

No restrictions  
on former Gitmo  
detainee except  
travel ban



Denver Broncos  
to face Carolina  
Panthers in  
Super Bowl



Kuwait Times  
THE FIRST DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

Special Supplement  
Inside  
**India** REPUBLIC DAY



150 FILS  
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40 PAGES

## KUWAIT IN SPENDING SPREE ON DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

GOVT STAYS THE COURSE DESPITE OIL SLUMP, BUDGET DEFICIT



Min 08°  
Max 18°  
High Tide  
00:27 & 14:18  
Low Tide  
07:59 & 19:48

## AMIR HOISTS FLAG TO MARK MILESTONES



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah hoists the national flag at a flag-raising ceremony at Bayan Palace yesterday, marking the 10th anniversary of his assumption to power, the 55th National Day and the 25th Liberation Day. — KUNA (See Page 2)

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait awarded projects worth a record \$32 billion last year and plans to raise the figure in 2016 despite a sharp decline in oil revenues, an economic report said yesterday. Last year's awards were 20 per cent higher than in 2014, National Bank of Kuwait, the largest lender in the state, said in a report. Over half of the amount spent on projects in 2015 went to the oil and gas sectors, it said.

The awards include a \$13-billion contract to build a new refinery with a capacity of 615,000 barrels per day and a heavy oil production facility costing \$4 billion. In the transportation sector, the government awarded a \$4.3-billion contract for the airport expansion but the project has not yet been signed.

### FULL REPORT ON PAGE 21

This year appears to be a bumper year with contracts worth \$55 billion expected to be signed before the end of 2016, NBK said. The projects include a \$3.3-billion liquefied natural gas import terminal, a \$7-billion petrochemicals project and a natural gas development project worth \$5.7 billion, it said. The government also plans to tender a large number of projects in the power, health and housing projects in 2016.

The investment spending spree comes although Kuwait is projected to post its first budget deficit due to low oil prices, after 16 consecutive years of windfall. During those 16 years, the state amassed fiscal reserves of over \$600 billion. In February, parliament approved a five-year development plan that envisages spending KD 34 billion (\$112 billion) between the current 2015/2016 fiscal year and 2019/2020. Like other Gulf states, Kuwait's economy heavily relies on oil which contributes 94 percent of public revenues. —AFP



CAIRO: An Egyptian rides his motorbike as he plays national songs marking the anniversary yesterday of the 2011 uprising that toppled longtime ruler Hosni Mubarak in Tahrir Square. — AP

## EGYPTIANS MARK UPRISING

CAIRO: Egyptians yesterday marked the fifth anniversary of the uprising that toppled Hosni Mubarak amid tight security and a warning from the new regime that demonstrations will not be tolerated. Dozens of masked policemen deployed in several Cairo squares including near Tahrir Square - the epicenter of the 18-day anti-Mubarak revolt - to prevent potential protests against President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi's government. Egyptian special forces toting machine-guns patrolled several Cairo districts, with police armored vehicles on the streets.

They also boosted security around police stations which were targeted by protesters during the 2011 uprising and which have also been attacked by militants in a growing jihadist insurgency. A long-running security crackdown intensified in the build-up to the anniversary, with police rounding up dozens of activists and raiding hundreds of homes. Activist hangouts including cafes, cultural centers and a publishing house near Tahrir Square were raided or shut down.

Critics have accused Sisi of restoring Mubarak's autocratic rule and betraying the hopes of those who took to the streets five years ago. "Egyptians have been made to watch as their country reverts back to a police state," said Boumedouha, rights group Amnesty International's deputy Middle East and North Africa director, said in a statement.

"Tens of thousands have been arrested and the country's prisons are now overflowing, with widespread reports of torture and hundreds held without charge or trial."

"Five years since the start of the great Egyptian revolution... the counter-revolution has been able to take control once again," said a statement from 6 April movement, which was at the forefront of the 2011 uprising. "The revolution is not over. It continues and its goals remain in the hearts of all the Egyptians who backed it for the sake of a free, strong and advanced nation..."

Jan 25 was declared "Revolution Day" a year after the revolt in 2012, but there were no official plans to mark yesterday's anniversary. The uprising that overthrew Mubarak's 30-year-old regime is no longer celebrated after Sisi, then the army chief, overthrew Mubarak's successor Mohamed Morsi in July 2013 and launched a deadly crackdown on his supporters. Sisi ousted Morsi, Egypt's first freely elected leader, after widespread protests against the Islamist's divisive first year of rule.

Since Sisi installed the new regime, authorities have banned all but police-approved rallies and overseen a crackdown that has left hundreds of Morsi supporters dead and thousands imprisoned.

Continued on Page 13

## IS PLANNING MAJOR EUROPE ATTACKS

BRITAIN, FRANCE DISMISS VIDEO OF PARIS ATTACKERS

### ROUHANI STARTS EUROPEAN TRIP

ROME: Iran President Hassan Rouhani flew into Italy yesterday looking to reap the economic and political dividends from the lifting of international sanctions imposed over the Islamic Republic's nuclear program. Rouhani will also visit the Vatican and France on his first overseas trip since the nuclear deal came into force earlier this month, clearing the way for Iran to rebuild its relationship with the West.

The Iranian leader touched down in Rome accompanied by more than 100 ministers, officials and businessmen who are expected to help him clinch deals worth billions in trade and investment, topped by a major order for new Airbus planes. He smiled broadly for the cameras at Italy's presidential palace before being ushered away for a working lunch with Italian President Sergio Mattarella, the first appointment in a five-day trip.

The fight against the Islamic State group, whose attacks on Paris forced Rouhani to delay a trip originally scheduled for November, and the war in Syria are expected to feature highly in diplomatic contacts during the visit. Rouhani, 67 and a former academic and diplomat, is seen as a pragmatist who was elected in 2013 on a pledge to end sanctions and improve relations with the West.

He met Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi yesterday evening and will be received by Pope Francis today and by French President Francois Hollande tomorrow. "We have had friendly relations with Italy and France in the past and we want to continue our good relations with them," Rouhani told reporters before his departure yesterday from Mehrabad Airport.

Continued on Page 13

PARIS: France and Britain yesterday dismissed a video released by the Islamic State group showing jihadists who carried out the November Paris attacks training and committing atrocities in what is likely Iraq or Syria. And the Europol police agency warned that the extremist group was planning more "large-scale terrorist attacks" in Europe, with analysts saying the footage showed there was a high level of coordination and planning behind the Paris attack.

Two months after IS gunmen and suicide bombers attacked Paris nightspots, killing 130 people, the group published a 17-minute video showing four Belgians, three French citizens and two Iraqis all of whom took part in the assault and either died on the night, or in a subsequent police raid days later. Entitled "Kill wherever you find them", the video shows nine men delivering final messages inciting lone-wolf attacks and, in particular, threatening Britain.

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This combination of image grabs created from an Islamic State video released yesterday shows nine militants involved in the November Paris attacks, in which they threaten "coalition" countries including Britain. — AFP

## SAUDIS PRESENT PLAN TO MOVE BEYOND OIL

### ARAMCO KEEPS UP INVESTMENT

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia outlined ambitious plans yesterday to move into industries ranging from information technology to health care and tourism, as it sought to convince international investors it can cope with an era of cheap oil. A meeting and presentation at a luxury Riyadh hotel was held against a backdrop of low oil prices pressuring the kingdom's currency and saddling it with an annual state budget deficit of almost \$100 billion - the biggest economic challenge for Riyadh in well over a decade.

Top Saudi officials said they would reduce the kingdom's dependence on oil and public sector employment. Growth and job creation would shift to the private sector, with state spending helping to jumpstart industries in the initial stage. "It's going to switch from simple quantitative growth based on commodity exports to qualitative growth that is evenly distributed" across the economy, said Khalid Al-Falih, chairman of national oil giant Saudi Aramco.

"Fiscal discipline becomes number one" in such an environment, said Falih. He said the firm has been able to make a lot of cuts "by simply driving down costs", but investment has continued. "Our investment in capacity, oil and gas, has not slowed down," Falih said. Global crude prices have plunged from above \$100 a barrel in early 2014 to below \$32 a barrel yesterday. The fall led oil-dependent Saudi Arabia to impose unprecedented cuts in its 2016

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# AMIR, SENIOR STATE OFFICIALS ATTEND FLAG-HOISTING CEREMONY

## GOVERNORATES KICK OFF NATIONAL CELEBRATIONS



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah arrives at Bayan Palace for the flag-hoisting ceremony.



Senior state officials in attendance at the flag-hoisting ceremony.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah raises Kuwait's flag, marking the beginning of national celebrations.

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah attended yesterday a flag-hoisting ceremony at Bayan Palace, marking the 10th anniversary of his assumption to power, the 55th anniversary of National Day and the 25th anniversary of Liberation Day.

The ceremony was attended by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem, senior Sheikhs, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Minister of Amiri Diwan Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

It was also attended by First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah and Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Acting Minister of Oil Anas Al-Saleh.

In addition, ministers, senior state advisors and officials, and senior Army, Police, and National Guard officers were also present at the ceremony. The convoy of His Highness the Amir arrived at the Palace and he was warmly received by the army, police, National Guards as well as Kuwait Fire Service Directorate personals. His Highness the Amir hoisted the flag, followed by playing the national anthem.

### Source of pride

The flag-hoisting day is one of the most glorious of nations around the globe for its great national meanings, governor of the Capital retired Lieutenant-General Thabit Al-Muhanna said. He made the statement yesterday during the capital's flag-hoisting ceremony, marking start of celebrations of the 10th anniversary of His Highness the

Amir Sheikh's assumption to power, the 55th anniversary of National Day and the 25th anniversary of Liberation Day. This is an opportunity to manifest love to, and pride of Kuwait and His Highness the Amir, he added.

Similar ceremonies were held in the country's other five governorates. In Al-Ahamdi, Governor Sheikh Fawaz Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, said the celebrations are a source of pride for all Kuwaitis and expats. He renewed the oath to His Highness the Amir to serve the country and the people.

Flag-hoisting enhances national unity and the spirit of belonging and loyalty to the country, Governor of Mubarak Al-Kabeer retired General Ahmad Abdullatif Al-Rujaib said in a press statement. He stressed the momentousness of further boosting unity among Kuwaitis for more security, safety and stability in the country.

These celebrations mark significant points in the history of Kuwait, Hawally Governor retired General Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Sabah told the governorate ceremony. He added that Kuwait's independence was the beginning of building a modern state.

### Protecting the society

In Al-Jahra, Governor retired Lieutenant-General Fahad Ahmad Fahad Al-Amir reiterated the importance of national unity for protecting the society and its gains, and realizing progress. He reviewed some of the future projects planned for Al-Jahra, urging seriousness and hard work to achieve them.

Flag-hoisting is the best expression of pleasure over the 10th anniversary of His Highness the Amir assumption of power, Farwaniyah Governor Sheikh Faisal Al-Humoud Al-Malek Al-Sabah, said in a press statement. The Farwaniyah's ceremony included a gallery for the province's students, who also offered a show. — KUNA



Kuwait's flag waves during a ceremony held at the Mubarak Al-Kabeer governorate yesterday. — Photos by Amiri Diwan and Fouad Al-Shaikh



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives a copy of a book commemorating the 10th anniversary of his assumption of power from KUNA's Chairman Sheikh Mubarak Al-Duaij Al-Sabah. — Amiri Diwan photos

# AMIR MEETS ARMY, POLICE TOP OFFICIALS

## HIS HIGHNESS BRIEFED ON SEA CITY PROJECT

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received senior officials at the army, police, National Guard and Fire Service Directorate (KFSD), at Bayan Palace yesterday. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah was present at the meeting.

In addition, His Highness the Amir received National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem and members of parliamentary committee who participated in Parliamentary Union of the OIC Member States (PUIC) meeting, which was held in Baghdad. His Highness the Crown Prince also received the speaker and his delegation. Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince separately received Fawaz Khaled Al-Marzouq,

who briefed them individually on the fourth stage of the Sabah Al-Ahmad Sea City. Also yesterday, His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince received KUNA Board Chairman and Director-General Sheikh Mubarak Al-Duaij Al-Ibrahim Al-Sabah, who presented both a copy of a book marking 10 years since His Highness the Amir assumed power.

Earlier, His Highness the Amir received His Highness the Crown Prince, the National Assembly Speaker, as well as His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Hamad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, while His Highness the Crown Prince received Chairman of the National Security Apparatus (NSA) Sheikh Thamer Al-Ali Al-Sabah. —KUNA



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is pictured with Fawaz Khaled Al-Marzouq, and a picture for the Sabah Al-Ahmad Sea City project.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah greets the Interior Ministry's Undersecretary Lieutenant General Suleiman Al-Fahad.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah greets Kuwaiti Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Mohammad Al-Kheder.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets Fawaz Khaled Al-Marzouq.





KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah chair's the cabinet's meeting yesterday. — KUNA

## PM CALLS FOR REEVALUATION OF PLANS AMID VOLATILE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah has called for a reevaluation of plans amid volatile economic conditions in country with aim of cutting spending, Minister of Information said yesterday.

Sheikh Salman Al-Sabah, also Minister of State for Youth Affairs, was speaking after a weekly cabinet meeting, presided over by His Highness the Prime Minister, which tackled plans of reassessment concerning dispatch of patients to seek medical treatment abroad.

The cabinet also has agreed to implement a recommendation by the Committee of Economic Affairs, to establish a free trade zone in the southern Al-Nuwaiseeb area. Minister of Commerce and Industry Dr Yousef Al-Ali, in remarks during the meeting, revealed that the Ministry has assumed control over Al-Nuwaiseeb free trade area.

Moreover, the cabinet also reviewed the implementation of annual plan for the years 2015/16, as Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Development and Planning Affairs Hind Al-Subaih, offered a detailed explanation of the country's future vision and developmental goals. The annual

plan for the years 2015/16 contains a total of 531 projects to be initiated by joint efforts of the country's public and private sectors.

Subaih also touched on some hurdles that could impede implementation of the projects, sharing with the Cabinet some strategies that can be employed to overcome these obstacles and facilitate the implementation of the projects. The cabinet also discussed developments in a number of crucial issues in both regional and international arenas.

### Cameron's letter

Meanwhile, the cabinet also discussed a letter sent by British Prime Minister David Cameron to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. In the letter, Cameron extolled historic relations between Britain and Kuwait, underscoring firm commitment to preserving peace and security in the Gulf region.

Cameron also extended an invitation to His Highness the Amir to partake in the fourth International Donors' Conference slated for February in London. The conference is part of efforts of mitigating human suffering in Syria.

The Cabinet also reviewed a letter by Bill and

Melinda Gates Foundation's Co-Chair William Henry Gates, who thanked His Highness the Amir for the hospitality during a recent visit to the country. Gates also lauded His Highness the Amir's dedication to humanitarian causes across the globe.

The Cabinet also discussed the impending visit of Tunisian President Beji Caid Essebsi, who is due to arrive in the country today. Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto's visit to Kuwait last week was touched upon, where a total of seven agreements on cooperation in a myriad of fields were signed between Kuwait and Mexico.

With the onset of national day celebrations in the country, Sheikh Salman noted that a special flag raising ceremony was held earlier yesterday, heralding the commencement of celebrations of the 55th national day, 25th anniversary of liberation from Iraqi occupation and the 10th anniversary of His Highness the Amir assuming power.

Given the enormity and festive nature of the occasion, Sheikh Salman said that His Highness the Prime Minister extends sincerest congratulations to the people of Kuwait, wishing persistent peace, prosperity, security and stability in the country.—KUNA

## AMIR COULD MAGNIFICENTLY FORTIFY KUWAIT: SPEAKER

**KUWAIT:** National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem yesterday said that His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah could magnificently fortify Kuwait and establish its political immunity amid regional dramatic volatility over the past 10 years.

"The past 10 years were not so easy at all in view of fluctuating regional developments and growing political and security tensions in the region. Kuwait was so lucky to have had a highly experienced and wise skipper," Ghanem said in a press statement marking the 10th anniversary of His Highness the Amir's assumption of power.

"The success of His Highness the Amir in leading the ship of Kuwait amid such crashing waves was not an easy task, but thanks to His Highness the Amir's stock of experience, wisdom

and statesmanship accumulated throughout years was so sufficient to drive Kuwait to safety," he added.

The speaker highly commended the way His Highness followed to address the reflections of the global financial crisis, the Al-Imam Al-Sadeq mosque explosion, the terrorist cell as well as other political and security problems. He went on to say that thanks to His Highness the Amir's farsightedness and political wisdom, His Highness the Amir managed to respond to such challenges in a magnificent manner. The speaker also appreciated His Highness the Amir's dedication by acting as a regional facilitator and adopting humanitarian initiatives, especially regarding the Syrian crisis, citing the UN naming of His Highness the Amir as 'Humanitarian Leader' as a clear-cut example in this regard.—KUNA



Marzouq Al-Ghanem



GENEVA: Health Minister Dr Ali Al-Obaidi (right) is pictured with Kuwait's permanent delegate to the UN Ambassador Jamal Al-Ghunaim. —KUNA

## REGION YET TO BOOST EMERGENCY RESPONSE: HEALTH MINISTER

**GENEVA:** Kuwaiti Health Minister Ali Al-Obaidi said yesterday that Middle East countries are still required to shore up their response to emergency amid challenges posed by ongoing conflicts in several countries.

Addressing the meeting of the World Health Organization (WHO) Executive Board held in Geneva in his capacity as chairman of the 62nd session of the WHO Middle East committee, the minister said ongoing regional conflicts are affecting countries inside and outside the region. In spite of progress in the region's response to emergency cases since 2014, its countries have yet to exert more efforts in this regard, he added.

The region's countries have created a regional integrated fund aiming to provide support during the critical stages of emergency cases amid a clear-cut trend towards reliance upon regional donors for bankrolling the fund, he added.

Despite growing challenges, they have also managed to make headway in the implementation of international health regulations and set up a relevant assessment committee, the minister pointed out. "This step is another example for the ability of regional committees to contribute to WHO programs," he added.

The regional committees help WHO members focus on priorities and fields where they really need the WHO's backing whether at the regional level or that of the main headquarters, Obaidi emphasized. Over the last four years, the region's countries have been keen on providing all types of help to the reform of the emergency response mechanism, the minister added. The current 138th session of the WHO

Executive Board kicked off yesterday and lasts until January 30.

### Amir's award

Obaidi had announced in a statement upon his arrival at Geneva International Airport that winners of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's Award will be selected during the 138th session of the World Health Organization (WHO), scheduled on January 25-30. He explained that the award in the category, health care for the elderly, would be distributed on sidelines of the forthcoming WHO General Assembly.

Speaking at length about the session agenda, the senior Kuwaiti official said participants in the meetings would discuss matters related to the WHO budget, reforms, staff training, funding and health partnerships. Kuwait, in its capacity as chairman of the 62nd session of the WHO Middle East committee, will present a report to the Executive Board regarding the commission meeting, hosted by the country on October 5-8, 2015.

The report illustrates efforts exerted by the regional countries to enhance health security, namely precautions that have taken against the Corona virus, which causes SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) and the Bird Flu. It also assesses implementation of relevant health laws and realization of sustainable development objectives. Implementation of these objectives has been outlined within framework of action plans, with aim of securing high health standards for peoples of all ages, including health in various policies, Obaidi added in the remarks to the Kuwaiti news network.—KUNA

## MINISTER AFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO RAPID PROJECTS' CONCLUSION



KUWAIT: Minister of Public Works Dr Ali Al-Obaidi is seen during the inauguration of Al-Jahra highway's second stage. —Photo by Fouad Al-Shaikh

**KUWAIT:** Minister of Public Works Dr Ali Al-Obaidi affirmed yesterday his ministry's keenness to complete all work projects as soon as possible despite all the delays. Obaidi made his remarks during the inauguration of Al-Jahra highway's second stage, stressing importance on continuing to finish all vital road projects to ensure comfort to citizens based on the guidelines and directives of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah.

Obaidi added that the inauguration of the road is a positive and important step because it connects north of the country with the center, and contributes to the reduction of traffic jams. The minister also expressed keenness that his ministry is working tirelessly to put an end to all road problems that face drivers, namely the flying pebbles. Obaidi noted that his ministry as well as others cooperated effectively in providing all means necessary to complete the state's projects. — KUNA

## KUWAITI-TUNISIAN RELATIONS 'STRONG' ESSEBSI IN KUWAIT TODAY

**TUNIS:** Tunisian President Beji Caid Essebsi's visit to Kuwait will be an additional chapter added to the strong and every growing bilateral relation, an official said yesterday. Essebsi is set to arrive in Kuwait today in a two-day visit where he will hold talks with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Speaking on the matter, former Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmed Ounaies told KUNA that both countries were eager to further normalize relations, stressing that the upcoming visit by President Essebsi was an opportunity to explore various ways to develop ties. Essebsi's previous visit to Kuwait in 2011 in his capacity as former Prime Minister is a positive sign that the relations will be further expanded now that he is president, said Ounaies.

### Boosting ties

The Tunisian President's upcoming visit to Kuwait was on an invitation by His Highness the

Amir. According to a number of former diplomats and media figures the upcoming visit by the President would be focusing essentially on boosting political ties between the two nations.

Kuwaiti-Tunisian relations witnessed a golden age during the late 1970s and 1980s especially within the economic and educational domains. In the 1990s, the relations between the two countries dwindled due to the controversial Tunisian stance on the Iraq invasion of Kuwait; however, the two reconciled afterwards and resumed developing relations on all levels.

Both nations hope to take this further, with Tunisia, which is going through a somewhat difficult economic period, hoping their president's visit will usher in much-needed Kuwaiti investments for development. Tunisian officials also hope that Kuwait, an effective member of the influential Gulf Cooperation Council, can offer something in the political realm amid a turbulent Middle East region.

### 33 loans

On the economic level, data from March 2015 revealed that Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED), thus far, had provided 33 loans to Tunisia worth a total of KD 164.5 million (\$547.75 million).

Tunisian journalist Kamal Ben Youssef believes that his nation's government will look to bring back economic cooperation that was booming in the 1980s. The visit will be an opportunity for the signature of a number of agreements on the direct, bilateral or tripartite scale (with the inclusion of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development), he suggested.

On the other hand, a former Tunisian ambassador views that the president will aim to focus on political affairs alone. He attributed his view to the leader's new-found powers as per the fresh constitution, which offers him the ability to map out the country's foreign policies. — KUNA

## ALWALEED PHILANTHROPIES, UNHCR LAUNCH CAMPAIGN IN SUPPORT OF SYRIAN REFUGEES

**KUWAIT:** The Alwaleed Philanthropies (AP), chaired by Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), yesterday launched an innovative digital campaign in an urgent call for the international community to support the efforts to protect displaced Syrians this winter. The "Tweet for Heat" campaign, sheds light on the life threatening weather conditions millions of refugees and internally displaced are facing amid dwindling resources and for many in fragile makeshift shelters.

More than 8 million displaced Syrians will have to withstand another harsh winter temperatures dropping as low as -5 C degrees across the Middle East and Europe. Over 4.6 million refugees, half of whom are children, are dispersed across three continents with temperatures as low as -10 C degrees in search of warmth and safe havens.

"The innovative Tweet for Heat campaign is calling on the global community to join Alwaleed Philanthropies and UNHCR in our urgent effort to help protect millions of refugees against severe, life-threatening win-

ter weather conditions," said Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Chairman of Alwaleed Philanthropies.

### Urgent shelter

The "Tweet for Heat" campaign aims to provide urgent shelter and warm blankets to millions of refugees at risk of hypothermia. Temperatures are expected to reach record lows this winter in the Balkan Peninsula, Turkey, the eastern Mediterranean, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and other areas in Europe. Children are especially at risk of freezing to death due to their slender bodies and inadequate protection from frigid temperatures and blizzards. Currently, the Syrian refugees' most urgent needs are blankets, clothes, heaters, stoves and waterproof tents.

"I would like to thank Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal for leading this innovative initiative that will highlight the plight of displaced Syrians during this harsh winter. Many people are suffering terribly in the cold, but the available resources to help them are limited. This campaign will be crucial in raising awareness and providing much-needed support to tens of

thousands of vulnerable families," said Filippo Grandi, the High Commissioner of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The "Tweet for Heat" campaign will provide members of the public with a firsthand account of twenty refugee families' difficult living conditions. By using heat-monitoring devices that automatically tweet changing temperatures, and by searching for the hashtag #TweetforHeat.

### Brutal temperatures

Social media users can witness the brutal temperatures endured by vulnerable refugee families in winter. The refugees' first-hand account of their journeys, struggles and hopes for the future will be captured, shared and continuously updated on the "Tweet for Heat" campaign website: [tweetforheat.com](http://tweetforheat.com).

The public is urged to use the hashtag: #TweetforHeat to help raise awareness about the plight of the refugees by re-tweeting the temperatures refugees face. They are also invited to visit the "Tweet for Heat" campaign website ([Tweetforheat.com](http://Tweetforheat.com)) where they can

follow the refugees' compelling first-hand stories of their search for warmth and safe refuge this winter.

The UNHCR's regional winter plan aims to address these essential requirements and secure the winter needs of 2.5 million displaced Syrians. The winter plan urgently

requires \$171 million in order to secure emergency shelter and winter kits among other critical items to safe guard refugees against the relentless weather conditions. The public is also being encouraged to donate directly to the UNHCR's life-saving winter assistance by visiting: [donate.unhcr.org](http://donate.unhcr.org).





## SAUDIS LAUNCH HASHTAG TO SALUTE SPEAKER

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** Hundreds of Saudi nationals hailed the honorable attitude of Kuwait's parliament speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem when he strictly rejected the statements made by the speaker of the Iranian Islamic Shura Council, Ali Larijani against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Al-Ghanem rejected the accusations Larijani made on Sunday during the conference held for the Islamic Parliaments Union in Baghdad, Iraq. "If Saudi Arabia is not present in this meeting, I myself and the Kuwaiti delegation, represent Saudi Arabia," Ghanem said on the conference, which made Saudi tweeters launch a 'Thanks\_Marzouq\_Al-Ghanem' hashtag.

### No bonus suspension

Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor's Undersecretary Dr Mutar Al-Mutairi denied that the ministry intends to suspend payment of the excellence performance bonus as a means to reduce government expenses and stressed that the austerity policy would

not affect employees' rights. "The excellent performance bonuses will be paid as usual for hardworking employees who deserve them," he underlined. Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a special ceremony held by the community development department to honor ideal employees, Mutairi stressed that, according to the cabinet decision, rationalization and austerity should not affect employees' rights such as salaries, allowances and social raises.

### Court annuls slander charges

The court of misdemeanor yesterday annulled sentencing Sheikh Ahmed Al-Fahad to six months in prison and acquitted him in a case filed against him over charges of slandering the judiciary. In this regard, lawyer, Abdul Mohsen Al-Ateeqi added that the court also acquitted Al-Watan TV employees accused in the same case. In an unrelated ruling, the court of appeal adjourned a hearing to discuss the National Assembly's storming case until February 14, said informed sources.

## HALA FEBRUARY FESTIVAL KICKS OFF JANUARY 29TH

**KUWAIT:** The organizing committee for Hala February festival said yesterday that they have completed all preparations and necessary procedures to officially start the festival which will be scheduled to kick off its 17th edition since its inception on January 29. The festival will witness the attendance of Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Sabah. It will be held along the strip of the Arabian Gulf Street until Kuwait's Towers, the president of

media committee for the festival Walid Al-Saqubi said in a statement. Saqubi added that the festival will see unconventional celebrations, because it coincides with the 10th anniversary of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's assumption of power, the 25th anniversary since Liberation Day, and the 55th anniversary of National Day. The official noted that due to success of previous festivals, a large march on the street will take place as part of the activities in the festival. —KUNA

## ARAB QUARTET DISCUSSES IRAN'S INTERVENTIONS

**ABU DHABI:** The Arab Quartet discussed yesterday developments of the crisis with Iran and ways to counter Tehran's interventions in Arab states' internal affairs, official media reported. The meeting was held on the sidelines of the consultative ministerial meeting of Arab League Council, according to WAM news agency. The Arab Quartet was formed on January 10th by virtue of the Arab League Council's resolution No. 7988.

Meanwhile, the Arab League Council at the ministerial level discussed ways of enhancing joint Arab action to deal with crises and issues on the work agenda of the

Arab States and the League Council. The Arab foreign ministers discussed ways to meet the challenges and risks threatening the Arab countries, especially terrorism and foreign interventions in the internal affairs of Arab States and their repercussions on the future of security and stability in the Arab region.

The Kuwaiti delegation at the meeting, which was attended by Secretary General of the Arab League Dr Nabil El-Araby, was headed by First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. —KUNA

# LAWMAKER CALLS FOR MORE CONTROLS IN OIL SECTOR

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** Member of the parliament's budgets committee MP Abdulrahman Al-Jeeran said it is not possible to follow an effective rationalization policy amidst the lack of control in the oil sector, adding that current leaderships are not qualified to manage the rationalization and the budgets, and that there is no effective and true role of the oil sector in service of the society.

Jeeran said it is necessary to start with rationalizing from the oil sector because it is concerned with finding successful alternatives by following policies that do not stray from its specialties. Jeeran said permanent strategies require:

1. Control production costs by using modern technology, reduce operating expenses, stop squandering funds in operation contracts and reduce unplanned stoppages in plants.
2. Concentrate on transformational industries that involve transforming oil into higher value material such as petrochemicals.
3. Finding safe exits for refineries or chemical plants owned by Kuwait abroad.
4. Selecting leaders who are able to rationalize spending and be highly trustworthy.
5. Increase the added value of Kuwait oil through controlling production cost and establishing transformational industries, and

finding safe outlets to sell Kuwait oil in the long run.

### General reserve

Meanwhile, the finance ministry said the



MP Abdulrahman Al-Jeeran

financial surplus from oil during the past years went to the state's general reserves and future generations fund. It said that the funds are

managed by the Kuwait Investment Authority, and the results of its work are discussed at the National Assembly to determine the value of the reserves and performance of the funds. The finance ministry said that in order to maintain state reserves, while oil prices are dropping, the annual state budget must be rationalized, and sources of income diversified, to ensure the state meets its commitments without resorting to general reserves.

### Abdaly cell

A seventh appellant penal court was appointed to look into the state security 'Abdaly cell' case. The criminal court had earlier sentenced two suspects to death and handed a life sentence to another, while 15 suspects were sentenced to 15 years in jail. The court sentenced another suspect to 10 years and handed 5 years to three suspects, while exonerating one suspect.

### Social police

The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs denied rumors that it will create a 'social police' force. It said the role of the ministry is to run Islamic affairs and what is related to mosques, and all that is related to security and policing is the responsibility of the interior ministry.



**KUWAIT:** A visiting media delegation from Egypt visited Kuwait Journalists Association (KJA), where they met board member Jassem Mohammad Kamal. The two sides discussed ways of enhancing media cooperation between the two countries, as well as the situation with regards to press freedom in the Arab World.

# LABORER DIES IN FREAK ACCIDENT

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** A laborer was yesterday killed when he clambered inside a ready mix truck's mixing bowl to clean it, and his coworker accidentally switched it on. A case was filed for investigations.

### Fires

Fire broke out in a Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh house, prompting Jleeb and Ardiya fire centers to respond. The fire was fought quickly and no injuries were reported. Meanwhile, four fire centers responded to another fire in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh.

### Traffic campaign

A traffic campaign was launched in Ahmadi governorate to maintain law and order around schools. The campaign resulted in sending nine juveniles to the juveniles' prosecution for driving without a license, while 18 vehicles were impounded.

### Gas leak

A high-ranking source at the Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) said officers and non-commissioned officers specialized in dealing with hazardous materials from Mubarak Al-Kabeer center went to Adan Hospital to deal with a leak and determine what type of gas was involved and the need for certain measures. In other news, KFSD held an exercise at the Avenues mall. The exercise simulated a fire at the mall, so Industrial Shuwaikh Fire Center responded. A team handled rescue operations and another fought the fire, as the mall was evacuated in cooperation with policemen.



**Vehicles impounded during a traffic campaign in Ahmadi.**



**Firefighters are seen during an exercise at the Avenues mall.**

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# ‘AMNESTY’ NOT ATTRACTIVE ENOUGH: SRI LANKAN ENVOY

## AMBASSADOR URGES NATIONALS TO ‘TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES’

By Ben Garcia

**KUWAIT:** While calling on his countrymen who are illegally staying in Kuwait to turn themselves over to the authorities, the Sri Lankan ambassador to Kuwait noted that the current partial amnesty is not attractive enough to con-

vince expatriates to take advantage of it. “When we communicate with our people, especially those who call with regards to the amnesty, they don’t seem to be convinced,” said Kandeepan Bala.

“A regular amnesty means that you are allowed to leave the country without paying fines and that you are free to return. In the current amnesty, you have to pay. Even without the amnesty, the government of Kuwait dispenses goodwill, and we thank them for this. However, I think this amnesty is similar to the voluntary repatriation program which has already been in place for years,” Bala explained.

“But we reiterate to our people to take advantage of opportunities given by the host country because at the end of the day, if you are illegal and if the authorities catch you, they will deport you without hesitation. So in order to avoid major procedures, you better come to our embassy and get the necessary papers so we can help you out,” he noted.

Bala disclosed that unlike in the past, orders or decisions by the Ministry of Interior are usually communicated to them through a circular, but for the latest “amnesty,” there have been no official communications yet. “We got the information from the media, and until now no memorandum from the Ministry of Interior has been sent. So like other embassies, we went directly to them to get the details of the reports. The amnesty this time is a partial one, so there’s not much attention from over-staying expats,” he added.

### Partial amnesty

On Jan 10, the Ministry of Interior announced a partial amnesty for all illegal residents in Kuwait. Residency violators are allowed to pay fines and either legalize their status or leave the country without being blacklisted. This will mean they can return on a new visa in the future, but unlike in previous years, residency violators will not be forgiven fines and must still clear all dues.

The ministry’s Director of Public Relations and Security Media Brig Adel Al-Hashash told the press that all residency affairs departments across the country are ready to receive violators in order to rectify their legal status, pay fines and leave the country. However, those who are caught by security per-

sonnel will be deported and banned from returning even after fully paying fines. Under normal circumstances, the fine for overstaying is KD 2 per day and

is capped at a maximum of KD 600.

Other embassies, like those of the Philippines and India, released guidelines for their nationals last week.



**KUWAIT:** This handout photo provided by the Interior Ministry shows people inside a ministry bust shortly after they were arrested during a security campaign in Hawally and Rega’ie last week.

## INDIAN EMBASSY’S GUIDELINES

The Ministry of Interior, Kuwait has announced special dispensation (partial amnesty) for all illegal residents in Kuwait. As per the announcement, residency violators will be allowed to pay their fines and either legalize their status or leave the country without being blacklisted. But this would apply to those who voluntarily participate in the scheme and that the residency affairs departments across the country are ready to receive violators in order to rectify their legal status and payment of fines for leaving the country.

There are approximately 28,000 Indians illegally staying in Kuwait due to residency/visa violations. All Indian illegal residents are urged to avail the above dispensation to either legalize their status or leave the country after payment of fines without being blacklisted. They should contact the concerned residency affairs department of Kuwait with available documents to rectify their status or for payment of fines for leaving the country to avail the

above opportunity.

The embassy is ready to provide all necessary assistance to all those seeking the above special dispensation by issuing emergency certificates (travel documents) expeditiously if required by the local authorities who are processing their documents under above scheme. The requirement for issue of emergency certificate is as under:

- (a) Prescribed format for issue of EC (copy enclosed)
- (b) Three recent passport-sized photograph;
- (c) A copy of the passport (relevant pages)
- (c) Payment of KD 5 consular fee for EC

For any query/clarification on the matter, please contact A K Srivastava, Second Secretary (PIC/CW) tel no. 22531716 and mobile no. 97229914 or B K Sinha, Assistant (CW) on mobile no. 97164067 or Mohammad Ashfaq Durrani, local staff member on mobile 66680031.

