labeling law last month that required retailers to include the animal's country of origin on packages of red meat. It's a major victory for the meat industry, which had fought the law in Congress and the courts since the early 2000s. Lawmakers said they had no choice but to get rid of the labels after the World Trade Organization repeatedly ruled against them. The WTO recently authorized Canada and Mexico, which had challenged the law, to begin more than \$1 billion in economic retaliation against the United States.

"US exporters can now breathe a sigh of relief," said Republican Sen Pat Roberts of Kansas, chairman of the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee. The longtime opponent of the labels helped add the repeal to a massive year-end spending bill. After the law was passed, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said the government immediately would stop requiring the labels. Consumer groups say the repeal is a disappointment just as consumers are asking for more information on their food packages. Advocates say the labels help people make more informed buying decisions and encourage purchases of American meat.

Before repeal, the labels told shoppers



WASHINGTON: Meat labels are seen at a grocery store in Washington. It's now harder to find out where your meat was born, raised and slaughtered. — AP

that a particular cut of meat was "born in Canada, raised and slaughtered in the United States" or "born, raised and slaughtered in the United States." Congress first required the labels in 2002 amid fears of mad cow disease from imported cattle. The labels weren't on most packages until 2009, though, due to delays pushed by the meat industry. Repeal became inevitable once the United States lost all its WTO appeals and the retaliation became a possibility. But the consumer groups criticized Congress

for repealing the law for ground meat and pork in addition to the fresh cuts of meat that were the subject of WTO concerns.

The bill was "a holiday gift to the meatpacking industry from Congress," complained the advocacy group Food and Water Watch. Meatpackers who buy Mexican cattle were some of the law's most aggressive opponents. The repeal also was a big defeat for lawmakers from northern border states where US ranchers directly compete with Canadian

ranchers. Those lawmakers insisted on including the labeling in the 2002 and 2008 farm bills and this year fought to replace it with a voluntary program once the WTO rulings came down. But after years of success, this time they were not able to find enough support.

Roger Johnson of the National Farmers Union, which has heavy membership in those states, said the group was "furious" about the repeal. "Packers will be able to once again deliberately deceive consumers," Johnson said. Still, there was some good news for food labeling advocates in the spending bill. Despite an aggressive push by the food industry, lawmakers decided not to add language that would have blocked mandatory labeling of genetically modified ingredients.

Also, a provision by Sen Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, would require labeling of genetically modified salmon recently approved by the Food and Drug Administration. The issue is expected to come up again in 2016, with Vermont set to require labeling on genetically modified food this summer. The day the spending bill passed, Vilsack said he would try to help Congress come up with a middle ground on labeling of engineered foods "in a way that doesn't create significant market disruption, while at the same time recognizing consumers' need to know and right to know basic information." — AP

# CLINIC PAGE



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## MILLENNIUM HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTER ANNOUNCES SPECIAL OFFERS FOR Q1 2016

Marking its first New Year's celebration since opening its doors to the public last spring, the five-star Millennium Hotel and Convention Centre has unveiled a range of generous offers to provide guests with a relaxing and refreshing start to 2016.

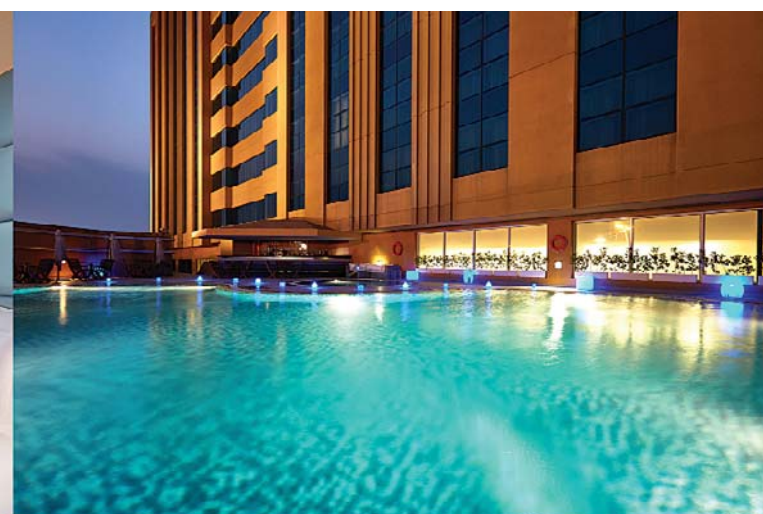
"In-line with the Millennium's long-held tradition of treating guests as family, we are delighted to extend an extra-special New Year's welcome with Special rates on accommodation and our distinguished restaurant and café," explained Dani Saleh, Area General Manager of Millennium and Copthorne Hotels Kuwait.

Guests taking advantage of the offer will enjoy limited-time rates on accommodation that range from standard rooms to extravagant suites, all of which come equipped with exceptional amenities and modern décor. Moreover, all staying guests will have access to a stylish techno-gym, an outdoor heated

swimming pool and Sauna and steam rooms for ultimate relaxation.

For those looking for a unique fine dining experience, Millennium Hotel and Convention Centre is offering special International Buffet at its own LAMAR International Restaurant. Known for its exquisite cuisine, modern ambience and enchanting open kitchen cooking stations, LAMAR International Restaurant has become a local favorite in recent months. Now with the new offer, guests may enjoy the International Buffet at KD 14 per person. The restaurant also features a sumptuous Seafood Night each Wednesday for only KD 18 per person.

Separately, Millennium is offering special prices on all sweets and pastries at the one-of-a-kind Library Café. Located on the ground floor, Library Café invites guests to order a light snack or drink, select one of the books on display and soak in the unique atmosphere.



## PRIVATE SCREENING OF 'THE PEANUTS MOVIE' WITH MCDONALD'S KUWAIT AND SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN



McDonald's Kuwait hosted a private screening of the new animation blockbuster 'The Peanuts Movie' at Mall 360 Cinescape, for an audience of special needs children.

It was an evening of fun, entertainment and movie magic, which kicked off with the screening of the eagerly anticipated film. During the screening, the McDonald's 'Senior Stars' distributed goodie bags to the children, filled with fun gifts and memorabilia of the movie. Finally, the evening wrapped up with all the children enjoying a special "The Peanuts Movie" Happy Meal.

"McDonald's Kuwait has enjoyed a long and close relationship with the special needs community in Kuwait, and we have strived to put a smile on the faces of special

needs children in any way we can," said Sherif Coutry, Marketing Director at McDonald's Kuwait. "We are always thrilled to organize this movie screenings for special needs audiences, as they are always a big hit with the children and spread joy amongst them. We are grateful for all the organizations and members of the community who helped make this a night to remember."

Operating in Kuwait since 1994, McDonald's today has 72 restaurants geographically located to service customers across the map, committed to the wellbeing of the society with an active social responsibility agenda, while maintaining high-quality products served in a safe and friendly atmosphere.



## CLOSING CEREMONY OF ICSK PAC ARTS FEST AT ICSK KHAITAN

The Indian Community School Kuwait Khaitan branch held the ICSK PAC Arts Fest in November and the curtains for the same drew with a grand closing ceremony. The Arts Fest witnessed prize winning performances in various categories. There were speeches, dances, group songs and recitations from different categories of children. The prizes and certificates for the winners were awarded. The invited and the in-house judges were felicitated.

The Honorary Secretary to the Board of Trustees Vijay Karayil presided over the ceremony and Parent Representative to the BOT Nizar K V, Arts Fest Convener Suresh Mathur, 40 PAC convener Mathew George and all the

other Parent Representatives graced the occasion. Karayil, in his presidential speech, emphasized the importance of music and dance and all other fine arts in a student's life. He further added that it is not enough that the children get high marks in the examinations; they should also enjoy their time in school and have memories to cherish their school life. He reminded the parents to understand and appreciate the teachers who play an important role in their children's life. The Principal K.G. Shirsath welcomed the gathering while Nissar proposed the vote of thanks. Reyana Mahesh the fest convener of the PAC Khaitan branch ably hosted the programme.



## AWARENESS CLASSES AT INDIA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Children often lack skills to protect themselves against abuse exploitation and problems caused due to lack of hygiene and misuse of technology. To create awareness about these things Sapna Raoof, Vice Principal (I-V) and teachers Sridevi, Sherin Feby and Noor conducted classes separately for boys and girls of class V.

Caution, communication and confidence, the key aspects of safety were explained in detail and tips were given. The class will also help the girls during their transition from childhood to Adolescence.

Students were urged to trust their parents and to talk to them about any-

thing and everything. They were asked to approach only parents and teachers for any such kind of support or help.

During the question answer session children were given an opportunity to satisfy their curiosity without any hesitation. This helped the students to clear many misunderstandings which could have led to stress and change in attitude and behavior. The Director Malayil Moosa Koya has always taken the initiative and encourages teachers in conducting such awareness classes. We at IISM believe that it is our responsibility as teachers and parents to protect our children by teaching them the skills to be smart, strong and safe.

## IISM CHAIRMAN NOMINATED TO THE GOVERNING BODY OF DR APJ ABDULKALAM TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

Dr P A Ibrahim Haji, the chairman of India International School Mangaf, is nominated by Kerala Governor, P Sathasivam to the four-member board of gov-

ernors of Kerala's newly set up technological university. The university which was established in 2014 and renamed in 2015 as Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Technological University has been set up for the promotion of technical education in Kerala.

Dr P A Ibrahim Haji, the co-Chairman of Malabar Group of Industries is better known as an educationalist than a businessman and an industrialist. The honor bestowed upon Dr P A Ibrahim Haji, is indeed a recognition of his mighty contribution in the field of education. PACE (Perfect Academic Center of Excellence) Group of Institutions formed under the honorable chairmanship of Dr Ibrahim Haji, with a long-term plan to expand the network of schools, col-

leges and other educational institutions in the UAE, other GCC countries and India has been extending exemplary service to the student community for the past few years.



Dr P A Ibrahim Haji

PA College of Engineering, Mangalore, India is a vast complex of various branches of engineering and other centers of higher studies such as; Bachelor of Engineering (BE), Post Graduate Department of Business Management (MBA), P A First Grade College (PAFGC), P A Polytechnic and P A Pre-University College. The schools run by Pace Group are India International School Kuwait, Asian School Sharjah, Creative English School Abudhabi and RIMS International School Kannur, Kerala. The staff and management of India International School congratulated Dr P A Ibrahim Haji on his magnificent achievement.



AOU CELEBRATES INAUGURATION OF NEW BRANCH BUILDING IN RIYADH

Prof Moudi Al-Humoud, Rector of the Arab Open University (AOU), announced that HRH Prince Talal bin Abdulaziz, President of the Arab Gulf Development Program (AGFUND) and Chairman of AOU Board of Trustees, would patronize the inauguration of the AOU branch building in Riyadh, in the presence of HRH Prince Faisal bin Bandar bin Abdulaziz, Emir of Riyadh, on Wednesday, 6 January 2016.

Humoud said that this event is highly significant and a major shift in the AOU course, in particular in the AOU Branch building in Saudi Arabia, as being the most modern AOU build-

ing designed to be environmentally friendly, providing education in accordance with the highest international standards, including classrooms and labs equipped with highly technological means, especially it is the only University in Saudi Arabia that offers higher educational environment based on the highest standards of quality to its students via e-learning means.

Humoud pointed out that through this building and other buildings recently opened in Bahrain, Jordan and Egypt, AOU strives to offer higher education opportunities to knowl-

edge seekers regardless of their age, gender and work status and to achieve their dreams in obtaining a university degree, and therefore it will achieve human development in the Arab world, especially AOU has a partnership with the Open University in the UK where a graduate gets two accredited certificates from both universities. The new building covers 39,000 m2 and includes two separate sections for males and females, classrooms, and Language and Computer labs.

At the end of her statement, Humoud commended the attention and efforts of HRH

Prince Turki bin Talal, Chairman of Advisory Committee on AOU Buildings that he paid to the AOU buildings which have been designed in modern styles and equipped with state-of-the art learning technology to benchmark against the highest standards of learning quality as well as to graduate students able to meet demands and requirements of regional and international labor markets. She also praised the cooperation of all Saudi Arabia official institutions in addition to other AOU branch countries for their facilities offered to the University.



Prof Moudi Al-Humoud



Hadeel Mustafa Qamhiya



Faten Ayman Al-Sharaa



Abeer Tawfiq Al-Adawi

ACK RECOGNIZES PARTICIPANTS IN 'SMOKING AWARENESS INITIATIVE'

The Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) held a special ceremony recognizing outstanding contributions by its students and staff members towards the 'ACK Smoking Awareness Initiative', a nation-wide program raising awareness on the health and environmental impacts of smoking.

Set as a priority by ACK's executive management, the initiative first started with the College's Engineering students designing and constructing mechanical models displaying the effects of smoking on people and the environ-

ment. Their hard work was immediately recognized with a special award at the '2015 KNPC 8th Annual CEO Awards.'

This semester, students from the School of Business developed informative presentations using the School of Engineering's mechanical models and visited Grade 1 classes at the International Academy of Kuwait (IAK).

When addressing the participating students, Dr Usameh Jamali - ACK's Advisor to the Chairman - commented that he was extremely proud that ACK has taken up the challenge of developing an innovative program to show young

children in a very simple but practical way how each cigarette affects their body. Dr Jamali mentioned how sad it has been for him to see too many people suffer from the effects of smoking. He emphasized that it is not only the smokers themselves who gets affected but those around them who breathe the smoke that comes from each cigarette. Thanking the students and staff members for their contribution, Certificates of Appreciation were presented by Dr Jamali; College President, Professor Mohamad Terro; as well as College's Dean Dr Gad Elbeheri.



Kuwait University's College of Architecture organized a students' trip to the construction site of the National Bank of Kuwait's (NBK) new head office building, which is expected to be an architectural landmark in green buildings' construction.

CONGRATULATIONS

Hadeel Mustafa Qamhiya, Faten Ayman Al-Sharaa and Abeer Tawfiq Al-Adawi celebrated their graduation from the Arab Open University (AOU) recently in a ceremony attended by their families and friends. Hadeel graduated in Information Technology, Faten in Business Administration and Abeer in English Literature. Congratulations, and wishes for further success.





00:20 Fast N' Loud  
01:10 Deadliest Catch: Legend Of The Cornelia Marie  
02:00 Gold Rush: Catch Up  
02:50 Catching Monsters  
03:40 Auction Hunters  
04:05 The Liquidator  
04:30 Storage Wars Canada  
05:00 What Happened Next?  
05:30 How It's Made  
06:00 Ice Cold Gold  
06:50 Wheeler Dealers  
07:40 Fast N' Loud  
08:30 Auction Hunters  
08:55 The Liquidator  
09:20 Storage Wars Canada  
09:45 What Happened Next?  
10:10 How It's Made  
10:35 Deadliest Catch: Legend Of The Cornelia Marie  
11:25 Gold Rush: Catch Up  
12:15 Catching Monsters  
13:05 Auction Hunters  
13:30 The Liquidator  
13:55 Storage Wars Canada  
14:20 Ice Cold Gold  
15:10 Wheeler Dealers  
16:00 Fast N' Loud  
16:50 What Happened Next?  
17:15 How It's Made  
17:40 Lair Of The Mega Shark  
18:30 Dual Survival  
19:20 Manhunt With Joel Lambert  
20:10 The Liquidator  
20:35 Storage Wars Canada  
21:00 Spawn Of Jaws: The Birth  
21:50 Dual Survival  
22:40 River Monsters  
23:30 Wheeler Dealers



00:35 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman  
01:20 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman  
02:08 How Do They Do It?  
02:31 How Do They Do It?  
02:55 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman  
03:42 NASA's Unexplained Files  
04:29 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman  
05:16 How Do They Do It?  
05:39 How Do They Do It?  
06:03 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
06:50 Mega Builders  
07:37 How Do They Do It?  
08:00 How Do They Do It?  
08:23 Mythbusters  
09:08 NASA's Unexplained Files  
09:53 Mega Builders  
10:38 How It's Made  
11:00 How It's Made  
11:23 How The Universe Works  
12:08 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
12:53 Mega Builders  
13:38 Mythbusters  
14:23 How It's Made  
14:46 How It's Made  
15:10 NASA's Unexplained Files  
15:57 How The Universe Works  
16:44 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
17:31 Mega Builders  
18:18 NASA's Unexplained Files  
19:05 Mythbusters  
19:50 Food Factory  
20:15 Food Factory  
20:40 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
21:25 How It's Made  
21:50 How It's Made  
22:15 NASA's Unexplained Files  
23:00 Food Factory



00:15 California Investigator  
00:40 Who On Earth Did I Marry?  
01:05 Who On Earth Did I Marry?  
01:30 The Haunted  
02:20 Ghost Lab  
03:10 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones  
04:00 California Investigator  
04:25 California Investigator  
04:45 Who On Earth Did I Marry?  
05:10 Who On Earth Did I Marry?  
05:30 The Haunted  
06:20 Deadly Affairs  
07:10 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones  
08:00 Dr G: Medical Examiner  
08:50 On The Case With Paula Zahn  
09:40 Fatal Encounters  
10:30 Murder Shift  
11:20 Deadly Affairs  
12:10 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones  
13:00 The Will  
13:50 I Almost Got Away With It  
14:40 California Investigator  
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22:35 Who On Earth Did I Marry?  
23:00 Deadly Sins  
23:50 Deadly Women



00:00 Violetta  
00:45 The Hive  
00:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
01:40 Wolfblood  
02:05 Wolfblood  
02:30 Violetta  
03:15 The Hive  
03:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
03:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
04:10 Wolfblood  
04:35 Wolfblood  
05:00 Violetta  
05:45 The Hive  
05:50 Mouk  
06:00 Lolirock  
06:25 Hank Zipzer  
06:50 Girl Meets World  
07:15 H2O  
07:40 H2O: Just Add Water  
08:05 Austin & Ally  
08:30 Austin & Ally  
08:55 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
09:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
09:45 Jessie  
10:10 Jessie  
10:35 Teen Beach 2  
12:20 Hank Zipzer  
12:45 I Didn't Do It  
13:10 I Didn't Do It  
13:35 Liv And Maddie  
14:00 Liv And Maddie  
14:30 H2O  
14:55 H2O  
15:20 Jessie  
15:45 Jessie  
16:10 Violetta  
17:00 The Next Step  
17:25 Liv And Maddie  
17:50 Jessie  
18:15 Austin & Ally  
18:40 I Didn't Do It  
19:05 H2O  
19:30 Violetta  
20:20 The Next Step  
20:45 Good Luck Charlie  
21:10 Good Luck Charlie  
21:35 Wizards Of Waverly Place  
22:00 Binny And The Ghost  
22:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
22:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
23:10 Wolfblood  
23:35 Wolfblood



00:00 E! Entertainment Special  
00:55 The Grace Helbig Show  
01:25 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
02:20 Escape Club  
03:15 Escape Club  
04:10 The E! True Hollywood Story  
05:05 The E! True Hollywood Story  
06:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
06:55 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
07:50 Style Star  
08:20 Beyond Candid With Giuliana  
09:15 Giuliana & Bill  
10:15 Giuliana & Bill  
11:10 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills  
11:35 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills  
12:05 E! Entertainment Special  
13:05 House Of DVF  
14:05 Fashion Bloggers  
14:30 Fashion Bloggers  
15:00 Kourtney And Khloe Take The Hamptons  
16:00 Kourtney And Khloe Take The Hamptons  
17:00 Giuliana & Bill  
18:00 House Of DVF  
19:00 WAGs  
20:00 Christina Milian Turned Up  
21:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
22:00 Dash Dolls  
23:00 Dash Dolls



00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
01:00 Food Court Wars  
02:00 Mystery Diners  
02:30 Mystery Diners  
03:00 Man Fire Food  
03:30 Man Fire Food  
04:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
04:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games  
06:00 Chopped  
07:00 Man Fire Food  
07:30 Man Fire Food

08:00 Chopped  
09:00 Guy's Grocery Games  
10:00 The Kitchen  
11:00 Barefoot Contessa  
11:30 Barefoot Contessa  
12:00 Chopped  
13:00 Guy's Big Bite  
13:30 Guy's Big Bite  
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
15:00 Man Fire Food  
15:30 Man Fire Food  
16:00 Chopped  
17:00 The Kitchen  
18:00 Siba's Table  
18:30 Grandma's Secret Cookbook  
19:00 Chopped  
20:00 Guy's Grocery Games  
21:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
21:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
22:00 Man v Food  
22:30 Man v Food  
23:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin



00:10 Pick Me!  
01:05 Emmerdale  
01:30 Coach Trip  
02:00 Come Date With Me Australia  
02:30 Murdoch Mysteries  
03:25 Churchill's Secret  
05:15 The Chase  
06:10 Paddock To Plate  
07:05 Coach Trip  
07:30 Churchill's Secret  
09:20 Murdoch Mysteries  
10:15 The Chase  
11:10 Coach Trip  
11:35 Pick Me!  
12:30 Paddock To Plate  
13:25 Emmerdale  
14:20 Coach Trip  
14:45 Murdoch Mysteries  
15:35 Pick Me!  
16:30 Vera  
18:20 Paddock To Plate  
19:10 Coach Trip  
19:35 Pick Me!  
20:30 Vera  
22:20 Coach Trip  
22:50 Emmerdale  
23:15 Paddock To Plate



00:00 Weird Loners  
00:30 Cristela  
01:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore  
01:30 Getting On  
02:00 Togetherness  
02:30 The Big C  
03:00 Your Family Or Mine  
03:30 The Goldbergs  
04:00 Two And A Half Men  
04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
05:30 Suburgatory  
06:00 Til Death  
06:30 New Girl  
07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
08:00 Two And A Half Men  
08:30 Suburgatory  
09:00 Your Family Or Mine  
09:30 Breaking In  
10:00 Melissa & Joey  
10:30 New Girl  
11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
12:00 Til Death  
12:30 Men At Work  
13:00 Young & Hungry  
13:30 New Girl  
14:00 The Goldbergs  
14:30 Breaking In  
15:00 Melissa & Joey  
15:30 Cristela  
16:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore  
16:30 Til Death  
17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
18:00 Your Family Or Mine  
18:30 The Goldbergs  
19:00 Modern Family  
19:30 Melissa & Joey  
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
21:00 Cristela  
21:30 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore  
22:00 Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll  
22:30 You're The Worst  
23:00 The Big C  
23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers



00:00 Justified  
01:00 Quantico  
02:00 Rosewood  
03:00 Allegiance  
04:00 Switched At Birth  
05:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
06:00 Covert Affairs  
07:00 Switched At Birth  
08:00 Odyssey  
09:00 Quantico  
10:00 Covert Affairs  
11:00 Switched At Birth  
12:00 Coronation Street  
12:30 Coronation Street  
13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
14:00 Odyssey

15:00 Live Good Morning America  
17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
18:00 Odyssey  
19:00 Complications  
20:00 The Night Shift  
21:00 Deadline Gallipoli  
22:00 Supergirl  
23:00 Scream Queens



00:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
01:00 Good Morning America  
03:00 Mistresses  
04:00 Grimm  
05:00 Good Morning America  
07:00 Coronation Street  
07:30 Coronation Street  
08:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
09:00 Parenthood  
10:00 Coronation Street  
10:30 Coronation Street  
11:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
12:00 C.S.I.  
13:00 Marvel's Agent Carter  
14:00 Parenthood  
15:00 Chicago Fire  
16:00 White Collar  
17:00 C.S.I.  
18:00 Marvel's Agent Carter  
19:00 Parenthood  
20:00 C.S.I.  
21:00 Marvel's Agent Carter  
22:00 Mistresses  
23:00 Grimm



00:00 Battle Of The Damned  
02:00 Act Of Valor  
04:00 Bloodsport  
06:00 Forget And Forgive  
08:00 Special ID  
10:00 Last Passenger  
12:00 Bloodsport  
14:00 Batman: Assault On Arkham  
16:00 Toinx  
18:00 Last Passenger  
19:45 Star Trek  
22:00 Gone In Sixty Seconds



00:00 Act Of Valor-PG15  
02:00 Bloodsport-PG15  
04:00 Forget And Forgive-PG15  
06:00 Special ID-PG15  
08:00 Last Passenger-PG15  
10:00 Bloodsport-PG15  
12:00 Batman: Assault On Arkham  
14:00 Toinx-PG15  
16:00 Last Passenger-PG15  
17:45 Star Trek-PG15  
20:00 Gone In Sixty Seconds  
22:00 Northmen: A Viking Saga



00:00 Keith Lemon: The Film  
02:00 The Waterboy  
04:00 The Love Guide  
06:00 Big Fat Liar  
08:00 Mr. Wonderful  
10:00 The Love Guide  
12:00 The Waterboy  
14:00 Titeuf, Le Film  
16:00 Mr. Wonderful  
18:00 Malavita  
20:00 Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues  
22:00 Behaving Badly



01:00 Jamie Marks Is Dead-PG15  
03:00 Zulu-PG15  
05:00 InSight-PG15  
07:00 Second Coming-PG15  
09:00 Chalet Girl-PG15  
11:00 InSight-PG15  
13:00 Reclaim-PG15  
15:00 My Piece Of The Pie-PG15  
17:00 Chalet Girl-PG15  
19:00 The Trials Of Cate McCall-PG15  
21:00 Tracks-PG15  
23:00 Horns-18



01:00 13 Eerie-PG15  
03:00 A Common Man-PG15  
05:00 About Alex-PG15  
07:00 Stonehearst Asylum-PG15  
09:00 Imogene-PG15  
11:00 Kristy-PG15  
13:00 Trigger Point-PG15  
15:00 Earth To Echo-PG  
17:00 Imogene-PG15  
19:00 Winter's Tale-PG15  
21:00 The Silent Storm-PG15  
23:00 As Above, So Below-18



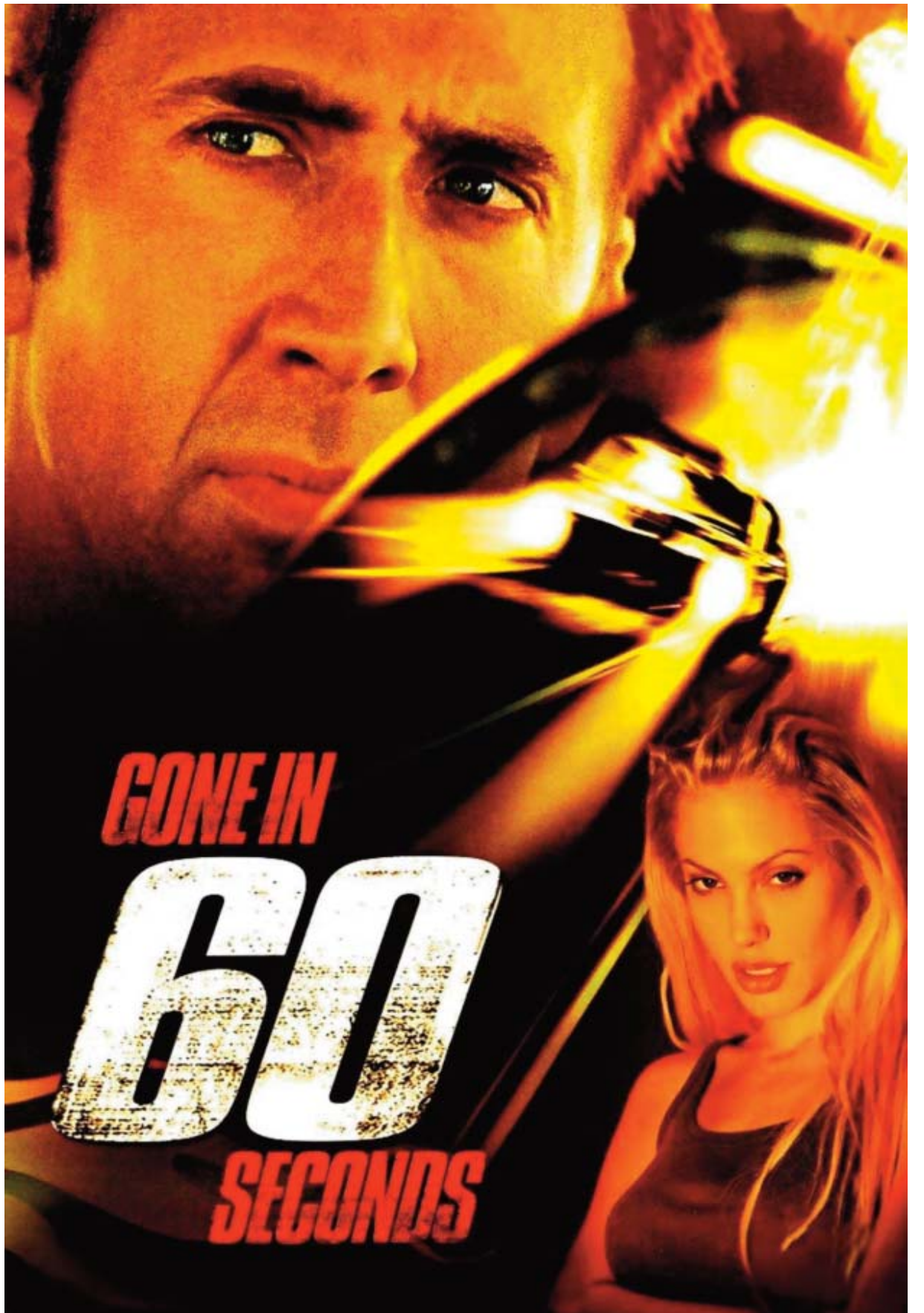
01:15 The Elf Who Stole Christmas  
02:45 Hatching  
04:30 Miffy The Movie  
06:00 Krazzy Planet  
08:00 Ploddy Police Car On The Case  
10:00 The Olsen Gang In Deep Trouble  
11:30 The Three Dogateers  
13:00 Hatching  
14:30 Bamse And The City Of Thieves  
16:00 Garfield's Fun Fest  
18:00 The Olsen Gang In Deep Trouble  
20:00 Back To The Sea  
22:00 Bamse And The City Of Thieves  
23:30 Marvel's The Invincible Iron Man