Frankly Speaking

## FOCUS ON LAW ENFORCEMENT



By Labeed Abdal

local@kuwaittimes.net

**G**erman Chancellor Angela Merkel’s backing of stricter laws by its party to expel convicted refugees involved in sexual attacks in Cologne and her stressing that “if crimes were committed and laws were broken, this must have consequences with regard to residency permits and political asylum applications, changing laws in a way that benefits both citizens and the majority of refugees and makes those who sexually assaulted women feel a tougher grip of

*Merkel’s focus is on law enforcement, not retreating, calling for debate and civilized coexistence*

the law”, is very important because many troublemakers and outlaws have infiltrated into Germany with the refugees bringing their chaotic and bad manners along with them.

On the other hand, latest German statistics about crimes were mostly related to physical assaults and robberies and stressed that people coming to Germany for political asylum had never been involved in sexual crimes. The reports also showed a growing opposition by radical parties to accepting refugees from the Middle East.

Merkel’s focus is on law enforcement, not retreating, calling for debate and civilized coexistence, focusing on finding the right solutions and avoiding reactions, because Europe is already roaring with anti-refugee protests. “This calls for stricter measures against refugees involved in sexual assaults,” she underlined, pointing out that the number of refugees was the largest since World War II, which caused a lot of destruction and devastation, forcing and displacing similar numbers to neighboring countries.



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Crime

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# WOMAN INSULTS POLICEMAN OVER ‘DECENCY’ REMARK

**KUWAIT:** A police officer at Ardhiya police station recently filed a case accusing a female citizen of insulting an officer on duty, said security sources. Case papers indicate that a female citizen went to the station to report a hit and run accident. But the police officer on duty refused to take the report, instead telling the woman to go home and put on something “decent” and then come back. Instead, the woman swapped her clothes with those of her sister’s inside the police station toilet and went back to the officer’s office saying that she had already changed her clothes. Shocked by how fast she came back, the officer asked how she did it and harshly scolded her for changing at the police station. The woman responded back, allegedly insulting the officer. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress.

## American dies in Mahboula

A US citizen was recently killed when he fell from the second floor of a Mahboula building, said security sources noting that the building janitor reported the presence of a body of one of the tenants in the building yard. Arriving to the scene and checking the apartment, policeman found two of the deceased’s friends inside and both seemed very confused. The body was removed by forensic medicine and the two friends were detained pending further investigations.

## Suspicious restaurant death

A 58-year-old citizen died while dining in a Hawally restaurant, said security sources, noting that on receiving a report from the restaurant manager, policemen rushed to the scene and detained a woman in her forties who was dining with the deceased pending further investigations to determine the cause of death.

## Police patrol flips over

A weapon inspection policeman recently sustained spinal fractures when he lost control over his patrol vehicle and it flipped and rolled along Al-Ghouss street in Adan area, said security sources adding that the policeman was on a mission when a vehicle driven by a woman swerved and forced him off the road. The policemen was rushed to Adan hospital in critical condition while his colleagues carried on with the mission and managed to seize a number of unlicensed weapons.

## Stabbing in Jahra

A non-Kuwaiti man recently stabbed a citizen in Jahra when they fought on winning the friendship of a transvestite, said security sources. Case papers indicate that the investigation officer at Jahra hospital reported that a citizen in a critical condition was rushed to the hospital’s ICU due after being stabbed with a sharp object. Investigations showed that he fled the scene but was later on identified and arrested. His nationality was not reported.

## Bedoon knocks down officer

A bedoon man, wanted for five cases, was recently arrested after he knocked off a traffic policeman along Fahaheel expressway, said security sources. Case papers indicate that a police patrol had spotted the suspect’s vehicle being driven without license plates. On stopping him and asking for his ID, the suspect drove off knocking the policeman down and hitting four other vehicles in his attempt to escape. However, the suspected was chased and arrested along the fifth ring road and on checking his ID, detectives found that he was bedoon and that he was already wanted for five cases and banned from travelling. A case was filed.

## Suicide attempt

A citizen detained at Nugra police station recently tried to commit suicide by cutting his own veins and throat, said security sources noting that the man, who had been arrested for some financial claims, broke a lamp in the detention cell and used its glass in the attempt before policemen saw him and managed to prevent the man doing himself harm. The suspect kept shouting that he would repeat the attempt unless he was released.

## Weapons arrest

A citizen was recently arrested at his family house in Saad Al-Abdullah area in possession of an AK-47 rifle, two shotguns and ammunition that he used to threaten his own family members, said security sources. Case papers indicate that a female citizen called the police to report that her husband had been threatening her and their children with guns. The woman provided the police with the address and a force was dispatched to the scene where, after 40 minutes of negotiations, they managed to talk the husband out of harming his family. The weapons were confiscated and the man, who seemed mentally disordered, was referred to relevant authorities.

## Truffle thieves caught

Four citizens were recently arrested for trespassing into a Subbiya conservation and digging out truffles there, said security sources noting that the nature reserve guards reported spotting the trespassers and a police patrol rushed to the scene and arrested them.

## Drunk driver

A citizen recently handed his own driver to Al-Zahra area police station while the employee was heavily drunk, said security sources. The driver was arrested and a case was filed. —Al-Rai, Al-Anbaa



# ENERGY GLOBE FOUNDATION AWARDS KUWAIT DIVE TEAM

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Dive Team has received an international environmental award from the Energy Globe Foundation, an organization based in Austria. The Dive Team won the Kuwait’s national project category, awarded to a country’s best environmental program. An international jury of environmental experts described the work as a “great initiative” that “aims at rehabilitating and restoring the marine environment”.

The Kuwait Dive Team won the national sustainability project, an acknowledgement of the group’s work in salvaging boats, ships, naval vessels, nets, and harmful waste from coral reefs; building artificial reefs and farming coral to assist in the growth of the Gulf’s coral population; and spreading community environmental awareness through school trips, exhibitions, and publications.

Tareq Al-Duaij, a member of the Kuwait Dive Team, represented the group in Tehran to receive the award. Duaij said that the Dive Team feels honored to receive this international award presented by such a prestigious international institution in environmental work. He reports that the ceremony was attended by many environmental experts and scholars as well as members of international arbitration courts and ministers representing more than 120 countries. 2000 projects from more than 177 countries were included in the competition.

Duaij said that the ceremony was organized by the Energy Globe Foundation. Receiving this award in the presence of representatives from all participating award states was a proud moment for all Kuwaitis. The award reflects the hard work of the Environmental Voluntary Foundation that is made possible thanks to the patronage of His Highness the Emir. Duaij also thanked all of the volunteers, supporters, and sponsors of the Kuwait Dive Team, from governmental agencies to private corporations, who have made these international achievements possible.



## Worldwide consciousness

The Energy Globe Foundation is a non-profit organization founded by Austria’s Wolfgang Neumann, a global leader in sustainability with 30 years of experience in energy efficiency and renewable technologies. The Foundation aims to build worldwide consciousness about the need to use resources sustainably, especially in regards to energy, and encourage projects that are creating a sustainable world for future generations and improving living conditions in developing countries. Having organized a large number of activities, campaigns, projects and initiatives, the Energy Globe Foundation has become a worldwide renowned organization whose international scope of action has extended to nearly every country in the world. The Energy Globe Foundation is supported in its activities by the Honorary Board, a think-tank consisting of recognized and well-known individuals from the fields of economics, politics, and culture. In addition, an international network of voluntary ambassadors is active on behalf of Energy Globe in numerous countries.

The Energy Globe Foundation

presents an award to an outstanding project from each country that contributes to the preservation of the environment and focuses on energy efficiency and renewable energy. A jury evaluates these projects and announces their decisions on an online website each year in order to encourage other projects. Winners are given an Energy Globe Certificate, an internationally recognized sustainability certification.

The Prize aims to create environmental awareness by recognizing sustainable projects and find solutions to global environmental issues. The award organizers hope to demonstrate that everyone is able to contribute positively to the preservation of the environment. Since its founding in 1999, the prize has profiled 6000 projects.

Prize recipients and supporters include Kofi Annan, members and ministers of the European Union, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNEP, members of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the World Bank, the European Renewable Energy Council, and celebrities such as Martin Sheen, Aamir Khan, and Alanis Morissette.

# ODAH INTENDS RESUMING CAREER WITH AWQAF MINISTRY, GETTING MARRIED

**KUWAIT:** In his first public appearance since he was released, former Guantanamo Bay detainee Fawzi Al-Odah said that he had concluded his rehabilitation period and that the public prosecution had suspended the case against him. Odah also said that he plans to resume his previous job at the ministry of awqaf but remarked that he had not met the concerned minister so far.

Speaking to reporters on attending a reception held to congratulate the last Kuwaiti Guantanamo detainee who was recently released Faye Al-Kandari, Odah expressed gratitude to HH the Amir, HH the Crown Prince, the government and his father Khaled Al-Odah, who is the head of the public committee for defending



**KUWAIT: former Guantanamo Bay prison detainee Fawzi Al-Odah speaks to reporters during a reception held to congratulate Faye Al-Kandari, the last Kuwaiti detainee released from the prison.**

—Photo by Fouad Al-Shaikh

Guantanamo detainees, for the efforts they exerted.

Responding to a question whether his previous detention would subject him to any political restrictions, Odah stressed that Kuwait was a sovereign country and that he was under no restrictions except for a two-year travel ban as agreed by Kuwait and the US. Odah denied feeling desperation at any moment during his detention and stressed that he has no ‘hard feelings’ for the US now. “Let bygones be bygones,” he said, noting that he has ‘zero’ feelings. “Not positive or negative,” as he said. Moreover, Odah said that was keen on reading, practicing sports and improving his English in prison, where he made friends with some of the guards. —Al-Rai

# GOVERNMENT FORCES CONTRACTED COMPANIES TO HIRE KUWAITIS

**KUWAIT:** Ministry of Commerce and Industry approved a proposal that commits foreign companies who have contracts with the government to appoint Kuwaiti graduates. They said the law does not contradict other laws and decisions of the ministry. The commerce ministry’s call came in reply to the fatwa and legislation department which insisted that the ministry gives its opinion on the proposed law by MP Roudhan Al-Roudhan, which compels foreign companies who are contracted or awarded tenders to employ Kuwaiti graduates.

The explanatory memo of the law said the reasons for this move is the suffering of Kuwaiti graduates from disguised unemployment and employment pileup without finding solutions that eradicate unemployment. The sources said it takes long periods for such vital laws to be passed, especially that the fatwa and legislation department received the proposal over a year ago on Jan 18, 2015. —Al-Qabas

# KD 100 ALLOWANCE TO KUWAITIS TO FACE INFLATION

**KUWAIT:** Government sources said there is a recommendation to raise the “cost of living” allowance for Kuwaiti employees in government departments to face the increase in the prices of consumer products following the implementation of the subsidies rationalization decisions. The increase will include employees whose salaries are less than KD 1,500, characterized by the government as limited-income who are supposed to keep receiving subsidies one way or the other. The recommendation considered cash payment for them as the best way to compensate for any increased prices in the market. As for citizens who are within the limited-income category and do not work for the government and receive labor support, the recommendation calls to treat them equally to government employees to avoid making them look for government jobs. —Al-Anbaa

# SABAH OF GOODNESS

By Dr Nermin Al-Houti

**H**is Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah last week gave orders to reduce the budget of the Amiri Diwan and rationalize it. This is the Sabah of “goodness”, and that is his political savvy, as he set an example to accustom us in all issues, so all state officials may follow his example in their ministries and government departments.

Good morning for the “Sabah of Goodness” - we pray to Almighty Allah to steady his steps, so that he remains the beacon of Kuwait. His Highness felt what the state needs and gave his orders to rationalize and be careful with the state’s funds to face the financial crisis that is linked to oil prices, which is the crisis the influence of which is not limited to Kuwait only, rather it is at the world level, and this sublime initiative will no doubt be the start for many Kuwait officials and people to follow suit.

While we call upon all to follow this initiative, we wonder about the stands of some areas despite this crisis. Among such stands for example is the education ministry, which asked the finance ministry not to reduce its budget or touch the outstanding job rewards for its employees. I wonder here about some of these officials who are asking to increase the budget and ignore the lack of rationalization.

Let our words today be the message of HH the Amir, the “Sabah of Goodness”, to become our new policy, so that we overcome our economic and financial crises. These are the messages that I am sending through my column for some people to take example of the wisdom of HH the Amir, “Sabah of Goodness”:

\* To those who are traveling around the world under the official duties category, we say: Easy with Kuwait’s budget.

\* To all those who squander public funds either by buying furniture, gifts, etc under the slogan “the prestige of the position” we say: Easy with the people of Kuwait.

\* To those who hold unfruitful parties and gatherings, only to appear in the media we say: Easy with Kuwait.

For all those who do not know the meaning of rationalization, guidance and how to reduce the budget we say: Follow “Sabah of Goodness”. A final world from the sublime speech of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad, may Allah protect him, during the opening of the fourth session of the 14th legislative parliamentary term on Tuesday Oct 27, 2015.

“And as I put before you the facts and the dimensions of the crisis, and ask the Assembly and government urgently to take immediate reform measures and actions, I assure that both the Assembly and the government will set a good example in the embodiment of discipline and commitment to these reforms and programs taking advantage of this opportunity to correct our economic course seeking other sources of income to reinforce our capabilities and potentials.”

—Translated by Kuwait Times from Al-Anbaa

# INTEGRATING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN EDUCATION - PART II

By Dr Zainab Al-Hasawi

**I**n continuation of what I said in the previous article about the significance of utilizing Kuwait’s leading experience in integrating students with special needs (learning difficulties) in mainstream schools, the researcher assessed the vocational development programs the directors of integration schools in Mubarak Al-Kabeer underwent with the aim of developing a strategy to vocationally develop those directors’ skills in dealing with students with learning difficulties and integrating them in mainstream schools (a PhD thesis).

The strategy was based upon Mubarak Al-Kabeer educational zone’s three-year experience in integrating students with special needs into 30 of the zone’s mainstream primary schools for girls and boys. The main points of strength in Kuwait’s integration experience is in the fact that the training courses held targeted all those involved in the integration program including school directors, HODs, psychiatrists and supervisors. In addition, the concept of integration as well as proper means of implementation were made very clear to them.

Assessing the success of the integration strategy in Kuwait relied on:

- Bridging the gap between the standards of integrating students with special needs in mainstream schools in Kuwait and those of UNESCO that had been already adapted to suit the Kuwaiti society’s culture.
- Full realization of the importance of achieving comprehensive quality in integration school directors’ vocational development.
- Developing the educational process elements to provide proper foundations for building strong infrastructure for learners with various abilities, namely those with special needs, who are already in the core of achieving the Kuwaiti society’s goals.
- Achieving excellence through providing staff members working with the integration program with all aids, tools and capabilities.
- Motivating leaders (directors) to achieve excellence and high productivity.
- Rooting the values of democracy, liberty, accepting others and human rights.
- Taking care of students with special needs, allowing them to excel and utilize their potentials to benefit the society as well as themselves.
- Creating students capable of confronting and dealing positively with economic and cultural openness.
- Achieving democracy and supporting the principle of providing equal educational opportunities in public education.

Finally, integration should be the cornerstone of governmental educational policies within a framework of providing education for all and fulfilling special needs. (To be continued)

— Translated by Kuwait Times from Al-Anbaa





Diplomats push for Syria talks despite delay

FRANCE, INDIA TO STRENGTHEN COUNTER-TERROR COOPERATION

CLINTON URGES IOWA TO FINISH ‘SHOPPING’

**NORTH LIBERTY, Iowa:** Democratic presidential frontrunner Hillary Clinton on Sunday urged Iowa voters to choose her experience over the idealism of rival Bernie Sanders, who made the rounds of university campuses at the weekend to earn student support. “I know some of you are still shopping. I’d like to shop too. I hope during the course of this afternoon to convince some of you,” Clinton told about 600 people packed into an elementary school gym in the town of North Liberty.

On Feb 1, voters in Iowa, in the US heartland, will cast the first ballots in the US presidential nominations process - a long road to Election Day on Nov 8. Clinton, the 68-year-old former secretary of state, and Sanders, a 74-year-old senator from Vermont, are running neck-and-neck in some opinion polls, though Clinton enjoys a wide advantage on a nationwide basis.

‘She Never Wavers’

“As secretary of state, she stared down some of the toughest dictators in the world, and so I have no doubt that she can take on the Tea Party, and the gun lobby,” said Cecile Richards, president of Planned Parenthood, the influential US women’s health care provider. “She never blinks, she never wavers.” The message Clinton and her team sought to drive home was that her proposals are more realistic than those of Sanders, a self-proclaimed democratic socialist who has put taking down the financial elite and Wall Street at the heart of his campaign. He has repeatedly attacked Clinton over what he says are her close ties to some big banks, and has chastised her for giving paid speeches to Wall Street firms.

But Clinton fought back Sunday. “I have taken on Wall Street for years!” she said. “I have a better plan to do it. No bank is too big to fail, and no executive is too big to jail,” she added. She also insisted on her foreign policy bona fides and the “very specific steps” she would take to defeat the Islamic State jihadist group.

Clinton devoted a long section of her stump speech to her role in the Osama bin Laden raid in 2011, which several of President Barack Obama’s aides considered to be too dangerous and risky. She said she encouraged Obama to go ahead with it.

“The person who sits in that (White House) situation room has to be able to weigh intelligence and evidence to be able to really dig deep in these details, and I offer you my experience and my judgment,” she said. “We need to chart a steady course,” she concluded - suggesting that a Sanders administration would lack such stability.

Her candidacy on Monday got the backing of The Boston Globe, a newspaper with thousands of subscribers in New Hampshire, which follows Iowa next month as balloting gets underway to choose the two major parties’ presidential nominees. “This is Clinton’s time and the Globe enthusiastically endorses her,” the daily wrote. Over the weekend, she got the endorsement of The Des Moines Register, Iowa’s largest circulation daily.

Students ‘Really Into’ Bernie -

Still, Sanders’ idealism has charmed many Democratic voters. In a speech at the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls, Sanders hammered home his call for a “political revolution,” recalling how at first, he was deemed a “fringe candidate” - not a serious challenger to Clinton. “Well, my friends, a lot has happened in nine months,” he said. In an effort to assuage any doubts about voting for him in November,

Sanders offered up poll data suggesting he could beat Republican frontrunner Donald Trump in the general election by a wider margin than Clinton would. “In a general election, Republicans win when people are demoralized, when people do not vote and the voter turnout is low,” he said. “Any objective assessment of our campaign versus Secretary Clinton’s campaign will tell you that the energy, the excitement is



NORTH LIBERTY, Iowa: US Democratic Presidential Candidate Hillary Clinton speaks at a campaign rally on Sunday, ahead of the Iowa caucus. — AFP

with our campaign.” Sanders added: “The only way we win is when the engine of enthusiasm, when young people come out and vote, when working people come out and vote.” The speech was his eighth of the weekend, three of them on college campuses. Caleb Cady, a 22-year-old student at Hawkeye Community College, said Sanders was indeed popular with young voters. “All my friends are really into him. There was a punk rock show at the Octopus on

Hill Street called ‘Shred for Bernie,’ and everybody I knew was there - it was a big event,” Cady said.

Cool to Bloomberg

Meanwhile, the Democratic presidential candidates gave a cool reception on Sunday to former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s potential independent White House run, with Sanders saying it would add another billionaire

like Trump to the race. The weekend disclosure from a source close to the situation that Bloomberg is laying the groundwork for a run that he could launch should Clinton falter, sent shockwaves rippling through the entire presidential field. Sanders told ABC’s “This Week” program that Bloomberg’s entry would add a second billionaire to the field. Trump, a real estate mogul, is leading the crowded Republican field. — Agencies

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# HERO OF EGYPT UPRISING STILL HOPES FOR CHANGE

**CAIRO:** In 2011, activist Esraa Abdel-Fattah helped ignite revolution on the streets of Egypt and was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize. Five years after the fall of autocrat Hosni Mubarak, she is shunned or insulted by Egyptians on those same streets. "They say I am a traitor and foreign agent and that we are the people who destroyed the country. I hear it when I am passing people in the streets," said Abdel-Fattah. "Some people still ask 'what was wrong with Mubarak?'"

Abdel-Fattah and a small circle of fellow activists were once seen by many in Egypt as the best hope for an end to corruption and repression and the dawning of an era of free speech and respect for citizens by the state. Nowadays, she cuts a lonely figure in her small apartment, hoping Egyptians will rise up again to demand democracy despite the fiercest crackdown on dissent in the country's modern history.

"I don't know if people will take to the streets tomorrow, or next year, or the following year," the 37-year-old journalist told Reuters at her home in the Sheikh Zayed suburb of Cairo. "The revolution is people demanding freedom, bread, justice, and dignity. People will keep demanding them." Abdel-Fattah helped organise the demonstrations that began on January 25 and ended Mubarak's 30-year rule 18 days later, only to see Egypt return to what human rights groups call an authoritarian state after years of upheaval.

The Muslim Brotherhood was elected after Mubarak's departure. A year later the Islamist movement was overthrown by then military chief Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, following mass protests against its turbulent rule. Esraa Abdel-Fattah had co-founded the April 6 Youth Movement, which became a driving force of the 2011 street protests. Known as "Facebook Girl", she and other social

media activists launched a web page that urged young people to join a strike to support workers in an industrial town. She was arrested as a result but not held for long.

## Mass Arrests, Clampdown on Protests

Abdel-Fattah said it does not pay to be as daring in Egypt under Sisi, who went on to become elected president, the latest man from the military to rule. Security forces have arrested about 40,000 political activists, Islamists and liberals alike, under Sisi, human rights groups estimate. Protesting without police permission is a crime, a clearer penalty than the situation during Mubarak's rule, one of the reasons Abdel-Fattah gives for not planning any demonstrations for the foreseeable future.

About 300 people gathered in Cairo's Tahrir Square yesterday, not to celebrate the instigators of the revolt that over-

threw Mubarak but to praise the police who tried to stop them. Many Egyptians, craving stability after years of political turmoil, backed Sisi's crackdown on Mursi's followers, described by the government as an effort to stamp out Islamist militant terrorists. "Anyone who protests is locked up. Even people who write their opinions on Facebook or Twitter are questioned about their writings," she said.

The powerful state media brands Abdel-Fattah and others who were instrumental in the 2011 demonstrations "Enemies of Egypt". Those who are not behind bars feel like pariahs. Abdel-Fattah has not lost hope, however. "No one in the world knew that the revolution of January 25, 2011 would look like it did. I see in the eyes of younger generations the idea and dream of a revolution is still there," she said. "I am ready to play any role, big or small, to complete this revolution, I could be jailed for a

tweet, or anything I write."

She believes the relentless pressure on government opponents will ultimately backfire and generate new calls for freedoms. "This can't go on, the widening of detentions of the innocents. You have families that are destroyed," said Abdel-Fattah. "We also have people who are arrested without charge. They can stay in jail up to three or four years. I don't believe this can go on. The revolution lives inside us. It will come," she said.

She does not need to look far for a reminder that Sisi appears firmly in control. Beside her is a handmade poster given to her by friends to cheer her up. It reads: "Let Esraa Fly". Pro-government Egyptians say she and other activists received funds from abroad to incite protests and conspire against the state. They deny the allegations, which have not been tested in court, but Abdel-Fattah is banned from leaving Egypt. —Reuters



**TUNIS:** Tunisian policemen wave the national flag and shout slogans during a demonstration outside the Carthage Palace yesterday. — AFP

## TUNISIA POLICE HOLD PAY PROTEST AT PALACE

**CARTHAGE, Tunisia:** Hundreds of police staged a protest yesterday outside Tunisia's presidential palace to demand a pay rise, in the latest sign of the country's economic and social woes. "We are defending our homeland but also our rights" and "Our accounts are in the red" chanted demonstrators, wearing civilian clothes rather than their uniforms, outside the palace in Carthage on the outskirts of Tunis.

Presidential guards, who lost 12 of their colleagues in a November bombing claimed by the Islamic State jihadist group, did not join the protest but wore black armbands in solidarity. The demonstration was organized "after the failure of negotiations with the government on salary increases", Riadh Rezgui, spokesman for Tunisia's domestic security services' union, told AFP. A government official who took part in the negotiations has said the cost of the pay increases demanded by police would amount to one billion dinars

(\$480,000).

The police officers' union says that wages have not kept pace with inflation. Authorities appealed for patience after protests against poverty and unemployment in several towns last week - in what was the worst social unrest in Tunisia since the 2011 revolution. Yesterday, the interior ministry eased an overnight nationwide curfew imposed on Friday by two hours, meaning it will now last from 10:00 pm until 5:00 am, instead of starting at 8:00 pm.

While Tunisia is hailed as a rare success story of the Arab Spring uprisings, authorities have failed to redress the economy or resolve the problems of social exclusion and regional inequalities. Apart from the political turmoil of the past five years which has handicapped the economy, the North African country also faces jihadist violence that has devastated its vital tourism industry. — AFP

## EU CONFIDENT TURKEY TO GET €3BN REFUGEE AID

**ANKARA:** EU foreign affairs chief Federica Mogherini yesterday expressed confidence Turkey would soon receive a package of three billion euros (\$3.2 billion) for mainly Syrian refugees, despite a delay of almost two months since the funds were agreed. Mogherini, leading a high-level delegation to Ankara for talks with the Turkish leadership, said discussions were ongoing on the disbursement of the funds but played down reports they were being held up by disagreements. The financial aid is the centre-piece of a deal agreed with Ankara on Nov 29 for the EU to step up support for Syrian and other refugees in Turkey in exchange for the Turkish authorities cutting the illegal flow of migrants to Europe.

"The talks are ongoing, I am very much confident that the amount that was decided will be there in a reasonable time," Mogherini said after talks with Turkish ministers in Ankara. Media reports have suggested that Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi, in particular, was blocking the disbursement of the funds to Turkey. But Mogherini said she wanted to play down "this dramatic approach" over the issue, emphasizing that the funds were "not pocket money". "We are doing the preparatory work for spending this money in an appropriate way. Because again it's not pocket money, it's money that goes to projects," she

said. "The commission is carrying out all the assessments of the needs and projects," Mogherini said.

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu sought to also urge calm over the delay, saying: "We don't take it personally." "But any delay is affecting daily life of the refugees, schooling and medical needs," he added. Turkey is currently playing host to at least 2.2 million refugees from the almost five year conflict in Syria and has repeatedly complained that the West failed to provide adequate financial help. But Brussels now wants to encourage Turkey to keep the refugees inside its territory, after hundreds of thousands of migrants crossed into the EU in 2015, creating tensions in EU societies. The November deal also gave new momentum to Turkey's years-long push to become a member of the EU, which had long been held by disputes over Cyprus and human rights. Mogherini, along with Enlargement Commissioner Johannes Hahn and Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid Christos Stylianides, were later due to hold talks with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. EU officials have expressed disappointment the November deal has not led to a noticeable reduction in the numbers of migrants crossing the Aegean Sea from Turkey, with boats still arriving on the Greek islands daily despite the winter weather. — AFP



**ANKARA:** Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu (right), European Union's Foreign Policy Chief Federica Mogherini and EU Commissioner for Enlargement Johannes Hahn speak after a joint news conference yesterday. — AP

# DIPLOMATS PUSH FOR NEW SYRIA TALKS DESPITE DELAY

## OPPOSITION THREATENS BOYCOTT

**BEIRUT/GENEVA:** The United Nations said yesterday it would issue invitations for marathon Syrian peace talks to begin this week, but opposition groups signalled they would stay away unless the government and its Russian allies halt air strikes and lift sieges on towns. The first talks in two years to end the Syrian civil war were meant to begin yesterday but have been held up in part by a dispute over who should represent the opposition to President Bashar Al-Assad. UN envoy Staffan de Mistura said he was still working on his list, and expected to issue the invitations today for talks to start on Friday.

The aim would be six months of talks, first seeking a ceasefire, later working towards a political settlement to a war that has killed more than 250,000 people, driven more than 10 million from their homes and drawn in global powers. The ceasefire would cover the whole country except parts held by Islamic State militants and Al-Qaeda's Syrian branch, the Nusra Front, de Mistura told a news conference in Geneva.

De Mistura, whose two predecessors quit in apparent frustration after holding failed peace conferences of their own, acknowledged the going would be difficult. Delegations would meet in separate rooms in "proximity talks", with diplomats shuttling between them. Threats to pull out should be expected. "Don't be surprised: there will be a lot of posturing, a lot of walk-outs or walk-ins because a bomb has fallen or someone has done an attack... You should neither be depressed nor impressed, but it's likely to happen," he said. "The important thing is to keep momentum."

The spokesman for one of the rebel groups in the opposition High Negotiating Committee (HNC) said it was impossible for the opposition to attend as long as rebel territory is being pounded by air strikes and besieged towns are being starved. "It is impossible to give up any of our demands. If we attend, it's as if we are selling our martyrs," said Abu Ghiath Al-Shami, spokesman for Alwiyyat Seif al-Sham, one of the groups fighting against Assad's forces in the southwest.

US Secretary of State John Kerry said he expected clarity within a day or two over who would attend, and expressed support for de Mistura's decision to take time to draw up the list. "We don't want to decide and have it crumble on day one. It's worth taking a day or two, or three, or whatever," Kerry said during a visit to Laos. The outcome was up to the Syrian parties, he added. "They have to be serious. If they are not serious, war will continue. Up to them. You can lead a horse to water; you can't make it drink."

## Russian Intervention

Years of high-level diplomacy have so far yielded no progress towards ending or even



**GENEVA:** UN Syria envoy Staffan De Mistura gestures during a press conference on efforts to restart peace talks during a press conference at the United Nations yesterday. — AFP

curbing the fighting. Since the last peace conference was held in early 2014, Islamic State fighters have declared a caliphate across much of Syria and Iraq, and the war has drawn in world powers. The United States has led air strikes against the militants since 2014, and Russia launched a separate air campaign nearly four months ago against enemies of its ally Assad.

Russian firepower has helped the Syrian military and its allies achieve military gains, including a major push in the northwest of the country in recent days, with rebels acknowledging a turn in momentum. The rise of Islamic State and Russia's entry into the war have given new impetus to diplomacy, leading to a Dec 18 UN Security Council resolution, backed by Washington and Moscow, that called for peace talks.

But world powers remain at odds over who should be invited. Russia says opposition figures it calls terrorists must be excluded, and wants to include groups like the Kurds who control wide areas of northern Syria. Regional heavyweight Turkey opposes inviting the Kurds. The main Sunni Arab opposition groups, who are supported by Arab governments and the West, say they will not attend unless they can choose their own delegation. Spokesman Salim Al-Muslat said the opposition HNC would discuss its position on Tuesday.

The HNC, formed in Saudi Arabia last month and grouping armed and political opponents of Assad, has repeatedly said talks cannot begin until air strikes are halted, government sieges of rebel-held territory lifted and detainees freed, steps outlined in the UN resolution. "Unfortunately, it is not possible to sit and talk to anyone without the suffering being lifted first," Muslat said on Arabic news channel Arabiya al-

Hadath.

## Suicide Bombing

The peace conference, if it takes place, will be the third since the war began and the first convened by de Mistura, a veteran diplomat with dual Swedish and Italian nationality. All previous diplomatic efforts foundered over the future role of Assad, with the opposition refusing to back off its demand that he leave power and the president refusing to go. A suicide bomber driving a fuel tank truck blew himself up at a checkpoint run by the Islamist rebel group Ahrar al-Sham in the northern city of Aleppo yesterday, killing at least 23 people, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring group said.

Rebel forces lost the town of Rabiya in Latakia province over the weekend, their second major setback near the Turkish border in northwestern Syria in recent weeks as the government and Russia seek to cut rebel supply lines to Turkey. "It's a major pullback for us, but it is not over. We have 17 martyrs and 30 wounded. And none of the injuries are from bullets: it is all due to shrapnel from missiles, proof of how we are struggling to fend off Russian air strikes," Firas Pasa, a leader of an ethnic Turkmen rebel group told Reuters in Gaziantep, Turkey, near the border. "If the West wants us to defeat Syrian government forces then we urgently need anti-aircraft capabilities," he said.

A member of Ahrar al-Sham, Abu Baraa Al-Lathkani, said the rebels had abandoned the strategy of trying to hold territory and were shifting to guerrilla tactics. The Syrian military, its morale running high, is planning the next phase of its offensive in northern Syria. The coming target is Idlib, a rebel stronghold, said a military source. — Reuters

## News

In brief

### Israeli guards kill two Palestinians

**JERUSALEM:** Two Palestinians stabbed two women yesterday at a grocery in an Israeli settlement of the West Bank before being shot dead, police and medics said, in the latest in nearly four months of attacks. Israel's military said two pipe bombs were also found in the area and were being defused. One of the women, 23, was said by Israeli medics to be in critical condition after the incident in Beit Horon settlement, northwest of Jerusalem. The other, a 58-year-old, was in moderate condition. The two Palestinians were shot dead by security guards, Israeli police said, adding one was in his early 20s and the other a teenager. The attack was the third inside a West Bank settlement since Jan 17, when an Israeli woman was stabbed to death at the entrance to her home in Otniel.

### 15-year terms added for Bahrain mutineers

**DUBAI:** A court in Bahrain yesterday added 15-year jail terms to the sentences of 57 Shiite inmates involved in a prison mutiny, a judicial source said. The inmates were convicted of rioting and mutiny following unrest last March at Jaw prison south of the capital Manama, the source said. The charges included "disobeying orders and forcing guards out of the prisoners' buildings" and then "destroying furniture, air conditioners and security cameras", the source said. Security forces finally stormed the buildings and clashed with the rioting prisoners, resulting in casualties among police and inmates, the source added. Al-Wasat newspaper said the defendants were also fined a total of 508,187 dinars (\$1.35 million).



**SANAA:** Yemenis walk past the site of a Saudi-led airstrike that targeted a building in the Yemeni capital yesterday. — AFP

## YEMEN PM RETURNS TO ADEN

**SANAA:** The Yemeni prime minister and his Cabinet returned yesterday to the volatile southern port city of Aden, months after he was targeted in a suicide bombing that forced them to leave the country. Khaled Bahah's return is aimed at establishing a permanent government presence in Aden, officials in his office said, even as the country is torn apart by civil war. The officials didn't provide more information. Yemen has been torn by conflict since 2014, when Shiite rebels known as Houthis and allied with a former president captured large swaths of the country, including the capital, Sanaa, which they took in September that year. In March 2015, a coalition of mainly Gulf Arab countries led by Saudi Arabia launched airstrikes against the Houthis and

later, a ground operation to retake back ground from the rebels. More than 5,800 people have been killed and over 80 percent of Yemen's population is in dire need of food, water and other aid, according to the United Nations.

Also yesterday, a missile fired by the Saudi-led coalition killed a judge and his entire family - eight people in all - in Sanaa's neighborhood of Nahda, security officials said. The judge was a known Houthi supporter. And in the northern Jawf province, more than 20 fighters on both sides of the Yemeni conflict died in fierce clashes, security and tribal officials said. All officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they aren't authorized to speak to reporters. — AP



## OVER 1,500 CANDIDATES VYING FOR WHITE HOUSE

**CHICAGO:** Michael Petyo is a carpenter, a US Navy veteran, a grandfather and Russian Orthodox church cantor who likes to boast about his homemade nut rolls. He also happens to be a candidate for president of the United States. The 66-year-old Indiana man has no big financial backers, little political experience outside of two failed runs for Congress and his odds of winning are almost nil. But that has not stopped him from thinking he is the one to succeed President Barack Obama.

Petyo is among a rising number of Americans who aspire to be president, due to what psychology experts describe as growing narcissism, distrust of leadership and the power of social media to reach the public. Joining more than 1,500 others, according to the Federal Election Commission, Petyo admits he is a long shot, but figures he just needs some attention: "How do they know I'm not the next guy waiting in the wings?"