01:15 Pawn  
03:00 Gattaca  
05:00 What Dreams May Come  
07:45 See Girl Run  
08:45 When A Man Loves A Woman  
11:00 What Dreams May Come  
13:00 Black Nativity  
15:00 Manny  
16:45 When A Man Loves A Woman  
19:00 Frankie & Alice  
21:00 25th Hour  
23:30 I Origins



03:05 Calimero  
03:20 Zou  
03:30 Loopdidoo  
03:45 Art Attack  
04:10 Henry Hugglemonster  
04:20 Calimero  
04:35 Zou  
04:45 Loopdidoo  
05:00 Art Attack  
05:25 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:35 Calimero  
05:50 Zou  
06:00 Loopdidoo  
06:15 Art Attack  
06:35 Henry Hugglemonster  
06:50 Calimero  
07:00 Zou  
07:20 Loopdidoo  
07:35 Art Attack  
08:00 Calimero  
08:10 Zou  
08:25 Loopdidoo  
08:40 Jake And The Never Land



## GONE IN SIXTY SECONDS ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD



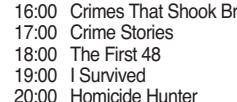
00:00 Sugar Daddies-PG15  
02:00 Curve-PG15  
04:00 Isa-PG15  
06:00 The Mark-PG15  
08:00 Hellboy: Blood & Iron-PG  
10:00 Stolen Child-PG15  
12:00 Curve-PG15  
14:00 The Past-PG15  
16:15 Hellboy: Blood & Iron-PG  
18:00 Into The Woods-PG  
20:15 Think Like A Man Too-PG15  
22:00 Wild Card-18



03:50 Follow That Dream  
05:35 Futurworld  
07:20 The Great Escape  
10:10 Of Mice And Men  
12:00 Follow That Dream  
13:50 Eight Men Out  
15:50 Nobody's Fool  
17:35 Of Mice And Men  
19:25 Little Sister  
21:00 Road House  
22:55 Fargo  
03:00 Electra Glide In Blue  
02:25 Life Of Sin



03:00 Killer Kids  
04:00 Jack The Ripper  
05:00 Born To Kill  
06:00 Crime Stories  
07:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
08:00 Surveillance Oz  
09:00 Surveillance Oz  
10:00 Frenemies  
10:30 Frenemies  
11:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
12:00 Crime Stories  
13:00 Homicide Hunter  
14:00 I Survived  
15:00 Frenemies  
15:30 Frenemies  
16:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
17:00 Crime Stories  
18:00 The First 48  
19:00 I Survived  
20:00 Homicide Hunter  
21:00 Crime Stories  
22:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
23:00 When Life Means Life  
00:00 The Jersey Slayings  
01:00 Campus Nightmares  
02:00 My Ghost Story



03:05 Calimero  
03:20 Zou  
03:30 Loopdidoo  
03:45 Art Attack  
04:10 Henry Hugglemonster  
04:20 Calimero  
04:35 Zou  
04:45 Loopdidoo  
05:00 Art Attack  
05:25 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:35 Calimero  
05:50 Zou  
06:00 Loopdidoo  
06:15 Art Attack  
06:35 Henry Hugglemonster  
06:50 Calimero  
07:00 Zou  
07:20 Loopdidoo  
07:35 Art Attack  
08:00 Calimero  
08:10 Zou  
08:25 Loopdidoo  
08:40 Jake And The Never Land



03:05 Calimero  
03:20 Zou  
03:30 Loopdidoo  
03:45 Art Attack  
04:10 Henry Hugglemonster  
04:20 Calimero  
04:35 Zou  
04:45 Loopdidoo  
05:00 Art Attack  
05:25 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:35 Calimero  
05:50 Zou  
06:00 Loopdidoo  
06:15 Art Attack  
06:35 Henry Hugglemonster  
06:50 Calimero  
07:00 Zou  
07:20 Loopdidoo  
07:35 Art Attack  
08:00 Calimero  
08:10 Zou  
08:25 Loopdidoo  
08:40 Jake And The Never Land

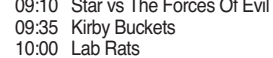
Pirates  
09:05 Sofia The First  
09:30 Miles From Tomorrow  
10:05 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
10:35 Doc McStuffins  
11:00 Sofia The First  
11:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
12:00 Miles From Tomorrow  
12:25 Special Agent Oso  
12:50 Handy Manny  
13:15 Jungle Junction  
13:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
14:00 Sofia The First  
14:25 Sofia The First  
14:50 Miles From Tomorrow  
15:15 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
15:40 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
16:05 The Adventures Of The Disney...  
16:35 Miles From Tomorrow  
17:00 Sofia The First  
17:25 Aladdin  
17:50 Gummi Bears  
18:15 Chip 'n' Dale's Rescue Rangers  
18:40 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
19:05 Miles From Tomorrow  
19:30 Sofia The First  
19:55 Doc McStuffins  
20:15 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
20:45 Sheriff Callie's Wild West  
21:05 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
21:35 Sofia The First  
22:00 Miles From Tomorrow  
22:25 Miles From Tomorrow  
22:50 Lilo And Stitch  
23:45 Cars Toons  
23:50 Zou  
00:05 Henry Hugglemonster  
00:20 Calimero  
00:35 Zou  
00:50 Loopdidoo  
01:05 Art Attack  
01:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
01:45 Calimero  
02:00 Zou  
02:15 Loopdidoo  
02:30 Art Attack  
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster

03:00 American Pickers  
04:00 American Restoration  
04:30 American Restoration  
05:00 Duck Dynasty  
05:25 Duck Dynasty  
05:50 American Pickers  
06:45 American Restoration  
07:10 American Restoration  
07:35 Shipping Wars  
08:00 Shipping Wars  
08:25 Big Rig Bounty Hunters  
09:15 Ice Road Truckers  
10:05 Ax Men  
11:00 The Legend Of Shelby The Swamp Man  
11:30 The Legend Of Shelby The Swamp Man  
12:00 Mountain Men  
13:00 American Pickers  
14:00 Storage Wars  
14:30 Storage Wars  
15:00 Pawn Stars  
15:30 Pawn Stars  
16:00 Shipping Wars  
17:00 Pawn Stars  
17:30 Pawn Stars  
18:00 American Pickers  
20:00 Storage Wars  
20:30 Storage Wars  
21:00 Ax Men  
22:00 Pawn Stars  
22:30 Pawn Stars  
23:00 Storage Wars  
01:00 Storage Wars Texas  
02:00 Storage Wars

03:00 Killer Kids  
04:00 Jack The Ripper  
05:00 Born To Kill  
06:00 Crime Stories  
07:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
08:00 Surveillance Oz  
09:00 Surveillance Oz  
10:00 Frenemies  
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11:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
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14:00 I Survived  
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21:00 Crime Stories  
22:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
23:00 When Life Means Life  
00:00 The Jersey Slayings  
01:00 Campus Nightmares  
02:00 My Ghost Story



07:00 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero  
07:25 Boyster  
07:50 Supa Strikas  
08:15 Lab Rats  
08:40 K. C. Undercover  
09:10 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
09:35 Kirby Buckets  
10:00 Lab Rats  
10:25 Kickin' It  
10:50 Mighty Med  
11:20 Supa Strikas  
11:45 K. C. Undercover  
12:15 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero  
12:35 Annedroids  
13:00 Motocrossed  
14:30 Phineas And Ferb  
14:45 Phineas And Ferb  
15:10 Disney Mickey Mouse  
15:15 Rocket Monkeys  
15:40 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero  
16:05 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
16:30 Kirby Buckets  
16:55 Gamers Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
17:25 K. C. Undercover  
17:50 Supa Strikas  
18:15 Lab Rats  
18:40 Mighty Med  
19:10 Annedroids  
19:35 Kickin' It  
20:00 K. C. Undercover  
20:25 Supa Strikas  
20:55 Lab Rats



03:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
03:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
03:48 Henry Danger  
04:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn  
04:36 The Haunted Hathaways  
05:00 Winx Club  
05:24 Sanjay And Craig  
05:48 Sanjay And Craig  
06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants  
06:36 SpongeBob SquarePants  
07:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
07:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
07:48 Sanjay And Craig  
08:12 Harvey Beaks  
08:36 Breadwinners  
09:00 Get Blake  
09:24 Rabbids Invasion  
09:48 Henry Danger  
10:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn  
10:36 The Haunted Hathaways  
11:00 Winx Club  
11:24 SpongeBob SquarePants  
11:48 SpongeBob SquarePants  
12:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
12:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
13:00 Breadwinners  
13:24 Breadwinners  
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14:12 Rabbids Invasion  
14:36 Henry Danger  
15:00 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn  
15:24 SpongeBob SquarePants  
15:48 SpongeBob SquarePants  
16:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
16:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
17:00 Sanjay And Craig  
17:24 Harvey Beaks  
17:48 Breadwinners  
18:12 Henry Danger  
18:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn  
19:00 The Haunted Hathaways



# CLASSIFIEDS



## KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (31/12/2015 TO 06/01/2016)

**SHARQIA-1**  
THE PEANUTS MOVIE 11:30 AM  
POINT BREAK 1:30 PM  
THE PEANUTS MOVIE 4:00 PM  
DILWALE - Hindi 6:00 PM  
DILWALE - Hindi 9:00 PM  
POINT BREAK 12:05 AM

**SHARQIA-2**  
APARTMENT NO. 6 - Kuwaiti Film 12:00 PM  
APARTMENT NO. 6 - Kuwaiti Film 1:45 PM  
JOY 3:30 PM  
APARTMENT NO. 6 - Kuwaiti Film 6:15 PM  
JOY 8:00 PM  
APARTMENT NO. 6 - Kuwaiti Film 10:45 PM  
JOY 12:30 AM

**SHARQIA-3**  
BANG BANG BABY 12:30 PM  
THE BIG SHORT 2:30 PM  
BANG BANG BABY 5:00 PM  
THE BIG SHORT 7:00 PM  
BANG BANG BABY 9:45 PM  
THE BIG SHORT 11:45 PM

**MUHALAB-1**  
SNOWTIME! 12:30 PM  
SNOWTIME! 2:30 PM  
DILWALE - Hindi 4:30 PM  
DILWALE - Hindi 7:30 PM  
POINT BREAK 10:30 PM  
POINT BREAK 1:00 AM

**MUHALAB-2**  
BANG BANG BABY 12:00 PM  
THE PEANUTS MOVIE 2:00 PM  
EXTRACTION 4:15 PM  
BANG BANG BABY 6:15 PM  
EXTRACTION 8:15 PM  
BANG BANG BABY 10:15 PM  
EXTRACTION 12:15 AM

**MUHALAB-3**  
APARTMENT NO. 6 - Kuwaiti Film 1:00 PM  
THE BIG SHORT 3:00 PM  
APARTMENT NO. 6 - Kuwaiti Film 5:45 PM  
THE BIG SHORT 7:45 PM  
APARTMENT NO. 6 - Kuwaiti Film 10:30 PM  
THE BIG SHORT 12:30 AM

**FANAR-1**  
JOY 12:15 PM  
THE PEANUTS MOVIE 2:45 PM  
JOY 5:00 PM  
KHANET EL YEK 7:30 PM  
JOY 9:30 PM  
JOY 12:15 AM

**FANAR-2**  
BANG BANG BABY 11:30 AM  
BANG BANG BABY 1:30 PM  
THE BIG SHORT 3:30 PM

BANG BANG BABY 6:00 PM  
BANG BANG BABY 8:00 PM  
THE BIG SHORT 10:00 PM  
THE BIG SHORT 12:30 AM

**FANAR-3**  
SNOWTIME! 12:45 PM  
STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 2:45 PM  
SNOWTIME! 5:45 PM  
APARTMENT NO. 6 - Kuwaiti Film 7:45 PM  
APARTMENT NO. 6 - Kuwaiti Film 9:45 PM  
APARTMENT NO. 6 - Kuwaiti Film 11:45 PM

**FANAR-4**  
EXTRACTION 11:45 AM  
EXTRACTION 1:45 PM  
POINT BREAK 3:45 PM  
EXTRACTION 6:15 PM  
EXTRACTION 8:15 PM  
POINT BREAK 10:15 PM  
EXTRACTION 12:45 AM

**FANAR-5**  
THE GOOD DINOSAUR 12:00 PM  
DILWALE - Hindi 2:30 PM  
DILWALE - Hindi 5:30 PM  
DILWALE - Hindi 8:30 PM  
DILWALE - Hindi 11:30 PM

**MARINA-1**  
BANG BANG BABY 12:15 PM  
THE BIG SHORT 2:15 PM  
BANG BANG BABY 5:00 PM  
THE BIG SHORT 7:00 PM  
BANG BANG BABY 9:45 PM  
NO THU 11:45 PM  
THE BIG SHORT 11:45 PM  
NO THU

**MARINA-2**  
POINT BREAK 12:00 PM  
EXTRACTION 2:30 PM  
SNOWTIME! 4:30 PM  
POINT BREAK 6:30 PM  
EXTRACTION 9:00 PM  
EXTRACTION 11:00 PM

**MARINA-3**  
JOY 1:00 PM  
APARTMENT NO. 6 - Kuwaiti Film 3:30 PM  
THE GOOD DINOSAUR 5:30 PM  
APARTMENT NO. 6 - Kuwaiti Film 8:00 PM  
JOY 10:00 PM  
APARTMENT NO. 6 - Kuwaiti Film 12:30 AM  
NO THU

**AVENUES-1**  
THE PEANUTS MOVIE 12:30 PM  
THE PEANUTS MOVIE 2:45 PM

THE PEANUTS MOVIE 5:00 PM  
APARTMENT NO. 6 - Kuwaiti Film 7:15 PM  
APARTMENT NO. 6 - Kuwaiti Film 9:15 PM  
APARTMENT NO. 6 - Kuwaiti Film 11:15 PM  
APARTMENT NO. 6 - Kuwaiti Film 1:15 AM