The number of candidates seeking the White House has more than tripled from 417 in 2012, though some entrants have penned in possibly fictitious names such as "Disco Daddy" and "Darth Vader." Their ranks include Susan Young, a California social studies teacher aiming to give her students a lesson in democracy, Terry Jones, the Florida pastor known for organizing Quran burnings, and anti-virus software pioneer John McAfee.

Another candidate, Edie Bukewihge, included her grandma's chili recipe on her website, along with the promise that the last two years of her term could be boring because she will have repaired the country's "damages". These hopefuls are not a factor in polls that show businessman Donald Trump and US Senator Ted Cruz of Texas battling for the Republican nomination and US Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton leading the Democratic field ahead of next

month's Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire primary.

### 'Honey from a Hive'

But a lack of attention has not diminished Petyo's enthusiasm. He frequently compares himself to the Bible's David, the shepherd who God chose to be king. Like David, "words flow from my lips like honey from a hive," Petyo said. Petyo meets the Constitutional requirements for the job - he's at least 35 and a natural born US citizen. "I don't see how anybody can represent the people unless they're one with the people," said Petyo, who owns a construction company and has been handing out business cards at political events around the Midwest.

In an interview, Petyo espoused conspiracy theories, claiming the Internal Revenue Service's home is in Puerto Rico, Al-Qaeda members who carried out the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks had help from inside the US government and the Federal Emergency Management Agency is setting up detention camps around the country. For candidates like Petyo, the important thing is finding Americans who will listen to them, said Bart Rossi, a political psychologist. "They want to get their thoughts and ideas out there," said Rossi. "They want to be on the playing field even if they're not going to win the game."

Michael Maccoby, a psychoanalyst and leadership expert, said the world is going through deep changes, and more people distrust current leaders. "It's understandable that you have a lot of people thinking they've got the answer," he said. Petyo is a Republican, but shuns party labels as he supports unions, a typical Democratic position, while espousing the belief that US companies should pay little or no taxes. He should receive at least one vote. His long-time friend and supporter Jim Wright, a 65-year-old retired engineer who hands out flyers for the candidate, said he will vote for Petyo even though he doesn't have a "snowball's chance in hell". — Reuters



WASHINGTON: A young girl slides on the West Lawn of the US Capitol on Monday. —AFP

## EASTERN US STRUGGLES TO RETURN TO NORMAL

### BLIZZARD KILLS 25, WASHINGTON STILL REELING

**WASHINGTON:** The eastern United States emerged wearily from a massive blizzard that dumped huge amounts of snow and killed at least 25 people, but Washington was still reeling, with government offices and schools to remain closed yesterday. The storm - dubbed "Snowzilla" - walloped a dozen states from Friday into early Sunday, affecting an estimated 85 million residents who were told to stay indoors and off the roads for their own safety.

The 26.8 inches (68 cm) of snow that fell in New York's Central Park was the second-highest accumulation since records began in 1869, and more than 22 inches paralyzed the capital Washington. Near-record-breaking snowfall was recorded in other cities up and down the East Coast, with Philadelphia and Baltimore also on the receiving end of some of the worst that Mother Nature could fling at them.

But as the storm ended and temperatures rose, New York emerged from total shutdown and lifted a sweeping travel ban. Roads were reopened throughout the city, on Long Island and in New Jersey. Thousands of people flocked to parks, tobogganing, organizing snowball fights and strapping on cross-country skis, as children

delighted in a winter wonderland under glorious sunshine. Broadway resumed shows, which were canceled on Saturday, and museums reopened, as snow plows quickly cleared the main avenues and temperatures hovered at about zero Celsius.

Jessica Edwards, a filmmaker from Canada, joined in the fun, pulling four-year-old daughter Hazel down a hill on a sled in a New York park. "Oh my God, she's so excited - we left the house this morning and we packed a bunch of stuff to make a snowman," she told AFP.

### Caution Advised

But as the storm-related death toll rose, authorities advised caution despite the picture postcard scenes outside. "We urge all New Yorkers not to travel on our roads except when necessary, and to be extremely careful when driving," Mayor Bill de Blasio told a news conference. "Our tireless sanitation workers are out in full force and we must give them space to clear the roads. If you go outside, use caution and stay alert for ice and cold temperatures," he added.

In the nation's capital, which is not as adept at handling winter weather as the Big Apple, authorities struggled to get the city back up and running.

Major roads were clear downtown, but side streets were still piled high with snow. Public schools were to remain closed and only limited public transportation was to resume Monday. Metro fares were to be waived as trains would begin running only every 20-25 minutes, and only at underground stations on three of the city's six lines. Only a few key bus lines were to be in operation Monday from 12-5 pm.

Limited flight operations were to resume from Washington's Reagan National and Dulles International airports on Monday, a day after officials battled in New York to get some aircraft off the ground. Among those whose travel was disrupted by the blizzard was Vice President Joe Biden, whose airplane made an unscheduled detour to warm and sunny Miami as he traveled from meetings in Turkey early Sunday, unable to land in snowed-under Washington.

The White House says Biden will now depart Miami Monday for his hometown of Wilmington, Delaware. The House of Representatives meanwhile, has opted to remain out of session for the coming week due to the severity of the winter storm and related travel woes - with no votes set until Feb 1.—AFP





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## GREEK LEADERS TO CLASH OVER PENSION CUTBACK PLAN

**ATHENS:** Greece launches debate on a contentious pension reform plan in parliament today, the opening salvo of what may be the toughest test yet of Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras's staying power at the helm of Europe's most indebted nation. Juggling a fragile majority of just three seats in parliament, Tsipras, elected a year ago, is likely to mount a staunch defence of his plans for a pensions system which could face collapse without radical cutbacks.

The intricacies of how to cut 1.8 billion euros (\$1.95 billion) off the pension bill this year will not be addressed today, though it will give Greek politicians an opportunity for political jousting in a highly fractious parliament. But with farmers on the streets threatening mass blockades and nationwide walkouts scheduled for Feb 4, Tsipras's govern-

ment has been at pains to stress it is trying to rectify the shortcomings of previous governments.

"We have done everything possible to keep the present pension levels intact, and create a system based on equality and social justice," Tsipras told crowds of supporters during a rally marking a year in power on Sunday night. The total annual pension bill is about 28.5 billion euros. Greeks' pension payments have already been reduced about a dozen times - about 30 percent on average since the country's financial crisis erupted in 2010.

Greek government officials say formal debate on pension reform is likely to take place in February. The leftist-led coalition has signalled it could soften some measures for sectors being hit hardest as it takes the pulse of public

sentiment while awaiting approval of its plans from lenders.

But Greeks, fed up seeing their incomes shrink as the taxes pile up, fear that their future is bleak.

"This new pension reform plan is an Armageddon," Panos Papanikolaou, a neurosurgeon, told reporters outside the labor ministry during a protest by doctors yesterday.

### OPPOSITION SHORT SHRIFT

Opposition parties have promised to reject the reforms proposed by the leftist premier, who came to power pledging to end the belt-tightening mandated by international lenders but was forced to sign up to a third bailout in July.

"Society cannot withstand new taxes. Nor will it permit the demolition of the social security system and the pension

cutbacks," the Socialist PASOK party said in a statement.

The conservative New Democracy party, which recent polls have suggested is marginally leading Syriza in polls, says it will vote against the cuts that it describes as the outgrowth of the government's policies. "The government's plan, which has sparked all this social reaction, is the price Greeks must pay for its wrong decisions and failed policies," New Democracy spokesman George Koumoutsakos told Reuters. "We will reject it."

Pension reform is a key topic for the first review of Greece's third bailout, which its leftist-led coalition wants to conclude swiftly so that it can open talks on long-term debt relief.

Government officials have suggested their final draft of proposed reforms will

be submitted to parliament after consultations with the European Union and International Monetary Fund mission reviewing Greece's bailout progress.

The creditors' technical teams arrived in Greece last week to collect fiscal data and information about the pension reform, but there was no fixed date for the return of the EU/IMF mission chiefs, known in Athens as "the quartet". Government officials and a source close to the lenders said they were likely to return by Friday or next week depending on how much headway the technical teams make on the ground. Last week, Tsipras held meetings with European Central Bank chief Mario Draghi and IMF Director Christine Lagarde at the annual World Economic Forum in Davos to discuss the review and underline Greece's will to conclude it. —Reuters

## 4 SUICIDE ATTACKERS KILL AT LEAST 28 IN CAMEROON

**YAOUNDE, Cameroon:** Four suicide bombers attacked a market and town yesterday in Cameroon's Far North region near the border with Nigeria, killing at least 28 people and wounding 65 others, officials said. Two attackers targeted the market in Bodo and two others detonated explosives in town, said the region's Governor Midjiyawa Bakari. The wounded have been taken to hospitals in Kousseri, he said.

"We have information the four bombers came from Nigeria. We are investigating where they spent the night before attacking the market," said Bakari. A Cameroon troop commander, Gen. Jacob Kodji, confirmed the attack and said Nigeria's Islamic extremist group Boko Haram are suspected. He said some accomplices may still be in hiding. "We have deployed soldiers to the

area to assist the local defense group because we are informed a few fighters may have escorted them (the bombers) to Cameroon from Nigeria," he said. Suicide bombers are suspected to be crossing the border from Nigeria to stage their attacks, killing dozens in the region in the last month, officials said. On Jan. 18 a 14-year-old suicide bomber attacked a mosque in the region last week, killing four, in the fifth attack on a mosque in Cameroon in less than a month. The Islamic militants began stepping up attacks early last year on neighboring Cameroon, Niger and Chad, countries contributing in efforts to crush Boko Haram. Boko Haram's six-year insurgency has killed about 20,000 people and displaced 2.3 million, according to Amnesty International and the United Nations. — AP

## EX-PRESIDENT NASHEED UNSURE WHETHER TO RETURN TO MALDIVES

**LONDON:** Former president Mohamed Nasheed said he had not yet decided whether to return to the Maldives at a press conference Monday in London, where he has travelled for medical treatment.

Flanked by his legal team including Amal Clooney, Nasheed said he would need to consult on his next move, quoting British punk band The Clash to explain his position. "I know the question you all want to ask is will I go back. This has been more eloquently answered by The Clash in 1982 when I was doing my A-Levels-

"Should I Stay Or Should I Go?" Nasheed, who was educated in Britain, told reporters. But he added: "Let me be clear. I will go to the Maldives. I will definitely go to the Maldives, there is no doubt about that. But only the question is how and when."

Nasheed, 48, arrived in London on Thursday after being granted 30 days of leave from the Maldives for spinal cord surgery in a deal brokered by Sri Lanka, India and former colonial power Britain.

He and his lawyers visited 10 Downing Street on Saturday, where Prime Minister David Cameron pledged support. Nasheed became the first democratically-elected president of the Maldives in 2008 and served for four years before he was toppled in what he called a coup backed by the military and police.

Last year, he was sentenced to 13 years in

jail on terrorism charges. Clooney, who is married to Hollywood film star George Clooney, argued for "urgent" targeted sanctions against figures in the Maldives government allegedly responsible for human rights abuses, including asset freezes in the European Union and US and travel bans.

"Sanctions can work, especially those cases of targeted, smart sanctions," she added. Nasheed's release had come about as a "direct result of the threat of sanctions", said another one of his lawyers, Jared Genser.

Shortly before the packed press conference, the Maldives government hit out at Nasheed, accusing him of using his prison leave for publicity purposes. "It is now clear the former president has been disingenuous at best, and misleading at worst, in seeking medical leave in the UK," foreign minister Duna Maumoon said in a statement.

"The government acted in good faith in allowing Mr Nasheed to travel abroad for treatment. Yet it is now clear his primary goal was to court publicity in the United Kingdom. This is not medical leave, but media leave," Nasheed also criticised lawyer Cherie Blair, wife of Britain's former prime minister Tony Blair, for advising the Maldives government, a decision which has drawn controversy in Britain's media.

"It's very sad that she got the wrong end of the stick, read the story wrong and dropped this catch," he said. — AFP

## ASYLUM SEEKER WRISTBANDS AT UK CENTER SPARK OUTRAGE

**LONDON:** Asylum seekers will no longer have to wear wristbands to claim food at a centre in Britain, its management announced yesterday, after the practice sparked outcry and comparisons with Nazi Germany. Clearsprings, a company contracted to house asylum seekers on behalf of the British government, said the system had been in place since May last year as a way of distinguishing what meals people were entitled to. "As in numerous such establishments where large numbers of people are being provided with services, wristbands are considered to be one of the most reliable and effective ways of guaranteeing delivery," the company said in a statement. "We are always reviewing the way we supply our services and have decided to cease the use of wristbands." It followed an outcry by campaigners after the practice at the Lynx House centre in Cardiff in Wales was revealed in a report by newspaper The Guardian. "It harks back to the Nazi regime with people being forced to wear a Star of David and stand out," said Hannah Wharf, poli-

cy officer of the Welsh Refugee Council.

"It's absolutely appalling, it is treating people like lesser beings. It is treating them like animals lining up to feed." Jo Stevens, the justice spokeswoman for the opposition Labour party, said that she would raise the issue in parliament. Eric Ngalle, 36, who spent a month in Lynx House before being granted refugee status, told The Guardian that asylum seekers were identifiable to locals due to the wristbands, which made them targets for abuse. "Sometimes drivers would see our wristbands, start honking their horns and shout out of the window, 'Go back to your country,'" Ngalle told the Guardian, describing the bands as "the garments of an outcast". "If you take off the wristband you can't reveal it back on to your wrist so if you want to eat you have to wear it all the time," he added. It follows a similar controversy in the northeast of England, where asylum seekers said they were targeted for abuse because the front doors of their homes were painted red by a private contractor. — AFP



**AMSTERDAM:** Amnesty International activists hold a protest against the ongoing migrant crisis with a boat filled with mannequins wearing life vests outside the Maritime Museum in Amsterdam, during an informal meeting of EU Justice and Home Affairs ministers at the Maritime Museum. —AFP

## GREECE THREATENED WITH EXPULSION FROM SCHENGEN

ATHENS DENOUNCES 'BLAME GAME', SAY EU NOT PROVIDING RIGHT HELP

**AMSTERDAM:** European Union interior ministers urged Greece yesterday to do more to control the influx of migrants, some threatening to have it excluded from the continent's prized passport-free travel zone as the crisis increasingly divides bloc members. Greece was the main gateway to Europe for more than a million refugees and migrants who reached the EU last year. It has been criticized for a failure to control the flow of arrivals, which has shown little sign of easing over the winter.

Some member states said Athens must deliver on obligations to alleviate the crisis, which has put the passport-free Schengen zone - hailed by many as the greatest achievement of European integration - on the verge of collapse.

"If we cannot protect the external EU border, the Greek-Turkish border, then the Schengen external border will move towards central Europe," said Austria's Interior Minister Interior Minister Johanna Mikl-Leitner. "Greece must increase its resources as soon as possible and accept help," she said. The EU has taken various steps to give cash-strapped Athens financial assistance to deal with the crisis, but many member states believe Athens is not using that enough. Of five registration "hotspot" centres due to be set up for migrants arriving in Greece, only one is running so far.

Overwhelmed by the influx, Greek law enforcement officials have often let migrants through deeper into Europe rather than keep them on Greek soil for proper registration - the first necessary step agreed by the EU before people can move further.

Athens says the numbers are impossible to manage and accuses the other 27 EU states of not offering the right help and not taking migrants from Greece they had committed to move. Greek migration minister Yannis Mouzalas denounced the threat of Schengen exclusion as "blame game". Athens' public order minister Nikos Toskas said sometimes only several miles separated the Greek and the Turkish border meandering between small islands in the Aegean sea where the refugees travel on small, easily capsizable boats.

"It is very difficult to stop small boats coming... except sinking or shooting them, which is against our European values and Greek values and we will not do that," he said.

### Temporary controls

The Schengen zone comprises 26 states, most of which are also EU members. Germany, France, Austria and Sweden are among several countries that have introduced temporary border checks as they struggle to control the flow of people. "Speaking about timetables, it's already too late. We have seven countries with border controls," Sweden's interior minister Anders Ygeman told Reuters.

He said migrant registration centres need to start functioning in Greece and Italy as planned.

"In the end, if a country doesn't live up to its obligations, we will have to restrict its connections to the Schengen area." Excluding Greece

would require applying Article 26 of the Schengen code that allows temporary border controls within Schengen for up to two years.

Germany, main destination for refugees and migrants fleeing war and poverty in the Middle East and Africa, hopes a November deal agreed with Turkey will mean fewer migrants arrive in Greece. But it is yet to bear fruit.

Greek officials said other EU countries had been too slow in providing everything from funds and border guards, to finger-printing equipment, ambulances and beds.

They criticised the states that reintroduced border controls inside Schengen.

"It's one thing to understand that a country is in panic, is afraid and closing borders. And it's another issue to accept that the European crisis will be a humanitarian crisis in Greece with thousands of trapped refugees and migrants," Mouzalas said.

European Union countries have asked the

bloc's executive to prepare for the extension of temporary border controls within the Schengen free-travel zone for up to two years, Dutch Migration Minister Klaas Dijkhoff said yesterday.

Struggling to control Europe's worst migration crisis in decades, some Schengen countries have reintroduced controls on the area's internal borders. "Currently, the temporary border measures can be taken only for a limited period of six months. But the unprecedented influx of asylum seekers, which compelled member states to take these measures nationally, have not decreased yet," Dijkhoff, who chaired the EU ministerial meeting in Amsterdam, told a news conference.

"So member states invited the (European) Commission to prepare the legal and practical basis for the continuance of temporary border measures through Article 26 of the Schengen border code," he said of the an article that allows to have controls at internal borders in place for up to two years. —Reuters

## FORMER UK MINISTER CECIL PARKINSON DIES

**LONDON:** Cecil Parkinson, who held senior posts in the British government under Margaret Thatcher until forced to resign amid a sex scandal, has died. He was 84. Parkinson's family said he died Friday after a long battle with cancer. Parkinson served former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in a number of senior positions. He managed the Conservative Party's successful 1983 election campaign and became a trusted confidant of Thatcher.

He was made Secretary of State for Trade and Industry but stepped down after

it was revealed that he had got his former secretary pregnant. She claimed he had promised to marry his and that he had pressured her to have an abortion, but she refused.

Thatcher brought him back to another Cabinet post four years later but by then his career had peaked and was widely viewed as in decline. Parkinson served in the House of Lords until he retired last year after he became ill. He began his career in Parliament in 1970 and also had a successful career in business. — AP



Cecil Parkinson



**ATHENS:** An Iraqi girl tries to warm up as she waits with her family at the Athens' port of Piraeus for buses that will take them to the Greek-Macedonian border yesterday. —AP



## KERRY IN LAOS TO DISCUSS BOMB LEGACY AND ASEAN

**VIENTIANE:** US Secretary of State John Kerry yesterday hinted Washington may boost the \$15 million fund it provides to tackle the deadly legacy of unexploded American bombs in Laos, during a rare visit to the reclusive communist state. The trip paves the way for a summit hosted next month by President Barack Obama in California with the ten leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Laos has assumed this year's chairmanship of the regional bloc and will see a flurry of diplomatic activity culminating later in the year in a visit by Obama—the first by a sitting US leader to the resource-rich but impoverished nation. Kerry's visit is only the third since 1955 by a US Secretary of State to a country carpet-bombed by America during the Vietnam War.

Unexploded bombs across the region are the result of the massive US bombing campaign aimed at disrupting North Vietnamese supply routes through landlocked Laos.

That grim legacy carries a particular resonance for Kerry, a decorated Vietnam war veteran wounded during combat, who said the US is "deeply engaged in trying to de-mine and deal with the unexploded ordnance issue."

Laos was the most bombed nation in the world per capita, with more than two million tons of explosive dumped on the country. Around 30 percent of the bombs failed to explode, including cluster munitions. Around 50,000 people have been killed by left-over ordnance since the end of the war, with tens of thousands of others maimed, including children.

The US has gradually lifted its funding to tackle

the scourge from \$5 million to \$15 million this year, Kerry said. "I know that we're looking at whether or not that could be plussed up even more," he said, suggesting Obama may bring a new pledge of funds when he visits.

### Laos changing too

After talks with Prime Minister Thongsing Thammavong, Kerry also hailed improving ties between the two nations after decades of tension. "While we don't agree on everything, obviously... we also do agree on a lot of things and on the way the world is changing. And it's changing here too," Kerry said of the nation which has been run by the secretive Communist Party since 1975.

Fresh from a trip to Saudi Arabia, Kerry hailed growing economic, environmental and security co-operation, as well as Laos' chairmanship of ASEAN, as the "defining" issues of a new friendship. The US diplomat, who is due in Cambodia later Monday, was in Laos days after the five-yearly congress of the Communist Party, which chose 78-year-old vice-president Bounnhang Vorachith as its next leader.

Relations between the US and Laos two have often been hostile, with American support for ethnic Hmong anti-communist insurgents still raw in the memory of the Laos' leadership.

Laos' poor human rights record is also a sticking point, embodied by the 2012 disappearance of prominent activist Sombath Somphone, who was last seen on CCTV footage at a police checkpoint in Vientiane. — AFP



**VIENTIANE:** US Secretary of State John Kerry (R) and Phouvieng Phothisane, acting director of the Vientiane Museums (L) and Tata Keovilay, with the US Embassy tour the That Luang Stupa or "Pha Tha Luang" in Vientiane yesterday. — AFP

## PAKISTAN'S POWERFUL ARMY CHIEF SAYS TO STEP DOWN

**ISLAMABAD:** Pakistan's influential army chief yesterday said he would step down at the end of his three-year term in November, the military's public relations wing said, breaking a precedent of military leaders seeking to extend their terms. General Raheel Sharif is considered by many to be Pakistan's most powerful man. Since he took office in 2013, the army has launched aerial and ground assaults against Islamist insurgent strongholds near the Afghan border in the northwest, earning the military broad support from a Pakistani population tired of militant violence.

Critics say the crack-down has been selective, going after some militant groups, but leaving others intact. Elements of Pakistan's army have in the past been accused of tacitly supporting Islamist armed groups that launch attacks in Afghanistan and India as a way to pressure both neighbours.

The general has thrown his support behind elected Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif during anti-government protests, while at the same time solidifying the military's hold over national security and foreign policy. General Sharif has also presided over a security crackdown in Karachi, the coun-

try's largest city, which has sharply reduced murder rates but drawn protests from opposition politicians who say their activists have been targeted. Under his watch, the military has been given authority to try civilians suspected of terrorism in secret military courts.

General Sharif is said to have been personally involved in efforts to bring the Afghan Taliban into peace talks with Afghanistan, though those efforts have stalled.

Speculation that General Sharif would seek to extend his tenure for another term was baseless, the army's public relations wing said in a series of tweets issued yesterday. "The Pakistan Army is a great institution. I don't believe in extension," he was quoted as saying. General Sharif's decision would represent a win for democratic institutions, but raises questions on the future of campaigns against militants. No obvious candidate to succeed him has yet emerged.

General Sharif pledged that efforts to combat terrorism "will continue with full vigor and resolve" after he retired, the army tweets said. Pakistan's past two military chiefs had sought extensions of their terms instead of stepping down, with General Pervez Musharraf staging a coup to topple Nawaz Sharif during a previous term as prime minister. — Reuters



**Pakistan's army chief General Raheel Sharif — AFP**

## PAKISTAN UNIVERSITY DEMANDS WEAPONS AFTER DEADLY ATTACK

**PESHAWAR, Pakistan:** A Pakistan university attacked by the Taliban last week has demanded the government arm its staff as it seeks to boost security after the deadly assault in which 21 people were killed, officials said yesterday.

"We have demanded weapons from the government and weapons licenses for all teachers and management officials," Bacha Khan university registrar Hamidullah Khan said. Authorities at the university in Charsadda in Pakistan's troubled northwest have also called for police checkpoints both inside and outside the campus and watch towers to protect students, he said.

Wednesday's attack in Charsadda saw heavily-armed militants storm the campus, gunning down students and teachers in a bloody rampage before they were killed by the military.

Among the 21 victims was a chemistry professor who students said fired his own pistol at the militants before he died in a hail of bullets. Teachers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province were given permission to carry firearms after the Pakistani Taliban massacred more than 150 people, the majority of them children, at a school in

the provincial capital Peshawar in 2014.

The Bacha Khan attack, which bore chilling similarities to the Peshawar massacre, has spurred the debate on arming teachers in Pakistan once more. University registrar Khan said the campus had been reopened yesterday but only to administrative staff, with classes suspended indefinitely as authorities seek to improve security.

"Students wanted to resume the classes," he said. "We appreciate their courage, but we now cannot take any risk on security." Students and teachers were being screened by police and security guards at the entrance to the campus yesterday, an AFP journalist said. "They (militants) cannot stop us, we will try to face them and continue our studies," a student who gave his name as Abdullah told AFP.

University employee Jehangir Khan echoed the call for the government to provide tighter security, noting the university was surrounded by open fields. "Students are afraid," he said. A memorial service was held at the university yesterday to "pay tribute to the martyrs", vice chancellor Fazal Rahim told AFP, while Khan said the victims' belongings were later handed over to their families. — AFP



**GURGAON:** French President Francois Hollande (left) and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi travel by tube to Gurgaon to attend the launch of the 'Alliance solaire Internationale' yesterday. — AFP

## FRANCE, INDIA TO STRENGTHEN COUNTER-TERROR COOPERATION

### RAFALE DEAL COULD BE FINALIZED AFTER TORTUOUS NEGOTIATIONS

**NEW DELHI:** French President Francois Hollande vowed yesterday not to weaken his resolve against terrorism as he held talks with India's leader on security cooperation and a long-delayed defence deal.

Hollande said he and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi had agreed to step up cooperation on counter-terrorism after deadly attacks on Paris in November that recalled the 2008 assault on Mumbai.

But they failed to reach a final agreement on India's long-delayed purchase of 36 Rafale fighter jets from the French company Dassault. The French president said a new video which threatens countries of the US-led coalition fighting the Islamic State group would only strengthen France's resolve, which was tested by November's deadly attacks in Paris.

"These odious provocations only serve to further increase the resolve that we have, that I have, to protect French people through the decisions that I have taken... but also to hit, and hit again, this organization that threatens us and kills our children," he said. Hollande made the comments after talks with Modi that focused on security cooperation following the Paris attacks.

Modi also spoke of the two leaders' joint resolve to increase security cooperation, recalling a deadly raid earlier this month on an Indian military base near the Pakistan border.

"President Hollande and I have agreed to scale up the range of our counter-terrorism cooperation in a manner that helps us to tangibly mitigate and reduce the threat of extremism and terrorism to our societies," he said. Modi was speaking alongside the French president, whose visit had raised fresh expectations that the Rafale deal would be finalized after years of tortuous negotiations.

A joint statement said the leaders welcomed the conclusion of an intergovernmental agreement on the purchase, but that "some financial issues" remained outstanding.

A senior French official told reporters on Sunday the two sides were still haggling over the price, which experts say could reach around five billion euros (\$5.6 billion). One sticking point is Delhi's insistence that arms makers invest a percentage of the value of any major deal in India. Manufacturer Dassault Aviation hailed the accord yesterday, saying in a statement it "actively supports the French authorities in finalizing a full accord within four weeks".

### Metro ride

Hollande will be chief guest at today's Republic Day parade in New Delhi, an invitation Modi extended to show solidarity after the assault on the French capital which killed 130 people. Earlier, he said the extremist threat weighed as heavily on France as on India, recently hit by the deadly attack on a military base near the border with Pakistan.

The 17-minute video put out by the IS group describes the Paris attackers as "lions" who "brought France to its knees" and urges Muslims in France to rise up against the country's leaders.

It features the heads of Hollande, French Prime Minister Manuel Valls and British Prime Minister David Cameron with targets superimposed on them, and purports to show nine jihadists involved in November's slaughter. "Nothing will deter us, no threat will make France waver in the fight against terrorism," Hollande told reporters.

"These images only serve to discredit the perpetrators of this crime," Hollande and Modi will sit together at the annual parade, a pomp-filled spectacle of military might which includes columns of Soviet-era tanks. Yesterday the atmosphere was distinctly more down-to-earth as the two leaders took the metro for their journey to the satellite city of Gurgaon.

There, they were set to lay the foundation stone at the new headquarters of the International Solar Alliance, a 121-nation group launched by Modi at the recent Paris climate conference to expand affordable solar power. Hollande has expressed hope that some of the French businesses travelling with him will be at the forefront of the solar energy push. The leaders are expected to announce a pact between France's CNES and India's ISRO space agencies for a joint satellite dedicated to climate change research. —AFP

## VIETNAM'S PM SET FOR POLITICAL EXIT AFTER PARTY VOTE

**HANOI:** Vietnam's prime minister looked set to make a political exit yesterday after the Communist Party congress accepted his withdrawal from an internal election, sources said, ruling him out of a bid for the party leadership.

Speculation has been rife in Vietnam that premier Nguyen Tan Dung's nomination for the party's central committee on Sunday signalled he was manoeuvring to challenge the politburo's agreed candidate for party chief, the incumbent Nguyen Phu Trong. By not running for the committee, he effectively ruled out a power bid because he would need to be a committee member to be elected to its ruling politburo and rise to the top post.

Dung, 66, who has served two terms as premier, was overlooked by the elite politburo when it agreed on its nominations for key leadership posts prior to the congress.

Several party sources confirmed to Reuters the congress decision, each requesting anonymity due to the sensitivity of the issue. The sources said President Truong Tan Sang was also allowed to withdraw. Analysts say Dung, a political heavyweight widely credited with pursuing a pro-business agenda, has long been at odds with party stalwarts wary of him entrenching his power and influence.

He is believed to have cultivated broad support among businessmen and the wider party. His exit will temper excitement building in Vietnam about the prospect of a rare leadership showdown in a secretive party officially ruled by consensus.

Dung had neither declared publicly an intention to retire, nor any ambition to lead the party, which has long sought to keep a lid on internal affairs. Dung has not commented yesterday's outcome. He is expected to remain prime minister until the legislature approves a new premier later this year.

It was not immediately clear how many of the more than 1,500 delegates voted to accept Dung's declining the nomination. A new central committee, from within which the politburo and leaders are chosen, is to be decided on Tuesday. The congress ends on Thursday.

To stand a chance of getting on the new central committee, the party's rules stipulate Dung would have needed a majority of the congress to vote against his withdrawal, creating a path for him to contest the leadership. Though Vietnam posted one of Asia's fastest growth rates last year at 6.7 percent and attracted record foreign investment, analysts say resentment has festered among the party's old guard about crises in the banking sector and among state-owned firms during Dung's premiership.

Last year saw unusually fast paced liberal measures being introduced, however, including Vietnam's accession to multilateral free-trade accords, including the US-led Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Though the party's strategy is to continue to strengthen the \$186-billion exports and manufacturing economy, analysts and investors have said reform momentum could become uncertain under a new leadership. — Reuters



**Pakistani security personnel check students outside the Bacha Khan University in Charsadda, Pakistan yesterday. — AP**



# WORK TOGETHER FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE OF CHINA-ARAB RELATIONS

## PRESIDENT XI'S SPEECH AT ARAB LEAGUE HEADQUARTERS

Speech by HE Xi Jinping

**President of the People's Republic of China  
At the Arab League Headquarters  
Cairo, 21 January 2016**

**Your Excellency Nabil el-Araby, Secretary-General of the Arab League,  
Your Excellency Sherif Ismail, Prime Minister of Egypt,  
Distinguished Ministers,  
Your Excellencies Diplomatic Envoys of Arab States,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Friends,

It gives me great pleasure to meet with Arab friends. This is my first visit to the Arab world as Chinese President. First of all, on behalf of the Chinese government and people and in my own name, I wish to pay high tribute and extend best wishes to the Arab states and people.

An ancient Chinese philosopher said, "Visit those who you feel close to even without meeting them before, and invite those you cannot forget long after your paths crossed." Coming to the Arab world, my colleagues and I all feel a sense of affinity. This is because in their exchanges across time and space, the Chinese and Arab peoples have been sincere with each other, forging friendship along the ancient Silk Road, sharing weal and woe in the fight for national independence, and helping each other in building their own countries. Such trust is unbreakable and cannot be bought with money.

Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Friends,

The Middle East is a land of abundance. Yet we are pained to see it still plagued by war and conflict. Where should the Middle East be headed? This is the question the international community keeps asking. The people here want less conflict and suffering, more peace and dignity.

An Arab poet once wrote, when you turn to the sun, you will see hope. There is hope in the Middle East, and all parties should look for it by pursuing dialogue and development.

- The key to addressing differences is to enhance dialogue. Use of force offers no solution to problems, neither will zero-sum mentality bring enduring peace. The process of dialogue could be protracted, and may even suffer setbacks, but it entails minimal adverse after-effects and produces the most sustainable outcome. Parties to the conflict should begin dialogue, identify their biggest common interests, and focus on advancing the process of political settlement. The international community should respect the will and role of those directly involved, the neighboring countries and regional organizations, instead of imposing a solution from outside. For dialogue to succeed, there is need for utmost patience and flexibility.

- The key to overcoming difficulties is to accelerate development. Turmoil in the Middle East stems from the lack of development, and the ultimate solution will depend on development, which bears on everyone's well-being and dignity. It is a race against time and a struggle between hope and disillusion. Only when young people are able to live a fulfilled life with dignity through development can hope prevail in their heart. Only then will they voluntarily reject violence, extremist ideologies and terrorism.

- The key to choosing a right path is to make sure that it suits the national conditions. There is more than just one path leading to modernization. Given the varied historical conditions, it is only natural that different countries may choose different paths of development. As an Arab proverb reminds us, "Nothing can scratch your skin quite like your own nails." When exploring development paths, one will get nowhere by blindly copying others. Only by proceeding from one's own realities can the right path be found. The development path of a country can only be determined by its people in light of its history, cultural traditions, and level of economic and social development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Friends,

The Arab League is the symbol of unity among Arab states. To uphold the lawful national rights and interests of the Palestinian people is the lofty mission of the Arab League and the shared responsibility of the international community. The Palestinian issue should not be marginalized, still less should it fall into oblivion. It is an issue of fundamental importance to peace in the Middle East. To bring an end to the conflict, the international community should not only promote the resumption of talks and implementation of peace agreements, but also uphold fairness and justice. One cannot do without the other. Without fairness and justice, peace accord can only bring about a cold peace. The international community should stick to the principle of fairness and justice, and address historical injustice as soon as possible.

In this context, I wish to call on the international community to take more effective measures, resume peace talks at the political level and advance reconstruction on the economic front so as to bring hope to the Palestinian people at an early date. China firmly supports the Middle East peace process and supports the establishment of a State of Palestine enjoying full sovereignty on the basis of the 1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital. We understand the legitimate aspirations of Palestine to integrate into the international community as a state. We are in favor of putting in place a new mechanism to promote peace on the Middle East question and support efforts made by the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation toward this end. To improve Palestinian people's well-being, the Chinese government will provide 50 million RMB yuan of grant to the Palestinian side and support the

solar power station project in Palestine.