**AVENUES-2**  
THE BIG SHORT 12:15 PM  
THE BIG SHORT 3:15 PM  
THE BIG SHORT 6:00 PM  
THE BIG SHORT 8:45 PM  
THE BIG SHORT 11:30 PM

**AVENUES-3**  
DILWALE - Hindi 11:30 AM  
DILWALE - Hindi 2:30 PM  
DILWALE - Hindi 5:45 PM  
DILWALE - Hindi 9:00 PM  
DILWALE - Hindi 12:15 AM

**AVENUES-4**  
APARTMENT NO. 6 - Kuwaiti Film 11:45 AM  
DILWALE - Hindi 2:00 PM  
DILWALE - Hindi 5:15 PM  
Special Show "DILWALE - Hindi" 5:15 PM  
DILWALE - Hindi 8:30 PM  
APARTMENT NO. 6 - Kuwaiti Film 11:45 PM

**AVENUES-5**  
JOY 12:30 PM  
THE BIG SHORT 3:15 PM  
Special Show "JOY" 3:15 PM  
EXTRACTION 6:00 PM  
Special Show "EXTRACTION" 6:00 PM  
JOY 8:15 PM  
EXTRACTION 11:00 PM  
EXTRACTION 1:15 AM

**AVENUES-6**  
EXTRACTION 12:00 PM  
EXTRACTION 2:15 PM  
EXTRACTION 4:30 PM  
EXTRACTION 6:45 PM  
EXTRACTION 9:00 PM  
EXTRACTION 11:15 PM

**AVENUES-7**  
SAVVA. HEART OF THE WARRIOR 11:45 AM  
BANG BANG BABY 2:00 PM  
SAVVA. HEART OF THE WARRIOR 4:00 PM  
BANG BANG BABY 6:00 PM  
BANG BANG BABY 8:00 PM  
BANG BANG BABY 10:00 PM  
BANG BANG BABY 12:05 AM

**AVENUES-8**  
SNOWTIME! 12:00 PM  
SNOWTIME! 2:15 PM  
KHANET EL YEK 4:15 PM  
SNOWTIME! 6:15 PM  
NARCOPOLIS 8:15 PM  
STOMPING GROUND 10:30 PM

## VACANCY

### STAFF NURSES

Diploma/BSC  
Nursing, with license  
OBS & GYNE Clinic  
in Farwaniya

Submit your CV at  
emp@dramirabehbehani.com  
Contact: 24734505 ext: 0 / 65092978

## REQUIRED

For a reputed Textile Showroom

1. Sales Lady
2. Fashion Designer

- Visa Transferable • Presentable
- English & Arabic knowing

Interested candidates kindly send your CV

Fax No. 22427072

Email: admin@indianheritage.com

### ACCOMMODATION

Sharing accommodation  
available for a bachelor  
with a Mangalorean  
Catholic bachelor near  
Khaitan cinema Garnatha  
bus stop. Contact:  
66036893. (C 5107)

### PRAYER TIMINGS

F0ajr: 05:19  
Shorook: 06:43  
Duhr: 11:53  
Asr: 14:45  
Maghrib: 17:04  
Isha: 18:26

## URGENTLY REQUIRED

Experienced  
driver for a  
Kuwaiti family

interested applicant call:

99766796

## EMERGENCY

112



## Flight Schedule

### Arrival Flights on Tuesday 5/1/2016

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
BBC	143	Dhaka	00:05
MSC	415	Sohag	00:05
KLM	411	Amsterdam/Dammam	00:20
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55
THY	772	Istanbul	01:05
DLH	635	Doha	01:35
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55
FDB	067	Dubai	03:05
RJA	644	Amman	03:05
MSR	612	Cairo	03:10
QTR	1076	Doha	03:15
KKK	6507	Istanbul	03:20
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:25
THY	6376	Istanbul	05:05
DXH	170	Bahrain	05:40
THY	770	Istanbul	05:55
FDB	5061	Dubai	06:30
BAW	157	London	06:40
KAC	416	Jakarta/Kuala Lumpur	07:15
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	07:20
QTR	1086	Doha	07:40
FDB	053	Dubai	07:45
SVA	512	Riyadh	07:50
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50
OMA	641	Muscat	08:00
KAC	354	BLR	08:15
KAC	206	Islamabad	08:25
KAC	352	Kochi	08:30
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:50
KAC	362	Colombo	08:50
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:20
QTR	1070	Doha	09:25
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:20
IRC	6507	Shiraz	10:30
IRA	675	Lar	10:40
UAE	873	Dubai	11:05
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:15
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30
JZR	561	Sohag	12:45
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00
FBA	831	Al Najaf	13:30
AGY	780	Alexandria	13:45
KAC	382	Delhi	13:50
QTR	1078	Doha	14:10
FDB	057	Dubai	14:10
KAC	514	Tehran	14:10
AXB	393	Kozhikode	14:20
SVA	500	Jeddah	14:30
KAC	672	Dubai	14:45

KAC	284	Dhaka	14:45
KAC	788	Jeddah	14:50
GFA	221	Bahrain	15:00
KNE	472	Jeddah	15:05
OMA	645	Muscat	15:30
NIA	251	Alexandria	15:30
KAC	562	Amman	15:40
ABY	127	Sharjah	15:45
UAE	857	Dubai	15:45
JAD	301	Amman	15:55
QTR	1072	Doha	16:10
JZR	1541	Cairo	16:10
FDB	051	Dubai	16:30
ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	16:40
RJA	640	Amman	16:55
KAC	542	Cairo	16:55
SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15
GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30
KAC	540	Sharm el-Sheikh	17:45
JZR	325	Al Najaf	17:50
MSR	614	Cairo	17:50
JZR	777	Jeddah	17:55
KAC	502	Beirut	18:00
UAE	875	Dubai	18:00
FDB	063	Dubai	18:05
UAL	982	IAD	18:15
JZR	177	Dubai	18:20
KAC	680	Muscat	18:25
KAC	786	Jeddah	18:30
ABY	123	Sharjah	18:45
QTR	1080	Doha	18:55
KAC	742	Dammam	19:05
KAC	614	Bahrain	19:10
KAC	774	Riyadh	19:25
KAC	166	Paris/Rome	19:30
GFA	217	Bahrain	19:30
KAC	618	Doha	19:35
KAC	104	London	19:40
KAC	674	Dubai	19:45
MSR	618	Alexandria	20:05
FDB	061	Dubai	20:20
OMA	647	Muscat	20:20
FDB	5053	Dubai	20:50
DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:55
JAI	572	Mumbai	20:55
ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:20
MEA	402	Beirut	21:20
ALK	229	Colombo	21:25
UAE	859	Dubai	21:40
GFA	219	Bahrain	21:45
JZR	125	Bahrain	22:00
QTR	1082	Doha	22:00
KLM	415	Amsterdam	22:05
AIC	987	Chennai/Hyderabad	22:25
ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:25
FDB	059	Dubai	22:30
PIA	239	Sialkot	22:35
JZR	239	Amman	23:05
JZR	185	Dubai	23:15
JZR	555	Alexandria	23:25
UAL	981	Bahrain	23:25
FDB	071	Dubai	23:45
THY	764	Istanbul	23:50
JAI	574	Mumbai	23:55
MSC	403	Asyut	23:55

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

### Departure Flights on Tuesday 5/1/2016

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05
FDB	072	Dubai	00:40
MSC	404	Asyut	00:55
JAI	573	Mumbai	00:55
MSC	416	Sohag	01:00
BBC	143	Chittagong/Dhaka	01:35
KLM	411	Amsterdam	01:35
KAC	283	Dhaka	02:10
THY	773	Istanbul	02:30
DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:35
ETH	621	Addis Ababa	02:45
KAC	381	Delhi	03:30
UAE	854	Dubai	03:45
PGT	859	Istanbul	03:55
OMA	644	Muscat	03:55
FDB	068	Dubai	04:00
MSR	613	Cairo	04:10
ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:15
KKK	6508	Istanbul	04:20
QTR	1077	Doha	05:00
THY	765	Istanbul	05:15
JZR	560	Sohag	06:10
FDB	070	Dubai	06:30
THY	6376	Dubai/Istanbul	06:35
JZR	164	Dubai	06:55
RJA	645	Amman	07:05
THY	771	Istanbul	07:05
FDB	5062	Dubai	07:10
GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15
FDB	054	Dubai	08:30
QTR	1087	Doha	08:40
BAW	156	London	08:45
SVA	513	Riyadh	08:50
OMA	642	Muscat	08:55
JZR	1540	Cairo	09:15
KAC	787	Jeddah	09:25
ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40
KAC	513	Tehran	09:45
KAC	541	Cairo	09:55
UAE	856	Dubai	09:55
KAC	101	London/New York	09:55
KAC	561	Amman	10:00
KAC	671	Dubai	10:05
ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:25
KAC	501	Beirut	10:30
FDB	056	Dubai	10:35
KAC	165	Rome/Paris	11:00
QTR	1071	Doha	11:00
GFA	214	Bahrain	11:05
KAC	539	Sharm el-Sheikh	11:25
IRC	6508	Shiraz	11:30
IRA	674	Lar	11:40
RBG	554	Alexandria	11:55
JZR	776	Jeddah	12:20
UAE	874	Dubai	12:30
MEA	405	Beirut	12:55
KAC	785	Jeddah	13:00
KAC	679	Muscat	13:00
FDB	076	Dubai	13:10
MSC	402	Alexandria	13:30
JZR	176	Dubai	13:45
MSR	611	Cairo	14:00

AE	872	Dubai	14:15
JZR	324	Al Najaf	14:25
FBA	832	Al Najaf	14:40
AGY	781	Asyut	14:45
KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
FDB	058	Dubai	15:10
QTR	1079	Doha	15:10
AXB	394	Kozhikode	15:20
GFA	222	Bahrain	15:45
KAC	617	Doha	15:45
SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
KAC	773	Riyadh	15:50
KAC	613	Bahrain	15:50
KAC	741	Dammam	15:55
KNE	473	Jeddah	16:05
JZR	554	Alexandria	16:10
ABY	128	Sharjah	16:25
NIA	252	Alexandria	16:30
OMA	646	Muscat	16:30
JAD	302	Amman	16:40
JZR	266	Beirut	17:05
ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	17:30
JZR	238	Amman	17:30
FDB	052	Dubai	17:35
QTR	1073	Doha	17:40
UAE	858	Dubai	17:45
JZR	538	Cairo	17:45
RJA	641	Amman	17:55
SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
JZR	184	Dubai	18:40
MSR	615	Cairo	18:50
JZR	124	Bahrain	19:10
FDB	064	Dubai	19:20
ABY	124	Sharjah	19:25
UAE	876	Dubai	19:30
UAL	982	Bahrain	19:30
GFA	218	Bahrain	20:15
KAC	361	Colombo	20:45
KAC	351	Kochi	20:50
QTR	1081	Doha	20:50
KAC	343	Chennai	21:00
MSR	607	Luxor	21:05
KAC	331	Trivandrum	21:10
OMA	648	Muscat	21:20
FDB	062	Dubai	21:20
DLH	634	Doha	21:45
FDB	5054	Dubai	21:50
DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
JAI	571	Mumbai	21:55
KAC	301	Mumbai	22:10
ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:10
MEA	403	Beirut	22:20
ALK	230	Colombo	22:25
GFA	220	Bahrain	22:30
UAE	860	Dubai	22:55
KAC	345	Ahmedabad	23:00
QTR	1083	Doha	23:05
KLM	415	Dammam/Amsterdam	23:05
KAC	205	Islamabad	23:10
ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:15
KAC	411	Bangkok/Manila	23:35
FDB	060	Dubai	23:35
PIA	240	Sialkot	23:35



CROSSWORD 1128

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ACROSS

1. A man who serves as a sailor.  
4. Exaggerated masculinity.  
12. The elementary stages of any subject (usually plural).  
15. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.  
16. A native or inhabitant of ancient Etruria.  
17. The longer of the two telegraphic signals used in Morse code.  
18. A system of solmization using the solfa syllables.  
20. The basic unit of money in Ethiopia.  
22. Relating to or resembling or made of or adorned with pearls or mother-of-pearl.  
24. South American armadillo with three bands of bony plates.  
25. A glass for beer.  
27. God of wealth and love.  
29. Before noon.  
31. Not only so, but.  
32. Used as a Hindi courtesy title.  
35. Any of various minerals consisting of hydrous silicates of aluminum or potassium etc. that crystallize in forms that allow perfect cleavage into very thin leaves.  
37. Any of a series of univalent groups of the general formula CnH2n+1 derived from aliphatic hydrocarbons.  
39. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.  
41. A rapid bustling commotion.  
45. An alloy of copper and zinc (and sometimes arsenic) used to imitate gold in cheap jewelry and for gilding.  
49. Falcon-headed solar god.  
50. (Old Testament) The second patriarch.  
53. American prizefighter who won the world heavyweight championship three times (born in 1942).  
54. A white or silvered surface where pictures can be projected for viewing.  
56. Any of various spiny trees or shrubs of the genus Acacia.  
59. 1 species.  
62. Type genus of the Laniidae.  
64. American novelist (1909-1955).  
66. (trademark) A tinne luncheon meat made largely from pork.  
70. The airforce of Great Britain.  
73. A river that rises in central Germany and flows north to join the Elbe River.  
74. The United Nations agency concerned with international maritime activities.  
75. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).  
77. A theocratic republic in the Middle East in western Asia.  
78. 10 grams.  
79. A flat tortilla with various fillings piled on it.  
80. Soft white semisolid fat obtained by rendering the fatty tissue of the hog v 1.