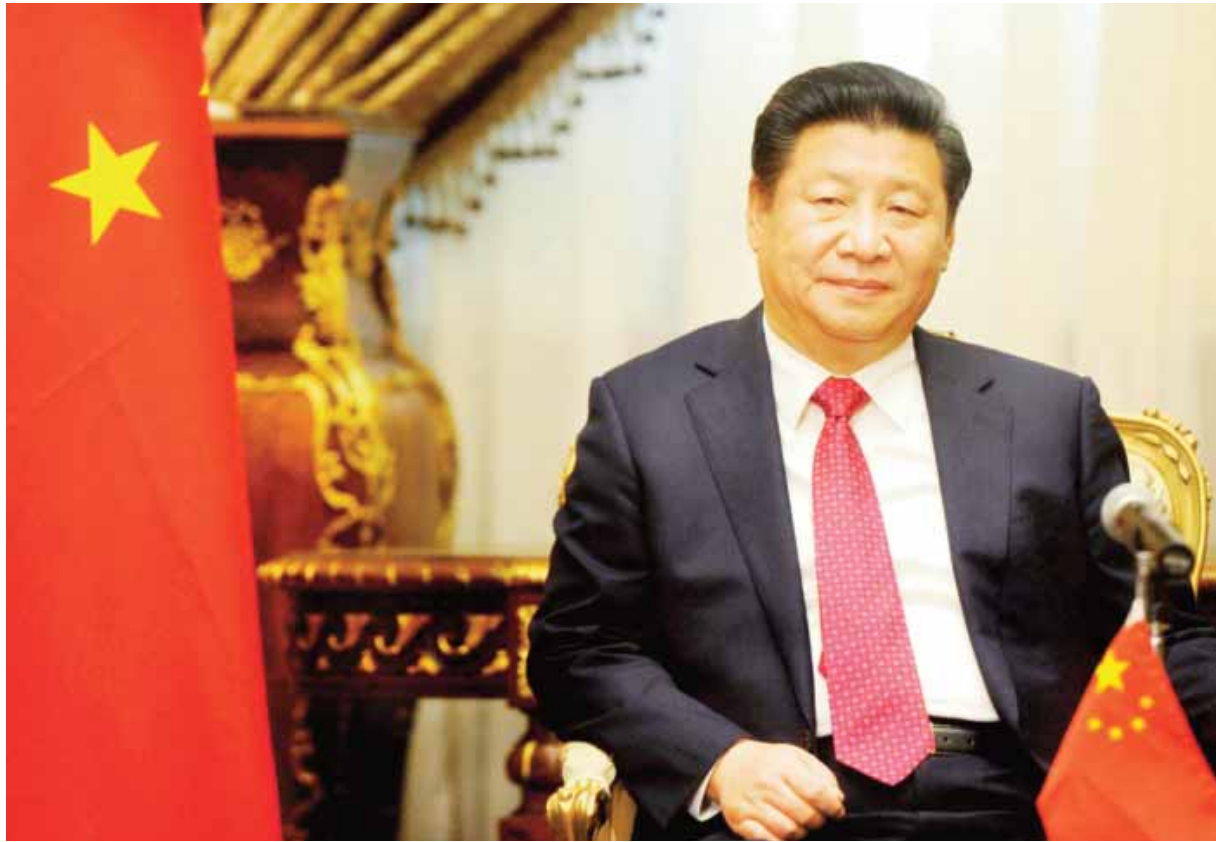
The current state of affairs in Syria is unsustainable. There will be no winner out of a conflict, and it is the people in the region who suffer. To address the hot-spots, what is most urgent now is to bring about ceasefire. Political dialogue is the path to a fundamental solution. At the same time, humanitarian assistance brooks no delay. This year, the Chinese side will provide 230 million RMB yuan of additional humanitarian assistance to the people of Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya and Yemen.

Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Friends,

At the Ministerial Conference of China-Arab States Cooperation Forum in Beijing in June 2014, I called for joint Chinese and Arab efforts to build the Belt and Road Initiative. I suggested that we take energy cooperation as one priority, infrastructure development and trade and investment facilitation as two key areas, and nuclear energy, aviation satellite and new energy as the three high-tech areas for breakthrough. This so-called "1+2+3" cooperation pattern was warmly received by our Arab friends, and now we have seen early harvest.

- Top-level designing is getting more mature. China and Arab states have set up the mechanism of Strategic and Political Dialogue. China has entered into strategic partnership with eight Arab states and signed agreements with six Arab states on jointly developing the Belt and Road Initiative. Seven Arab states have become founding members of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

- Pragmatic cooperation is thriving. Being the second largest trading partner of Arab states, China has signed US\$46.4 billion of new project contracts with them. FTA negotiations have resumed between the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and China and witnessed substantial progress. There are two RMB clearing centers in Arab states and two joint investment funds between China and Arab states. The China-Arab States Technology Transfer Center has been officially inaugurated. The two sides have agreed to set up training centers for peaceful use of nuclear energy and clean energy respectively, and to introduce the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System to Arab states.



President of the People's Republic of China Xi Jinping

The second China-Arab States Expo has seen the signing of cooperation projects worth 183 billion RMB yuan, serving as an important platform for our joint efforts to build the Belt and Road.

- People-to-people and cultural exchanges have become more diversified. We have carried out a variety of activities during the Year of China-Arab Friendship, signed agreement on the first joint university and started cooperation between 100 cultural institutions from both sides. The number of Arab students in China has exceeded 14,000. There are now 11 Confucius Institutes in Arab states. Every week, there are 183 flights between China and Arab states.

Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Friends,

China follows the path of peaceful development, an independent foreign policy of peace and a win-win strategy of opening-up. One of our priorities is to take an active part in global governance, pursue mutually beneficial cooperation, assume international responsibilities and obligations, expand convergence of interests with other countries and forge a community of shared future for mankind.

We need to make good use of the coming five years as the crucial period to jointly build the Belt and Road and set out the guiding principles of peace, innovation, guidance, governance and integration. We should be builders of peace, promoters of development, boosters of industrialization, supporters of stability and partners of people-to-people exchanges in the Middle East.

China is ready to work with Arab states to jointly build the Belt and Road and expand common ground in our respective effort to achieve national renewal.

First, we need to hold high the banner of peace and dialogue and take steps to promote stability. The Belt and Road Initiative calls for exchanges between nations and civilizations for mutual understanding, rather than mutual resentment. It is important to remove, rather than erect, walls between each other, take dialogue as the golden rule and be good neighbors with each other.

The ancient Chinese philosopher Mencius said, "Ensuring the right conduct and uphold justice should be the way to follow across the land." With regard to China's policy measures toward the Middle East, China decides its position on issues on the basis of their own merits and the fundamental interests of the people in the Middle East. Instead of looking for a proxy in the Middle East, we promote peace talks; instead of seeking any sphere of influence, we call on all parties to join the circle of friends for the Belt and Road Initiative; instead of attempting to fill the "vacuum", we build a cooperative partnership network for win-win outcomes.

The Chinese people believe in the philosophy of change and adaptation. The Arabs also say "continuing in the same state is impossible". We respect the Arab states' aspiration for reform, and support Arab states in their efforts to independently explore the path of development. To properly handle the relations between reform, development and stability is of vital importance. This is like camel racing, a popular sport in the Arab world. If the camel runs too fast at the beginning, it may be exhausted toward the end of the race. Yet if it starts too slow, it may lag behind in the end. Only the rider who keeps a good balance between speed and stamina can claim the final victory.

The spread of terrorist and extremist ideas poses a serious challenge to peace and development. Countries need to have consensus about the fight against terrorist and extremist forces. Terrorism knows no borders. There is no distinction between good and bad terrorism. And there should be no double standards in fighting terrorism. For the same reason, terrorism shall not be linked with any specific ethnic group or religion, as it will only create ethnic and religious tensions. No policy can be effective on its own, and a comprehensive strategy that addresses both symptoms and root causes must be applied in the fight against terrorism.

To this end, China will set up a China-Arab research center on reform and development. We will hold a roundtable on inter-civilization dialogue and eradicating extremism within the framework of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum and organize exchange of visits by 100 renowned religious leaders.

We will enhance cooperation on cyber security, block the online transmission of audio and video materials instigating violence and terrorism, and jointly participate in the formulation of an international counter-terrorism convention in the cyberspace. We will provide US\$300 million of assistance to support such projects as law enforcement cooperation and police training to help regional countries enhance their capacity in maintaining law and order.

Second, we need to advance structural adjustment and adopt new ways of cooperation. Given the ever more fierce global competition in development, we need to upgrade our cooperation. We need to advance the "oil and gas plus" cooperation model and further tap the potential of cooperation. China is ready to strengthen cooperation with Arab states across the entire industrial chain from upstream to midstream to downstream, renew long-term oil purchase agreement, and enter into strategic energy cooperation with Arab states that features mutual benefit, reliability and enduring friendship. It is important to set up new mechanism for trade and investment and expand space for cooperation.

As China is already on the fast track of outbound investment and Arab states boast strong sovereign wealth funds, we may sign more currency swap and mutual investment agreements, expand RMB settlement business, accelerate investment facilitation and steer the investment fund and private capital of our two sides toward major projects under the Belt and Road Initiative. It is important to step up high-tech cooperation and foster new driving force for our cooperation. On the basis of the existing technology transfer and training centers, the two sides may speed up the introduction of new and high technologies such as high-speed rail, nuclear power, aerospace, new energy and genetic engineering so as to add more value to the pragmatic cooperation between China and Arab states.

For this purpose, China will implement the action plan for new ways of cooperation, explore a model of package cooperation involving oil, loan and project, and extend the traditional oil and gas cooperation

chain to the development of new and renewable energy. China will take part in the development of industrial parks in the Middle East with priority given to the Suez Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone. By means of personnel training and joint planning and building of factories, we will integrate the whole process from processing and manufacturing to transportation and export. We will launch China-Arab states scientific and technological partnership program and jointly build 10 laboratories on modern agriculture, ICT and health. We will hold China-Arab States BeiDou Cooperation Forum.

Third, we need to advance industrialization in the Middle East and carry out production capacity cooperation. Production capacity cooperation is consistent with the overall trend of economic diversification in the Middle East. It can help Middle East countries embark on a new path of efficient, people-oriented and green industrialization.

Chinese equipment is of high quality yet inexpensive price. Combined with technology transfer, personnel training and strong financing support, they can help countries in the Middle East develop urgently needed industries such as iron and steel, non-ferrous metals, construction materials, glass, car manufacturing and power plant with relative low cost to fill the gap in their industrial structure and foster new comparative advantages. China's competitive production capacity and the human resources in the Middle East, when combined, will deliver more and better job opportunities for the region.

This morning, I attended the inauguration ceremony of the second phase of the China-Egypt Suez Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone. The project will bring to Egypt over 100 companies in such sectors as textile, garment, oil equipment, motorcycle and solar energy, and create over 10,000 job opportunities for Egypt.

In order to promote the industrialization process of the Middle East, China will work with Arab states to launch an action plan for production capacity cooperation. Under this initiative, China will set up a US\$15 billion special loan for industrialization in the Middle East to be used on production capacity cooperation and infrastructure projects in regional countries, and provide countries in the Middle East with US\$10 billion of commercial loans to support production capacity cooperation. China will also provide US\$10 billion of concessional loans with even more favorable terms for regional countries. Meanwhile, China will launch a US\$20 billion joint investment fund with the UAE and Qatar to primarily invest in traditional energy, infrastructure development and high-end manufacturing industries in the Middle East.

Fourth, we need to strengthen cultural exchanges and mutual learning and take actions to enhance friendship. Like the diverse species in Mother Nature, cultural diversity gives life to our planet. The Middle East is the meeting place of ancient human civilizations and home to diverse and splendid civilizations and cultures. China will continue to unswervingly support Middle East and Arab states in preserving their ethnic and cultural traditions, and oppose all forms of discrimination and prejudice against specific ethnic group and religion.

The Chinese and Arab civilizations each have their own systems and distinctive features, yet they both embody the common ideals and aspirations of mankind for development and progress, and they both champion such values as moderation, peace, forgiveness, tolerance and self-restraint. We should promote dialogue among civilizations in a spirit of inclusiveness and mutual learning and explore together values in our respective cultural tradition that remain relevant today as positive guidance for good relations.

The regions covered by the Belt and Road Initiative are vibrant in people-to-people exchanges. The close ties between our peoples must be nurtured through constant efforts. Yesterday, I met with ten old Arab friends who received the Award for Outstanding Contribution to China-Arab Friendship. It is the hard work of generations of friendly people from both sides that has enabled the seedlings of China-Arab friendship to grow into luxuriant and evergreen trees.

In order to ensure the smooth flow of talents and ideas along the Belt and Road, we will implement the "hundred, thousand and ten thousand" project for enhancing China-Arab friendship. Under the project, we will launch a "Silk Road Book Translation" program for the translation of 100 Chinese and Arab classics into each other's language. We will strengthen connectivity between our think tanks and invite 100 experts and scholars to visit each other's countries. We will provide 1,000 training opportunities for young Arab leaders and invite 1,500 leaders of Arab political parties to visit China to bring up young envoys and political leaders for China-Arab friendship. We will also provide 10,000 scholarships and 10,000 training opportunities for Arab states and organize mutual visits for 10,000 Chinese and Arab artists.

Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Friends,

As an Egyptian proverb goes, "Man fears time. Time fears the pyramid." To me, nothing is more enduring than the great spirit of reform and freedom that defines the Egyptian people. Today's Egypt represents the hope of a renewed civilization and carries the mission of national rejuvenation. China firmly supports the efforts of the Egyptian government and people and looks to Egypt to become a pillar of stability and model of development in the region.

In the pursuit of national rejuvenation, setbacks and pains are hardly avoidable. Yet if the path is correct, one will eventually reach his destination. China and Arab states must forge ahead hand in hand to scale new heights, deepen friendship and cooperation, and make a joint endeavor for the lofty cause of peace and development for mankind.

Shukran. Thank you.

(From the Embassy of China in Kuwait)





**A Lebanese man takes pictures of his wife and daughter as they stand in front of icicles hanging on stones in Mdeirej village on Mount Lebanon yesterday. A snowstorm is currently hitting Lebanon isolating dozens of villages and cutting the highway linking Beirut with the Syrian capital of Damascus. Schools and daycares were also closed because of the storm, one of the strongest to hit Lebanon this winter. — AP**

## ROUHANI STARTS EUROPEAN TRIP

Continued from Page 1

He also revealed that "important contracts" were in the works with French car makers Peugeot and Renault, adding to a burgeoning list of deals being struck as European companies scramble to get back into a \$400-billion (370-billion-euro) economy with the fourth biggest reserves of oil in the world and a consumer market of 80 million people. National carrier Iran Air said on Sunday it would be buying 114 Airbus planes to modernize an ageing fleet that has struggled to stay in the air as a result of the impact of sanctions.

The deal, to be signed in Paris this week, underlines the huge economic stakes involved in Iran's re-opening, particularly for Europe's manufacturing and engineering sectors. Iran's Transport Minister Abbas Akhoundi said the first Airbuses were earmarked for delivery by March and that Iran was in the market for a total of up to 500 planes. Peugeot is tipped to forge a car assembly joint venture with Iran Khodro, reviving a partnership which generated Iranian sales of 473,000 units in its last year before the French company pulled out in 2012.

Iranian media reported the deal will involve investment of \$500 million. Iran's Central Bank governor said last week the country was counting on the nuclear deal unblocking some \$50 billion worth of foreign investment. Italian companies have been amongst the quickest off the blocks with a major business delegation having visited Tehran in November and some 500 entrepreneurs invited to a forum Rouhani will attend on Tuesday.

Italy was formerly Iran's biggest European trading partner but trade has dwindled to a fifth of its former volume as a result of the sanctions. Italian media are predicting deals this week worth \$17 billion, topped by a five-billion-euro contract for pipeline company Saipem. National carrier Alitalia said yesterday it was upgrading its Rome-Tehran service from four a week to daily flights in anticipation of increased business and tourist travel.

Amid the scramble for slices of the Iranian pie, rights groups fear Tehran's repression of political dissent and extensive use of the death penalty will be forgotten. Pope Francis is expected to reiterate the Vatican's concerns on both issues, as well as asking Rouhani to help protect Christians in the Middle East. — AFP

## EGYPTIANS MARK UPRISING

Continued from Page 1

Several secular and leftist activists who spearheaded the anti-Mubarak uprising have also been jailed. Morsi's blacklisted Muslim Brotherhood movement was the only group to have called for protests yesterday, and a few of its supporters tried to demonstrate in Cairo's Al-Haram district near the pyramids, but quickly dispersed fearing police retaliation. "The January revolution still exists in all squares of Egypt and will fade only after achieving all of its goals and defeating the military coup (against Morsi)," a Brotherhood statement said yesterday.

In a speech last month, Sisi warned against any demonstration marking the anniversary. "I am hearing calls to stage a new revolution. Why? ... I came to power with your will and choice, not against your will," he said. Sisi, who does not belong to any political party, won a presidential election in 2014 riding a wave of popularity after ousting Morsi. A new parliament was inaugurated earlier this month but it is dominated by pro-Sisi law-

makers and is unlikely to pose any challenge to his rule. "It's now clear that the counter-revolution has triumphed," said Karim Bitar of the Paris-based Institute of International and Strategic Studies. "The revolution has been confiscated and buried." Many Egyptians tired of years of political unrest and instability support Sisi, saying there are no alternatives and that some level of stability has been achieved by his regime. "The demands of protesters that led to the January 25 revolution still exist. The only reason Egyptians have sacrificed them since then is a hope that the country will achieve stability," said Hazem Hosni, professor of political science at Cairo university.

Sisi still faces serious challenges, including reviving a sluggish economy as investments and tourist revenues fall, and a deadly insurgency led by the Egyptian affiliate of the Islamic State jihadist group. Hundreds of police and soldiers have been killed in militant attacks since Morsi's ouster and security forces have so far been unable to quell the insurgency. — Agencies

## SAUDIS PRESENT PLAN TO MOVE BEYOND OIL

Continued from Page 1

budget, to push economic diversification and to consider a share listing of Aramco.

Falih later told reporters that his country is not to blame for low prices. Unlike others who store crude on ships while they look for buyers, "Saudi Aramco and therefore Saudi Arabia does not ship a single barrel without a customer... Our supply is tightly, tightly linked to end-user demand," he said. Falih said there are two possible options for a stock market listing of Saudi Aramco, which sits on crude reserves of 261.1 billion barrels. "One is to bundle together a significant downstream portfolio" such as its chemicals and marketing operations.

Another, being considered for the first time in Saudi Arabia, is to possibly list a percentage of "everything we do", Falih told the forum. He called Saudi Aramco the kingdom's "crown jewel" which would not be publicly listed as a cash-generating exercise. Rather, "it's a sign of the times" as the kingdom opens for business, he said.

Over 2,400 people, including local and foreign officials, business, consultants and academics, registered for the event, staged by the government's investment promotion agency. Commerce and industry minister Tawfiq Al-Rabiah said Saudi Arabia had been a victim of the "Dutch disease" - a condition in which the oil sector had crowded out other parts of the economy - but was now working to correct that. Under the reforms, parts of the national healthcare system would be converted into independent commercial companies, officials said.

Participants in the conference, including the chief executives of US aerospace firm Lockheed Martin and Pepsico, discussed subjects ranging from how to foster entrepreneurs to ways of developing dynamic cities and increasing the role of Saudi women in the business world. The heavy presence of foreign business representatives suggested many saw opportunities in the Saudi strategy. Although Riyadh is burning through its foreign assets to cover the budget gap, it still had \$628 billion in November, enough to finance years of new

projects.

Some participants expressed doubt about the scale of the planned change in a country where about two-thirds of local workers are in the public sector, preferring it to more rigorous private employment. There is little tradition of entrepreneurship in the world's biggest oil exporter, and financial and legal systems have not been set up to encourage it.

"The transition away from being a rentier state is not a comfortable one," said David Chaudron, managing partner of the California-based Organized Change Consultancy, which works with Saudi companies. "They're trying. But the fundamental question is: will their trying bear enough fruit before the downside of the current system hits? Or is it a day late and a dollar short? Will the forces of change ultimately be enough to overcome the inertia of the current system? I don't know."

The US ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Joseph Westphal, pointed to risks in administering the plans. "Saudi Arabia has to have a government system that is adaptable," he said, adding that top officials would need to delegate decisions and authorities would have to be willing to take risks in the recognition that there would be some failures.

Nevertheless, many participants at the conference recognized that strong political momentum had now built up behind the reform plans, many of which had previously been discussed for years without result. The momentum has increased since King Salman took the throne in January last year and created a powerful Council of Economic and Development Affairs chaired by his son, Prince Mohammed bin Salman. The government is believed to have hired hundreds of Western consultants to work on the plans. Falih said that in addition to using its spending to start industries such as shipbuilding, Saudi Aramco would use its extensive educational and vocational training programs to help create the human capital needed for the transformation. "Saudi Aramco will be a bridge for a transition away from itself," he said. — Agencies

## IS PLANNING MAJOR EUROPE ATTACKS

Continued from Page 1

Seven are shown outdoors behind victims who are later decapitated or shot, while another is seen carrying out target practice. Purported ringleader Abdelhamid Abaaoud, who was in Europe for several months before the attacks, is the only one speaking inside a room. The fighters' battlefield names are given, and the video confirms for the first time that IS trained the attackers and sent them to carry out the assault, rather than merely inspiring supporters from afar.

"The clear preparation that went into it... specifically highlights how this was a plot that was directed by core IS," said Raffaello Pantucci of the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) in London. "The dilemma has always been: was IS actually employing assets against the West or was it just creating noise to throw sand in our faces? Now it's quite clear they are attacking."

The video features images of French President Francois Hollande and British Prime Minister David Cameron with targets superimposed on them. Referring to the 70-nation coalition fighting IS, Abaaoud warns that "the more you wage war against the Islamic State, the more it will expand... for we are terrorists." But Hollande, who is on a visit to India, dismissed the threats. "Nothing will deter us, no threat will make France waver in the fight against terrorism," he told reporters. And Cameron's office said the video showed "an appalling terrorist group that's clearly in decline and in retreat."

With French and Arabic songs playing in the background, the video calls for the murder of Westerners, and names two of the Paris streets where several of the attacks took place. It also praises Amedy Coulibaly, who killed four hostages at a Jewish supermarket in Jan 2015, two days after the Kouachi brothers staged a deadly attack on the Charlie Hebdo magazine, killing 12. The video, produced by IS' Al-Hayat Media Centre, shows television news footage of the night of the attacks, and the chaos in Paris, with red targets superimposed over special forces in the streets of the French capital. It was not clear why the video was released more than two months after the devastating attack, but Pantucci suggested it was merely a tactic to "reclaim the news agenda again".

In a report released yesterday, the European police agency Europol warned IS was planning more attacks on soft targets in the EU. IS has developed an "external action command" which was trained for "special forces-style attacks" internationally, the report said. Europol chief Rob Wainwright told a news conference that "the so-called Islamic State had developed a new combat style capability to carry out a campaign of large-scale terrorist attacks on a global stage - with a particular focus in Europe." "So-called Islamic State has a willingness and a capability to carry out further attacks in Europe, and of course all national authorities are working to prevent that from happening," he added.

Wainwright was unveiling the findings of a new Europol report on changes in how the jihadist group operates, coinciding with the launch of the agency's new counterterrorism center in The Hague. "IS is preparing more terrorist attacks, including more 'Mumbai-style' attacks, to be executed in member states of the EU, and in France in particular," the Europol report said. "The attacks will be primarily directed at soft targets, because of the impact it generates. Both the November Paris attacks and the October 2015 bombing of a Russian airliner suggest a shift in IS strategy towards going global."

IS had developed an "external action command" which was trained for "special forces-style attacks" internationally, the report said. But the report played down fears that jihadists were smuggling themselves into Europe as part of the huge wave of refugees and migrants that the continent is dealing with, many of whom are fleeing the war in Syria. "There is no concrete evidence that terrorist travellers systematically use the flow of refugees to enter Europe unnoticed," it said.

It warned however that many new arrivals were vulnerable to radicalization or recruitment, with evidence that extremist recruiters were specifically targeting refugee centers. One of the main tasks of the new Europol counter-terrorism center was to collect details on the estimated 5,000 Europeans who have gone to fight with IS in Syria and Iraq, Wainwright said. "We already have details on 3,700 fighters actively engaged in the conflict zone but that's not the full picture and it's something we will be addressing through priority work of the new center," it said. — Agencies

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## Focus

# OIL BOOMTOWN PAINFULLY ADJUSTS TO LIFE AFTER BUST

By Nia Williams

Canada's northern oil hub Fort McMurray is learning the hard way that there is no such thing as simply going back to normal after a long boom that got cut short by the collapse in crude prices. With prices down 70 percent over 18 months, producers have deferred costly new oil sands projects and laid off tens of thousands of mainly fly-in fly-out workers, who overwhelmed the city during the 15-year oil boom, but also bankrolled much of its prosperity.

That huge shadow population, which by some estimates peaked at around 70,000 nearly matching the city's permanent population of around 80,000, stretched its public services, inflated rents and property prices. The stress was so great that city officials welcomed the onset of the market downturn with a sense of relief - an opportunity to return to a more balanced development. Now, downtown parking and spots at popular restaurants and cafes are easy to find and traffic flows smoothly. But local businesses estimate that half of the transient workers have left, heading home to other parts of Alberta and other provinces, and say the exodus has hit them hard. "Anybody who tells you it's not tough, they are lying," said Jeff Peddle, a restaurant owner and property manager. He said he and his wife work 15-hour days, seven days a week, to keep their businesses going after cutting staff. Several new restaurants opened in the city in 2015 in an unlucky turn of timing, including Peddle's Jamaican restaurant, and Cosa Nostra, an upscale Italian with a dress code and live piano music. "I started this project two years ago when this town was booming and everything was rock and roll," said Cosa Nostra owner and chef Mark Hobson. "Now everybody is crossing their fingers. We are struggling with the fact there are not a lot of people in town."

Statistics paint a similar picture of a swift and painful descent from the heights of the boom when the regional economy kept growing by nearly 8 percent a year. Last year, local authorities estimate it shrunk by over 1 percent, while unemployment in the Wood Buffalo-Cold Lake region nearly doubled over the past year to 8.6 percent in December. The city started trimming its budgets shelving C\$84 million of capital projects in 2015, including an energy supply pipe to downtown Fort McMurray and a waste water treatment plant. It also trimmed its initial 2016 budget by C\$30 million to C\$831 million. Demand for the local food bank, which mainly caters to the local population, soared 76 percent last year, according to executive director Arianna Johnson.

## Shrinking City Syndrome

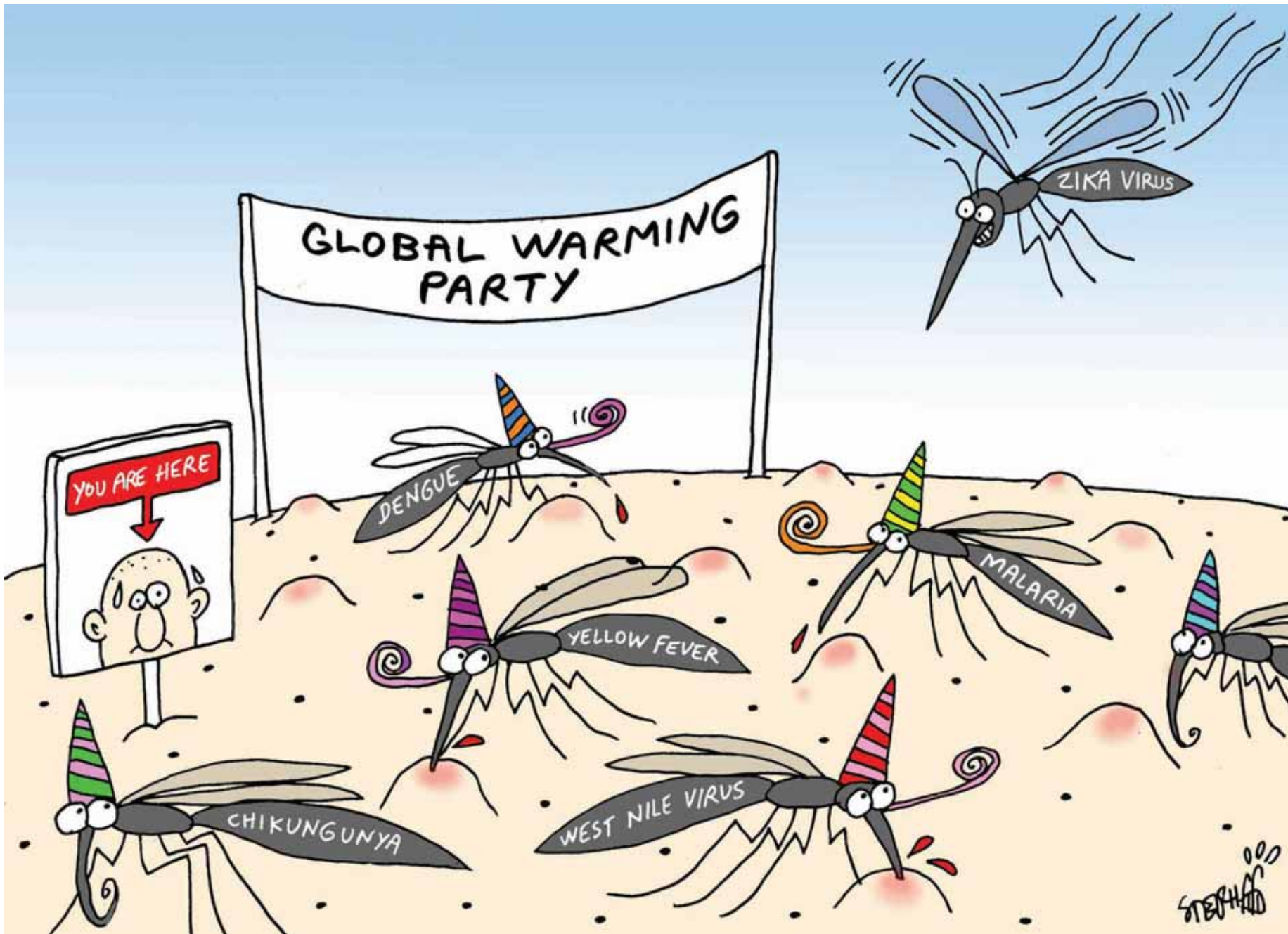
Fort McMurray and other former hotspots, such as Williston in the heart of North Dakota's vast Bakken shale formation, risk experiencing a "shrinking city" syndrome that "Rust Belt" mining towns grappled with decades ago, said Sandeep Agrawal, urban studies and regional planning professor at the University of Alberta. "It is very difficult for these municipalities to change course because they have never thought in that way, or they get caught in the euphoria of growth," Agrawal said.

Local officials frown at “boomtown” or “ghost town” labels, saying there is more to the local economy than oil. “It was a boomtown western frontier, which is not true, and now it’s doom and gloom and Fort McMurray is empty, which is also not true,” councillor Tyran Ault said. There is no denying though, that oil has been a key factor in the modern history of the city that was founded in 1870 as a fur trading post and a gateway to the Arctic.

A \$250 million investment in the 1960s by the company that is now Sunco Energy hatched the oil sands industry that went into overdrive in the 2000s with improved technology and climbing global oil prices. Workers would fly in from as far away as Cape Breton on Canada's Atlantic Coast and the permanent population soared by more than 70 percent between 2000 and 2012. Now the city, which in 2011 projected its population to reach 230,000 by 2030, is adjusting its budgets to new forecasts of 1-2 percent population growth and grappling with post-boom withdrawal symptoms. For sale signs pop up on almost every block, 30 percent of rental properties are empty compared with around 10 percent a year earlier and some commercial buildings sit vacant downtown. The airport, lavishly refurbished in 2014 for \$525 million (\$182.81 million) saw Dec 2015 passenger numbers drop by a quarter year-on-year and flights to destinations such as Denver, Colorado and Mexico suspended.

Nearly half of the city's 2,550 hotel rooms stood empty last year compared with a third in 2014, as did camps in the muskeg and boreal forest surrounding the city that housed tens of thousands of the fly-in-fly-out workers. "Our parents said save for a rainy day," said Ian Robb, president of the union representing camp cleaners and cooks. "Well, it's pouring now." Yet many in the city accept it will have its ups and downs and cling to the hope the boom times will return. "Fort McMurray is always a transient town, it's nature of the beast with the work we do here," said Herb Exell, assistant business manager with the IBEW Union, representing electrical workers. "When things are going well this community can double overnight." —Reuters

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# WOMEN NURTURE TREES, PRIDE IN FOREST DRIVE

**By Aamir Saeed**

**R**obina Gul has swapped her needle for a trowel. Until recently, the villager from northern Pakistan got by making clothes for family weddings and religious festivals, but now she is encouraging other women to set up tree nurseries like hers that can earn them a handsome monthly income. Gul is growing some 25,000 saplings of 13 different species crammed into the small courtyard of her two-room house in Najaf Pur, a village of around 8,000 people in the Haripur district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. "It gives me immense pleasure to look after the saplings as this has changed my whole life," said Gul, 35. "It has become a hobby for me and a source of income too."

She set up the nursery at her home in March last year under an agreement with the provincial forest department. The government provides around a quarter of the start-up cost for poor households to set up a tree nursery, with a subsidy amounting to 150,000 rupees (\$1,429.93) each over a year. They first get black polythene bags from the forest department to fill with mud and manure, followed by seeds and training on how to sow them and tend to the trees. "I am now getting over 12,000 rupees per month (from the subsidy), just by looking after the saplings in my home," Gul said. "I have also acquired the skills I need to grow different seedlings, and this will help me earn enough even after the project is wound up."

The provincial government is planning to spend 21 billion rupees from its budget through to May 2018, when its term ends, on a project called the "Billion Tree Tsunami". The goal is to plant 1 billion trees in degraded forest areas and on private land. The project is part of the Green Growth Initiative launched in February 2014 in Peshawar by former international cricket star Imran Khan, who is chairman of the

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party, which governs the province.

The initiative aims to boost local economic development in a way that uses natural resources sustainably, with a focus on increasing clean energy uptake and forest cover. The government has turned forest restoration into a business model by outsourcing nurseries to the private sector, including widows, poor women and young people. This provides the government with saplings to plant, as well as green jobs for the community. At the same time, illegal logging has been almost eliminated in the province following strict disciplinary action against some officials who were involved. Other measures include hiring local people to guard forests and banning wood transportation.

### Economic Boost

According to government data, Pakistan has forest cover on 4.4 million hectares (10.87 million acres) or 5 percent of its land area, while the current rate of deforestation is 27,000 hectares per year, one of the highest in the world. The forestry sector contributed \$1.3 billion to Pakistan's economy in 2011, or around 0.6 percent of GDP, while employing some 53,000 people directly, according to Global Forest Watch. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, individuals interested in setting up a small-scale nursery of 25,000 plants are selected by Village Development Committees.

The provincial government guarantees to buy the saplings they grow, according to Malik Amin Aslam, adviser to Khan and global vice president of the International Union for Conservation of Nature. "The government provides seeds and all relevant technical assistance to the beneficiaries, and then buys back one-year-old saplings at a fixed price of six rupees per seedling," he said.

So far, there are 1,747 private and 280 government-run nurseries in the province, with a planting stock of 45 million

and 165 million saplings respectively, he said. They will all be transplanted onto the land in March and April, he added. "These nurseries are not only providing the planting stock for the 'Billion Tree' drive but are also generating tremendous economic activity throughout the province," he said. Aslam said the government had planted 115 million saplings so far and sown seeds for 300 million more at a cost of 1.5 billion rupees, with a survival rate of over 80 percent for the young trees planted out in August and September.

## Involving Women

Zobia Gul, a community development officer in the forest department, mobilizes women and educated girls in remote areas to play an active part in society by setting up nurseries. "Most of the families in the rural part of the province are conservative," she said. "Here comes the role of the female forest officials in reaching women in their homes and informing them about the project."

Local men appear happy with efforts to include women in the scheme because it allows them to bring in money without having to go out to work. Over 500 women are directly involved in the project, giving them pride in their work establishing the nurseries and serving as custodians of the forests around their villages, the officer said. Inspired by these women, around 150 more across the province have registered with community development officers to start nurseries in the upcoming season, starting from March.

"I am going to become part of Imran Khan's vision and the 'Billion Tree Tsunami' project," said Farwa Ambreen, a recent graduate from the University of Peshawar. "I believe this is going to help not only Pakistan but also the whole world in boosting the green economy and tackling climate change," she said. —Reuters

# RURAL GERMANY 'INTEGRATION LAB' FOR REFUGEES

**By Mathilde Richter**

**G**erman villages and small towns could hold the key to socially integrating a mass influx of refugees who would in turn help revitalize dwindling rural populations, experts say. "The rural regions are a laboratory of integration," said Karl-Friedrich Thoene from the infrastructure and agriculture ministry of the eastern state of Thuringia. Unlike in densely populated big cities, "there can be no parallel societies in rural areas," he said. "The village community is the ideal chance for integration."