DOWN

1. A short labored intake of breath with the mouth open.  
2. A slender double-reed instrument.  
3. A pale rose-colored variety of the ruby spinel.  
4. (South African) An ear of corn.  
5. A highly unstable radioactive element (the heaviest of the halogen series).  
6. A hard brittle blue-white multivalent metallic element.  
7. United States neuroscientist noted for his studies of the neural basis of vision (born in

- 1926).  
8. Goddess of fertility.  
9. Sparsely covered with stunted trees or vegetation and underbrush.  
10. A law officer having duties similar to those of a sheriff in carrying out the judgments of a court of law.  
11. In operation or operational.  
12. (Babylonian) A demigod or first man.  
13. A small cake leavened with yeast.  
14. A human female who does housework.  
19. Goddess of love and fecundity.  
21. Extremely large treelike cactus of desert regions of southwestern United States having a thick columnar sparsely branched trunk bearing white flowers and edible red pulpy fruit.  
23. A holy war by Muslims against unbelievers.  
26. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.  
28. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.  
30. (Greek legend) The greedy king of Phrygia who Dionysus gave the power to turn everything he touched into gold.  
33. An azure blue semiprecious stone.  
34. Deciduous round-headed Asiatic tree widely grown in mild climates as an ornamental for its heart-shaped leaves and fragrant yellow-green flowers followed by hanging clusters of fleshy orange-red berries.  
36. A state of deep and often prolonged unconsciousness.  
38. A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.  
40. English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).  
42. The capital and largest city of Bangladesh.  
43. A radioactive element of the actinide series.  
44. (chemistry) P(otential of) H(ydrogen).  
46. A city in northwestern Switzerland.  
47. Low stingless nettle of Central and South America having velvety brownish-green toothed leaves and clusters of small green flowers.  
48. A soft yellow malleable ductile (trivalent and univalent) metallic element.  
51. Determine the essential quality of.  
52. The Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the Dali region of Yunnan.  
55. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali metal group.  
57. A ductile malleable reddish-brown corrosion-resistant diamagnetic metallic element.  
58. Attack someone physically or emotionally.  
60. Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.  
61. Make less visible or unclear.  
63. A rechargeable battery with a nickel cathode and a cadmium anode.  
65. A youth subculture that began in London in the early 1960s.  
67. (obstetrics) The number of live-born children a woman has delivered.  
68. (botany) Of or relating to the axil.  
69. Sewing that repairs a worn or torn place in a garment.  
71. (usually followed by 'to') Naturally disposed toward.  
72. (used as a combining form) Recent or new.  
76. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Adjust to changing plans today. You may be helping with the care of young people or looking for an opportunity to teach or entertain others. You are in for some positive energy within your own personal future-go ahead and get started with your plans now. This is a good day to get your own personal things done, or to just relax. Good eye-hand coordination and a sustained effort make almost any task run well. You may feel like exercising or getting out of the house for a while this afternoon. Emotions are very present but within control. Poetry and art may be possible later. Movies, books, and all forms of escape could prove very enjoyable. Lovers, children and other people or things dear to your heart are emphasized.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You are confident, inventive and energetic. Your leadership ability is valuable when problems occur that hold up the completion of projects. Take advantage of the energies that are around you now because they are all positive-any constructive activity will have good results. A feeling of being at peace and stable on the emotional level comes into play at this time. Stability is satisfying and you strive for this in work and in your family life. Your wit and friendly nature bring comfort to all who know you. Be careful of the temptation to overspend this afternoon. Compare prices if you have a need to purchase an expensive item. Think of money as portions of your working time-then you will have wise choices in using your money.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

The intellectual and the emotional parts of you may compete from time to time. When an opportunity comes up to solve any problem today, you might consider proposing that some time be allowed for you to think about a situation before giving an opinion without much thought. This way you will either be able to research or think of a commonsense answer. If you have decided to travel before the end of this month, check your plans to make sure all the paperwork is in order. Letters and phone calls to friends and family members seem to be calling your name. This is also a good day for love. A shared interest with a loved one will bring a harmonious end to this day. After the evening meal, music may be more desirable than usual.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You may find yourself wanting to explode with emotion but patience will win over whatever negative seems to dominate this morning; this too shall pass. The trick is what you do with those feelings. Consider using a mentor that will see things from a different perspective. If your mentor is not present, carry a picture of that person you might consider a mentor and learn wonderful lessons through referencing how that person would behave in difficult situations. You could use a picture by the phone of one of your friends that is good at dealing with difficult phone calls; refer to that person in your mind; you will be able to deal with a difficult phone call. Poetry and art may be possible this evening. Movies, books and all forms of escape prove enjoyable.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your ideas may run counter to some particular plan of action. There is an opportunity, however, to turn things around and have a better understanding of a difficult situation or a difficult person. You will find an answer that will satisfy everyone. Mistakes come when you rush-pace yourself. A young person may announce that attention from you will be wanted in the future. This may be as simple as taking on the job of tutoring. You love languages and may be teaching your language to a person that does not speak your language. There is also an opportunity to correct someone's speech. Your winning ways will help this day become most positive. A drive this evening, weather permitting, will be a good approach to bringing a balance to your day.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

It may be time to look at the quality of work you produce and the payment you receive. The time that you put into some project or some work-related job may need review. It may be that you are in business for yourself and whether that is true or not, the day affords you time to think about your professional progress and how you can plan any changes that will make positive things happen. Promise yourself to keep to a goal-schedule and accomplish one big goal each quarter. For the rest of this month learn different ways to meditate, solve problems or be in a state of peacefulness. Use those stressful feelings as a signal to become centered. You will find communication between loved ones easy this evening-romance is possible.

WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

Refrigerator

Find and circle all of the refrigerator items that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an additional item found in many refrigerators.

M S C A R R O T S S B U T T E R  
U T S E C I U J E Y S N O M E L  
S R S E P A R G B R O C C O L I  
T A B A C O N B S S M G B A S R  
A W M B S A R K S A E P U E E B  
R B A C R E N S P P D V B R P L  
D E G O A I V L R I U I R T U  
S R N D R K E L A E C N O L M B  
A R E D C S E W E E V D A I O T  
N I T U Y T E S C H U O L C E H  
A E S R T R E I S C S K T O H G  
N S U U S E M S E L P P A F C I  
A P C G H A A P U H C T E K E L  
B E G C J Y R T L U O P M U C L  
E E S I A N N O Y A M W A T E R

- |          |           |             |              |
|----------|-----------|-------------|--------------|
| APPLES   | DRAWERS   | LETTUCE     | ORANGES      |
| BACON    | DRINKS    | LIGHTBULB   | PEAS         |
| BREAD    | EGGS      | MAGNETS     | POULTRY      |
| BROCCOLI | GRAPES    | MAPLE SYRUP | PRODUCE      |
| BUTTER   | ICE CUBES | MAYONNAISE  | SHELVES      |
| CAKE     | JAM       | MEAT        | SPINACH      |
| CARROTS  | JUICES    | MILK        | STRAWBERRIES |
| CHEESE   | KETCHUP   | MUSTARD     | WATER        |
| COLD     | LEFTOVERS | OLIVES      | YOGURT       |



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Be aware of power struggles and plan your strategies carefully. You may unexpectedly find some long-term problems clear up, particularly if you go the extra mile to help in a difficult situation or with a difficult person. Figuring out how to organize projects and people is apt to become a topic of special interest and an opportunity to stretch and grow. Involved in research, you will make certain that quotes and hearsay are backed by authority or evidence and must have practical worth and application. There is intense study and thought. There is also time later today to enjoy a little rest and relaxation with your favorite person. Be aware of maintaining a balance in your life-family, work, play, education, exercise and rest are important factors.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Your friends and family are impressed with your perseverance. There is satisfaction in a job well done. Keep up the good work. Now that a new year has begun, you may decide it is time to clear out some of the old clutter and create clean spaces. Cleaning out drawers, notes, magazines, newspapers, clothes, old equipment, etc., can be a part of the clearing away process to begin all new. Do not forget to either recycle or bundle for a charity. Do not try to accomplish everything in one day, however. Getting things organized and placed in a particular area seems to be a phase you might well want to integrate into your everyday life. It is so much more peaceful to have an organized workplace and a well-run home place. A job well done.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Power struggles could be intense with group issues today. There could be some disagreements. If you are trying to prove a point, find statistics or examples to back up your ideas and try again later. Give the idea time to settle for a day or two before you approach the subject again-you may be pleasantly surprised. Inventions and quality ideas are possible when you communicate and agree to disagree. The satisfaction of a job well done is one of your greatest incentives. A sense of support and harmony is a good thing. An older person may need your help this afternoon. In the process of listening, you may find that listening is really all that is needed. Of all people, you know how important it is to have others listen to your ideas.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

No matter how disciplined or determined you are today, you won't likely accomplish everything on your agenda. You're all too easily distracted because your curiosity is aroused by every new idea that floats your way. Unfortunately, you may grow anxious when you realize these mental diversions aren't leading you to your desired destination. But the information you learn now can be worthwhile later, even if you're not making tangible progress. Be patient, you'll be able to see the big picture soon enough.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You may want to go in a different direction from the other people around you. If you are courteous and check to see if anyone needs anything, while they are busy coordinating and preparing for their day, you may take a little time to neatening up your work area. It may be that you think best when your surroundings are presentable and less cluttered. If you are in sales, you will find many customers feel most comfortable in your area of the store. There is talk of new business opening up around your place of work and you are encouraged to see business is improving, particularly so soon after the holidays. This afternoon you will not want to tarry too long at the stores as you will be hearing sweet music at home.

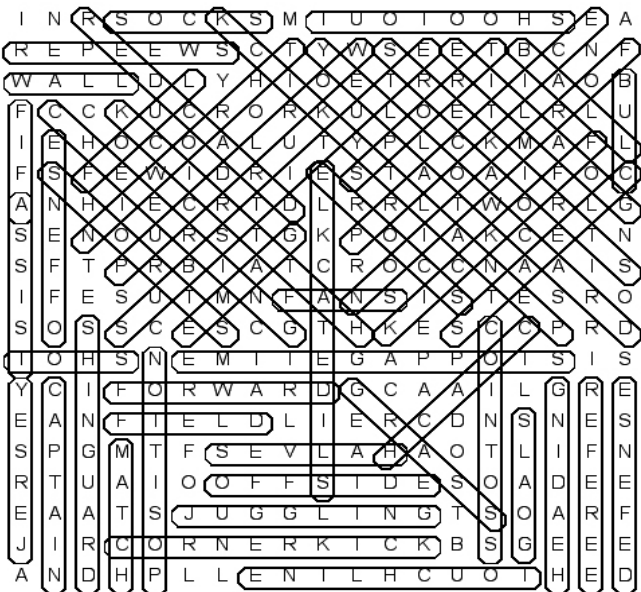


Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Discussions surrounding an increase in salary or benefits may present some insights into a technique to reach your goals. You always see the positive and with a new plan on your mind, you will see good things develop in future business success. "turnabout is fair play" brings you around to helping another person, a family member perhaps, to develop his or her plans for future business success. All this brainwork may culminate in sharing a meal together. There is an opportunity to visit with the young people in your family that you have not had a chance to get to know. Laughter is one of the best healers and you may be able to teach a young person how to take life a little easier. Encouraging volunteer work is a big plus for your today.

Yesterday's Solution

Soccer



- |             |           |              |               |
|-------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|
| ASSIST      | FORMATION | MATCH        | SLIDE TACKLE  |
| BALL        | FORWARD   | OFFENSE      | SOCKS         |
| CAPTAIN     | FOUL      | OFFSIDE      | SPORT         |
| CHEERING    | GAME      | PENALTY KICK | STOPPAGE TIME |
| CLEATS      | GOALIE    | POSITION     | STRIKERS      |
| CLUB        | GOALS     | PRACTICE     | SUBSTITUTE    |
| COACH       | GRASS     | RED CARD     | SWEEPER       |
| COIN TOSS   | HALVES    | REFEREE      | THROW-IN      |
| CORNER KICK | HAT TRICK | SCORE        | TOUCHLINE     |
| DEFENSE     | HEADING   | SHIN GUARD   | WALL          |
| FANS        | JERSEY    | SHOOT-OUT    | WORLD CUP     |
| FIELD       | JUGGLING  | SHORTS       | YELLOW CARD   |
| FIFA        | KICK-OFF  | SHOT         |               |

The hidden message is: IN MANY COUNTRIES SOCCER IS CALLED FOOTBALL.

Daily SuDoku

9		4	1	8		6	
				6		9	
		8					3
		7			1		2
2			3		5		4
	1		4			3	
6						2	
	7			5			
	9			1	2	6	

medium

Yesterday's Solution

2	8	1	5	9	7	3	4	6
6	5	9	1	3	4	2	7	8
4	3	7	6	2	8	9	5	1
1	6	8	3	4	9	5	2	7
9	2	4	7	1	5	6	8	3
5	7	3	8	6	2	4	1	9
7	9	6	2	5	1	8	3	4
3	1	2	4	8	6	7	9	5
8	4	5	9	7	3	1	6	2

very hard

Yesterday's Solution

G	Y	B	E		K	H	E	S	A	R	I		G	M	T
R	O	L	E		E	C	T	A	S	I	S		R	A	W
A	B	A		M	E	G	A	L	P		A	B	A	S	E
M	O	B	C	A	P			P	I	C	A	R	I	A	E
			E	A	S	E	D			R	I	C	I	N	
A	D	M	I	R	A	L			E	A		N		B	S
C	R	A	B		K	O	L	A			A	J	A	I	A
H	E	L	A		E	D	E	N			B	H	A	D	O
R	A	T		P		E	P	E	E		A	L	A	T	E
A	R	E	C	I	D	A	E			S	B		N	I	L
S	Y	D	N	E	Y		R			E	C		L	A	C
			U	R	E	A				L	A	M	A		
S	C	A	T			K	E	B	A	B		B	A	K	U
O	A	R		A	B	A	D	A	N		U	L	M	U	S
F	B	I		N	A	B	A	L	U	S		A	I	D	E
A	G	A		S	I	A	M	E	S	E		B	A	U	D



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
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
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 Ikhlis Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

## 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

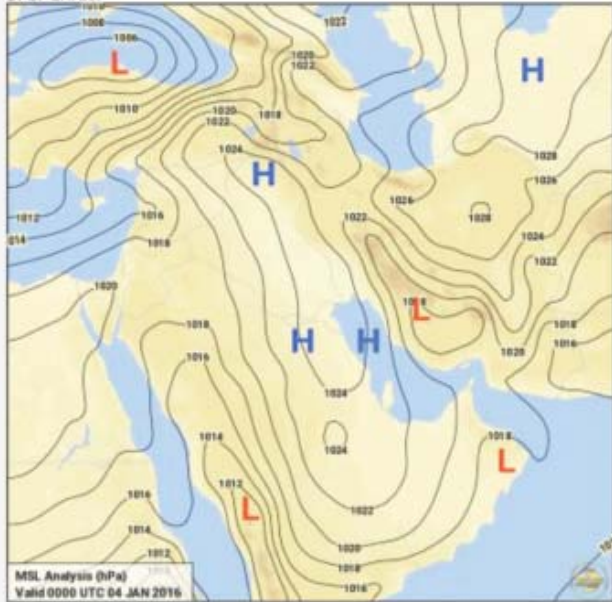
Issued 04/01/2016-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 16 °C

By Day : Cool with light to moderate north westerly to light variable wind, with speed of 12 - 35 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear

By Night : Cold with light variable wind, with speed of 08 - 22 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear

SFC. CHART



Four-Day Forecast

	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Expected Weather	partly cloudy	sunny	sunny	partly cloudy
Min Temp °C	06	08	09	09
Max Temp °C	18	18	19	20
Wind Direction	variable wind changing to light to moderate south easterly	variable wind changing to light to moderate north westerly later on	north westerly	south easterly
Wind Speed km/h	08 - 26	12 - 32	08 - 28	12 - 35

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	09	14
KUWAIT AIRPORT	04	16
ABDALLY	03	17
BUBYAN	04	15
JAHRA	05	16
FAILAKA ISLAND	07	13
SALMIYAH	10	13
AHMADI	09	13
JAL ALIYAH	04	16
QAROH ISLAND	13	14
UMM AL-MARADEM	12	14
NUWAISIB	06	16
WAFRA	04	15
MANAGISH	04	17
SALMY	04	17
MUTRIBA	03	16

### Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	13
Min Temp (°C)	05
Max Rel Hum (%)	100
Min Rel Hum (%)	38
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	43 N
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm

	Sunrise	06:43
	Sunset	17:03

### Prayer Times

Fajr	05:16
Sunrise	06:43
Zuhr	11:53
Asr	14:43
Sunset	17:03
Isha	18:33

## INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	Luxembourg	00352
Albania	00355	Lesotho	00266
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antiga	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Bahamas	001242	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahrain	00973	Martinique	00596
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritania	00222
Barbados	001246	Mauritius	00230
Belarus	00375	Mayotte	00269
Belgium	0032	Mexico	0052
Belize	00501	Micronesia	00691
Benin	00229	Moldova	00373
Bermuda	001441	Monaco	00377
Bhutan	00975	Mongolia	00976
Bolivia	00591	Montserrat	001664
Bosnia	00387	Morocco	00212
Botswana	00267	Mozambique	00258
Brazil	0055	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brunei	00673	Namibia	00264
Bulgaria	00359	Nepal	00977
Burkina	00226	Netherlands	0031
Burundi	00257	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Cambodia	00855	New Caledonia	00687
Cameroon	00237	New Zealand	0064
Canada	001	Nicaragua	00505
Cape Verde	00238	Nigar	00227
Cayman Islands	001345	Nigeria	00234
Central African	00236	Niue	00683
Chad	00235	Norfolk Island	00672
Chile	0056	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
China	0086	North Korea	00850
Colombia	0057	Norway	0047
Comoros	00269	Oman	00968
Congo	00242	Pakistan	0092
Cook Islands	00682	Palau	00680
Costa Rica	00506	Panama	00507
Croatia	00385	Papua New Guinea	00675
Cuba	0053	Paraguay	00595
Cyprus	00357	Peru	0051
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Philippines	0063
Czech Republic	00420	Poland	0048
Denmark	0045	Portugal	00351
Diego Garcia	00246	Puerto Rico	001787
Djibouti	00253	Qatar	00974
Dominica	001767	Romania	0040
Dominican Republic	001809	Russian Federation	007
Ecuador	00593	Rwanda	00250
Egypt	0020	Saint Helena	00290
El Salvador	00503	Saint Kitts	001869
England (UK)	0044	Saint Lucia	001758
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Pierre	00508
Eritrea	00291	Saint Vincent	001784
Estonia	00372	Samoa US	00684
Ethiopia	00251	Samoa West	00685
Falkland Islands	00500	San Marino	00378
Faroe Islands	00298	Sao Tone	00239
Fiji	00679	Saudi Arabia	00966
Finland	00358	Scotland (UK)	0044
France	0033	Senegal	00221
French Guiana	00594	Seychelles	00284
French Polynesia	00689	Sierra Leone	00232
Gabon	00241	Singapore	0065
Gambia	00220	Slovakia	00421
Georgia	00995	Slovenia	00386
Germany	0049	Solomon Islands	00677
Ghana	00233	Somalia	00252
Gibraltar	00350	South Africa	0027
Greece	0030	South Korea	0082
Greenland	00299	Spain	0034
Grenada	001473	Sri Lanka	0094
Guadeloupe	00590	Sudan	00249
Guam	001671	Suriname	00597
Guatemala	00502	Swaziland	00268
Guinea	00224	Sweden	0046
Guyana	00592	Switzerland	0041
Haiti	00509	Syria	00963
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Serbia	00381
Honduras	00504	Taiwan	00886
Hong Kong	00852	Tanzania	00255
Hungary	0036	Thailand	0066
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Toga	00228
Iceland	00354	Tonga	00676
India	0091	Tokelau	00690
Indian Ocean	00873	Trinidad	001868
Indonesia	0062	Tunisia	00216
Iran	0098	Turkey	0090
Iraq	00964	Tuvalu	00688
Ireland	00353	Uganda	00256
Italy	0039	Ukraine	00380
Ivory Coast	00225	United Arab Emirates	00976
Jamaica	001876	United Kingdom	0044
Japan	0081	Uruguay	00598
Jordan	00962	USA	001
Kazakhstan	007	Uzbekistan	00998
Kenya	00254	Vanuatu	00678
Kiribati	00686	Venezuela	00582
Kuwait	00965	Vietnam	0084
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Laos	00856	Virgin Islands US	001340
Latvia	00371	Wales (UK)	0044
Lebanon	00961	Yemen	00967
Liberia	00231	Yugoslavia	00381
Libya	00218	Zambia	00260
Lithuania	00370	Zimbabwe	00263

## PRIVATE CLINICS



Ophthalmologists	
Dr. Abidallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabeea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223
Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daaory	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-Mikhaazem	23726920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadad	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayooobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abidallah Al-Refae	25333501
Urologists	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abidallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

Plastic Surgeons	
Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	22547272
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	22617700
Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60
Family Doctor	
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581
Psychiatrists	
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047
Dr. Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0
Gynaecologists & Obstetricians	
Dr Adrian arbe	23729596/23729581
Dr. Verginia s.Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliytami	25343406
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272
Dr. Salem soso	22618787
General Surgeons	
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148
Internists, Chest & Heart	
Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446
Dr Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3

Paediatricians	
Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maarroof	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gajare	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282
Dermatology	
Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University	23845955
Dentists	
Dr Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abidallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abidallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111
Neurologists	
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875
Gastrologists	
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abidallah Al-Ali	22633135

Endocrinologist	
Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330
Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari	25658888
Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr	25329924
Physiotherapists & VD	
Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees	22666288
Rheumatologists:	
Dr. Adel Al-Awadi	25330060
Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290
Internist, Chest & Heart	
DR.Mohammes Akkad	24555050 Ext 210
Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	25339667
Consultant Cardiologist	
Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC	2611555-2622555
Inaya German Medical Center Te: 2575077 Fax: 25723123	

Psychologists /Psychotherapists	Soor Center Tel: 2290-1677 Fax: 2290 1688	info@soorcenter.com www.soorcenter.com	Kaizen center 25716707	Noor Clinic 23845955	William Schuilenberg, RPC 2290-1677 Zaina Al Zabin, M.Sc. 2290-1677
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# Rosie Huntington-Whiteley: I would love advice from Elle

**R**osie Huntington-Whiteley would love to call Elle Macpherson for advice on how to become a "brand". The 28-year-old British model wants to be as successful for as long as the 51-year-old fashion legend - who is just as famous for her business ventures as she is for her figure - and thinks her career could only be aided by a good mentor. Rosie said: "I've always been aware that modeling was going to be a fleeting moment. From very early on people would say, 'Save your money, modeling doesn't last long.' And I left school at 17, basically without any qualifications. I realized I had this opportuni-

ty to really build something for the long term for myself, so what could that be? I started looking at the models a generation ahead of me, and I saw a lot of these women turning themselves into brands. There have definitely been times in my life when I've been like, 'Oh God, I wish I knew Elle Macpherson well enough to pick up the phone to call her.' Rosie - who has a lingerie range and a new cosmetics line with British high street retailer Marks & Spencer - credits her success to visualizing what she wants to achieve and then going for it. The blonde beauty - who has a burgeoning acting career with roles in

'Transformers: Dark of the Moon' and 'Mad Max: Fury Road' - told the new issue of Glamour magazine: "That's my one piece of advice. It definitely helps to try and see where it is you want to be in five years and kind of work back from that. I've always been very clear about where I wanted to go, and it was seeing myself at a certain place at a certain time. For any job, it really is a powerful thing."



## Ora cuts off her long blonde hair extensions

**R**ita Ora ditched her hair extensions because she wanted her locks to look like they were "cut with a knife and fork". The pop beauty had a clear idea in her mind about what she wanted her new style to resemble when she decided to ditch the length boosting strands and go shorter. Rita insists when you make a decision to overhaul your look you have to be bold. The 25-year-old star said: "This (my hair) was something I wanted to look like was cut with a knife and fork. I definitely wanted it to look like it wasn't a strategic, planned haircut. I like this little wedge in the back. I think you have to have a commitment to a certain degree to be like, 'Alright guys I'm cutting my hair off.' I am with all my looks, whether it's extensions or whatever, I always commit to it. You have to or it doesn't work." Although Rita is one of the

sexiest women in the music business and regularly wows with her flesh-baring outfits she claims she's actually a "tomboy". But the 'Coming Home' hitmaker admits she just cannot resist clothes that make her feel "sexy". Speaking in a video interview with InStyle.com, she said: "I'm more comfortable being the street girl. I'm definitely a tomboy at heart. But I can't say no to clothes, I can't say no to something that makes me feel sexy and glamorous." Rita has modeled for numerous designers and most recently posed in her own underwear range that she created for Italian designer Tezenis.

## Jaden is the newest face of Louis Vuitton



**T**he 17-year-old actor-and-rapper - the son of Will Smith and Jada Pinkett Smith - is fronting the luxury fashion house's forthcoming Spring/Summer 2016 Womenswear campaign. The news was announced by the brand's creative director, Nicolas Ghesquière last night on Instagram when he uploaded a photograph from the campaign of Jaden wearing in a black skirt, fringed vest and a biker jacket. He accompanied the shot with the caption: "Happy to introduce Jaden Smith @christiangrey in the new SS16 @louisvuitton ad Campaign photographed by Bruce Weber." News that Jaden, who is known for his eccentric fashion choices, is the newest face of the French label comes after he was named one of GQ's Most Stylish Men Alive in 2015. Meanwhile, last year proved a successful year for the young talent as he also launched his clothing line, MSFTSrep. It's also believed the 'After Earth' star - who recently compared himself to Italian scientist and scholar Galileo - is penning a book on philosophy in a bid to inspire people. A source said last month: "Jaden sees himself as a modern-day prophet and is working on a collection of essays. 'They're new takes on string theory and chaos theory, but more mystical. He hopes to have a spiritual following when he releases these."

## Cudi takes fans to 'Star Wars' screening

**K**id Cudi treated his fans to a screening of 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens' at the weekend. The 31-year-old rapper bought all the tickets for an 11pm screening of the long-awaited movie at the Pacific Theatres within the Americana mall in Glendale, California on Saturday night and issued an open invite on Twitter for his loyal supporters to go and enjoy the film with him. He wrote: Do you love Star Wars? Do you love me? Would you wanna see Star Wars Force Awakens tonight with me, my treat? If you're cool, with a good heart and good vibes and said yes to all of these things, then meet me at the address with one of my albums, (SBTH so I know its real) or some type of OFFICIAL Kid Cudi merch (T shirt, hat etc) and the first people to get here by 10 50 pm with at least one of those things gets 1 single adult ticket to the 11pm Star Wars Force Awakens in 3D on the house with me and some friends. I pretty much bought the entire theater so lets pack it up!... "Why am I doing this? It's Star Wars. And why not! I thought it would be cool to start the year off watching a great film for the third time with some great company." Following the screening, Twitter was flooded with grateful fans thanking the star - whose real name is Scott Mescudi - for his generosity and showing off pictures of their signed tickets and merchandise. And fans who don't live in California shouldn't be too upset as the rapper has promised he will be staging "a couple more" screenings in different cities.



## Lana Del Rey gets restraining order against two fans

**L**ana Del Rey has obtained a restraining order against two fans. The 'Video Games' hit maker was reportedly left in fear of her life because of the obsessive behavior of Nataliia Krinitsyna and Luliia Vladimirovna, alleging the Russians had screamed her name in the middle of the night, and filled her mailbox with suicidal and threatening notes. Things got so bad, Lana moved house but the two fans tracked her down and continued sleeping outside her home and shouting for her through the night. As she was so convinced the two women would kill her, the 30-year-old star hired a full-time bodyguard and off duty Los Angeles police officers for protection. The restraining order was granted and a Los Angeles judge ordered the two women to stay 100 yards away from the singer and her home, TMZ reports. Just a month ago, a 19-year-old fan was arrested after he was discovered living in the garage of Lana's Malibu home, which is currently under construction. Police said the man was "clearly infatuated" with the singer after discovering "rambling" notes he had written. He was reported by a construction worker but had disappeared before police arrived, and officers eventually tracked him down and arrested him in nearby Santa Monica.

## Greene settles fire lawsuit

**A**shley Greene has settled a two-year legal dispute over a fire at her apartment. The 'Twilight Saga' actress - whose home in West Hollywood's Granville Towers went up in flames due to an unattended candle in March 2013 - has reportedly agreed an undisclosed settlement with the building's doorman, Adrian Mayorga, TMZ reports. The member of staff had claimed he was hurt while running through the smoke-filled hallways, yelling for residents to flee the burning building. The 'Pan Am' actress was left "inconsolable" after the fire as it killed one of her beloved dogs, fox terrier Marlo. It was claimed after the blaze that residents had previously complained to the building manager about their famous tenant. Ashley's neighbors were reportedly unsurprised by the fire and claimed she caused commotion by inviting friends and fellow actors over to her condo at all hours of the day, including during the middle of the night, resulting in the people living below her having trouble sleeping. Four other residents in the block previously sued over the fire, claiming repairing the damage had wrecked their homes and turned the historic building into a "disruptive construction zone".



## Traviss likes Winehouse statue

**R**eg Traviss thinks the Amy Winehouse statue is "amazing". The 38-year-old filmmaker has visited Camden Town in North London to see the likeness of his late fiancée - who died in July 2011 - a number of times and is "very pleased" with the permanent tribute to the 'Back to Black' hitmaker. He said: "I think it's quite amazing to be honest, that there is a statue in existence. It's a real salute to her. I think it's quite amazing. I'm very pleased actually. 'I've been there a couple of times. It's obviously funny to go and see, as you can imagine, but I think it's brilliant.' Reg believes

people will always be interested in the tragic singer and her life story, especially because her music is so "timeless". Asked if he thinks interest in Amy will ever die down, he said: "I think when there's someone so talented in what they do and is such a personality who attracts a lot of attention, all we can do is look at other people in history. "So when I say looking at other people, I would say most likely ... No." I can't imagine it because her music was quite timeless, extremely good, so just like anything, its lifetime will just continue."