The lower cost of living, cheaper rents and tight-knit communities in the countryside are main "factors of success" for integrating the newcomers, said Gudrun Kirchhoff, an expert on refugee issues at the German Institute of Urban Affairs. Social life in small communities is typically held together by clubs and associations in which most villagers take part, experts point out. Germany has taken in more than 1.5 million asylum seekers since 2014, from war-torn Syria to Balkan countries. On arrival, they are allocated accommodation across the country, with cities, towns and villages all expected to take their share.

### Dwindling Rural Populations

Wolfgang Borst, major of the Bavarian village of Hofheim, population 5,000, is among those who see the influx as a opportunity. "We are very satisfied. We are gaining a lot more villagers," said Borst, who has long been concerned about Hofheim's dwindling population. Of four young Syrians living in Hofheim who have just obtained refugee status, "one will leave, the other three will stay," he said. Borst was speaking at the Gruene Woche (Green Week) agricultural fair in Berlin, which ran until January 24 and where the refugee issue was the subject of many round-table and panel discussions.

Some regard the mass arrivals as a huge challenge, but others see it as a chance. And for the refugees themselves, frequent-

ly traumatized by the war and destruction they escaped, the peace and quiet of the open countryside can be a godsend. Hofheim and six nearby communities have taken in a total of 224 migrants and housed them in 19 homes. Their joint "asylum support group" organizes German language courses, traffic safety classes and sporting activities.

That is not to say that life in remote and isolated communities is free of problems. Dwellings are frequently far apart, public transport networks are threadbare and people often have to travel long distances to see a doctor or attend a language class. There are also entrenched social structures, very clear ideas about societal norms and often a "latent racism" and distrust of outsiders, said Kirchhoff. More prosaically, Internet connections are often slow and

few supermarkets stock the staple food-stuffs that the refugees are used to.

## Dismantling Prejudice

Granske, with a population of 4,000 and located 65 km north of Berlin, has opened up a home with space for 80 refugees. "Initially, reactions were hostile," said Klaus Pölitz, co-founder of an initiative called 'Welcome to Granske.' "Our aim was to prepare for their arrival and dismantle prejudice." When the first Serb family arrived in 2014, he and the mayor used Google Translate software to write a short welcome speech, much to the newcomers' bemusement. Pölitz remembered with a chuckle.

While refugees are obliged to stay in their assigned accommodation during the asylum application process, they are free to move once they are given refugee sta-

tus. And many choose to move to the cities, where more of their compatriots live or the employment prospects are better. Thoene argued that "we need incentives to persuade the migrants to stay" in rural areas.

Gerlinde Augustin, who heads the SDL institute for rural and land development in Augsburg, said care should be taken not to pit the interests of newcomers against those of native inhabitants. A local family who has waited for months for a kindergarten place, for example, may have little understanding if refugees are awarded a place straight away, she said. Timm Fuchs, of the German federation of towns and municipalities, argued that not every village should have to take in refugees, only those that are economically strong enough to cope. —AFP

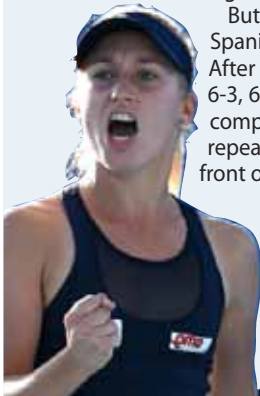


This file photo taken on Nov 9, 2015 shows migrants walking on the road after crossing the Austrian-German border near the Bavarian village of Wegscheid in southern Germany. —AFP



## GAVRILOVA SORRY FOR ‘LITTLE GIRL’ MELTDOWN

**MELBOURNE:** New Australian tennis star Daria Gavrilova has shown refreshing humility by admitting she acted like “a little girl” and needed to learn from it after a mid-match meltdown at the Australian Open. The Moscow-born Gavrilova, who only received her Australian passport in recent weeks, has been a breakout star at Melbourne Park, winning legions of new fans with her formidable game and sunny disposition.



But she had a centre-court tantrum against experienced Spaniard Carla Suarez in the fourth round on Sunday night. After winning the opening set 6-0, she lost focus to crash 6-3, 6-2 in the next two sets and lose. In shades of madcap compatriot Nick Kyrgios, the 21-year-old chastised herself, repeatedly threw her racquet and kicked a ball in disgust in front of the sell-out crowd and global television audience.

“It wasn’t great and I’m very disappointed with myself. I was being a little girl. Just, yeah, I’m very disappointed with myself,” she said. “I got emotionally fried in the second set. I was getting angry with myself, just showing way too much emotion. I’ve never played that deep in a Grand Slam, so maybe that’s why. —AFP

## EUROPEAN MEDALIST AMONG RUSSIANS BANNED FOR DOPING

**MOSCOW:** The Russian Olympic Committee has banned four track and field athletes for doping, including a silver medalist from the 2012 European championships. Irina Maracheva, who won silver in the 800 meters at the European competition in Helsinki, received a two-year ban. Several other Russian 800-meter runners have either been given doping bans in recent years or are under investigation, including Olympic champion Mariya Savinova.

Maracheva originally finished third in the 800 final in 2012 but was upgraded to silver when Russian teammate Yelena Arzhakova was disqualified from the gold-medal position for doping. Race walker Anna Lukyanova, a former silver medalist at the world junior championships, was banned for two years and joins a list of more than 30 doping cases in recent years linked to the Russian national walking center in the city of Saransk. There were also four-year bans for runners Maria Nikolaeva, an 800-meter specialist, and Elena Nikulina, who races in the 400. The sanctions were the first handed down by the ROC, which has gained some authority over the Russian track and field federation since it was banned from global competition in November over allegations of systematic doping. In a statement late Sunday, the ROC did not specify which violations the four athletes had committed, when the bans were dated from, or which results would be canceled out as a result. ROC spokesman Konstantin Vybormov told The Associated Press on Monday that “practically all” of the cases involved the biological passport system, which analyses athletes’ blood for evidence of doping. —AP

## MANCINI SINGLES OUT INEPT INTER STRIKERS

**MILAN:** Roberto Mancini has warned misfiring Inter Milan they need to awake from their goals slumber as the Serie A giants’ title challenge took a knock at the weekend. “We’re creating the chances, but we need to be more intelligent in the way we deal with them and finish them off, otherwise it becomes a problem,” Mancini said after Inter dropped points for the third consecutive game in a 1-1 draw with 10-man Carpi. “I’m 50 years old, and even I would have scored from some of the chances we had.” As fellow Argentinians Gonzalo Higuain and Paulo Dybala continue their impressive goals quest, Inter’s main striker Mauro Icardi has yet to get up to speed. The Argentinian shared the league’s top scorer’s award with Luca Toni last year after both finished on 22 goals. In 21 games this term, Higuain is on record pace for Napoli with 21 goals and Dybala claimed his 12th of the campaign for Juventus in a 1-0 defeat of Roma. Icardi has scored eight in 18 appearances.

Although Icardi was not the only culprit for Inter-Ivan Perisic, who had six shots on goal Sunday, and Adem Ljajic spurned good opportunities-the misses are proving costly. Inter were heading for their first win in three games thanks to Rodrigo Palacio’s lucky 39th minute tap-in until surrendering to a Carpi counter-attack in the dying minutes. —AFP



# TOULON MAIN THREAT TO ENGLISH TITLE DROUGHT

**PARIS:** It may be nine years since an English side lifted Europe’s top club prize but the Premiership has never had a better chance than this year. Of the five European Champions Cup groups, four were won by English teams while Northampton only missed out to Racing 92 in Pool 3 on bonus points. Five of the eight quarter-finalists are English and three of them will be playing at home in the last eight.

What’s more, Wasps topped a Pool 5 including reigning three-in-a-row champions Toulon, Exeter won a Pool 2 that contained last year’s beaten finalists Clermont and Saracens took a perfect six wins from six matches in the Pool 1 of record four-time former winners Toulouse. Add to that Leicester topped a group with French champions Stade Francais and the future looks rosy for the English.

It’s been a remarkable turnaround in a competition that had become the private possession of first the Irish and then the French in recent years. Leinster and Toulon won six of the eight titles between them since Wasps were the last English team to lift the trophy in 2007, beating Leicester 25-9 at Twickenham.

England are guaranteed to have a team in the final, though, as all four sides in one half of the draw are from the Premiership. The winners of the Wasps-Exeter quarter-final will play the winners of Saracens-Northampton in the last four. For some, Exeter Chiefs amongst them, the first task will be adjusting to their surprise progress and aiming higher.

“We didn’t expect to be winning the pool, but the players put in a fantastic shift and got a real tangible reward for it,” said Exeter head coach Rob Baxter after the remarkable Pool 2 finale ended with a 33-17 win over Ospreys. Wasps were also surprised to take top spot in their group, the only one ever to feature four former winners. “Topping the group is a major achievement,” said head coach Dai Young.

“Just to be in the quarter-finals for two years on the trot is a huge statement from the club.”

### ‘Happy at home’

For the likes of Saracens, beaten finalists against Toulon in 2014, or twice former winners Leicester, anything other than reaching the final will be seen as failure. “You go into a one-off game in the quarter-final and they’re all good teams who have come through. They’re all able to beat each other,” said Leicester head coach Richard Cockerill, whose side host Stade Francais in the last eight.

“We’ll be happy to be at home because historically that gives you the best chance of going further.” Victory might see them face Toulon in the semi-finals. It will still take something special to beat Toulon, who actually won five matches to Wasps’ four in Pool 5 but lost out on head-to-head record after the English side’s four bonus points allowed them to finish level at the top.

Toulon showed incredible grit just to get through their group, a try from Australia wing Drew Mitchell after the final buzzer giving them victory at home to Wasps in their penultimate game where a defeat would have seen them eliminated. They also battled through two tight games with Bath (12-9 and 19-14) and won by just four points away to Leinster, turning around a 16-7 half-time deficit to win 20-16. But next up they must get past compatriots if they are to reach the last four as a trip to Racing awaits them in April.

Just reaching the quarter-finals was an exploit not lost on Toulon manager Bernard Laporte who described it as an “immense satisfaction” and said he was “very proud” of his team. “Now we have a quarter-final in April,” said Laporte. “It will be away, that’s true, but these type of matches are vice-tight. It’s always close. In any case, we’re still there.” As long as that’s the case, the English drought won’t be over. — AFP



**CHICAGO:** Dmitrij Jaskin #23 of the St. Louis Blues tries to control the puck between Trevor van Riemsdyk #57 and Brent Seabrook #7 of the Chicago Blackhawks at the United Center. — AP

# BLACKHAWKS BACK TO WINNING WAYS, WIDEN CENTRAL LEAD

**CHICAGO:** Corey Crawford stopped 25 shots for his league-leading seventh shutout, rookie Artemi Panarin and Andrew Shaw scored and the Chicago Blackhawks beat the St Louis Blues 2-0 on Sunday night to end a two-game losing streak. Crawford wasn’t consistently tested while earning his 19th career shutout. The defending Stanley Cup champion Blackhawks rebounded from listless road losses at Tampa Bay and Florida that followed a franchise-record 12-game winning streak. St Louis’s Brian Elliott made 23 saves in his eighth straight start since taking over for Jake Allen, who suffered a lower-body injury on Jan. 8. Elliott is 5-2-2 since entering in the second period of that game against the Ducks.

### KINGS 3, SHARKS 2, OT

Vincent Lecavalier tied it with 12.2 seconds remaining in regulation, Marian Gaborik scored in overtime and Los Angeles rallied past San Jose. Drew Doughty also scored while the Kings earned their league-best sixth win when trailing after two periods and extended their lead in the Pacific Division to nine points over the second-place Sharks. Jhonas Enroth made 30 saves to earn his first win since Nov. 12.

Logan Couture and Joe Pavelski scored for the Sharks, who extended their point streak to nine games despite the loss. It’s the longest streak for San Jose since getting a point in the first nine games in the 2013-14 season. Martin Jones made 29 saves.

### SENATORS 3, RANGERS 0

Craig Anderson stopped 35 shots for his third shutout this season and Ottawa snapped a two-game skid with a win over New York. Bobby Ryan, Mike Hoffman and Jean-Gabriel Pageau each scored for Ottawa and Anderson earned his 32nd career shutout. Henrik Lundqvist made 31

NHL Results/Standings

San Jose 2, Los Angeles 3 (OT); Carolina 5, Calgary 2; Chicago 2, St. Louis 0; Ottawa 3, NY Rangers 0.

Western Conference

Central Division

	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS
Florida	28	15	5	130	107	61
Tampa Bay	26	18	4	129	117	56
Detroit	24	16	8	118	122	56
Boston	25	17	5	142	123	55
Montreal	24	20	4	132	124	52
Ottawa	23	20	6	137	152	52
Toronto	17	20	9	113	128	43
Buffalo	19	25	4	108	128	42

Metropolitan Division

Washington	35	8	3	155	100	73
NY Rangers	26	17	5	136	126	57
NY Islanders	25	15	6	128	114	56
New Jersey	25	19	5	114	116	55
Pittsburgh	23	17	7	119	120	53
Carolina	22	20	8	118	135	52
Philadelphia	20	17	8	103	121	48
Columbus	17	27	5	123	159	39

Western Conference

Pacific Division

Chicago	33	15	4	147	117	70
Dallas	30	14	5	160	132	65
St. Louis	28	16	8	129	128	64
Colorado	26	21	3	138	133	55
Minnesota	23	17	8	120	113	54
Nashville	22	18	8	125	129	52
Winnipeg	21	24	3	121	138	45

Central Division

Los Angeles	30	15	3	126	109	63
San Jose	25	18	4	136	128	54
Arizona	23	19	5	127	140	51
Vancouver	20	18	11	121	137	51
Anaheim	21	18	7	95	109	49
Calgary	21	22	3	124	142	45
Edmonton	19	26	5	122	149	43

Note: Overtime losses (OT) worth 1 pt and not included in loss column (L).

saves for the Rangers. The 18,940 on hand at Canadian Tire Centre were treated to a goaltending duel for much of the afternoon. Both Anderson and Lundqvist made a number of big saves to keep the game scoreless. Leading 1-0 early in the third, the Senators got a little breathing room as Hoffman scored his team-leading 22nd to make it 2-0. Hoffman used Ryan as a decoy on a 2-on-1 and beat Lundqvist glove side.

### HURRICANES 5, FLAMES 2

Kris Versteeg scored twice to lead Carolina

over Calgary. Victor Rask, Elias Lindholm and Joakim Nordstrom also scored for Carolina. The Hurricanes led 3-0 early in the second period and chased Calgary goalie Karri Ramo. Eddie Lack made 33 saves for Carolina. Calgary got goals from Jiri Hudler and Joe Colborne. It fell to 0-15 when trailing after one period. Versteeg scored his first on a pass from Eric Staal to put Carolina ahead 3-0 at 3:50 of the second. He scored again on a power play with 8:47 left in the third for a 4-2 advantage. — AP



**SURREY:** A file photo taken on November 6, 2014, shows England hooker Dylan Hartley (right) as he passes the ball alongside flanker Chris Robshaw during a training session at the team’s training base in Bagshot, south-east England. — AFP

# FOWLER EYES MAJOR TO MERIT INCLUSION INTO GOLF’S ELITE

**ABU DHABI:** Golf’s new “Big Three” has been around for only a few months, and already there’s talk of the exclusive group being expanded. Rickie Fowler is back in the conversation after his fourth worldwide victory in the last nine months, over a stellar field at the Abu Dhabi HSBC Championship.

Yesterday, the American found himself at a career-high No. 4 in the rankings, with only Jordan Spieth, Jason Day and Rory McIlroy above him. But to merit inclusion in the sport’s golfing elite, Fowler knows he needs to add a major to his increasingly impressive resume. He gets his first chance at the Masters in April.

“I’d like to jump in and be a part of that crew,” said Fowler, sitting beside the huge Falcon Trophy awarded to the Abu Dhabi champion. “The goal right now with where my game’s at - it’s the best it’s been this early in the season in my career - I’m working on getting ready for Augusta. I’d like to have my shot at getting the green jacket there.”

Fowler had never previously won a tournament in the first four months of a year. He’s been a slow starter to seasons - he tied for 66th in Abu Dhabi in 2015, 17 shots behind unheralded French winner Gary Stal - making the Masters even tougher to win. But this is a different Fowler, who acknowledges that his work on the range with celebrated coach Butch Harmon is starting to pay off.



Rickie Fowler

### ‘No question’

His playoff win at The Players Championship last May started his winning run that has also taken in the Scottish Open and the Deutsche Bank, and made him believe

more in himself. “From The Players on, just being in the situation, contention, Sunday, final round, against the best players in the world and just believing and having the confidence that, hey, if I go hit the shots, I’m winning,

no question,” Fowler said. “It’s nice to have that added confidence now. Really having the belief and knowing that come Sunday when I’m in the mix, I know I can go get it done.”

That experience likely helped in Abu Dhabi when Alejandro Canizares and Thomas Pieters both came within one shot of Fowler’s final-round lead, which started at two strokes and had grown to four by No. 6. Fowler pulled off some clutch putts and two chip-ins - from a greenside bunker from 30 yards at No. 8 for eagle, and from just off the green at No. 17.

“Being able to do that, you get such an adrenaline rush and such a boost from it, and it’s so rewarding,” said Fowler, who won by one shot from Pieters. “I felt really comfortable in some of those situations.” In 2014, Fowler finished in the top five in all four majors and his fifth place at the Masters was his best at Augusta. He said Sunday that, with a rare early-season victory in the bag, all roads now lead to Augusta.

“It’s a great way to start,” Fowler said. “Nice to have the game where it’s at right now going into the season, instead of trying to work on things and trying to find stuff. “Right now, I can go and fine-tune and really build ultimately for Augusta. ... The ultimate goal this year is to go win a major and this is a step in the right direction.” — AP



# RAONIC ROCKS WAWRINKA TO REACH QUARTER FINALS

**MELBOURNE:** Canada's Milos Raonic fought off a comeback by 2014 champion Stan Wawrinka in a tense five-setter before taking a major scalp and reaching his second straight Australian Open quarter-final yesterday.

Raonic, who earlier spoke of his grief over a high school shooting in his home country, eliminated the Swiss world number four 6-4, 6-3, 5-7, 4-6, 6-3 and will face Gael Monfils in the quarters. The 13th seed, who upset Wawrinka's fellow Swiss Roger Federer to win this month's Brisbane International, remains unbeaten this year after his impressive victory in three hours 44 minutes.

It was Raonic's first win against the reigning French Open champion in five meetings, and he has not lost a match at tour level since going down to Rafael Nadal in the third round of last year's Shanghai Masters. "I'm very happy with the way I competed, the way I turned things around after having the momentum against me going into the fifth set," Raonic told reporters.

"I felt very clear in what I needed to do and I believed that I could do it. I think that gave me some kind of calm and some kind of peace inside," Raonic said new coach Carlos Moya was helping him feel calmer in

stressful match situations. "I feel like I'm putting in the work and I'm getting the results from it. I'm very happy with that," he said. "It gives me some kind of ease in those difficult moments, maybe if things aren't going necessarily my way completely."

A case in point came when Raonic was on track for a straight-sets win after four service breaks to lead by two sets in 76 minutes. But Wawrinka lifted his intensity and took the match to a fifth set. The match turned in the third set when Wawrinka broke Raonic's serve in the 11th game and served out to keep the encounter alive.

Raonic started missing more and Wawrinka picked up his serving percentage, and he broke the Canadian in the fifth game of the fourth set and fought off four break points on his serve in the eighth game. Wawrinka steamed to triple set point in the 10th game and took the match into a fifth set with the momentum shifting his way. But in the final set, Wawrinka lost serve in a shaky sixth game when on second break point his forehand drive was just out, giving Raonic a 4-2 lead. Wawrinka saved a match point in the eighth game but Raonic brought up a further three match points and finally won it

with a put-away at the net. Raonic, who dedicated his third-round win over Viktor Troicki to victims of last week's school shooting which left four dead, has yet to beat shot-maker Monfils in their two meetings so far. "He's very entertaining and he's very difficult to play. He can give you complete ends of the spectrum within one game," Raonic said of Monfils. "I just have to take the game to him. I have to make him feel uncomfortable. Not let him get into his sort of playing comfort. If I can sort of keep up with the efficiency moving forward, I'll have definitely some opportunities." — AFP

# FEDERER'S WISDOM ON TENNIS, LIFE AND KIDS

**MELBOURNE:** Over the course of his celebrated career, Roger Federer has acquired wisdom on the tennis courts that translates to life lessons which he hopes his children can learn from. A father of four, Federer has two sets of twins. The girls are 6 and the boys are just 18 months and everyone travels together for his job. Young Myla and Charlene have joined their mother, Mirka, in Federer's box at matches, their heads buried in books, as their famous dad has expertly navigated his way into the second week of his 36th consecutive Grand Slam - one of his many records.

The No. 3-ranked Federer says it might be an untraditional family life with a lot of time on the road, but he wants to keep his loved ones close. "We're used to this life. It's the only thing they know and I know really for the last 20 years," said Federer. He faces No 6 Tomas Berdych in the quarterfinals on Tuesday and could face No. 1 Novak Djokovic in a semifinal that would be the latest installment in their long rivalry. Djokovic faces Kei Nishikori in another quarterfinal Tuesday.

During on-court interviews, Federer has spoken of the pride he feels knowing that his girls are old enough now to have life-long memories of watching him play, and in post-match news conferences he has shared what he hopes they learn from him. "I have had those conversations with them, that hard work brings you somewhere," said the Swiss star who has won a record 17 Grand Slams. "I told them the other day they can be anything they would want to be as long as they

work hard at it," he said, adding that he has no strong opinion whether his offspring inherit his passion for tennis, although he has started his daughters on lessons.

## Work hard

"I think they need to know whatever they choose, they have to work hard at it." "I told them after all these years, I still go out and train, trying to improve," Federer said. "I think they see the benefit of hanging around with the same theme or subject for a while." Federer continues to set records all the time. In Australia, he became the first man to win 300 Grand Slam singles matches with his third-round win over Grigor Dimitrov.

To watch Federer play in Melbourne, whether you're a fan or his children, is an unforgettable experience. His style and grace, his elegant one-handed backhand and his ability to craft shots that make the crowd gasp are enough to make you believe that age is irrelevant. Federer joked that his children were now giving him tennis tips.

"They told me I should play on the lines. They think that's a good thing. I was like, 'OK, I'll try that,'" he laughed. They came along to practice the other day at Melbourne Park and had a request that dad do a trick where he looks one way and hits the other. "I said, OK, I'll try that, too. It's not as easy as you think it is but I'll try," Federer said, amused that the wisdom flows both ways. "They've give me advice, if you like. Yeah, they're good coaches." — AFP



**MELBOURNE:** Belarus's Victoria Azarenka gestures after victory in her women's singles match against Czech Republic's Barbora Strycova on day eight of the 2016 Australian Open tennis tournament. — AFP

# OMINOUS AZARENKA FIRES UP AS ZHANG DREAM CONTINUES

**MELBOURNE:** Two-time champion Victoria Azarenka remained in ominous form yesterday to surge into the Australian Open quarter-finals, as Chinese qualifier Zhang Shuai's amazing Grand Slam run stayed alive. Former world number one Azarenka proved too strong for Czech Barbora Strycova on Rod Laver Arena, storming through 6-2, 6-4 to set up a last-eight clash with Angelique Kerber, who beat fellow German Annika Beck 6-4, 6-0.

Azarenka, the 14th seed who won at Melbourne Park in 2012 and 2013, has a 6-0 record over Kerber, including in the Brisbane International final this month, making her a hot favourite to keep her title run going. "I'm looking forward to it. She's such a fighter and such a nice person," said the Belarusian, looking ahead to the test on Wednesday. "I'll just give it my best and I'm sure she'll do the same."

Seventh seed Kerber powered past Beck to reach the quarter-finals for the first time and knows she has a formidable task ahead against a player who has won each of their encounters dating back to 2012. "I had tough matches against her in the past. I never won against her right now, but that will be a challenge," she said. "It's a new one, it starts from zero, and I know

what's coming from her. I will try to be aggressive and try to go and win the match."

World number one Serena Williams and fifth-seeded rival Maria Sharapova play each other in a headline last-eight clash today, while fourth seed Agnieszka Radwanska faces 10th seed Carla Suarez. Johanna Konta joined them to reach her maiden Grand Slam quarter-final and become Britain's first woman to reach the Australian Open last eight since Jo Durie in 1983.

Konta prevailed in a three-hour, four-minute slugfest 4-6, 6-4, 8-6 against Russia's Ekaterina Makarova. "Goodness gracious," said Konta, who will next face Zhang. "Mentally, emotionally and physically I left it all out there on the court." The only other British women to get as far were Virginia Wade, who won in 1972, and Sue Barker who made the semis twice.

## Focused and composed

Zhang booked her place by battling past injured and tearful 15th seed Madison Keys. She had lost all 14 of her previous Grand Slam matches before this year's tournament and was mulling retirement, but she has now won four in a row after beating the American 3-6, 6-3, 6-3. It was devastating finale for Keys, last year's semi-

finalist, who needed treatment on her upper left leg which hampered her movement. She gamely carried on but was clearly in pain, with tears on court. "Bad luck Madison. She was injured and I'm very lucky today," said Zhang. "It was so difficult to concentrate because I could see she was in pain." Azarenka, 27, has been in the zone at Melbourne Park, dropping just 11 games in four matches as she zeroes in on a return to the top after battling injuries for the past two years. She went into the Strycova clash with a clear advantage, whipping her on all four of their previous meetings, including at the last two Australian Opens.

But it wasn't straightforward against the Czech, who stunned third seed Garbine Muguruza in the last round. "She is such a tough opponent. I'm just happy I went through. I played smart, aggressive and really took my opportunities," said Azarenka. Melbourne Park has been a happy hunting ground for Azarenka, who has now made the quarters or better five times in her last seven attempts. Kerber, who had a stellar 2015 but underachieved at the majors, eased past Beck who fell apart in the second set after pressing her compatriot hard in the first. — AFP



**MELBOURNE:** Roger Federer of Switzerland celebrates after defeating David Goffin of Belgium in their fourth round match at the Australian Open tennis championships. — AP

# DOUBLES PARTNERS QUESTIONED OVER MATCH-FIXING ALLEGATION

**MELBOURNE:** Two players at the Australian Open said yesterday they have been interviewed by officials over reports their opponents may have deliberately lost their first round mixed-doubles fixture, fuelling fresh fears of match-fixing in tennis. The remarks by Lukasz Kubot and Andrea Hlavackova came after the New York Times reported an online bookmaker had suspended gambling on the lowly match because of unusual betting patterns.

All players involved in the match rejected the claims of a fix. The allegation by betting firm Pinnacle Sports came after the BBC and BuzzFeed said last week players who had been in the sport's top 50 had repeatedly fallen under suspicion but had never faced action. The New York Times reported on Sunday that ahead of their match, a large amount of money had backed Hlavackova and Kubot to beat Spaniards Lara Arruabarrena and David Marrero, far more, the paper said, than would usually be wagered on a first round match.

Marco Blume of Pinnacle Sports told the paper the firm suspended betting on the match 13 hours before it began. The Times' dispatch was dampened, however, by two major betting companies reportedly contradicting the claim. The Sydney Morning Herald said William Hill and Betfair kept betting open for the match and logged no unusual activity. Kubot and Hlavackova

defeated Arruabarrena and Marrero 6-0, 6-3 before bowing out in the second round. "I just spoke with TIU (Tennis Integrity Unit)... and I will keep that confidential," Poland's Kubot told reporters yesterday, with his Czech partner Hlavackova also confirming she met with TIU officials.

Both said they had never been involved in a match where they thought anything was wrong. "I didn't see and I didn't look at anything after the match," Kubot said. Curacao-based Pinnacle was not immediately available to confirm the report. Arruabarrena and Marrero, meanwhile, rejected any possibility of match-fixing, according to the New York Times.

The TIU did not immediately respond to queries from AFP, and Melbourne police would not comment on the case specifically. Match-fixing fears have overshadowed the year's opening Grand Slam, with some players revealing bribery attempts including world number one Novak Djokovic, who said he was offered \$200,000 to throw a match in 2007.

According to the BBC and BuzzFeed report, three Wimbledon matches were suspicious and at least eight of a "core group" of 16 players on the fixing radar were at the Australian Open. The latest developments came as retired Australian player Nick Lindahl faced court in Sydney over allegations he offered to throw a match at a Futures tournament in 2013. — AFP

# MURRAY OVERCOMES 'SCARY' FAMILY DRAMA

**MELBOURNE:** An emotionally drained Andy Murray beat Bernard Tomic to reach the quarter-finals of the Australian Open yesterday, easing the stress of a difficult few days after the collapse of his father-in-law.

The British world number two downed the 16th-seeded Tomic 6-4, 6-4, 7-6 (7/4) in two hours, 30 minutes to end home interest in the tournament and set up a last-eight match with Spanish eighth seed David Ferrer. It will be the seventh consecutive quarter-final in Melbourne for Murray, who is bidding to finally win the title for the first time after four runner-up finishes.

The victory capped a difficult period for Murray, who rushed to the hospital bedside of his father-in-law Nigel Sears, Ana Ivanovic's coach, after he collapsed at the tournament on Saturday. Sears was cleared to leave hospital on Sunday and fly home following tests. Adding to the tension of the moment, Murray's wife Kim Sears is heavily pregnant and he has pledged to rush home if she goes into labor.

"It was just a tough, emotional few days at a difficult time," Murray told reporters, adding that he considered withdrawing from the tournament. "Everyone's just very happy that Nige is doing well, that he can be back home with his friends and family, be with Kim, as well, at this time. It will be nice for her, I'm sure."

"I woke up I felt quite drained, quite tired today. As the day went on and I decided to play, I started to focus a little bit better." He added: "It's been a hard, hard few days. Hopefully gets better the next few days. I just can't believe something like that happened a few days ago. It's shocking. Nige is an unbelievably fit guy. "Very, very scary."

## Tricky match

Murray put the medical emergency behind him but it was a scrappy match, as he broke the Australian's serve six times and dropped his own serve four times. "It was a tricky match. I got up a break I think in all of the sets. Each time he got it back. So there were quite a few momentum shifts in all of the sets," he said. "He definitely played better in the third set."

He started taking a lot more chances. It wasn't easy for me to get into a rhythm. "Luckily he missed a few easy forehands in the tiebreak, and that helped me out in the breaker. Helped me get it done in straight sets." Murray lost his service twice but broke Tomic's serve three times on the way to taking the opening set in 47 minutes.

Tomic's service came under pressure again in the second set with the Scot breaking him in the first and third games while dropping his in the second game. But Murray was more consistent around the court while the Australian missed some opportunities with wayward volleys and

poor judgment. Murray took a firm grip when he claimed the second set with an ace. Both players traded service breaks early in the final set but Tomic made a number of errors in the deciding tiebreak as Murray coasted home. Tomic has yet to take a set off Murray in four encounters.

Murray defeated Tomic in the Davis Cup semi-finals in Glasgow last year to secure a 3-2 victory as Great Britain went out to beat Belgium in the Davis Cup Final. Murray maintained his record of never losing a tour-level match against an Australian, and has now won all 17 of his meetings against Australian opposition. — AFP



**MELBOURNE:** Britain's Andy Murray plays a forehand return during his men's singles match against Australia's Bernard Tomic on day eight of the 2016 Australian Open tennis tournament — AFP



## ZAIN TEAM COMPLETES TRIALS TO PREPARE FOR EFG SAILING ARABIA

**MUSCAT:** The Zain sailing team, who created a sensation in 2015 by winning one leg and coming third overall in their first ever Sailing Arabia - The Tour, were overwhelmed with crew applications for the 2016 edition kicking off next month, requiring them to run two extensive training and selection trials at Oman Sail's sailing centre in Mussanah, Oman. Along with global technology provider Huawei and global law firm Clifford Chance, the Zain sailing team is set to start the challenge officially in Dubai on Tuesday February 16th.

The mobile operator's first venture into Sailing Arabia - The Tour last year was designed primarily as a team building exercise bringing together colleagues from across the region, but with 'fun' one of the most important goals. As they made their way round the course the team comprising mainly of staff from telecoms giant Zain Group eight operations, that included the participation of its Vice-Chairman and global and Kuwaiti business identity Bader Al-Kharafi, saw the support from the 7,000 strong workforce around the region snowball and when they managed to achieve a podium place at their first attempt, coming third, the team were catapulted into the spotlight.

"Initially, no one in Zain really understood what efforts and resources were required in sailing was, but once my colleagues and our sponsors Huawei and Clifford Chance could see what was involved, combined with our success, it started to generate a lot of interest. We were all blown away by it - it has generated a huge amount of buzz and corporate



**Zain Vice-Chairman and Kuwaiti business man Bader Al-Kharafi**

goodwill," explained Mike Miller, sailing team manager and Group Executive Director at Zain Kuwait-based office.

This buzz had a direct effect on their plans for 2016 so when a message was sent out inviting applications to join the Zain sailing team for Sailing Arabia - The Tour, they received 125 candidate replies, compared to just eight the previous year. These were then whittled down to 25 candidates from Kuwait, Saudi, Bahrain, Jordan and Lebanon who were taken to Mussanah for an intensive week of training and preparation, some of them stepping on the boat for the first time. They went through an introductory training aboard the

Farr 30s with two certified instructors from Oman Sail per boat. By the end of the first afternoon, everyone had learned all the basics, tacking and gybing and the following morning, in some choppy conditions, the spinners went up and the candidates were put to the test.

Thereafter, based on this first week of training, a core 10 member team was selected who then attended another training session over the weekend of 22-23 January, with the final crew of 7 selected. "The most important thing in our selection considerations was that they had the right attitude - enthusiastic and hard-working and we were pretty impressed



**Selection training in Mussanah**

because sailing took them right outside of their comfort zone," said Miller.

Furthermore the telecom executive noted, "Oman Sail laid on a fantastic show for us in 2015 in terms of the quality and professionalism of the instructors, the equipment they loaned to us - it was a positive experience all round." He concluded by stating, "The Zain sailing team's experience and success sent out a great message about Zain and what an interesting place it is to work. Also importantly, our sponsors Huawei and Clifford Chance were extremely satisfied with the remarkable result and overall media coverage the Zain sailing team received, and had no second thoughts

on sponsoring us again in 2016."

Organised by Oman Sail, EFG Sailing Arabia The Tour is the longest offshore race in the GCC region, with 15 intense days and 760 nautical miles spanning 4 countries. The tour brings together the best local sailing talents and elite international sailors to take on an intense challenge at a perfect time of the year. Racing against nature and rivals offers an unrivalled experience to develop new skills and prepare local crew to compete at the highest level. The fleet of identical Farr30 boats encourages healthy competition as the difference between winning and losing depends completely on the skill of the crew.

## WARRIORS, SPURS ON HISTORIC WINNING PACES THIS SEASON

**MIAMI:** There's never been an NBA season where two teams both won at least 80 percent of their games. Golden State and San Antonio might change that. With the season now past the midway point the Warriors are chasing a repeat title, the Spurs are chasing the Warriors, and they're both chasing history. When the teams meet Monday at Golden State for the first of their four regular-season matchups, the Warriors will enter with a .909 winning percentage - on pace to be the best in NBA history - while the Spurs are at .864.

Chicago's mark of .878 (72-10) from 1995-96 is the NBA's single-season best. Win or lose, Golden State will remain ahead of that pace. And while San Antonio almost seemed like an afterthought amid Golden State's 24-0 start, the Spurs are merely on pace for the third-best record ever.

"The Warriors go on a 55-game winning streak and they're only two games ahead of them," said Miami's Chris Bosh, slightly overstating Golden State's winning streak. "That's crazy." While this meeting is being touted as a potential Western Conference finals preview - as will the other Warriors-Spurs games on March 19, April 7 and April 10 - it lost some star power Sunday when San Antonio ruled Tim Duncan out with right knee soreness. But Bosh didn't think the teams would take a true playoff-type approach anyway, not this early in the season.