# Disick didn't kill himself because of kids

Scott Disick would have "killed himself" if he didn't have children. The 'Keeping Up With the Kardashians' star - who checked into rehab in October 2015 following the breakdown of his relationship with long-term girlfriend Kourtney Kardashian - is determined to turn his life around and "make it right" for the sake of Mason, six, Penelope, three, and Reign, 12 months. Speaking to Kourtney, her mother Kris Jenner and her sisters Khloe Kardashian and Kim Kardashian West, he said: "It's like, it's just terrible but like if I didn't have those kids I would kill myself. "But I have them and I'm gonna be here and I'm gonna make it right for them. "You know I just hope somehow, not that I'm religious but God could give me a

chance or us a chance at this or something because like I just know that I'll never have the happiness that I would have otherwise and it's been nice having you guys in my life for so long so it's weird to lose that many people that quick you know?" Kourtney, 36, admitted she believes Scott's desire to change is genuine but thinks he "doesn't know how to get there". In response, her 32-year-old former partner vowed to do his best to prove he has turned his back on his hard partying ways and is ready to be a committed father and partner to Kourtney. In scenes which aired on last night's episode of 'Keeping Up With the Kardashians', he said: "I want to be able to be the man that you've always wanted. I could party I could go out every

night I could do whatever, it's not the life that I really want. "I know what I want and I may not get it but I know that I would literally hate myself for the rest of my life if I didn't at least try and I realize that if I don't make a change now like it'll never be able to be OK and it may not be but I'm damn well gonna try. "I wanted you guys to know that and I wanted to see you guys and I just love you all and miss you guys so much you know?" Khloe, Kris and Kim all reassured Scott: "We love you too." He thanked them and then left.



## Winslet clarifies equal pay stance

Kate Winslet is "entirely committed to empowering women". The 'Steve Jobs' actress thinks it is important women are "paid the same as men" for doing the same jobs and has vowed to continue to stand up for female rights. She said: "For my entire career, I've really stood for women's rights and I will always remain entirely committed to empowering women and the right to equal pay is a fundamental part of that. "Of course women should be paid the same as men. Of course they should. Of course I should." The 40-year-old actress' comments may come as a surprise as she previously slammed public discussion of salaries as "vulgar", but she insists her comments were "misinterpreted". She explained to E! News: "When you're talking about specifics of pay that is a line of questioning I really had a hard time with. "So my remarks were in response to that but only that. Of course we should be paid the same as the boys. We want to stand alongside them." In October, Jennifer Lawrence slammed the gender gap in Hollywood after it emerged she had been paid less than her male 'American Hustle' co-stars and Kate thinks the 25-year-old star's response was "entirely appropriate". She added: "It was a very difficult situation for her. "Hopefully these discussions will continue to support the efforts that are being made all over the world for the right to equal pay in this field and all other industries."



## Sheeran spends 2K on kids' toys

Ed Sheeran has spent £2,000 in a toy shop - on gifts for himself. The 24-year-old singer, who recently announced he was taking a break from the spotlight, treated himself to a plastic gun, roller skates and a pirate ship over the Christmas period because he wanted to make up for all the times his parents banned him from having the goodies as a child. He said: "As any kid that has good parents will know, when you grow up you're not allowed things. I went into Toys R Us and just spent two grand on everything I wanted when I was younger. "I was like, 'I was never allowed that pirate ship so I'm having that, wasn't allowed a Nerf gun so I'm having that, I wasn't allowed a scooter so I'm having that.' "I bought roller skates, a yo-yo, those wheelie shoes. ... I haven't used half of them but it was just that moment that I'm allowed to now. I bought everything." But the spending didn't stop there as the flame-haired hunk also had a browse online afterwards and found himself whipping out his credit cards to buy some plastic dolls. He explained: "All the stuff I bought in the shop is in my house. But then I went on eBay and spent a day looking for the same dolls I had when I was younger and bought all of them as well." And, although the toys are currently gathering dust in a cupboard in his house, Ed is adamant it was worth it because he's stashing them away for his future children. He added to The Sun newspaper: "So I have this cupboard in my house with everything from my childhood. I know my kids are going to play with them and have fun."



## Bieber and Baldwin made their relationship official!

Justin Bieber and Hailey Baldwin have made their relationship official. The 21-year-old singer and blonde model have been romantically linked for the past few weeks, and following rumors of a New Year's Eve kiss in St Barts, Justin decided to share a picture of the passionate moment on his Instagram page. In the snap, Justin is seen with his arm clasped around Hailey's waist as they smooch. Hailey shows off her model figure in a pair of denim cut off shorts and a white top as she embraces the 'Love Yourself' singer. Justin decided to leave the picture without a caption, giving fans their own opportunity to voice their opinions on the shot. However, it has been claimed the singer made the decision to

make the kiss picture public as further proof he is over his relationship with Selena Gomez. A source told HollywoodLife.com: "Justin is not looking for permission from Selena, he also is not looking to check in with her either. "He is going to do what he wants to do and Selena can deal with it the way she deals with it. If Selena wants to know about Justin's hookups she can find out online." Justin and Selena's kiss came at the New Year's party thrown by Richie Akiva, after the singer performed for 200 guests.



## Pregnant Hathaway shared a bikini picture on Instagram

The 33-year-old actress is expecting her first child with husband Adam Shulman and decided to treat her fans to a shot of her blossoming baby bump on the social networking site. The snap shows Anne on the beach wearing a red two-piece, tenderly cradling her stomach with a huge smile on her face. She wrote alongside the picture: "Happy 2016 to my beautiful Instafrinds! So, posting a bikini pic is a little out of character for me, but just now while I was at the beach I noticed I was being photographed. "I figure if this kind of photo is going to be out in the world it should at least be an image that makes me happy (and be one that was taken with my consent. And with a filter)." Anne signed off her message by writing: "Wishing you love, light and blessings for the year ahead! Annie." The picture marks the first time Anne has publicly acknowledged the pregnancy, despite being seen displaying her changing shape in New York in recent weeks. Anne has become one of Hollywood's most sought after leading ladies over the years, with roles in films such as 'Les Misérables' and 'The Devil Wears Prada' under her belt. But when she becomes a mother, the actress is apparently planning to take a break from the industry to concentrate fully on her new arrival. A source told Britain's Closer magazine recently: "Anne can't wait to be a mum. She's been wanting it for a long time and waited until the right time to take a break from Hollywood. "She feels she's achieved so much already, it's time to take a break from acting." concentrate on being a full-time mum."

## Boy George messed up his life 'pretty massively'

The 'Karma Chameleon' hitmaker - who previously battled with drugs and has criminal convictions - admits he struggled for a while but found a turning point when he realized how "lucky" he is. He said: "I suppose the best thing I can say about what happened to me is that I messed up my life pretty massively and then there was this turning point, where I realized that I was lucky to do the things that I do and have the life that I have. So I decided to do the best job possible of being Boy George." The 54-year-old star - real name George Alan O'Dowd - is gearing up to be a judge on TV talent show 'The Voice' but

insists he'll always be a singer and is glad his music can open up other avenues. He told The Times magazine: "My friend always jokes, 'I'm not going to downsize. I'm going to get a bigger house.' I kind of agree with that. Why would you want to downsize? I think if you get this stuff into perspective, then you can really have fun with it. "I'll always be a singer. But if you have to look at a career like a big pie chart and know that everything feeds everything else. So that old-fashioned idea that you're going to be on telly and sell lots of records is naöve. People don't buy records like we bought them; they are a creative calling card."



## Gillian Anderson loves being a single mother

The 'Fall' star - who has Piper, 21, Oscar, nine and Felix, seven, from previous relationships - insists she is "content" with her life as it is and doesn't feel she needs a man to make her happy. She said: "Well, yes, I am content. I don't feel anything is lacking in my life. I certainly don't sit on bar stools, pining. But the fact is I just haven't met anyone, and I don't know where people do meet people. "The thing is that there are needs and there are wants. I have a list of needs and I will not compromise about those. But aside from that ... I don't meet anybody! It's not like I meet people, and they ask me out, and I say no. It's not even like I meet people and I don't give them enough attention. I just don't meet them at all. I'm either on a plane, or on set, or with my children. There have been people in my life who've tried to set me up, and if a friend said: 'I know someone amazing', I would show up. But here's the thing: I've got three children. It's a big ask." The 47-year-old actress also revealed personality is far more important than looks for her when it comes to picking a boyfriend. She added to The Observer magazine: "I haven't been in a relationship for a couple of years. But I'm not anxious about it, nor am I interested in starting to see someone who doesn't fit. People go: 'Oh, he's so cute.' The trouble is, I'm not interested in looks at all."







## DeGeneres to accept People's Choice humanitarian award

Ellen DeGeneres is receiving a humanitarian award, and St Jude Children's Research Hospital is reaping the benefits. Producers of the People's Choice Awards announced yesterday that DeGeneres will be recognized as the Favorite Humanitarian at Wednesday's ceremony. The

honor comes with a \$200,000 donation from Walgreens, which DeGeneres is directing toward the hospital. She joked that the award "sums me up perfectly as I am both a human and an itarian." DeGeneres is also nominated for Favorite Talk Show Host at the fan-voted People's

Choice Awards, which will be presented at the Microsoft Theater in Los Angeles and broadcast on CBS. — AP

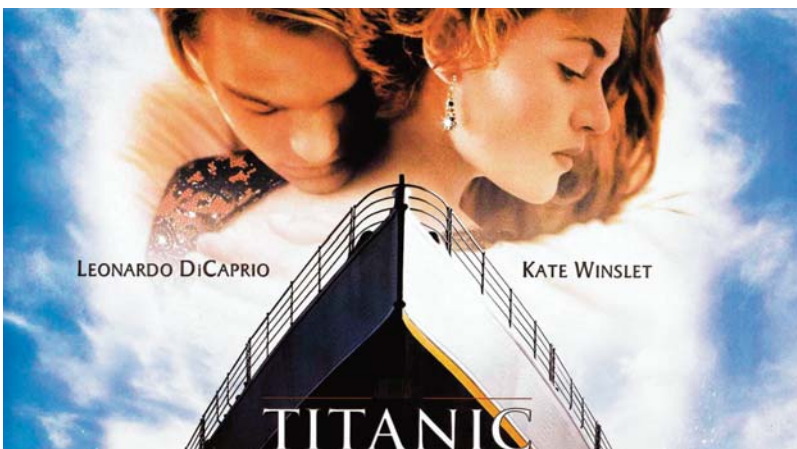
## 'Star Wars' box office surpasses 'Titanic,' 'Jurassic World'

"Star Wars: The Force Awakens" marched confidently into the new year, raking in an additional \$88.3 million over the New Year's weekend and topping the box office for a third week, according to studio estimates Sunday. In addition to setting a new high mark in New Year's box office history, the record-busting film blew past the domestic grosses of both "Jurassic World" (\$652.3 million) and "Titanic" (\$658.7 million) to become the second-highest earner of all time with \$740.3 million in just 19 days of release. The top domestic film is "Avatar" with a \$760.5 million lifetime domestic gross, but "Star Wars" is barreling in to surpass it soon. For context, it took "Avatar" 72 days to reach \$700 million. "Star Wars" did that in 16 days. Internationally, "Star Wars" earned \$96.3 million this weekend, boosting its global total to \$184.6 million. The film opens in China on Jan 9. While "Star Wars" might not give up its throne any time soon, films like "Daddy's Home" and "Sisters" have proven to be incredibly

strong performers. "Daddy's Home," the comedy starring Will Ferrell and Mark Wahlberg, came in second with an estimated \$29 million, bringing its total to \$93.7 million in just two weeks. The film fell only 25 percent from its first weekend in theaters. Even more formidable is the mere 11 percent drop from the Tina Fey and Amy Poehler comedy "Sisters," which brought in \$12.6 million in its third weekend for a fourth-place spot. The film has earned \$61.7 million so far. "When you look at the holding power of 'Daddy's Home' and 'Sisters,' it shows you that those films are for many people the antidote to 'Star Wars,'" said Paul Dergarabedian, a senior media analyst for box office tracker Rentrak. "The diversity of the slate that the studios created by not retreating from 'Star Wars' is helping." Quentin Tarantino's bloody Western "The Hateful Eight," meanwhile, took third with \$16.2 million in its first weekend in wide release after a strong limited debut. The

three-hour epic, which cost a reported \$44 million to produce, has made \$29.6 million to date - just shy of what "Django Unchained" made in its first weekend. "There is still a big audience out there for auteur-driven cinema," Dergarabedian said. "Tarantino, no matter what, is an interesting filmmaker. Film fans want to see what he's up to. It's not as big as some of his other films, but it's still doing well as it expands." "Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Road Chip" took fifth place with \$11.8 million, dropping only 10 percent from last weekend. The year is off to a strong start overall, up 24.5 percent from last year. This New Year's weekend could even set a record if it tops the \$220 million total of 2009/2010, when both "Avatar" and "Sherlock Holmes" were in theaters. Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at US and Canadian theaters, according to Rentrak. Where available, the latest international numbers for Friday through Sunday are also included. Final domestic figures will be released today.