Spurs coach Gregg Popovich and Warriors coach Steve Kerr know that no matter how important Monday seems, much bigger nights await before the Larry O'Brien Trophy gets awarded again. "I don't expect anybody to show their hand early," Bosh said. "They might play psychological games. Pop might rest the first 10 guys and sign

eight D-League guys and send them out there. You never know."

### The week ahead

There are other NBA games this week and here's five to keep an eye on: Minnesota at Cleveland, Monday; New Cleveland coach Tyrone Lue's first game as an NBA player was against Minnesota. He'll hope his first win as an NBA coach is against the Timberwolves, too. Oklahoma City at New York, Tuesday; Madison Square Garden was the only arena Thunder coach Billy Donovan called home as an NBA player, albeit for a mere 24 games as a Knick in 1987-88. (But the Knicks were 19-5 in those games.)

San Antonio at Cleveland, Saturday: The second installment of ABC's Saturday night broadcasts this season should be another good one. LeBron James has walked off a winner in only two of his last nine games against the Spurs. Atlanta at Miami, Sunday: This will be only the second home game for the injury-riddled and slumping Heat in a span of 25 days. Hawks and Heat have split two games this season, both winning on the road.

### Stat line of the week

Kemba Walker scored 52 points against Utah, Stephen Curry was plus-34 against Cleveland and plus-36 against Chicago two nights later, and James Harden had two triple-doubles. But this week's call goes to DeMarcus Cousins.

Cousins' line against Indiana on Saturday: career-best 48 points on 17-for-29 shooting, and 13 rebounds as well. He is averaging 26.7 points and 11.4 rebounds this season. The Kings are on a five-game winning streak and in line for their first playoff berth since 2006. — AP



**TORONTO:** Toronto Raptors' Kyle Lowry drives to the basket as Los Angeles Clippers' Blake Griffin tries to block during first half NBA basketball action. — AP

## RAPTORS TROUNCE CLIPPERS FOR EIGHTH STRAIGHT WIN

**TORONTO:** Kyle Lowry scored 21 points and Jonas Valanciunas had 20 as the Toronto Raptors beat the Los Angeles Clippers 112-94 on Sunday for their season-high eighth straight win. DeMar DeRozan and Terrence Ross both added 18 points each for the Raptors. Ross shot 5 for 7 on 3-pointers and totaled at least 10 points off the bench for the fourth straight game. Chris Paul had 23 points and 11 assists for the Clippers, and DeAndre Jordan had 15 and 13 rebounds. JJ Redick scored 17 points for Los Angeles. The Raptors beat the Clippers for the fourth straight time, completing a second straight season sweep. It also marked the first time in franchise history the Raptors swept both Los Angeles teams in the same season, having beaten the Lakers in both meetings already. The Raptors' winning streak is the second-longest in franchise history, one short of the team-record set in the 2001-02 season.

### NETS 116, THUNDER 106

Brook Lopez scored a season-high 31

points and grabbed 10 rebounds, and Brooklyn snapped Oklahoma City's seven-game winning streak. Kevin Durant had 32 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists, but Oklahoma City never led in the game that was delayed four hours by the blizzard that dumped more than 2 feet of snow on New York on Saturday. Russell Westbrook finished with 27 points, 11 rebounds and seven assists as the Thunder lost for just the fifth time in 27 games. Taking advantage of a Thunder team missing starting center Steven Adams, Lopez shot 11 for 19 from the field in bouncing back from one of his worst performances of the season. He had been limited to just eight points Friday in a loss to Utah.

### CELTICS 112, 76ERS 92

Jae Crowder and Isaiah Thomas scored 20 points each and Boston cruised past Philadelphia. Avery Bradley had 19 points and Marcus Smart added 16 off the bench for the Celtics, who have won five of seven. Robert Covington scored 25 points to lead

Philadelphia. The game originally was scheduled for Saturday but was postponed due to Winter Storm Jonas. With Philadelphia's airport closed on Saturday, the Celtics instead practiced in Boston and arrived in Philadelphia on Sunday morning.

### ROCKETS 115, MAVERICKS 104

James Harden had 23 points, 15 rebounds and 10 assists, Trevor Ariza scored a season-high 29 and Houston rallied past Dallas. The Rockets trailed by one entering the fourth quarter, but they used 14-4 run, highlighted by consecutive 3-pointers by Ariza, Jason Terry and Josh Smith, to take a 98-89 lead with about nine minutes left. Chandler Parsons made a layup for the Mavericks before Houston scored five straight points to push the lead to 103-91. Terry started that stretch with a 3-pointer and Smith joked Dirk Nowitzki to get open for a hook shot, and the Mavericks didn't threaten again. Parsons had a season-high 31 points for the Mavericks, who dropped their second straight game. — AP

## PRESIDENT OF KUWAIT HANDICAPPED SPORTS CLUB APPRECIATES SUPPORT



**Shafi Al-Hajiri**

**KUWAIT:** President of Kuwait Handicapped Sports Club Shafi Al-Hajiri appreciated the generous support of the Public Authority for Sports (PAS), to allow the club to organize several local tournaments in various individual and team games. This was done in order to prepare the athletes for foreign tournaments.

Al-Hajiri said the support the club enjoys from PAS officials headed by Director General Sheikh Ahmad Mansour Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and Deputy Director General for Sports Dr Humoud Fulaiteh is among the reason behind the outstanding performance of the club as



**Sheikh Ahmad Al-Mansour**

many athletes qualified for the Paralympics to be held in Brazil later this year.

Al-Hajiri said the first of the local tournaments will be held on Saturday for swimming, table tennis and wheelchair basketball, with more than 70 players of both genders participating. He said the organizing committee is exerting tremendous efforts to prepare for the tournament and is allowing athletes and officials all means to achieve success. Al-Hajiri said the club was keen to hold the tournaments to coincide with Kuwait's celebration of its national days.

## ADIDAS SAYS IT IS SEEKING INFORMATION FROM IAAF

**FRANKFURT:** Adidas, a major sponsor of global athletics, is in "close contact" with track and field's governing body, the IAAF, about the sport's doping and corruption scandals, the sportswear company said yesterday, amid reports it is considering ending its sponsorship. The Germany-based company said that "Adidas has a clear anti-doping policy in place" and added that "we are in close contact with the IAAF to learn more about their reform process."

The IAAF too said it is in contact with "all its sponsors and partners as we embark on our reform process." A BBC report said Adidas had told the IAAF it was terminating its sponsor-

ship deal four years early because of the doping affair involving Russian athletics and accusations of deeply rooted corruption under the IAAF's previous leadership.

Earlier this month, a World Anti-Doping Agency probe said the IAAF was corrupted from the inside by a "powerful rogue group" led by its president, and they conspired to extort athletes and allow doping Russians to continue competing. Other IAAF leaders were at fault, too, the WADA panel's damning report said. They must have known of the nepotism that allowed Lamine Diack to turn the International Association of Athletics

Federations into a personal fiefdom during his 16-year reign as president, it said. "It is increasingly clear that far more IAAF staff knew about the problems than has currently been acknowledged," said the report, written by former WADA president Dick Pound and presented at a news conference in Munich.

A key question raised by the report is whether alleged corruption under Diack went beyond extorting doped athletes and infected other areas of IAAF business. WADA's investigators called for a detailed follow-up probe of all world championships awarded by the ruling body for 2009-19, due to evidence they found

of possible wrongdoing. That included an indication that Diack, a former IOC member, was prepared to sell his vote in the 2020 Olympic hosting contest won by Tokyo in exchange for sponsorship of IAAF events.

"The corruption was embedded in the organization. It cannot be ignored or dismissed as attributable to the odd renegade acting on its own," the report said. Diack was taken into custody by French authorities in November on corruption and money-laundering charges. He is suspected of taking more than 1 million euros (\$1.1 million) to blackmail athletes and cover up positive tests.

Sebastian Coe, the British middle-distance running great who took over from Diack in August, is not accused of corrupt wrongdoing. But he was a member of the IAAF's Council, its oversight body, that "could not have been unaware of the extent of doping." The WADA report came two days after the Associated Press released details from six years of IAAF internal emails, reports and notes showing a high level of communication between the athletics federation and Russian officials about suspicious test results from the nation's athletes, including plans to cover up some doping evidence. — AP



## S.AFRICA BAN BODI FOR 20 YEARS OVER MATCH-FIXING

**CENTURION:** Former South African international cricketer Gulam Bodi was yesterday banned for 20 years after he admitted charges of contriving or attempting to fix domestic Twenty20 matches. The ban, which will take immediate effect, was announced by Cricket South Africa (CSA) chief executive Haroon Lorgat during the fourth and final Test between South Africa and England at SuperSport Park.

Lorgat said aspects of the investigation were still ongoing. He refused to confirm or deny names of other players who have been reported to be under investigation, but said: "We are fortunate that several players rejected his approaches." He said the South African police had been informed in terms of anti-corruption legislation.

Lorgat hinted that some players might be charged with failing to report approaches by Bodi. "Our code is clear on the obligation of a player to report any approaches. If it is found that a player has failed to report we would look at the facts and decide on a proportional sanction," he said. Bodi, 37, played in two one-

day internationals for South Africa, both against Zimbabwe, in August 2007.

He played in a single Twenty20 international against the West Indies in December of the same year and was a member of South Africa's squad for the inaugural World Twenty20 in 2007, although he did not play in a game. His last appearance in a domestic game was in January 2015.

"There is no doubt that Mr Bodi's actions have threatened the integrity and image of the game we love and he must be handed a strong punishment. We have had many discussions with Mr Bodi and he accepts the folly of his actions," said Lorgat.

Five years of Bodi's ban are suspended on condition that he commits no further offences and actively participates in corruption-related education programs. Lorgat said the examples of Pakistan's Mohammed Amir and English county player Mervyn Westfield showed that it was possible for players found guilty of corrupt activity to help in educating players about the dangers of corruption. — AFP

## IN FORM KHAWAJA MISSES NEW ZEALAND ODI TOUR

**SYDNEY:** Australia yesterday named virtually the same squad for a one-day series in New Zealand next month as the line-up that triumphed over India, controversially leaving out "red-hot" batsman Usman Khawaja.

"This squad remains largely unchanged after a fantastic series win against India," national selector Rod Marsh said. "We have selected Adam Zampa as the spinning option for this tour in place of Nathan Lyon." Australia want their leading spinner to return to domestic action to prepare for the upcoming two-Test series in New Zealand. "This will give us a chance to have a good look at Adam ahead of the ICC World T20," Marsh added. That tournament takes place in India during March and April.

"Adam has certainly put forward a strong case for selection through good performances in the KFC Big Bash (League) ... and we think he has thoroughly earned this opportunity." But there was no place for Khawaja despite his man-of-the-match winning performance in the BBL final on Sunday night when he hit 70 off 40 deliveries. Selector Mark Waugh led a charge for Khawaja's inclusion, arguing that he was the top opener in the world today.

"He is batting as well as anyone can pos-

sibly bat," Waugh said. Sydney's Daily Telegraph said Monday that if Khawaja was not in the squad, "it will be the biggest embarrassment of the summer and create uproar in cricketing circles." Selector Marsh admitted that it was a tough call to leave out Khawaja, saying they had "tried our hardest to work him into the side." "He's in red-hot form and it's just a shame that we can't fit him in," he told reporters in Adelaide.

"We just couldn't find anyone to drop, to leave out of the side because they are all in fantastic form. "We'd love to have him in the side. We'd love to be able to pick 16 or 17 — because I think there's 16 or 17 that actually deserve to be in our one-day side," Marsh chose to focus on the challenges to be faced in New Zealand. "We know one of the biggest challenges we will face in New Zealand is adapting to the change in conditions," he said.

"The New Zealand side will be very tough to beat in their home conditions. "We know we will need to be at the top of our game if we want to be competitive." The Chappell-Hadlee Trophy series starts in Auckland on February 3 and moves on to Wellington on February 6 and Hamilton February 8 with the Test matches to follow. — AFP



Usman Khawaja

## DOUBTS GROW OVER SEXWALE'S FIFA BID

**JOHANNESBURG:** South Africa's Tokyo Sexwale was yesterday urged by his own national governing body to explain his lackluster election campaign as he bids to take over corruption-plagued FIFA. Sexwale, the only African candidate bidding for the job, is up against four rivals in the ballot to replace disgraced Sepp Blatter and become the most powerful man in football. But Sexwale, a former Robben Island prisoner with Nelson Mandela, has made little impact ahead of the vote on February 26, triggering concern from the South African Football Association (SAFA).

"The NEC (National Executive Committee), which is the highest decision-making body of the association, raised concerns about his low-profile campaign and they want him to come and explain himself," SAFA spokesman Dominic Chimhavi told AFP. SAFA, which endorsed Sexwale's bid, said at the weekend that it wanted to speak to him ahead of a key Confederation of African Football (CAF) meeting in Kigali on February 5.

Sexwale's spokesman said he was currently out of the country. "By the time that indication came, we had already planned to travel, so we are going to be seeing them next week," Sexwale's spokesman Peter-Paul Ngwenya told AFP. Sexwale, 62, became a millionaire business tycoon in the years after apartheid fell, and was on the team that won South Africa the right to host the 2010 World Cup.

### Wide-open race

He also serves on FIFA's anti-racism and anti-discrimination committee. In a wide-open race, he is up against Jordanian Prince Ali bin al Hussein, Bahraini Sheikh Salman bin Ebrahim al Khalifa, Swiss Gianni Infantino and Frenchman Jerome Champagne. "We are there to support him and we need to know what he thinks needs to be done going forward," SAFA chief executive Dennis Mumble told the City Press newspaper on Sunday. The highlight of the Sexwale's manifesto is a call for the ban on sponsors' names appearing on national team shirts to be scrapped, which could greatly boost the income of cash-strapped associations. He has also said he was determined "to repair the damage done to the FIFA brand globally" and to promote the game in Africa and China.

"I didn't want to be president but seeing the problems I thought I would stand," said Sexwale in one of his few recent interviews. "I feel very sorry for (Blatter). I don't say he was a friend but he is a friend... Blatter's work is a monument that stands for itself." FIFA's leadership has been decimated by an unprecedented set of corruption scandals.

Thirty-nine people have been charged by the US with corruption going back decades, while Swiss prosecutors have also opened investigations targeting Blatter and the bidding process for the 2018 and 2022 World Cups. UEFA's executive committee has unanimously backed Infantino's candidacy for the FIFA job. — AFP



WELLINGTON: Mohammad Amir of Pakistan is bowled by Trent Boult of New Zealand during the first one-day international between New Zealand and Pakistan at the Basin Reserve. — AFP

## NICHOLLS LEADS BLACK CAPS TO VICTORY OVER PAKISTAN

**WELLINGTON:** A solid 82 by Henry Nicholls followed by a ninth-wicket batting blitz carried New Zealand to a convincing 70-run victory in the opening one-day international against Pakistan in Wellington yesterday. In reply to New Zealand's 280-8, Pakistan were skittled out for 210 with four overs remaining. Nicholls apart, New Zealand's recognized run-makers struggled against a fired-up Pakistan attack, with the other six batsmen in the top seven contributing just 47 in total. The hosts were in a perilous position at 99-6 before Mitchell Santner joined Nicholls in a 79-run stand for the seventh wicket.

Matt Henry and Mitchell McClenaghan then added 73 off 33 balls in a closing onslaught to ensure a target which eventually proved too much for Pakistan. "If we're going to be honest we should have got them out for 200-odd, seeing the start we had," a disappointed Pakistan batting coach Grant Flower said. "The short ball worked to a certain extent but we overdid it, and we didn't learn and we just didn't bowl enough yorkers."

Man-of-the-match Nicholls, only in the side as cover for the injured Ross Taylor, said it was a matter of making the most of his opportunity. "It's nice to be able to do that," he said, adding he was philosophical about being dropped by Mohammad Hafeez on 15. "I was a bit more dirty on the shot rather than worried about what happened with the catch. It was meant to be and it was a life I needed."

### Brittle batting

After Azhar Ali (19) and Ahmed Shehzad (13) fell early in Pakistan's innings, Hafeez and Babar Azam lifted Pakistan's confidence. They cruised past the 100 mark in the 23rd over, the same as New Zealand, but with only two wickets down. However, the brittle nature of the Pakistan batting was highlighted as Kane Williamson broke their stand when he had Hafeez caught at long on for 42. Azam, without attempting to boost the run rate, continued on to 62 off 76 deliveries

before he miscued an attempt to hook Corey Anderson and sent the ball straight to Nicholls at deep midwicket. Sarfraz Ahmed (30) and Anwar Ali (16) put on 35 for the seventh wicket but their partnership ended when they tried to lift the scoring and Ahmed was well caught by Anderson on the boundary.

Where the New Zealand tail had exploded, Pakistan's fizzled out-with the last four wickets falling for five runs. Trent Boult finished with four for 40 while Grant Elliott, who removed openers Ali and Shehzad as well as Sohaib Maqsood, took three for 43. After being sent into bat on a windy

Wellington day, New Zealand never really settled against a hostile Pakistan attack. Openers Martin Guptill and Tom Latham were both out for 11, with Mohammad Irfan and Mohammad Amir taking a wicket each.

Amir in his second spell removed Anderson (10) and Luke Ronchi (5) in the space of three balls. Anwar Ali also took a double in quick succession when he broke a 45-run stand for the third wicket by Kane Williamson and Nicholls. He bowled Williamson for 10 and two balls later bowled Elliott without scoring, before returning later to claim the prized scalp of Nicholls. — AFP

### SCOREBOARD

**WELLINGTON:** Full scoreboard in the first ODI between New Zealand and Pakistan in Wellington yesterday:

<b>New Zealand</b>		Ahmed Shehzad c Williamson b Elliott	13
M. Guptill c Riaz b Irfan	11	Mohammad Hafeez c Henry b Williamson	42
T. Latham c Ahmed b Amir	11	Babar Azam c Nicholls b Anderson	62
K. Williamson b Anwar Ali	10	Sohaib Maqsood c sub (Milne) b Elliott	10
H. Nicholls b Anwar Ali	82	Sarfraz Ahmed c Anderson b Boult	30
G. Elliott by Anwar Ali	0	Imad Wasim c Ronchi b Santner	1
C. Anderson c Ahmed b Amir	10	Anwar Ali c Latham b Boult	16
L. Ronchi c Ahmed b Amir	5	Wahab Riaz not out	5
M. Santner c Ahmed b Irfan	48	Mohammad Amir b Boult	0
M. Henry not out	48	Mohammad Irfan b Boult	0
M. McClenaghan retired hurt	31	Extras (lb2, w10)	12
T. Boult not out	4	Total (10 wickets; 46 overs)	210
Extras (b4, lb3, w13)	20	Fall of wickets: 1-33 (Azhar Ali), 2-37 (Ahmed Shehzad), 3-118 (Mohammad Hafeez), 4-142 (Maqsood), 5-168 (Babar Azam), 6-170 (Imad Wasim), 7-205 (Sarfraz Ahmed), 8-206 (Anwar Ali), 9-210 (Amir), 10-210 (Irfan)	
Total (8 wickets, 50 overs)	280	Bowling: Henry 8-0-43-0 (4w), Boult 9-1-40-4 (w3), Elliott 10-1-43-3 (w2), Anderson 9-1-35-1 (w1), Santner 8-0-36-1, Williamson 2-0-11-1	
Fall of wickets: 1-23 (Guptill), 2-25 (Latham), 3-70 (Williamson), 4-70 (Elliott), 5-93 (Anderson), 6-99 (Ronchi), 7-178 (Santner), 8-203 (Nicholls)		Result: New Zealand won by 70 runs.	
Bowling: Irfan 10-0-43-2 (w1), Amir 8.1-0-28-3 (w3), Anwar Ali 9.5-0-66-3 (w3), Wahab Riaz 10-0-67-0 (w3), Imad Wasim 8-0-47-0 (w2), Azhar Ali 4-0-22-0 (w1)			
<b>Pakistan</b>			
Azhar Ali c Henry b Elliott	19		

## AMLA, BAVUMA PUT SOUTH AFRICA IN THE DRIVING SEAT

**PRETORIA:** A patient century stand between Hashim Amla and Temba Bavuma put South Africa in a commanding position at 223 for four at tea on day four of the final test against England yesterday. Amla, a regular thorn in England's side, was not out on 96 as he chases a second century in the match with Bavuma unbeaten on 63. The hosts led by 356 runs on a pitch that has turn, movement and uneven bounce.

The pair have put on 117 for the fifth wicket and kept England wicketless between lunch and tea after the touring side had made good inroads in the opening session when a fired-up James Anderson grabbed two early wickets and Ben Stokes another.

South Africa, who are likely to be down to three front-line bowlers in the second innings with seamer Kyle Abbott struggling due to a hamstring problem, must decide what target they want to set England with four sessions remaining. They will be mindful of overworking their depleted attack as they chase a consolation victory in the test with England already having claimed the series.

The previous highest chase successful in test matches at Centurion Park was 251 by England in 2000, though the pitch was only used for two days in that match after rain spoiled the contest and the teams decided to forfeit an innings each to force a result. Anderson had earlier taken his number of test wickets to 433, one short of Indian great Kapil Dev in sixth place on the all-time list.

He first induced a rash drive from opener Stephen Cook (25) that provided a catch for wicket-keeper Jonny Bairstow and two balls later grabbed the big scalp of home captain AB de Villiers, lbw without scoring. It was the third duck in a row for De Villiers, comfortably his worst run of form in test cricket since he made his debut in 2004. Stokes removed JP Duminy (29) caught behind by Bairstow to leave South Africa sweating at 106 for four, before Amla and Bavuma edged the home side ahead again. — Reuters



PRETORIA: South Africa's batsman Hashim Amla avoids a bouncer from England's bowler James Anderson on the fourth day of the fourth test cricket match between South Africa and England at Centurion Park. — AFP

### SCOREBOARD

**CENTURION, South Africa:** Scores at the end of South Africa's second innings on the fourth day of the fourth and final Test between South Africa and England at SuperSport Park yesterday.

<b>South Africa, first innings, 475</b>	Q. de Kock not out	9
<b>England, first innings, 342</b>	Extras (b2, lb5, w3)	10
<b>South Africa, second innings (overnight 42-1)</b>	Total (5 wkts dec, 83.2 overs)	248
S. Cook c Bairstow b Anderson	Fall of wickets: 1-5 (Elgar), 2-49 (Cook), 3-49 (De Villiers), 4-106 (Duminy), 5-223 (Amla)	
D. Elgar c Bairstow b Anderson	Bowling: Anderson 18-5-47-3, Broad 15-4-33-1 (1w), Stokes 16-4-36-1, Woakes 13.2-0-53-0 (1w), Ali 17-3-60-0, Root 4-0-12-0	
H. Amla c Bairstow b Broad	Match situation: England require 382 runs to win.	
A. de Villiers lbw b Anderson		
J. Duminy c Bairstow b Stokes		
T. Bavuma not out		



## ARSENAL DOESN'T HAVE A CHELSEA BLOCK: WENGER

**LONDON:** Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger dismissed suggestions that his side have a mental block regarding London rivals Chelsea following a 1-0 home defeat that carried an air of *deja vu*. Arsenal were bidding to return to the top of the Premier League table in Sunday's game, but they were left in third place after Per Mertesacker was sent off and Diego Costa scored to give Chelsea a clinical 1-0 victory.

Arsenal have not beaten Chelsea in nine league games and have not scored against them in the league in nine hours and 32 minutes, but Wenger said that Mertesacker's 18th-minute dismissal, for a last-man foul on Costa, meant it impossible to compare the game with previous fixtures.

"I think today (Sunday) was a special game. We played with 10 men, we were 1-0 down straight away. Normally you lose a game like that 3-0 or 4-0," he told reporters at the Emirates Stadium. "When you have to chase the game, (there's) nothing more dangerous than being down to 10 men. Overall we come out with a lot of regret because we feel we couldn't play with our team. "And looking at Chelsea today, I think there was a lot of room to beat them if we had played with 11 players."

Mertesacker was shown a straight red card for felling Costa after he had latched onto a through-ball from Willian. The Chelsea striker immediately made his side's numerical advantage count by converting Branislav Ivanovic's cross with a near-post volley in the 23rd minute. Costa had goaded Gabriel into kicking out at him in September's reverse fixture, earning the Arsenal centre-back a red card, and Wenger told a TV interviewer: "He has got two (Arsenal) players sent off this season."

Addressing the print media shortly after, the Arsenal manager backtracked, saying that he had only been stating "facts", but maintained that referee Mark Clattenburg's decision had been "harsh". Chelsea's interim manager Guus Hiddink said that

Mertesacker's lunge had merited "a red card without any discussion".

### 'Follow the captain'

Wenger reacted to Mertesacker's dismissal by sending Gabriel on for striker Olivier Giroud, which drew a chorus of boos from the home supporters. But he was unrepentant, saying: "Do you want to make a poll for every decision to see who does what? I make the decision and for me it was a normal decision."

While Arsenal were left three points below leaders Leicester City, Chelsea put seven points between themselves and the bottom three to ease any worst-case-scenario relegation fears that their fans may be harboring. The champions, unbeaten in seven league games since Jose Mourinho's dismissal, remain 14 points below the top four, but Captain John Terry said that Champions League qualification was still "doable".

"If the captain says yes, then we'll follow the captain! You always follow the captain," Hiddink said in response. "It's a gap. If you see the results in the Premier League, you see how competitive all the teams are, whether you're down at the bottom or high in the ranking. "All teams can beat all teams. With this gap, it's difficult to go into fourth position, but when the captain is saying that, I will follow my captain."

Hiddink also revealed that Costa, withdrawn in the 68th minute, would undergo tests on a knee injury. "I don't know if it's slight or more severe, but we'll check on it," said the Dutchman. "It was a little bit on the knee." Arsenal host second-tier Burnley in the FA Cup at the weekend before resuming their title challenge at home to Southampton on February 2 and Wenger said that time was on his team's side. "There is a long way to go," said the Frenchman, who welcomed Alexis Sanchez back after two months out with a hamstring injury. "What we take from today is that we are disappointed, but have a lot of positives from our attitude and spirit." — AFP



**TURIN:** Juventus' Paulo Dybala (left) is challenged by Roma's Daniele De Rossi during a Serie A soccer match, at the Juventus stadium. — AFP

## DYBALA STUNS ROMA IN ANOTHER HEATED CLASH

**TURIN:** Argentina striker Paulo Dybala hit his 12th goal of the Serie A campaign as Juventus maintained their impressive home record over Roma with a nervous 1-0 win in Turin on Sunday. Juve had won their last four league meetings at home with Roma, scoring at least three goals on each occasion.

At the end of a frustrating encounter that could spell trouble for Roma defender Daniele De Rossi-suspected of racially abusing Juve's Croatian striker Mario Mandzukic-Dybala sent the stadium wild when he ran on to Paul Pogba's short through ball to beat Wojciech Szczesny with a crisp angled strike.

Juve's 14th win and 11th consecutively means they remain second but the champions have closed the gap on Napoli, 4-2 winners over Sampdoria earlier Sunday when striker Gonzalo Higuain hit his 21st goal in as many games, to two points. "To win these type of games, you have to strike at the right moment," said a smiling Juve coach, Massimiliano Allegri.

"Paradoxically, in the opening half hour Dybala was nowhere to be seen. Then he was brilliant to score the winning goal for us in the closing stages." Roma remain fifth but are 12 points off the pace after what was Luciano Spalletti's second game in charge following the sacking of Rudi Garcia two weeks ago.

The Italian denied his team had come to stifle

Juve's game-winning strategy, but admitted: "Our priority is to get down to working a certain way. When we start playing and doing well, then we can start to talk about our objectives and (our position in) the league table." With Spalletti deploying a new 3-4-1-2 formation that saw Belgian midfielder Radja Nainggolan move up behind strikers Edin Dzeko and Mohamed Salah, Juve failed to score in the opening half of a league game for the first time since November when they put three, second-half goals past Palermo.

### 'Shut up, shitty gypsy'

But it took only minutes for the game's first flashpoint, Juventus winning a free kick after De Rossi was cautioned for an off-the-ball stamp on the foot of Mandzukic, who crumbled to the ground in apparent pain. It was then that television cameras allegedly caught the Italy defender mouthing an insult, with reports on several Italian websites claiming De Rossi said: "Shut up, shitty gypsy."

Both coaches played down the incident, although Spalletti did not deny the accusation, adding: "He (De Rossi) didn't put his hand up to his mouth, but I will tell him to do that next time. "In difficult moments like that, certain manners can go amiss. But Mandzukic was taking the piss out of all the (Roma) players during the game."

If confirmed, De Rossi could expect a ban that

will do his international career, and Roma's league campaign, little good. It made for a nervous opening period and it took Roma 18 minutes to fashion a chance, Alessandro Florenzi testing Gianluigi Buffon with a dipping shot that the veteran 'keeper scooped up with ease.

Mandzukic was in the spotlight moments after the restart, the Croatian cautioned for throwing his arm into the face of Antonio Rudiger, who crumbled to the ground. Roma breathed a sigh of relief when De Rossi blocked Sami Khedira's drive into the box after Salah had given possession away cheaply to Dybala in midfield. Roma eventually found their stride and for a while Buffon was the busier of the two 'keepers. Dzeko got his head to Miralem Pjanic's long drive into the area but it went nowhere and a half-volley from Nainggolan was deflected over the crossbar for a corner. Allegri replaced Stephan Lichtsteiner midway through the second period and minutes later the Colombian's high ball found Pogba on the edge of the area.

Pogba set up Evra for a snap shot on the left flank but Roma 'keeper Wojciech Szczesny pulled off a great save to block from the Frenchman. Minutes later Juve finally got the breakthrough, Pogba holding the ball up well amid a panicked Roma defense to set up Dybala for a first-time strike that zipped past Szczesny and into the far bottom corner. — AFP



**MONCHENGLADBACH:** Dortmund's Gabonese striker Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang (left) and Moenchengladbach's Swedish defender Oscar Wendt vie during the German first division football Bundesliga match Borussia Moenchengladbach vs Borussia Dortmund. — AFP

## BATTLE BETWEEN GERMANY'S TOP GOAL SCORERS HEATS UP

**BERLIN:** While the Bundesliga title-race may be lacking drama, the battle between hot-shot strikers Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang and Robert Lewandowski to finish as top-scorer looks set to enthrall fans until the season's end.

Bayern Munich remain on course to become the first club to win the Bundesliga for a fourth year running after Lewandowski scored twice in Friday's 2-1 win at Hamburg to leave his side eight points clear. The Poland international has 17 goals in his 17 league games, but is still one short of Aubameyang, who has scored 18 times in 18 matches for second-placed Borussia Dortmund.

A huge 16-point gulf separates Bayern from third-placed Hertha Berlin with Dortmund directly in the middle. Aubameyang failed to find the net in Saturday's 3-1 win at Borussia Moenchengladbach-only the fifth league game this season he has failed to score in-but he has still scored 27 goals in all competitions. His tally so far means that, at the same stage of the season, he has scored exactly the same amount as the legendary Gerd Mueller did in 1971/72 on his way to hitting a league-record 40 goals.

Both Aubameyang, Africa's player of the year for 2015, and Lewandowski have doubted Mueller's record will ever fall. And despite intense interest from English clubs in the January transfer window, the Gabon star is not leaving Dortmund any time soon. "We don't worry ourselves for a second about the departure of Aubameyang. It's not up for debate," said Dortmund coach Thomas Tuchel, with four years still to run on his striker's contract.

"He is a bench-mark for us and we have a lot planned for him." As ex-Germany captain Lothar Matthaeus suggested to Sky on Saturday, England's top clubs would have to fork out at least 100 million Euros to lure Aubameyang to the Premier League. None of Aubameyang's four shots on goal found the

net at Gladbach's Borussia Park on a rare below-par evening of frustration for the 26-year-old.

"We put in a good performance, even if I am not happy with my own performance," he said. "In training, the day before, almost every shot went in, but it didn't work out today." Aubameyang was signed by Dortmund from French club St Etienne in 2013 as a future replacement for Lewandowski, 27, who left for Bayern for the 2014/15 season.

### Personal crown

Having set four new Bundesliga records last September by scoring five goals in nine crazy minutes of Bayern's 5-1 rout of Wolfsburg, the ambitious Lewandowski wants silverware. The Bavarians have targeted the treble of Champions League, Bundesliga and German Cup before Pep Guardiola leaves at the end of the season.

In addition, Lewandowski wants the personal crown as the league's top scorer for the second time, having won it with Dortmund in 2013/14. He was superb in Hamburg, converting a first-half penalty after goalkeeper Rene Adler fouled Thomas Mueller, before helping home Mueller's strike for the winner. That second goal was Lewandowski's 50th goal for Bayern in a mere 76 competitive fixtures and his 17 goals already equals his tally for the whole of last season.

While Aubameyang has first-class service from his wingers Marco Reus and Heinrich Mkhitarjan at Dortmund, Lewandowski benefits from the superb support of Mueller. The Germany forward has 14 goals in 18 games this season, with six assists.

"We've played many games together and get along very well," Lewandowski said about his partnership with Mueller, which has yielded 31 goals this season, 65 percent of all of Bayern's goals. "We don't need to talk a lot, we both know how the other plays and where he's running." — AFP

## ZIDANE 'PROUD' DESPITE DENT IN REAL TITLE HOPES

**MADRID:** Real Madrid boss Zinedine Zidane insisted he was proud of his side's display despite slipping further behind Barcelona in the La Liga title race with a 1-1 draw at Real Betis on Sunday. Zidane had cruised to victory in his first two games in charge since replacing Rafael Benitez earlier this month, scoring five goals against Deportivo La Coruna and Sporting Gijon.

However, Los Blancos were stunned by Alvaro Cejudo's early opener and, despite dominating the majority of the match, could only reply through Karim Benzema's 21st goal of the season 19 minutes from time. "I am very proud of what they did tonight, we're just missing two more points," said the Frenchman. "We are on the right track and we need to take the positives. "It is clear losing two points is the negative thing, but there were some very good things tonight and we need to take those positives forward and fight until the end."

Barcelona and Atletico Madrid now lead Real by four points at the top of the table, whilst Barca also have a game in hand on both sides from the capital.

"The truth is I didn't expect (to drop two points) but football is like that, if you don't take your chances anything can happen," Zidane added. "But given how we played, I can't reproach the players for anything."

Betis hadn't scored in their previous seven games as part of a 10-game winless streak, but needed just seven minutes to make the breakthrough in spectacular fashion.

Keylor Navas made a fine save to block Ruben Castro's first effort, but the ball eventually fell to Cejudo on the edge of the area, who unleashed a volley into the top corner which Zidane himself would have been proud of in his playing days.

Madrid responded well to going behind and Cristiano Ronaldo and Pepe both missed glorious chances to equalize before half-time, whilst Benzema also had a huge penalty claim waived away. Benzema did finally level from James Rodriguez's cutback, but Antonio Adan made brilliant saves from Rodriguez and Benzema to salvage a point for Betis.

Barca also face both Atletico and Real at home in the tile run with Atletico visiting the Camp Nou next weekend. And Pepe was more realistic about his side's chances to preventing the European champions claiming a sixth title in eight years. "It isn't impossible, but it has become more difficult and it is a bit further out of our reach," he said. "We need to keep working as a team and try to get the idea of what Zizou wants as quickly as possible." — AFP



**SEVILLA:** Real Madrid's Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo (right) gestures towards Betis' goalkeeper Antonio Adan (left) after a clash during the Spanish league football match Real Betis Balompie vs Real Madrid CF at the Benito Villamarin stadium. — AFP

## LIVERPOOL EYE CUP FINAL SPOT

**LONDON:** Zigzagging across the road like a clown car they may be, but Liverpool are also just 90 minutes from Wembley ahead of today's League Cup semi-final second leg against Stoke City. A team that recorded seven 1-1 draws in nine games in September and October is beginning to gain a reputation for slapdash spectacles, following the recent 3-3 draw at home to Arsenal and Saturday's remarkable 5-4 victory at Norwich City.

It has made Jurgen Klopp's side a breathless watch, but with a 1-0 lead to protect at Anfield today, Brazilian midfielder Lucas Leiva knows that it is imperative his team tighten up at the back. "If we can score five goals and defend set-pieces especially a little bit better, we would be winning games more comfortably," he told the Liverpool website after the victory at Carrow Road.

"But it will give us a lot of belief. On Tuesday we have a very big game, a semi-final and a chance to go to Wembley. We will do everything we can to get there. "It's one of the biggest games of the season until now and a good chance for us to go to Wembley. We don't need any more motivation. "We will recover and for sure everyone will be 100 percent, mentally and physically, for Tuesday."

A draw will suffice for Liverpool to reach a first major final since 2012, when they won the League Cup and lost to Chelsea in the FA Cup final, after Jordan Ibe's first-half goal settled the first leg on

January 5. With Everton leading Manchester City 2-1 in the other semi-final, there is the prospect of a first Merseyside derby in a major final since the deciding match of the 1988-89 FA Cup, which Liverpool won 3-2.

But Liverpool's fans cannot know which version of their team will show up the slick, counter-punching side that won 3-1 at Chelsea, 4-1 at City and 6-1 at Southampton, or the meekly surrendering one beaten in recent weeks by West Ham United, Watford and Newcastle United.

### Shawcross doubt

Injuries to Dejan Lovren and Martin Skrtel mean that Klopp must continue to depend on the unconvincing centre-back partnership of Mamadou Sakho and Kolo Toure, which was badly exposed at Norwich. But Adam Lallana could return to the starting XI after rising from the bench to lash home the 95th-minute winner at Carrow Road.

Stoke went into the first leg on the back of impressive victories over Manchester City, Manchester United and Everton, but their form has tapered off somewhat since the turn of the year and they were beaten 3-0 at Leicester City on Saturday. Injuries have also started to bite, with captain Ryan Shawcross a doubt for the trip to Anfield after suffering a recurrence of a back problem at Leicester. —AFP



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## BLACKHAWKS BACK TO WINNING WAYS

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DENVER: New England Patriots tight end Rob Gronkowski leaps over Denver Broncos defensive back Shiloh Keo (33) during the second half of the NFL football AFC Championship game between the Denver Broncos and the New England Patriots. (Inset) New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady (12) and Denver Broncos quarterback Peyton Manning speak to one another after the game. — AP photos

# BRONCOS TO FACE PANTHERS IN 50TH SUPER BOWL

## 39 YEAR-OLD MANNING OLDEST EVER SUPER BOWL QUARTERBACK

**DENVER:** Peyton Manning is the only five-time MVP in NFL history, one of the faces of the league and, at 39, the oldest starting quarterback to lead a team to the Super Bowl. Slowed by age and injury, he is no longer the record-breaking passer he once was. Most folks figure Manning's fourth Super Sunday appearance will be his last game as a pro.

Cam Newton is at the opposite end of his career, just 26, making his debut in the big game. He also is expected to earn MVP honors for the first time, part of a new breed of dual-threat QBs as good at running as they are at throwing.

For the next two weeks, until Manning's AFC champion Denver Broncos (14-4) play Newton's NFC champion Carolina Panthers (17-1) for the Lombardi Trophy in Santa Clara, California, on Feb. 7, most of the focus will be on the two quarterbacks who were No. 1 overall draft picks 13 years apart. "Oh, wow," said Newton, whose Panthers opened as 4-point favorites with most bookmakers. "Playing 'The Sheriff.'"

**'Hall of Famer'**

That is a reference to Manning, who is 1-2 in past Super Bowls. He won a championship with the Indianapolis Colts in 2007, lost with the Colts in 2010, and lost again with the Broncos in 2014. But this is a different version of Manning. Yes, he's still as good as anyone at diagnosing defenses and changing things up - or appearing to, anyway - at the line of scrimmage. Yes, he's still out there yelling "Omaha!"

"He most certainly is a Hall of Famer," Panthers coach Ron Rivera said. But Manning is not quite as capable as he was, once upon a time, when it comes to putting the football exactly where he wants it, especially on deep routes. This has hardly been a record-setting season for Manning - or, until now, one worth remembering. Overall, the bad far outweighed the good, including one game with a passer rating of 0.0, 17 inter-

ceptions to only nine touchdown passes in the regular season, being sidelined for six weeks with a series of injuries, getting relegated to backup duty in the NFL for the first time, and vehemently denying a report linking Manning's wife to the banned drug HGH.

**Story-lines**

"My role has been different and my contributions are different," Manning said. "But I'm fortunate and grateful that I have the opportunity to contribute still, in some way. And it's a great honor to be going back to the Super Bowl." Here are some of the other story lines for the 50th Super Bowl, which will be Denver's record-tying eighth and Carolina's second:

**SUPERMAN:** Newton threw for 335 yards and two TDs, and he ran for 47 yards and a pair of scores, leading Carolina past the Arizona Cardinals 49-15 in the NFC title game Sunday night. It was the type of dynamic performance he put in all season, the sort of promise he showed while winning a Heisman Trophy in college at Auburn. "I keep saying it: We're not finished. We're not finished," Newton said.

**MILLER TIME:** Broncos linebacker Von Miller was terrific Sunday, getting 2 1/2 sacks and an interception in a 20-18 victory over Tom Brady and the New England Patriots in the AFC title game. "I wanted to do it for Peyton," said Miller, who was injured and missed Denver's loss to Seattle in the 2014 Super Bowl.

**DOMINANT DEFENSES:** Both of these teams excel at defense. The Broncos led the NFL with 52 sacks and allowed a league-low 283.1 yards per game, then made life difficult as can be for Brady on Sunday, knocking him to the ground over and over. No one forced more turnovers than the Panthers, and only five clubs gave up fewer points (the Broncos were one, naturally). Against Arizona, Carolina produced seven take-aways.

**CAROLINA'S STARTS:** If the Panthers are

able to get off to the sort of start they've made commonplace lately, they might not even give the Broncos a chance to make a game of it. In their two games this postseason, Carolina outscored its opponents 55-7 in the first half. That includes leads of 17-0 after one quarter and 24-7 after two against Arizona. "We wanted to start fast," Newton said. "We wanted to keep the pressure on."

**INJURIES:** Panthers linebacker Thomas Davis said he broke his right forearm against Arizona - "I knew something was wrong," he said - but sounded like someone who plans to play in the Super Bowl. The Broncos, meanwhile, lost both of their starting safeties - TJ Ward and Darian Stewart - to injuries during Sunday's game.



DENVER: Denver Broncos quarterback Peyton Manning waves to spectators following the AFC Championship game between the Denver Broncos and the New England Patriots. — AP

**DENVER'S DEFENSE CARRIES**

Peyton Manning is glad he doesn't have to face Denver's dizzying defense. Tom Brady wasn't so lucky. The Broncos bashed Brady throughout a 20-18 dethroning of the New England Patriots in the AFC championship Sunday that sent Denver to a record-tying eighth Super Bowl. Von Miller's monster performance led the way for a dominant defense that hit Brady 23 times and forced him into 29 incompletions, two fourth-down flops, and a costly interception on a failed 2-point try that would have tied it with 12 seconds left.

"Von played phenomenal today," safety TJ Ward said. "I have never seen a performance like that from one player." Miller had 2 1/2

sacks, four quarterback hits, a pass breakup and a takeaway that turned into a touchdown. "I tell you, I can do it all," Miller said with a wry smile. "I'm just playing." But he wasn't kidding. Denver's defense is no joke.

"Defense wins championships," Chris Harris Jr said, repeating the mantra in case anybody still doubts Denver. DeMarcus Ware added seven hits on Brady, including a sandwich sack with Miller, and Derek Wolfe set the early tone with a huge, jaw-rattling hit, a batted down pass and a sack. "He was rattled," said Aqib Talib, whose deflected pass on Brady's 2-point try settled into Brady Roby's hands. "I don't think I've ever seen anybody put that much pressure on Tom - ever. So, I think we did a hell of a job getting that pressure on him. That's why we're going to the ship."

Along with Manning, who was hit just four times and threw two TD passes to tight end Owen Daniels. Manning is seeking his second ring and his third for his boss, John Elway. "Me, personally, I think he still has it, although the critics say he doesn't have it," receiver Emmanuel Sanders said. "You want to talk about a guy that started the season off 7-0 and is now he is going to the Super Bowl. At age 39 or 40 or 70 or how ever old he is, no matter what, he gets the job done."

Two months shy of 40, he's also trying to supplant Elway as the oldest QB ever to win a Lombardi Trophy. Standing in their way is Cam Newton and the Carolina Panthers (17-1), who throttled the, Arizona Cardinals 49-15 to reach their first Super Bowl.

"I've enjoyed playing on the same team as that defense," Manning said of his teammates. "I'm glad I haven't had to face them this season, I'll say that. They've been challenging to go against in practice." Brady praised not only Denver's front seven, but its star-studded secondary. "It was just tough for us to ever get in a rhythm," said Brady, who fell to 11-6 in his storied rivalry with Manning, including 1-3 in conference championships. — AP



PEACOCK GROUP SIGNS PARTNERSHIP WITH DRAGONPASS



KUWAIT: A general view of the downtown Kuwait City. 2015 was a milestone for Kuwait’s projects market, with an unprecedented KD 9.7 billion (\$32.2 billion) worth of contracts awarded during the year.

KUWAIT EYES PROJECTS WORTH KD16.7BN

PROJECTS MARKET MARKS A MILESTONE IN 2015

**KUWAIT:** 2015 was a milestone for Kuwait’s projects market, with an unprecedented KD 9.7 billion (\$32.2 billion) worth of contracts awarded during the year, 20 percent more than the year before. Over half of the contracts signed were related to the oil and gas sector, as Kuwait attempts to reach its oil production target of 4 million barrels per day (b/d) by 2020. In July 2015, Kuwait awarded the long-delayed New Refinery contract at Al-Zour for KD 3.9 billion and the contract for the development of the Lower Fars Heavy Oil production facility in the north of the country for KD 1.2 billion.

In the transportation sector, the authorities also awarded the KD 1.3 billion contract to build the New Terminal Building at Kuwait International Airport. The project should see airport passenger capacity double to 15 million passengers by 2020.

Looking ahead, 2016 should also be a bumper year, with the authorities looking to sign deals worth KD 16.7 billion (\$55 billion) before year-end. This comes at a time when Kuwait is expected to record its first actual budget deficit in 16 years, of KD 4.7 billion (11.6 percent of GDP) by the close of FY15/16. The government, for its part, has shown no sign of cutting capital expenditure, stressing that development projects are to move

ahead in 2016.

Below is a breakdown of developments relating to Kuwait’s major projects for 2015 as well as the outlook for upcoming projects in 2016.

**Oil & gas**

Despite the more than 70 percent drop in oil prices since mid-2014 and the huge uncertainties facing the global oil and gas industry in the low oil price environment, Kuwait has pressed ahead with its energy-related development spending, emerging as the region’s biggest market for oil and gas projects in 2015 with an estimated KD 6 billion (\$19.8 billion) worth of contracts awarded.

In June 2015, downstream operator, Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC), awarded the delayed New Refinery project at Al-Zour. With a capacity of 615,000 barrels per day, the refinery will be the largest in the region. As part of expanding the Mina Al-Ahmadi refinery, KNPC also awarded Spain’s Tecnicas Reunidas a KD 450 million (\$1.49 billion) the contract to build a Gas Fractionation Train 5 at the refinery. Along with the KD 3.7 billion (\$12 billion) Clean Fuels Project, which KNPC had awarded in 2014, Kuwait is overhauling its refineries in order to increase both the quality and quantity of its petroleum products.

In 2016, KNPC is planning to award

the contract for the LNG Import and Regasification Terminal which is also in the Al-Zour area. The project is valued at KD 1 billion (\$3.3 billion), with a main contract award date set for April 2016.

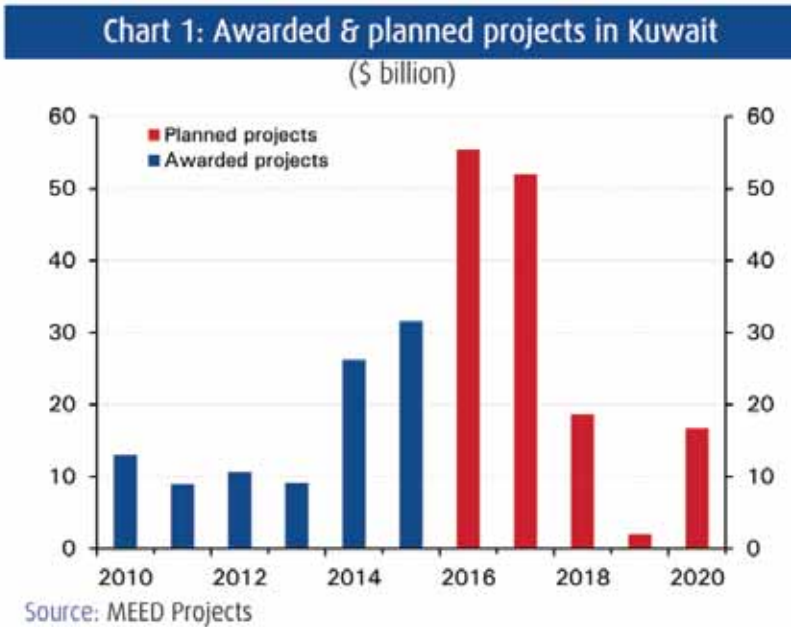
Kuwait is also looking into integrating an Olefins III plant into the refinery complex. The KD 2.12 Billion (\$7 billion) project is still being reviewed and is not expected to be tendered before December 2016.

Kuwait has also expedited plans to develop its oil & gas reserves situated in the north of the country. In January 2015, Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), the state’s upstream operator, awarded a KD 1.2 billion (\$4 billion) contract to Petrofac to develop the Lower Fars heavy oil handling facilities (Phase 1). The project targets the development of 7 to 15 billion barrels of oil-in-place in the northern desert; phase 1 should see the development of 60,000 b/d of heavy oil over ten years. KOC has also tendered three contracts worth KD 1.7

Maternity Hospital; the Italian firm Pizzarotti had submitted the lowest bid of KD 221 million for the project in July 2015. The ministry also announced a new KD 152 million (\$500 million) Sabah Al-Ahmad Hospital to be constructed south of Kuwait city. The main contract tender is expected to be issued in May 2016.

**Power & water**

2016 is expected to be a landmark year for the Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP) as it plans to award KD 2 billion (\$6.6 billion) worth of public private partnership (PPP) contracts. With phase 1 of Al-Zour North IWPP completed and close to reaching commercial capacity in the coming months, KAPP has issued the main contract bid for phase 2 of the project, which aims to produce 1,800 megawatts (MW) of electricity and 464,100 cubic meters a day of desalinated water. The main contract bid is set for February 2016, with a



the government revealed plans to develop the South Mutlaa city, which will contain 29,000 housing units. The government is planning to tender three infrastructure contracts pertaining to the project worth KD 2.6 billion (\$8.7 billion). Contract number 1, for the construction of the main roads, has already been tendered, and the submission deadline set for February 2016. Meanwhile, contracts 2 and 3 are scheduled to be awarded in the last quarter of 2016.

In August 2015, Kuwait awarded Turkish firm Limak the KD 1.3 billion (\$4.3 billion) contract to build the new

Main Terminal Building at Kuwait International Airport. Kuwait has also tendered a KD 151 million (\$500 million) Passenger Support Building as passenger traffic is expected to rise over the coming years until the main terminal is completed. The bids for the Passenger Support Building are currently being reviewed by the State Audit Bureau along with the contract for the main terminal building. An additional KD 334 million (\$1.1 billion) has been allocated for smaller packages in the airport expansion project, which are also scheduled to be tendered in 2016.

Table 1: Largest contract awards in 2015 (KD billion)

Company	Sector	Value
New Refinery Project	Oil & Gas	3.9
Airport Expansion: New Passenger Building	Transport	1.3
Ratqa LFHO: Production Facilities/Support Complex/Tank Farm (Phase I)	Oil & Gas	1.2
Mina Al-Ahmadi Refinery: Gas Fractionation Train 5	Oil & Gas	0.4
Al Jahra Hospital	Construction	0.4
Main Pipelines Manifold Gathering	Oil & Gas	0.2
Upgrade of Nuwaiseeb Road (Route 40)	Transport	0.2
Sabah Al-Salem University: Activity & Athletic Facilities	Construction	0.2
Sabah Al-Salem University: Academic Support Buildings	Construction	0.1
Doha Desalination Plant: Phase I	Power & Water	0.1

Source: MEED Projects, NBK

NBK ECONOMIC REPORT

(\$5.7 billion) for the development of Jurassic Non-Associated Gas Reserves. The three contracts cover the development of four fields: West Raudhatain; East Raudhatain; and Sabriyah and Umm Niqa. Originally scheduled for award in 4Q15, the deadline for the tender has been postponed to February and April 2016.

**Construction**

Kuwait’s Ministry of Health plans to adopt a World Health Organization (WHO) recommendation that calls for a minimum of 22 hospital beds per 10,000 citizens by 2030. Hospitals’ total bed capacity is expected to reach 12,000 beds by 2020.

The 1,168-bed Jaber Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah Hospital is now due to open in September 2016; it was originally scheduled for completion in 2015. In April 2015, the Amiri Diwan commissioned the KD 390 million (\$1.28 billion) New Al-Jahra Hospital, while in October the Prime Minister inaugurated the Al-Razi Hospital Expansion, which added 240 new beds to the hospital.

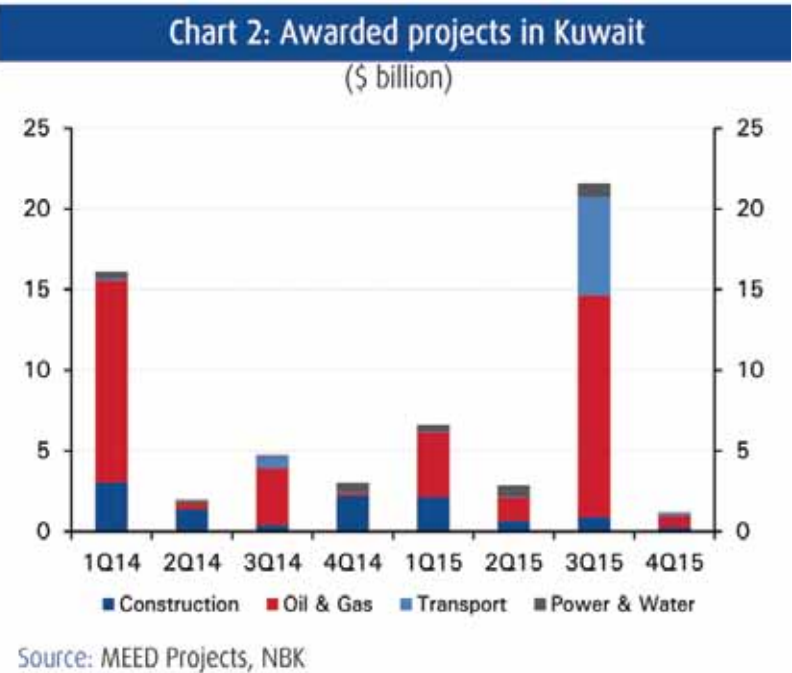
Taken together, the government has awarded upwards of KD 1.5 billion (\$5 billion) on new hospital projects since 2008.1. A further KD 881 million (\$2.9 billion) is expected to be awarded in 2016. The Ministry of Health is currently reviewing bids for the New

planned budget of KD 820 million (\$2.7 billion). KAPP also plans to award two waste-to-energy schemes: the KD 450 million (\$1.5 Billion) Umm Al-Hayman Wastewater Treatment Plant in May and the Kabd Municipal Solid Waste Project in July.

2015 proved to be a slow year for awards in this sector, with Kuwait only awarding two major power and water projects. Doosan Heavy Industries & Construction was awarded a KD 118 million (\$390 million) contract for the development of phase 1 of the Doha Desalination Plant, which is scheduled to have a capacity of 60 million gallons per day). Kuwait also awarded the TSK Electronica y Electricidad / Kharafi National joint venture a KD 117 million (\$388 million) contract to execute phase 1 of the 50 megawatts Shagaya Renewable Energy Complex, which will produce solar power. The project is scheduled for completion in April 2018.

**Housing and transportation**

The government is pushing ahead with efforts to provide housing for 106,000 applicants. In a survey conducted in 2013 by the Speaker of the National Assembly, Marzouk Al-Ghanim, the provision of housing was the voters’ most pressing concern. The government has since promised to deliver 12,000 units annually. In 2015,





## IRAN’S BANK PASARGAD LOOKS TO DRAW INVESTORS AND DRIVE OVERSEAS

**TEHRAN:** Bank Pasargad, Iran’s second-largest listed bank, is looking to raise capital and expand overseas now that the country is free of the shackles of sanctions, a senior official told Reuters.

After years of being frozen out of the global financial system, Iran’s banking sector will be crucial to the country’s efforts to win business from foreign firms and attract investment to upgrade its infrastructure, as deal-makers and conduits for the cash flows.

Bank Pasargad aims to raise money from both Iranian and foreign investors and to expand at home - including in investment banking and asset management - as well as overseas, according to board member Mostafa Beheshtiroui. It is exploring the possibility of establishing a presence in countries including Germany, Spain, Turkey and China, which could be in the form of wholly owned branches, joint ventures with local partners or outright acquisitions, he said in a telephone interview. It eventually plans to seek a listing on a foreign stock exchange.

The lender outlined its plans after a nuclear deal between world powers and Iran led to the removal of the curbs on Tehran’s banks, bringing out of isolation an industry big enough to wield some clout on a global level. The Iranian banking sector consists of eight state-owned and 19 privately owned banks which held a combined \$582 billion in assets at the end of 2014, according to central bank data. By comparison, South Africa’s banking sector has over \$400 billion in assets, while Turkey’s has about \$800 billion.

Iran itself is the second-largest economy in the Middle East and North Africa region after Saudi Arabia, according to the World Bank, and with around 78 million people has the region’s second-largest population of the region after Egypt.

The country faced some form of economic sanctions throughout the period between Bank Pasargad’s launch in 2005 and this month, though Pasargad says it was never on a Western list of individually sanctioned banks.

The bank grew domestically and is now the 11th largest listed firm by market value on Tehran’s stock exchange, and the second-biggest listed lender after Bank Mellat.

It has about \$19 billion of assets, according to Beheshtiroui - though he said that, without the depreciation of the rial against the dollar in recent years due to sanctions, the figure could have been as high as \$70 billion. Since the lifting of sanctions this month, it has doubled its number of correspondent bank relationships, mostly by adding mid-sized European banks, Beheshtiroui added. Correspondent banks act as agents for a lender to conduct business abroad.

“We have around 50 already - we already had documents exchanged prior to implementation,” said Beheshtiroui, referring to the day this month when the United Nations atomic agency confirmed Tehran had met its commitments under the nuclear deal.

### DOUBLE CAPITAL

Hurdles remain, however, such as securing approvals from clearing banks that would help process transactions denominated in hard currencies, Beheshtiroui said.

“Resuming correspondent relations is one thing, and resuming business is another,” he said. Many of the largest Western banks are expected to steer clear of doing business in Iran for some time because of concern about being caught up in US sanctions that remain in place, said Beheshtiroui, echoing comments made by the head of listed Tehran peer Middle East Bank to Reuters last week.

The ongoing American sanctions prevent US nationals, banks and insurers from trading with Iran and also prohibit any trades with Iran in US dollars from being processed via the US financial system.

Before sanctions were tightened in recent years, Bank Pasargad dealt with several of Europe’s biggest banks but none have now resumed their links, Beheshtiroui said.

Previously, foreign expansion plans met with resistance from regulators wary of being caught in the sanctions, such as in Turkey, where the bank unsuccessfully applied for a license in 2012.

“Before, nobody was even willing to sign NDAs (non-disclosure agreements) - this is happening only after implementation day,” said Beheshtiroui, adding that two such agreements had now been signed with parties he declined to name. The bank plans to double the capital contributed by shareholders to 100.1 trillion rials (\$2.8 billion at the free-market exchange rate) in the next three years, from 50.4 trillion rials currently, he added, but did not specify how the money would be raised. Its last capital increase was in August last year, when it added 12 trillion rials.

Pasargad could prove attractive to foreign investors because the depreciation of the rial has made Iranian assets cheaper to them, Beheshtiroui said. Iranian officials have said they will allow foreign investment in the local banking sector.

Many of Iran’s banks have struggled with bad debt during the sanctions era. Bank Pasargad had assets of 515 trillion rials and liabilities of 427 trillion rials as of March 20, 2015, and made a net profit of nearly 16 trillion rials in the year to that date, according to the most recent financial statement on its website. — Reuters



KUALA LUMPUR: A worker carries vegetables for sale at a farm in Bukit Tinggi, outside Kuala Lumpur, yesterday. —AFP

# OIL TUMBLES 3% BUT STOCKS HOLD GROUND

FOCUS TURNS TO FED MEETING TODAY AND TOMORROW

**LONDON:** Oil prices tumbled 3 percent yesterday and dragged the dollar down, but world stocks clung onto gains in a sign of stabilization after a horrendous start to the year.

Crude oil prices fell 3 percent as Iraq announced record-high oil production feeding into a heavily over supplied market, wiping out much of the gains made in one of the biggest-ever daily rallies last Friday. That tumble briefly weighed on stocks, which recovered ground as hopes of further monetary stimulus by major central banks helped take the edge off the bearish sentiment that has dominated since the start of the year.

The MSCI world equity index was up 0.1 percent, almost 5 percent above 2-1/2 year lows hit last week. Asian stocks rose 1.5 percent and moved further away from last week’s four-year low, while US stock futures traded just 0.1 percent lower.

“Risk-asset markets have received a boost from the European Central Bank hinting at stimulus last week, and investors are also looking at whether the fall in stocks has run its course,” said Philip Shaw, chief economist at Investec in London.

Global markets slumped at the start of the year on fears that a slowdown in China would spread to the rest of the world economy, while oil prices sank to 13-year lows.

German business morale fell to an 11-month low in January, a survey showed, suggesting growing concern among company executives in Europe’s largest economy. The Ifo survey reading of 107.3 compared with 108.6 in December and was well below 108.4 forecast in a Reuters poll.

### FED IN FOCUS

Market turbulence sets the backdrop for a meeting of the US Federal Reserve today and Wednesday, while Bank of Japan policymakers gather on Jan 28-29.

Last week, the European Central Bank signalled it could deliver further monetary stimulus, raising hopes that other central banks might take the same path. The market rout meanwhile could throw the Fed off its course of gradual interest rate hikes. “Attention will now turn to the US Federal Reserve and the Bank of Japan’s latest policy decisions later this week, with the main focus on the US central bank in the wake of last month’s historic decision to raise rates for the first time in nine years,” said Michael Hewson, chief market analyst at CMC Markets. — Reuters

## ABU DHABI’S AABAR SEEKS \$2.5BN TO REFINANCE LOAN

**DUBAI:** Abu Dhabi state fund Aabar Investments is seeking to borrow \$2.5 billion from banks to refinance a loan coming due in April, sources aware of the matter said yesterday. The state-linked firm is in talks with a small group of banks regarding the financing, the sources said, adding the talks were at the preliminary stage. The loan will be supported by its parent company, International Petroleum Investment Co (IPIC), said two of the sources without divulging the nature of support.

Aabar, with stakes in companies including UniCredit , Dubai-listed builder Arabtec and Richard Branson’s Virgin Galactic, declined to comment.

The 2013 loan that the new financing will replace was also backed by IPIC, which promised to stand behind Aabar should it have difficulty in making the repayment. Aabar has a chequered past, having bor-

rowed aggressively to build up its holdings around the turn of the decade but then suffering heavy losses as investments turned sour. For example, IPIC’s 2011 net profit was all but wiped out due to losses worth \$3.42 billion by Aabar’s holdings in German car-maker Daimler and UniCredit. It has since kept a lower profile as it seeks to repair its reputation within Abu Dhabi and manage its existing commitments. Aabar manages a portfolio of investments spanning real estate to aerospace and financial services to energy.

The 2013 loan was split between tranches lasting three and five years, which were each denominated in dollars, UAE dirhams and euros. Among the banks to have backed the loan were Bank of America-Merrill Lynch, HSBC, JP Morgan and National Bank of Abu Dhabi, according to Thomson Reuters data. — Reuters

## IRAQ AGREES \$328M GE DEAL TO BOOST ELECTRICITY GRID

**BAGHDAD:** Iraq has agreed a \$328.8 million deal with General Electric to boost electricity production capacity by 1,000 megawatts (MW), an electricity ministry spokesman said yesterday.

Though Iraq is a major OPEC oil producer, the country faces chronic electricity shortages, with its fragile grid struggling meet demand after years of war, sanctions and neglect. Many areas lack access to electricity or drinking water, prompting demonstrations by thousands of Iraqis last year to press the government to improve delivery of essential services. GE will pro-

vide equipment and maintenance for 10 power plants across the country, ministry spokesman Musab Al-Mударis told Reuters.

Baghdad will pay GE in instalments over three years, starting in 2017, because the electricity ministry’s 2016 budget was cut by more than half to 1.185 trillion Iraqi dinars (\$1 billion), Mudaris said.

Iraq expects a budget deficit of about 24 trillion dinars this year as it grapples with lower global oil prices and costs associated with the fight against Islamic State militants. — Reuters

## NIGERIA CURRENCY IN FREE FALL DUE TO OIL SLUMP

**ABUJA:** Food wholesaler Chioma Oluwaseun was sorting through the inventory in her warehouse to hike prices for imports, in line with a Nigerian currency that has lost a third of its value on unofficial “parallel markets” since last month. Even though the naira is plunging on the street, a result of the collapse of global prices for oil exports, which Nigeria depends on for state revenue, the official exchange rate has yet to budge. But few think that situation can last much longer.

Business owners like Oluwaseun say the widening gap between the official rate and the parallel rate is making it hard to keep their enterprises running. They will be looking to central bank governor Godwin Emeziele to announce policies to address a shortage of dollars at a news conference today.

“The exchange rate situation has become very difficult.... Everything is becoming very, very expensive,” said Oluwaseun as she checked through her stocks in Abuja’s sprawling Wuse market, where anything is sold from whiskey to TV screens and sofas. She pointed to two

letters from food suppliers which just landed on her desk announcing yet more price increases for imports.

Commercial banks have been running out of hard currency, forcing importers to tap the parallel market, where a dollar costs 305 naira, compared to the official rate of 198. A box of imported cranberry juice cartons now costs 700 naira more than a few weeks ago. “You cannot even get hard currencies such as the dollar, euro or pounds,” said Chucks Okonkwo, a distributor of alcoholic drinks in the market. Some products had disappeared from shop shelves because customers refuse to pay the price increase.

### FEWER TRUCKS

The rising cost of imports risks dragging down the whole economy, with firms across industries firing staff to offset the premium they need to pay to get dollars. Rising unemployment and prices-year-on-year inflation has risen to 9.6 percent in December-have depressed consumer demand. Fewer trucks than usual could be seen delivering goods to shops at the Abuja market. —Reuters

## EXCHANGE RATES

### AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

#### ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.560
Indian Rupees	4.501
Pakistani Rupees	2.897
Srilankan Rupees	2.118
Nepali Rupees	2.815
Singapore Dollar	214.080
Hongkong Dollar	38.980
Bangladesh Taka	3.873
Philippine Peso	6.350
Thai Baht	8.450

#### GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	81.110
Qatari Riyal	83.551
Omani Riyal	790.021
Bahraini Dinar	807.760
UAE Dirham	82.811

#### ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	38.550
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	38.890
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.419
Tunisian Dinar	149.170
Jordanian Dinar	428.440
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.027
Syrian Lira	2.168
Morocco Dirham	31.179

#### EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	304.000
Euro	333.250
Sterling Pound	437.150
Canadian dollar	216.910
Turkish lira	101.300
Swiss Franc	302.490
Australian Dollar	215.840
US Dollar Buying	302.800

### GOLD

20 Gram	225.300
10 Gram	115.570
5 Gram	58.630

### UAE EXCHANGE CENTRE WLL

#### CURRENCIES

Australian Dollar	202.10
Canadian Dollar	218.01
Swiss Franc	304.64
Euro	332.34
US Dollar	304.15
Sterling Pound	436.97
Japanese Yen	2.61
Bangladesh Taka	3.877
Indian Rupee	4.493
Sri Lankan Rupee	2.116
Nepali Rupee	2.808
Pakistani Rupee	2.896
UAE Dirhams	0.08277
Bahraini Dinar	0.8083
Egyptian Pound	0.03874
Jordanian Dinar	0.4326
Omani Riyal	0.7898
Qatari Riyal	0.08386
Saudi Riyal	0.08107

#### TELEX TRANSFER PER 1000

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	304.350
Canadian Dollar	217.315
Sterling Pound	436.095
Euro	330.075
Swiss Frank	310.175
Bahrain Dinar	805.175
UAE Dirhams	83.105
Qatari Riyals	84.320

### DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Saudi Riyals	81.840
Jordanian Dinar	428.735
Egyptian Pound	38.757
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.119
Indian Rupees	4.495
Pakistani Rupees	2.897
Bangladesh Taka	3.871
Philippines Peso	6.361
Cyprus pound	579.695
Japanese Yen	3.555
Syrian Pound	2.380
Nepalese Rupees	3.805
Malaysian Ringgit	72.045
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	46.605
Thai Bhat	9.425
Turkish Lira	101.620

### BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.428174	0.437174
Czech Korune	0.004219	0.016219
Danish Krone	0.400217	0.045217
Euro	0.323777	0.331777
Norwegian Krone	0.030823	0.036023
Romanian Leu	0.087205	0.087205
Slovakia	0.009081	0.019081
Swedish Krona	0.031566	0.036566
Swiss Franc	0.293260	0.303460
Turkish Lira	0.095638	0.105938

Australian Dollar	0.205220	0.216720
New Zealand Dollar	0.191600	0.201100

America		
Canadian Dollar	0.209802	0.218302

US Dollars	0.299900	0.304400
US Dollars Mint	0.300400	0.304400

### Asia

Bangladesh Taka	0.003519	0.004119
Chinese Yuan	0.044805	0.048305
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037123	0.039873
Indian Rupee	0.004219	0.004609
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023
Japanese Yen	0.002501	0.002681
Kenyan Shilling	0.003159	0.003159
Korean Won	0.000244	0.000259
Malaysian Ringgit	0.066864	0.072864
Nepalese Rupee	0.002882	0.003052
Pakistan Rupee	0.002606	0.002886
Philippine Peso	0.006275	0.006555
Sierra Leone	0.000067	0.000073
Singapore Dollar	0.209842	0.215842
South African Rand	0.012505	0.021005
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001763	0.002343
Taiwan	0.008927	0.009107
Thai Baht	0.008138	0.008688

### Arab

Bahraini Dinar	0.799476	0.807476
Egyptian Pound	0.035418	0.039754
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000200	0.000260
Jordanian Dinar	0.424776	0.432276
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000152	0.000252
Moroccan Dirhams	0.021514	0.045514
Nigerian Naira	0.001256	0.001891
Omani Riyal	0.783190	0.788870
Qatar Riyal	0.082790	0.084003
Saudi Riyal	0.080180	0.081130
Syrian Pound	0.001289	0.001509
Tunisian Dinar	0.145708	0.153708
Turkish Lira	0.095638	0.105938
UAE Dirhams	0.081787	0.082936
Yemeni Riyal	0.001374	0.001454



## A HONG KONG MOVE UNLIKELY TO SLASH HSBC TAX BILL

**LONDON:** HSBC's possible relocation to Hong Kong is unlikely to save the British bank much tax - one of its reasons for maybe moving abroad - and could actually increase its bill, a Reuters analysis of the company's filings shows. HSBC said last year that it was considering a possible shift overseas from London, citing higher taxes and tighter regulation in Britain and a desire to be closer to faster-growing Asian markets. Analysts said HSBC's former home Hong Kong, with a corporate tax rate of 16.5 percent against a British rate set to rise to 26 percent, was the most likely destination.