- 1."Star Wars: The Force Awakens," \$88.3 million (\$96.3 million international).
- 2."Daddy's Home," \$29 million (\$9.2 million international).
- 3."The Hateful Eight," \$16.2 million.
- 4."Sisters," \$12.6 million (\$650,000 international).
- 5."Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Road Chip," \$11.8 million (\$10.3 million international).
- 6."Joy," \$10.4 million (\$9.3 million international).
- 7."The Big Short," \$9 million (\$2.2 million international).
- 8."Concussion," \$8 million (\$1.4 million international).
- 9."Point Break," \$6.8 million (\$6.8 million international).
- 10."The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 2," \$4.6 million (\$4.4 million international). — AP



## 'Spotlight' named best picture by National Society of Film Critics

Investigative journalism tale "Spotlight" won the National Society of Film Critics' award for the best picture of 2015, as well as the group's honor for best screenplay (given to the film's co-writers Josh Singer and Tom McCarthy, who also directed). Period romance "Carol" also took two awards, with one for director Todd Haynes and another for cinematographer Ed Lachman. In the acting categories, NSFC named Michael B Jordan best actor for his role in "Creed" and Charlotte Rampling best actress for "45 years." Mark Rylance, a well-known stage presence who's won three Tony Awards, picked up supporting actor for "Bridge of Spies," while Kristen Stewart took supporting actress for her turn in "Clouds of Sils Maria." Amy Winehouse documentary "Amy" nabbed the trophy for non-fiction film, with Abderrahmane Sissako's "Timbuktu" scoring for foreign language film. NSFC tweeted out the voting results as each category was decided. The society hands out at least eight major awards per year, with the possibility of winners in further categories should the group decide to expand the year's list. Chaired by Variety's Justin Chang, the NSFC is made up of 53 film critics from around the country; eight of them disqualified themselves from voting because they haven't seen every film. Picture: "Spotlight" (23) Runners-up: "Carol" (17), "Mad Max: Fury Road" (13) Director: Todd Haynes, "Carol" (21) Runners-up: Tom McCarthy, "Spotlight" (21); George Miller, "Mad Max: Fury Road" (20) (McCarthy received as many points as Haynes, but did not appear on a majority of ballots.) Actor: Michael B Jordan, "Creed" (29) Runners-up: Geza Rohrig, "Son of Saul" (18); Tom Courtenay, "45 Years" (15)

Actress: Charlotte Rampling, "45 Years" (57) Runners-up: Saoirse Ronan, "Brooklyn" (30); Nina Hoss, "Phoenix" (22) Supporting actor: Mark Rylance, "Bridge of Spies" (56) Runners-up: Michael Shannon, "99 Homes" (16); Sylvester Stallone, "Creed" (14) Supporting actress: Kristen Stewart, "Clouds of Sils Maria" (53) Runners-up: Alicia Vikander, "Ex Machina" (23); Kate Winslet, "Steve Jobs" (17) Screenplay: Josh Singer and Tom McCarthy, "Spotlight" (21) Runners-up: Charlie Kaufman, "Anomalisa" (15); Charles Randolph and Adam McKay, "The Big Short" (15) Cinematography: Ed Lachman, "Carol" (25) Runners-up: Mark Lee Ping-bin, "The Assassin" (22); "Mad Max: Fury Road" (12) Foreign-language film: "Timbuktu" (22) Runners-up: "Phoenix" (20); "The Assassin" (16) Non-fiction film: "Amy" (23) Runners-up: "In Jackson Heights" (18); "Seymour: An Introduction" (15) Film Heritage awards: Film Society of Lincoln Center and the programmers Jake Perlin and Michelle Materre for the series "Tell It Like It Is: Black Independents in New York, 1968-1986" The Criterion Collection and L'Immagine Ritrovata for the restoration and packaging of the reconstructed version of "The Apu Trilogy" by Satyajit Ray Association Chaplin for supervising the digital restoration of Charlie Chaplin's Essanay Films Special citation for a film awaiting American distribution: Radu Muntean's "One Floor Below." — Reuters



## Netflix takes Pyramide-Sold docu 'Je Suis Charlie'

Giving far wider potential play to an insider's documentary on an event and group of artists that moved the world, Paris-based Pyramide International has licensed docu-feature tribute "Je suis Charlie" to Netflix. Directed by father-son team Daniel and Emmanuel Leconte, the former a close friend of the French cartoonists and helmer of a 2008 Charlie Hebdo docu-feature, "It's Hard To be Loved By Jerks," "Je suis Charlie" will be made available worldwide on Jan. 7, the first anniversary of the attack on Charlie Hebdo's office in Paris which left 12 dead. Move comes as Pyramide Intl., a premier European art-house sales company, is pushing out early pre-sales on two other key titles: Mikhael Hers' "This Summer Feeling" and Lea Fehrer's "Les Ogres." "Summer" and "Ogres" both screen at Paris' Unifrance Rendez-Vous with French Cinema, unsponsoring Jan 14-18. Premiering at September's Toronto Festival, "Je suis Charlie" features archival interviews with slaughtered cartoonists Cabu, who drew the caricature cover of a 2006 issue featuring the prophet Muhammad and Danish cartoons, and Charb, Charlie Hebdo editor-in-chief. Also in the mix are footage from multitudinous street demonstrations after the killings and post-attack talking heads accounts from co-worker survivors of the carnage and commentary that, usefully for foreigners, attempt to provide a context for Charlie Hebdo.

Analyzing in painstaking detail Charlie Hebdo's legal battle with Islamic organizations over its publishing of cartoons depicting Muhammad, "It's Hard To be Loved By Jerks" was acquired by Kino Lorber for US distribution in a 2015 Berlinale deal. Written by Hers and Mariette Desert, a Cesar best original screenplay nominee for Katell Quillever's "Suzanne," Hers' "This Summer Feeling" is distributed in France by Pyramide Distribution, bowing on Feb. 17. In its first sales deals, Pyramide Intl. closed Canada (K Films) and Taiwan (Maison Motion). Winner of the 2015 Bordeaux Independent Film Festival's Grand Jury Prize, the drama stars Norway's Anders Danielsen Lie (Joachim Trier's Cannes Un Certain Regard player "Oslo, August 31st," Lucie Borleteau's Locarno 2014 winner "Fidelio, The Journey of Alice") and Judith Chemla, a Lumiere Prize best newcomer winner for "Camille Rewinds."

**Personal portraits** Cartoonist Coco recalls how she was forced at gunpoint to open the Charlie Hebdo office doors; French president Francois Hollande discusses precedent, French feminist historian Elizabeth Badinter charges of anti-semitism, former Charlie Hebdo director Philippe Val sets Charlie Hebdo in a tradition of Denis Diderot, Emile Zola and Victor Hugo. Using Daniel Lecomte's closeness to Charlie Hebdo to follow its preparation of a special issue after the attack - the staff admit it was hard to see the funny side of the slaughter and present personal portraits of the dead cartoonists, "Je suis Charlie" is at its best, say reviewers, depicting the philosophy of the cartoonists, their passionate and unqualified defense of freedom of expression, satire, and the right to make people laugh.



## Tarantino's 'The Hateful Eight' wins Best Movie at Capri Hollywood Film Fest

Quentin Tarantino's "The Hateful Eight" won best movie honors at the Capri Hollywood Film Festival. The Weinstein Co. release also won best actor for Samuel L. Jackson, best supporting actress for Jennifer Jason Leigh and best musical score for Ennio Morricone. The awards were announced by Lina Wertmuller, honorary president of the festival, and Pascal Vicedomini, secretary general of the Institute Capri in the World. The festival's board includes Bille August; Bobby Moresco; Gianni Quaranta; Indian filmmaker Shekhar Kapur; film producers Aurelio De Laurentiis, Fulvio Lucisano and Marina Cicogna; Franco Nero; Andrea Purgatori; Mimmo Calopresti; Tony Renis; and Israeli singer Noa. TWC's "Carol" won best adapted screenplay for writer Phyllis Nagy and best production design for Judy Becker.

Costume designer Sandy Powell, who worked on "Carol," received the Legend Award. Powell also won the best costumes award for "Cinderella." TWC co-chairman Harvey Weinstein said in a statement: "Quentin Tarantino and the entire team from 'The Hateful Eight' are beyond thrilled to have been acknowledged in such a big way from the Capri Hollywood Film Festival. He is a massive fan of Italian cinema, which he often pays homage to in many of his films. I believe that this fantastic accolade is the beginning of the road to the Academy Award Best Motion Picture nomination that Quentin thoroughly deserves." "The Hateful Eight" will open in Italy on Feb 4. The film debuted in the US on Christmas Day on 100 screens in 44 cities in a special limited release in 70mm, opened

nationwide on Dec 30 and has grossed about \$30 million at the US box office. Netflix's "Beasts of No Nation" won for awards for Cary Fukunaga for best director Idris Elba for best supporting actor and for cinematography. Brie Larson won the award for best actress for "Room." David O Russell won best original screenplay honors for "Joy." The best editor award went to Pietro Scalia for The Martian. Best animated film went to "Inside Out" and "Labyrinth of Lies" was named best foreign film. Best song honor went to "See You Again," by Wiz Khalifa featuring Charlie Puth for "Furious 7." — Reuters





Feature



January , education everywhere



February, clean water



March, responsible consumption



April, sustainable energy



May, climate action



June, underwater life



July, industry innovation



August, good health



September, Peace



October, no hunger



November, no poverty



December, Faith and Hope

## Splash - Love For The Planet

### 6th edition of the Splash Calendar

The world we live in is plagued with issues that need our immediate attention and it requires us to come together as one community to address challenges the modern society faces. The Splash Limited Edition Calendar - Love For The Planet, takes the fashion route to help raise awareness. The stunning calendar was unveiled by Mr Raza Beig, CEO, Splash and ICONIC at a glittering party at his residence. Capturing and interpreting the very essence of these topical challenges is renowned fashion photographer Tejal Patni and taking the styling to the next level is international designer Furne Amato. Each month takes inspiration from 11 goals ranging from No Poverty, No Hunger, Education Everywhere to Industry Innovation.

Each image touches upon grave issues that are

highlighted through surrealism. Every month is dedicated to a challenge we have to come together to help eradicate. Lavish sets and props adds to the surrealistic approach to bring this calendar to life. Just to throw light on a few challenges out of the 11 that Splash has decided to advocate is that of Peace which is a powerful image of a woman in a flowing camouflage dress with pigeons flying out stating that a single act of peace is more powerful than a million wars. Clean Water emphasizes the importance of our basic right to clean water which is far more priceless than the luxuries in life as the model can be seen vacuuming a cloud to get pure water. As the model stitches up the sky in the next image, we are drawn to the cause of fixing Climate Change by taking the right action. The month of December urges everyone to open their hearts to a future of

opportunities and prosperous possibilities.

"Fashion is a powerful mode of expression and this year we have taken an incredibly ambitious route by drawing inspiration from the global goals set by world leaders. Our effort with the 6th edition of the Splash calendar is to simply spread the word and get people to take notice of these pressing issues. The images tastefully blend fashion and global challenges to present to you the issue in a way that will make you take notice and believe that it is possible to achieve a society devoid of poverty, injustice to name a few issues," said Raza Beig, CEO, Splash & ICONIC.



## NYC may fit more 'micro' apartments into housing picture

The apartments in a new Manhattan building boast little balconies, tall ceilings, dishwashers and storage space. All in 360 square feet (33 square meters) or less. It's micro-living in America's biggest city, and New Yorkers could be seeing more of it. Planning officials are proposing to end a limit on how small apartments can be, opening the door for more "micro-apartments" that advocates see as

dwelling, the pitch is that little can be just enough. "An efficiently designed micro-unit," says developer Tobias Oriwol, "is just a nice apartment." Due to open early next year, Carmel Place features 55 apartments ranging from 265 to 360 square feet. (25 to 33 square meters) By comparison, a typical one-car garage can be about 200 square feet (18 square meters).

ings would continue to need waivers. "For us, it was really important to demonstrate how small space could be an enhancement to quality of life," said Christopher Bledsoe of Stage 3 Properties, which designed the interiors and amenities at Carmel Place.

Long, flat walls without columns maximize furniture-arranging options, although some units come furnished with

Forty percent of the units have rents set by affordable-housing programs topping out at around \$1,500 a month, but market-rate ones rent for \$2,650 to \$3,150, roughly on par with many studios in the nearby Murray Hill neighborhood. About 20 people have applied and hundreds requested information for eight market-rate units so far, while over 60,000 have entered a lottery for the affordable ones. Mayor Bill de Blasio's housing plan says Carmel Place and other projects show "developers can build compact units that are livable, safe, healthy" options for small households. Of course, tiny apartments in New York are not exactly new.

### Shared apartments

Veteran appraiser Jonathan Miller estimates there are about 3,000 older apartments citywide that measure less than the 400-square-foot minimum. And some real estate agents say New York's young professionals are increasingly seeking small studios, willing to sacrifice space to be near work and away from roommates. Cities from San Francisco to Boston have OK'd some micro-apartments in recent years, seeking to address housing squeezes in a nation where 28 percent of households are people living alone, up from 13 percent in 1960. It's higher in some cities including New York, where about a third of households are single people.

Some housing advocates see micro-apartments as improvements on cramped quarters some people endure in shared apartments. "People are spending \$1,800 a month renting a room that's 10-by-10 and living with strangers that they met on Craigslist" in New York, said Sarah Watson, deputy director of the Citizens Housing Planning Council, an advocacy group. But critics see micro-units as a step backward in the city's affordable housing crunch - still pricey, just smaller. "It just, on some level, is offensive: The only way we can manage to house people is to stick them in a closet," says state Assemblywoman Deborah Glick, a Manhattan Democrat. — AP



Stage 3 Properties co-founder Christopher Bledsoe demonstrates a desk that expands into a dining table that can seat up to 12 people inside one of the apartments at the Carmel Place building in New York.-Ap photos



Christopher Bledsoe demonstrates a retractable bed that turns into a sofa when stored inside one of the apartment units at the Carmel Place building.

affordable adaptations to a growing population of single people. Critics fear a turn back toward the city's tenement past and question whether less space will really mean less expensive.

At Carmel Place, the Manhattan building that marks the city's first experiment in decades with building super-small

### Smaller studios

As an experimental project, Carmel Place got city land and a waiver from New York's 400-square-foot (37-square-meter) minimum on new apartments, set in 1987. A proposed elimination of that minimum would allow smaller studios in buildings with a mix of apartment sizes, but entire micro-unit build-

fold-out wizardry, including a desk that expands into a 12-seater table and a retractable bed that pulls down tidily over a love seat. Developer Monadnock Construction and architecture firm nArchitects worked inch-by-inch to meet such requirements as a wheelchair-accessible bathroom within the small space.



Christopher Bledsoe closes a sliding glass door as he stands at the Juliet balcony inside one of the apartment units at the Carmel Place building.



Christopher Bledsoe talks about the kitchen appliances that come with one of the apartment units at the Carmel Place building.



Small decorations complete the look of one of the bathrooms for viewing inside one of the completed apartments at Carmel Place.





Children play with soap bubbles in Cologne, western Germany. — AFP

## Idaho man finds art in back hair

One man's back hair is another man's canvas. At least that's how Mike Wolfe, 35, of Nampa, Idaho, has decided to approach manscaping. Wolfe tells KTVB-TV that after years of feeling ashamed of his body hair, he asked a friend in 2008 to trim an American flag on his back rather than undergoing hair removal processes like shaving or waxing. Since then, the two meet up several times

throughout the year to design a new creation onto Wolfe's back. "Pssh, it's manhandling back hair," said Wolfe. "It's disgusting. But it's funny. You can't deny it's funny."

Tyler Harding, a former graphic artist who has been friends with Wolfe for more than a decade, says it takes about an hour to complete the artistic trim. And the creations can now be seen on a calendar - called a Calend-hair -

available for \$20. Some proceeds will benefit a charity at Wolfe's church. Designs are uniquely named, such as Grim Reap-hair for October and M-hair-achi Band for May.

"Everybody always makes fun of the guy with back hair," Wolfe said. "Well now it's my turn to shine, right?" Wolfe's wife takes some credit for him flaunting his fur. When they went on their first date, Wolfe told her he was hairy. He felt

nervous at the time, but she took it in stride. "Looking back now this might be because of me," Jamie Wolfe said. "Maybe I shouldn't have given him so much confidence in his back hair." — AP



Photos show Tyler Harding, right, trims a design on Mike Wolfe out of his back hair in Nampa, Idaho. — AP photos

## Yemeni artist Hakim Al-Akel



Visitors look at paintings by Yemeni artist Hakim Al-Akel displayed at a gallery during an exhibition on war and peace yesterday in the capital Sanaa. — AFP photos