Some investors have said weakening growth in Asia and a reduction in a British levy on banks' asset bases announced last year, argues for HSBC to stay put. But some analysts say Asia's better long-term growth opportunities and Hong Kong's lower tax rate may yet hold attractions for the bank.

A Reuters examination of corporate filings shows that Hong Kong may offer HSBC fewer tax advantages than many believe. That's because HSBC will struggle to move enough profit to Hong Kong to benefit from its lower tax rate. Indeed, it may have to report more income in Britain if it moves, since many of the overhead and borrowing costs now booked in Britain may in future be offset against more lightly taxed Hong Kong profits.

Also, Hong Kong's less generous treatment of share bonuses may cost HSBC millions of dollars in tax deductions each year. Crawford Spence, Professor of Accounting at Warwick Business School, who has studied international groups' tax planning, said the Reuters analysis showed the "commonsense understanding" that HSBC would receive a big tax benefit was too simplistic.

"They may not be saving much money at all on this particular aspect," he said. HSBC declined to answer questions on possible changes in its structure and their tax impact. "The Board is considering at least eleven criteria for long term shareholder value, one of which includes the tax system which needs to be transparent, fair and competitive," a spokeswoman said in a statement.

HSBC moved to London from Hong Kong in 1993 after it bought Midland Bank. However the climate for banks in the city has become increasingly hostile since the 2008 crisis with regulators bringing in tougher rules on capital and bankers' pay as well as imposing heavy fines for a litany of misdeeds that has scarred the industry.

While regulators in Asia have followed suit with tighter rules on bank capital and liquidity, the region's relatively strong showing in the 2008 crisis means lenders there have faced less of the public and political backlash seen in Europe.

### LOW UK PROFITS

HSBC's ability to cut its tax bill by moving from Britain is constrained by the fact that it doesn't declare much taxable profit in Britain. Britain is a lucrative market for HSBC, generat-

ing over \$15 billion in net interest income and fees in 2014, the most recent full year for which data is available.

However, the bank reported an accounting loss in Britain in 2014 and had a tax charge of \$69 million for the year. This is despite the fact its British retail bank, which has tens of thousands of staff, produces what Chief Executive Stuart Gulliver said last August were "excellent returns".

HSBC's investment bank, which is headquartered in London, had profits of \$8 billion in 2014, while its commercial bank, which also has a significant British presence, had profits of \$9 billion.

A key reason for the modest British taxable result is that much of the group's overhead costs are booked in Britain, such as top management salaries and central support functions. Also, since HSBC borrows most of its debt via British-registered companies, its annual report shows, it is also entitled to British tax deductions on bond coupons and other interest costs. HSBC's accounts show group overhead expenses of around \$9 billion a year. Hong Kong, which does not bear the same share of group overhead costs as London, generated over \$8 billion in profit on almost \$13 billion of revenue in 2014, filings show. The bank declined to say how much of its group costs would be booked in Hong Kong as part of any overseas move.

However, analysts said the change could be significant. Chris Wheeler, banks analyst at Atlantic Securities, said regulatory rules mean that if HSBC moved its main holding company to Hong Kong, it would have to raise more debt there, rather than in Britain.

"It would have to be in Hong Kong. It would have to be in the holding company," he said. If these costs were no longer booked against UK income, the UK profits would rise and face UK tax.

Of course, booking costs in Hong Kong would depress taxable profits there, reducing the tax bill there. However, that's not the kind of tax arbitrage companies usually target. "You're better issuing (debt) out of a higher tax jurisdiction than a lower tax jurisdiction," said Gary Greenwood, an analyst at Shore Capital who covers HSBC.

### BANKER BONUSES

In the area of executive pay, HSBC could find itself losing UK tax deductions without any corresponding saving in Hong Kong. In response pressure from investors and regulators, banks are increasingly paying senior bank executives their bonuses - often worth millions a year - in shares. Britain allows companies to take tax deductions in relation to newly issued shares paid to employees, even though this does not represent a cost to the company itself. Hong Kong does not, according to its Inland Revenue Department.

All this means that HSBC will have to shift much more UK profit than costs to Hong Kong in the coming years or face an increase in its tax bill. — Reuters



**DAVOS:** (From left): President of Afghanistan, Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, Nato Secretary-General, Jens Stoltenberg, USD efense Secretary, Ashton Carter and Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore, Tharman Shanmugaratnam attend a panel "The Global Security Outlook" at the World Economic Forum in Davos. —AP

# DESPERATE POLICYMAKERS STRUGGLE FOR ANSWERS

## LEADERS FACE HIGHEST GEOPOLITICAL RISKS IN DECADES

**DAVOS:** Angela Merkel was missing from Davos this year, but the German leader's optimistic mantra "we can do this" echoed through the snowy resort in the Swiss Alps.

China's economic slowdown? Manageable. Plunging financial markets? Temporary. And Europe's refugee crisis? A big challenge, but one which will ultimately push the bloc's members closer together, audiences were told over and over again.

Beneath the veneer of can-do optimism at the World Economic Forum, however, was a creeping concern that the politicians, diplomats and central bankers who flock each year to this gathering of the global elite are at the mercy of geopolitical and economic forces beyond their control. At the top of the lengthy list of worries was Europe, whose policymakers remain deeply divided in their approach to the refugee crisis at a time when the bloc faces a host of other threats, from Islamic extremism and the rise of far-right populists, to a possible British exit from the European Union.

"You've had deadly crises in Europe from day one and we've overcome them. However we always had one crisis at a time. Today we have about five, from Brexit to ISIS and everything in between," said Josef Joffe, the publisher-editor of German weekly Die Zeit.

"In the past we had leadership. Today we are facing overwhelming demands on leadership and we are delivering less of it," he added.

Amid the reassuring messages on the refugee crisis, came stark warnings from people like IMF chief Christine Lagarde that Europe faced a "make or break" moment. Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte and his Swedish counterpart Stefan Lofven gave the bloc 6-8 weeks to get its act together. And frustration boiled over after Austria became the latest country in Europe's Schengen passport-free travel zone to unveil unilateral steps at the

border to stem the tide.

"There is no way you can cope with such a massive flow of people just by closing the borders," said the EU's top diplomat Frederica Mogherini. "What do you do? You close the border and it's your neighbour's problem, who closes the border, and it's the other neighbor's problem?"

### VERY CLEAR LIMIT

On the economic front, there was also a growing sense of policymaker impotence.

Last January, in a bold sign of policy activism, the European Central Bank unveiled its hotly anticipated stimulus, or quantitative easing (QE), program in a bid to kick-start growth and inflation in a euro zone still reeling from financial turmoil and breakup fears.

A year later, despite Mario Draghi's assertion that the bank still has "plenty of instruments" at its disposal, the consensus in Davos was that it has now used up all its monetary ammunition and that politicians have failed to use the time the ECB bought them to implement economic reforms at home. Meanwhile growth remains subdued and inflation close to zero.

"We understand that there may be no limit to what the ECB is willing to do but there's a very clear limit to what the ECB can and will achieve," chairman of Swiss bank UBS and former Bundesbank chief Axel Weber said after Draghi signalled yet more monetary easing.

The central theme of this year's meeting was the "Fourth Industrial Revolution"-the idea that technological advances will allow ever greater levels of automation, transforming the global economy in profound ways. But in a sobering report on the implications of these advances, UBS said they were likely to increase inequality across the globe, and the authors expressed skepticism about whether politicians could put a halt to this

trend. At a lunch entitled "The End of Political Consensus," there was broad agreement that rising inequality, and the sense that elites were only looking out for themselves, was fuelling more and more resentment of established politicians, and giving rise to a tide of populism-in the form of politicians like Donald Trump and France's Marine Le Pen.

However the attendees, including Harvard historian Niall Ferguson and former European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso, had few answers about how to combat this trend beyond more responsible leadership.

"We are witnessing the decay of power," Moises Naim of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace told the audience. "The view is that anything is better than the people in power."

### OPTIMISM ON CHINA

On the positive side, there was optimism that the Chinese economy was heading for a soft rather than a hard landing, despite the struggles of policymakers there to manage the shift to lower growth rates. And few doomsayers thought that what Credit Suisse CEO Tidjane Thiam described in the final session on Saturday as "the worst start to any year on record in financial markets ever" was a harbinger of another global financial crisis. The optimists pointed to the climate deal struck in Paris in December as a sign of what policymakers can still do at a global level when they put their minds to it. But building on the momentum from that deal looks tougher than ever. In her outlook for 2016, Citi's global political analyst Tina Fordham, said geopolitical risks looked more acute than they have in decades, pointing to the refugee crisis as the challenge "where everything converges". "Not even Angela Merkel has the capacity to make all of this work," she said. —Reuters



**SAN JUAN:** Workers measure luggage size as passengers wait to board a ferry headed for the Dominican Republic in San Juan, Puerto Rico. A growing number of financially strapped Puerto Ricans are moving to the neighboring Caribbean country to open businesses and escape economic chaos that has scared away even many Dominican migrants. —AP

## DOMINICAN ECONOMY LURES PUERTO RICANS IN CRISIS

**SANTO DOMINGO:** Dominican Republic: Carlos Gonzalez already had noticed the growing number of empty chairs and increasingly quiet slot machines at the Puerto Rico casino where he worked as he mulled a job offer in the Dominican Republic.

It was 2013, and Puerto Rico's economy had been in a downward slide for nearly a decade. Gonzalez didn't know it at the time, but the once-popular casino where he worked as a marketing manager would soon close. He thought of his family and friends and the reasons he moved back to Puerto Rico in the first place after spending more than 20 years in New Jersey. It took him several months to make a decision "It's not easy to leave your land," the Puerto Rico native said - but he finally did.

"I never imagined it. Never!" Gonzalez said with a laugh. "I even asked myself 2,000 times whether I really was moving to the Dominican Republic. I told myself it was crazy."

The flow of migrants through the 80 miles (130 kilometers) of churning waters that separate Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic has typically moved in one direction for more than half a century: toward the US territory. But the island's deep economic crisis is reversing this trend, with a growing number of financially strapped Puerto Ricans moving to the neighboring Caribbean country to open businesses and escape economic chaos

that has scared away even many Dominican migrants.

Officials say it's hard to quantify exactly how many Puerto Ricans have moved to the Dominican Republic in recent years because they fall under the general category of US citizens, but they say the trend is undeniable.

"It used to be extremely rare for a Puerto Rican to stop by and seek a work visa," said Franklin Grullon, the Dominican consul in the Puerto Rican capital of San Juan. "There's been a surge in all types of visas, and we believe this flow will only increase."

The majority of Puerto Ricans seeking business visas are young to middle-aged men, and many request permission to work in the tourism sector because they speak English and find it easy to get a job, Grullon said. They are drawn by the Dominican Republic's robust economy, which grew 7 percent in 2015 for the second consecutive year, making it the strongest in the Latin American and Caribbean region. The government has credited vigorous performances in banking, construction and tourism, noting that a record 5.6 million tourists visited the Dominican Republic last year. There's also been a big increase in Puerto Rican professionals such as architects and engineers traveling to the Dominican Republic to work because of that country's booming construction sector, said German Monroig, executive director of the office of Puerto Rican affairs. —AP

## JAPAN'S 2015 TRADE DEFICIT NARROWS ON OIL PRICE DROP

**TOKYO:** Japan's trade deficit narrowed sharply in 2015 as tumbling oil prices took pressure off its soaring post-Fukushima energy import bill, official data showed yesterday, while autos led a pick-up in exports.

The deficit decline offered up some good news for Prime Minister Shinzo Abe as he struggles to stoke growth and ahead of a test to his leadership in upper house elections this summer.

Stronger demand in some key markets, including the United States, and a sharply weaker yen boosted exports from the world's number three economy, the finance ministry said.

The figures showed Japan recorded its fifth-straight annual trade deficit, but the latest figure narrowed by 78 percent from 2014 to 2.83 trillion yen (\$23.8 billion). Auto exports surged 10.3 percent from a year ago, while the value of crude oil imports dropped 41.0 percent.

For December alone, the nation saw a trade surplus of 140 billion yen, returning to the black for the first time in two months. Japan remains highly dependent on energy imports to power the economy, but a big drop in oil prices over the summer has taken pressure off the cost of its energy needs. The nation has kept most of its nuclear reactors closed since a tsunami and earthquake triggered meltdowns at the Fukushima plant in 2011.

The accident forced Japan to turn to pricey imported fossil fuels to keep the lights on, leading to a string of big trade deficits.

"The continued weakening in energy prices is exacerbating the fall in import prices," said Marcel Thielliant at research house Capital Economics. Abe has pushed to restart nuclear plants, backed by Japan's business community, but the public is sharply divided with many opposed to returning to atomic power.

### 'Energy question'

Several reactors have been restarted since the worst atomic accident in a generation. "The resumption of nuclear power plants had only a very marginal impact on the 2015 trade statistics," Junko Nishioka, chief economist at Sumitomo Mitsui Banking.

"But if the Abe administration moves forward (on more restarts) in the near term, it would have...further impact toward reducing the trade deficit." But Nishioka warned that overseas demand, particularly in China, was at risk in the face of a struggling global economy.

"Given the market turmoil, it will likely dampen business confidence," Nishioka added.

Falling oil prices have also depressed oil-related investment in the United States, denting demand for Japanese construction machinery, said Junichi Makino, chief economist at SMBC Nikko Securities. "Looking forward, automobile demand is expected to stay solid, while a pickup is expected for electronics," Makino added. —AFP



**OSLO:** Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg (L) and finance minister Siv Jensen (2nd L) meets with Central Bank Governor Oystein Olsen (R) in Oslo yesterday. Investment in Norway's all-important oil sector is predicted to decline until 2019 as producers face high costs and collapsing oil prices. —AFP



**KUWAIT AIRWAYS**

منذ عام 1954

الخطوط الجوية الكويتية

## ANNOUNCEMENT

With reference to the Kuwait Airways announcement on 3 December 2015, to sell Airplanes along with the spares, this is to announce that the last date for those interested to procure is Thursday dated 28 January 2016 at 14:00.

As Kuwait Airways has appointed SKYTECH- AIC to market these assets so please contact them for any further information at:-

**Annette Wilkinson**

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**Email: [annettew@skytech-aic.com](mailto:annettew@skytech-aic.com)**

**Web site: [www.skytech-aic.com](http://www.skytech-aic.com)**



# VOLATILITY GRIPS WORLD STOCK MARKETS AGAIN

**LONDON:** World stock markets experienced more volatile trading yesterday, with equities in Europe swinging between gains and losses after solid advances across Asia.

Asian stock markets closed with gains as investors bet on central bank stimulus measures to support markets after the bloodbath at the start of the year. "It's been a volatile start to the week in financial markets and that doesn't look like abating in the final week of the month, as the Federal Reserve and Bank of Japan announce their latest monetary policy decisions, we get a number of key economic releas-

es and corporate earnings season gets into full swing," said Craig Erlam, senior market analyst at Oanda trading group.

After global equities enjoyed sharp gains Friday, Asian trading floors began the new week with more solid advances, led by Hong Kong, Tokyo and Sydney. There will be close scrutiny this week of the Bank of Japan after a recent report said policymakers were considering ramping up its already vast stimulus program to avert a deflation threat that has been exacerbated by plunging oil prices.

That came a day after the head of the

European Central Bank, Mario Draghi, said he would consider further easing its own monetary policy. There is also increasing speculation that the Federal Reserve will delay another interest rate rise for now, having increased the cost of borrowing in December for the first time in a decade.

The outcome of the Bank of Japan's monetary policy meeting on Friday "could be the main event this week... as the central bank may be about to announce another round of monetary stimulus", added Erlam.

"The Japanese economy has been stalling

for some time and inflation has been non-existent. Add to this the recent appreciation of the yen on the back of safe haven flows and the BoJ may have little choice but to ease further."

On Monday meanwhile, data revealed that the outlook for the German economy clouded over significantly in January as business confidence fell to its lowest level in 11 months.

The Ifo institute's closely-watched business climate index fell by a steeper-than-expected 1.3 points to 107.3 points in January, the lowest level since February 2015.

The Ifo survey "has brought the strongest signal yet that the recent global economic concerns and associated final market gyrations have started to hit the eurozone's biggest economy", said Capital Economics economist Jonathan Loynes.

## China shares higher

Chinese shares began the week on a firmer note yesterday, extending gains from Friday after a rally in battered oil prices sparked a rise in Asian equities. The benchmark Shanghai Composite Index closed up 0.8 percent, while the CSI300 index of the largest listed companies in Shanghai and Shenzhen added 0.5 percent, building on gains of more than 1 percent on Friday as oil bounced off 12-

year lows.

After surging 10 percent on Friday and helping Wall Street rise over 2 percent, oil held gains during the Asian day yesterday, though they slipped back after Chinese markets closed.

China's fickle stock markets have slumped 16-17 percent so far this year on concerns about the slowing economy and confusion over the central bank's foreign exchange policy, with thin trading volumes reflecting a lack of investor confidence and exaggerating the volatility.

Chastened by the market's bearish reaction to an early January depreciation in the yuan, the People's Bank of China (PBOC) has kept the yuan's daily mid-point fixing little changed for the past two weeks. Spot yuan was at 6.5794 yesterday, just a few pips away from Friday's close, while offshore it firmed to 6.6110, about 0.5 percent weaker than the onshore rate.

"As the (yuan) exchange rates calm after recent interventions, stocks are likely to stabilize, and can even stage a technical reprieve in the near term," Hao Hong, managing director of research at BOCOM International said in a report. "Recovering oil prices amid the epic (U.S.) snow storm will also help, and non-commercial traders have already cut their bets," he said, warning that the weaker overall

Global

جولبل

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report

Monday 25 January 2016

Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low
Price index	▲ -36.73	4,938.22	#VALUE!	4,981.89	4,935.08
Weighted Index	▲ -3.40	332.63	#VALUE!	337.15	332.63
KSX 15	▲ -9.07	776.90	#VALUE!	790.33	776.90

Volume	154,997,119
Value (KWD)	10,512,504
Number of Trades	3,515

Security	Trades						
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
MARIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	114	— 0.0
IKARUS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	70	— 0.0
IPG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	315	— 0.0
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	600	— 0.0
ENERGYH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	34.5	— 0.0
GPI	38.5	37.5	1,848,218	69,683	55	38.0	— 0.0
ABAR	120	114	500	57	2	120	▲ 6.0
Oil & Gas			1,848,718	69,740	57	745.91	▲ 2.15
KFOUC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	212	— 0.0
BPCC	440	440	649,279	285,683	18	440	— 0.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	610	— 0.0
ALOURAIN	152	148	80,784	9,139	11	150	▼ -4.0
Basic Materials			710,043	294,821	29	841.43	▲ -7.59
KCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	360	— 0.0
KEFRI	305	305	25,000	7,625	2	305	— 0.0
CABLE	325	320	8,671	2,775	2	325	— 0.0
SHIP	142	142	138	20	1	142	▲ 10.0
PCEM	1,020	990	10,520	10,465	6	990	▲ 10.0
PAPER	380	380	1,963	746	1	380	— 0.0
MRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	57	— 0.0
ACICO	275	260	151,605	40,313	20	265	▼ -15.0
GMGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	490	— 0.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	132	— 0.0
KPAK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	350	— 0.0
KBMMK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	290	— 0.0
NICBM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	230	— 0.0
EQUIPMENT	51	49.0	176,790	8,793	9	49.0	▼ -3.0
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	99	— 0.0
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	102	— 0.0
SALBOKH	68	68	100	7	1	68	▲ 1.0
AGLTY	425	415	2,691,189	1,137,170	111	415	— 0.0
EDU	188	168	150	27	2	188	▲ 10.0
CLEANING	36.0	35.5	235,000	8,413	7	35.5	▼ -1.5
CITYGROUP	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	380	— 0.0
KGL	38.5	38.0	132,000	5,021	4	38.5	▲ 1.0
KCPC	210	190	14,250	2,776	3	210	▲ 10.0
HUMANISOFT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	770	— 0.0
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	130	— 0.0
SAF/IVAN	305	305	100	31	1	305	▲ 5.0
GFC	26.0	26.0	3,000	78	2	26.0	▲ 0.5
MAYADEEN	18.0	17.0	1,693,854	28,939	23	17.5	▲ 0.5
CGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	780	— 0.0
MITCC	54	50	2,089,252	110,472	62	53	▲ 2.0
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	600	— 0.0
ALAFIO	192	190	101,933	19,367	3	190	▼ -2.0
MUBARRAD	62	59	696,372	42,142	32	62	▲ 2.0
LOGISTICS	46.5	45.5	458,150	20,881	11	46.5	▲ 1.0
SCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	81	— 0.0
GCEM	68	68	90	6	1	68	— 0.0
GCEM	68	68	622	42	1	68	▼ -2.0
FCOM	71	71	1	0	1	71	— 0.0
RWCW	93	90	1,860	171	5	91	▼ -4.0
SPEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	88	— 0.0
Industriale			5,492,610	1,446,279	311	931.39	▲ 2.78
KSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	220	— 0.0
N5H	62	62	5,000	310	1	62	— 0.0
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	106	— 0.0
CATTL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	118	— 0.0
DANAH	70	70	14,000	960	3	70	▲ 1.0
POULT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	196	— 0.0
FOOD	1,840	1,820	79,831	145,312	4	1,820	▼ -20.0
Consumer Goods			98,831	146,602	8	1004.78	▲ -2.21
MHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	180	— 0
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	920	— 0
VIACO	126	126	250	32	1	126	▲ 8
Health Care			250	32	1	501.24	▲ 9.95
KCIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	840	— 0
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	220	— 0
SULTAN	55	52	701,748	37,765	39	55	▲ 5
CABLETV	20.5	20.5	1,000	21	1	20.5	▼ -2
EYAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	335	— 0
IFAHR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	194	— 0
QULAFUEL	102	100	8,170	927	7	102	▼ -4
MUNTAAZAHAT	90	87	50,089	4,358	3	87	▼ -2
JAZEERA	790	740	6,010	4,503	5	790	— 0
SOOR	102	100	42,674	4,287	14	102	▲ 2
FUTUREKID	110	110	50	6	1	110	— 0
ALNAWADI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	84	— 0
ALRAI	136	130	858	112	2	136	▲ 6
ZIMAH	81	77	132,960	10,494	26	80	— 0
UFGI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	132	— 0
KOUTFOOD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	560	— 0
Mozzan	940	930	292,275	272,042	13	930	▼ -10
Consumer Services			1,236,854	334,514	111	919.83	▲ 1.11
ZAIN	335	329	581,709	192,096	59	325	▼ -5
OOREDOO	1,040	1,040	21,696	22,594	7	1,040	— 0
HTSTTELEC	25.0	24.5	300,001	7,462	6	24.5	▼ -2
VIVA	990	990	710,491	703,386	142	990	▼ -10
Telecommunications			1,613,897	925,508	214	576.38	▲ -6.33
NBK	680	660	993,312	664,662	45	660	▼ -10
GBK	210	206	376,581	78,334	4	206	▼ -2
CBK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	510	— 0
ABK	345	345	4,996	1,724	1	345	▼ -5
ALMUTAHED	420	415	40,176	15,664	5	420	— 0
KIB	192	192	320,624	61,560	23	192	▼ -6
BURG	310	305	662,772	202,185	22	305	— 0
KFIN	460	450	2,119,515	963,443	79	450	▼ -5
BOUBAYAN	395	385	434,401	169,115	30	385	▼ -5
AJUR	190	186	381,455	71,750	19	186	▼ -2
ITHMR	32.5	30.5	23,209,481	732,229	273	31.0	▼ -1
WARADABANK	162	160	338,811	54,908	62	160	— 0
Banks			28,883,124	3,016,773	583	764.34	▲ -8.94
KINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	320	— 0
GINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	790	— 0.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	435	— 0.0
WINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	— 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	34.0	— 0.0
BKIKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	— 0.0
Insurance			0	0	0	1067.76	— 0.00

Security	Trades						
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
SOKOUK	32.0	29.0	4924502	154,404	121	32.0	▲ 2.5
KRE	43.5	42.0	1,869,406	80,315	27	42.5	▼ -0.5
URC	88	88	500	44	1	88	▼ -4.0
NRE	84	79	2,033,843	168,138	52	84	▲ 5.0
SRE	330	320	111,500	35,850	15	330	▲ 10.0
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	620	— 0.0
AREEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	136	— 0.0
MASSALEH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	61	— 0.0
AREBREC	25.0	22.5	451,847	10,362	19	22.5	▼ -1.5
ERESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	57	— 0.0
MABANEE	850	820	136,157	112,181	18	820	▼ -30.0
INJAZZAT	79	79	200	16	1	79	▼ -5.0
INVESTORS	19.5	18.5	2,406,273	45,560	38	19.0	— 0.0
IRC	23.0	21.5	337,130	7,327	19	22.0	▼ -2.0
ALTUJARIA	74	73	340,000	24,940	8	73	▼ -1.0
SANAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	41.0	— 0.0
AYANRE	69	65	52,500	3,514	10	68	▼ -1.0
AQAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	80	— 0.0
ALAQARIA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	19.0	— 0.0
MAZAYA	100	98	2,016,750	198,634	35	99	▲ 1.0
ADNC	24.5	21.5	33,290,877	752,653	304	21.5	▼ -1.5
THEMAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	75	— 0.0
TUARA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	39.5	— 0.0
TAAMEER	19.0	16.0	2,039,712	37,198	25	19.0	▲ 0.5
ARKAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	110	— 0.0
ARGAN	166	158	368,352	58,227	30	158	▼ -2.0
ABYAAR	24.0	22.5	424,000	9,779	11	22.5	▼ -2.0
MUNSHAAT	49.5	46.0	7,131,679	340,918	207	47.0	▼ -0.5
FIRSTDUBAI	36.0	34.5	147,010	5,101	11	35.0	▼ -1.5
KBT	35.0	34.0	1,571,700	54,043	57	34.5	— 0.0
REAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	140	— 0.0
MENA	17.5	17.0	136,010	2,330	5	17.5	▲ 0.5
ALMUDON	28.0	28.0	120,000	3,360	3	28.0	— 0.0
MARAKEZ	20.5	16.5	343,031	6,776	33	20.5	▲ 2.5
REMAI	30.5	30.5	4,500	137	2	30.5	▲ 1.5
MASHAER	95	95	40	4	1	95	▼ -3.0
Real Estate			60,277,519	2,111,805	1,053	798.88	▲ -4.96
KINV	87	85	10,000	870	2	87	▼ -3.0
FACIL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	150	— 0.0
IFA	23.5	22.0	1,812,205	40,920	37	22.5	▼ -0.5
NINPV	71	65	2,354,953	159,710	102	65	▼ -2.0
KPROJ	510	500	939,554	469,877	14	500	— 0.0
COAST	22.5	20.5	1,286,823	27,340	40	21.5	— 0.0
SECH	28.5	27.0	1,647,653	45,950	49	27.0	▼ -0.5
SGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	97	— 0.0
ARZAN	34.0	34.0	1,000	34	1	34.0	▲ 0.5
MARKEAZ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	89	— 0.0
KMEFIC	25.0	25.0	1,500	38	1	25.0	▼ -0.5
ALAMAN	48.5	48.0	20,750	1,001	3	48.0	▼ -2.0
ALOLA	45.0	43.0	350,000	15,375	21	43.0	▼ -2.0
ALMAL	23.0	21.0	3,952,797	86,349	56	21.5	▼ -0.5
GIH	19.5	18.5	1,728,720	32,574	30	18.5	▼ -0.5
AYAYAN	42.5	40.0	1,110	47	3	42.5	— 0.0
BAYANINV	31.5	29.0	4,096,910	125,445	102	31.0	▲ 1.5
OSOUIL	34.0	34.0	1,500	51	1	34.0	▲ 1.5
KPIC	36.0	31.5	265,120	8,545	94	31.5	▼ -2.5
KAMCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	102	— 0.0
NIH	40.0	39.5	1,000	40	2	39.	





# MUTAWA ALKAZI GROUP LAUNCHES ALL-NEW GA6

GRAND CEREMONY MARKS THE LAUNCH AT AUTO MOTO 16 EXHIBITION AT 360 MALL  
ALKAZI: WE ALWAYS OFFER THE BEST TO OUR CLIENTS AND ALWAYS KEEP THEM UP-TO-DATE

**KUWAIT:** GAC MOTOR is a great company and to confirm its evolution and its commitment to provide the best and the finest in the automotive industry, moreover, to compete with other brands of American, Japanese, Korean, European, the company has a strategy to launch at least one new car every year for a wide range of cars. Therefore, GAC MOTOR unveiled the new car GA6 which has technological specifications, high horsepower and integration which makes driving on the road full of fun and comfortable.

Mutawa Alkazi Group - exclusive agent for GAC in Kuwait- seized the opportunity to launch their new car (GA6), during a grand ceremony at 360 Mall exhibitions (Auto Moto 16) which was held in Kuwait. This great event happened in the presence of CEO of Mutawa Alkazi Group Omar Suleiman Alkazi, Sales General Manager Ahmed Abu Al-Huda, and mixed crowd of clients, pioneers and modern car lovers. On this occasion, the CEO of Mutawa Alkazi Group Omar Suleiman started his speech by welcoming the crowd and thanking them. He gladly unveiled the new car GA6 from the GAC MOTOR group. He presented the car to the clients who deserve, in his opinion, everything new, distinctive and special in the car industry. GA6 was made with highly technical and functional specifications to ensure the highest levels of performance, comfort and safety. It was designed to meet all needs in all details and aspects of the industry. It was made to be proportional to the European high-strength performance. It was manufactured as a sport car especially in front and back of the body, as well as the structure of the steel reaches its forces inside the passenger compartment to 95 percent, and smoothly carved in dynamic lines and a strong performance which provides comfort and balance to the driver behind the wheel, with dual front and rear tanks multi-link with vertical control arm.

## Perfect Turbo Engine

Alkazi continued by talking about the car's engine; equipped with Borger Warner's world-class Turbo which has capacity 1.8 Turbo dual. Its engine makes an innovative use of GAC's built-in dual balancing axle technology to comprehensively upgrade performance. It can provide ultra-strong power and continuously output an extremely high torque within a wide speed range, allowing the driver to enjoy ultimate driving. 7-speed automatic Transmission was designed to help speed change by 0.2 of a second, with the possibility to save fuel and change speeds with ease. 7-speed automatic Transmission is solid and durable, and it managed to pass the durability test with a cumulative mileage of over 10 million kilometers.

## Luxury Cabin

Alkazi added: GA6 owns luxurious cockpit with computer control gives you 360-degree vision, which gives you a sense of vitality. It also has electric sunroof, tinted glass and 3 keys for air conditioning for perfect control inside the vehicle. There are 8 inch HD monitor with advanced navigation system, DVD, MP3 player, Bluetooth, USB/AUX, and rear view



camera. In addition buttons to control the wheel, and an EPB system.

## Stability

Alkazi: GA6 was equipped with the newest of Bosch's system to have stability and control over the roads. It also has adjustable and folding side mirrors which are modified with blind spot monitoring system for monitoring background intelligently and accurately provide safe driving and to control both sides of the vehicle and the places that are difficult to see and prevent vehicle collisions from behind while changing the path or out of garages or back. It also has system that can identify lanes for front road and provide safe driving during a high speed and that system alerts the driver when he/she goes out of the lane by warning the driver to do the correct procedures and avoid risks.

As well as the front collision warning system which works by intelligent long range radar that can anticipate the risk of collision and activate audio and video alarm to remind the driver to use the brakes and reduce speed to maintain adequate safe distance from other vehicles.

## Beauty and Safety

Alkazi mentioned some aesthetic qualities in the car. He talked about its front and rear large Xenon LED lights, as well as the safety factors such as high quality airbags in the car for full protection for driver and escort. In addition to, he talked about the car's high-performance and quality braking system.

## Success and Growth

Alkazi praised the partnership with GAC MOTOR and on their consecutive successes and steady sales growth annually. And on their large and well established trust among customers with its products and auto parts. Moreover, he admired GAC MOTOR on their strong relationships and partnerships with leading car manufacturers in the world. GAC MOTOR was founded in 1997 and its location is in Guangzhou in China, and is the parent company of GAC GROUP. The company singled out itself from most other Chinese industries because it manufactures Honda, Mitsubishi, Toyota, Fiat, Hino trucks.

The company has benefited from its years of experience in mass production of other brands. GAC Group launched recently its



developed brand GAC MOTOR in 2007. Its specifications have matched the global standards and norms. All that made the company one of the most competitive automobile companies in terms of quality and price.

## Very Confident

Alkazi elaborated on the history of GAC MOTOR, and big sales growth it has been achieving in the recent years with great results. The company won many awards, both within China and in the world, especially in Asia, the Gulf and North Africa, due to its high specifications and multiple benefits for GAC. The company has multiple models that meet the needs and requirements of all clients. He pointed to the increase of public trust in the GAC due its quality cars and its partnership with many prestigious companies in the automotive industry, and the company shares experience of designs with these prestigious companies. GAC acquired its experience in the automotive industry, using different components for its cars from global suppliers such as electronic stability and engine management systems from Germany Bosch, the front brake of Germany Continental, bumpers front and

rear is from American Vistion. The transmission with five speeds from Japanese Eisen, air-conditioning company Japanese Denso, safety belts and airbags, rear brake and hydraulic power systems from American TRW. All these are to ensure a car with perfect performance on the road and with suitable prices for everyone.

## Especial Services

Finally Alkazi invited all interested to purchase any of the GAC cars which will help them realize their ambition and desire to own a perfect car with high specifications and great prices. He requested from them to visit Mutawa Alkazi Group's showrooms and learn more about the latest deals on cars and have the experience of test-driving them. He ensured highest quality of services, maintenance and repairs in all company's stations which are located ideally in Kuwait such as Al-Rai, Shuwaikh, and Al-Ahmadi. Our elite engineers and technicians are able to work with high precision and professionalism, as well as providing original spare-parts with most appropriate prices for all models. He also wished everyone a safe driving.



—Photos by: Joseph Shagra



## EMIRATES UNVEILS ITS A380 ONBOARD LOUNGE AT THE AVENUES MALL

**KUWAIT:** Emirates Airline, a global connector of people and places, is engaging with patrons and visitors of The Avenues, by showcasing its world-renowned A380 Onboard Lounge at Kuwait's largest mall. The innovative experience will allow Kuwaitis and residents alike to socialize and mingle on the ground, an experience which usually takes place at 40,000 feet.

Emirates Airline and Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait will also be running a social media competition at the Emirates OnBoard Lounge for a chance to win two Business Class flight tickets to Dubai as well as two ABK Emirates Visa Gold Prepaid cards worth KD200 each. Visitors must take a selfie

at the Emirates A380 Onboard Lounge at the Avenues Mall between 24 January and 30 January; upload the selfie to their Facebook, Instagram or Twitter accounts using #EmiratesA380Kuwait for a chance to enter a draw to win the tickets. ABK will also be giving away seven free ABK Emirates Visa Gold Prepaid Travel cards worth KD200 each.

Mohammed Alnahari Alhashimi, Emirates Country Manager Kuwait said: "By activating our A380 OnBoard Lounge, we are providing an inspiring environment for people to gather and experience what our inflight experience is all about on one of the most popular commercial aircraft in

the world, the Emirates A380." Garry Ceaplen, ABK AGM Retail Banking said: "The ABK Emirates Visa Gold Prepaid

Emirates Skywards, the award-winning frequent flyer program, cardholders can enjoy a wide range of benefits when using

Emirates OnBoard Lounge for a unique experience and the chance to win one of the grand prizes."

Emirates' Onboard Lounge, situated at the rear of the Business Class cabin on the upper deck of the A380, provides a refreshing environment for people to meet and enjoy their favourite beverages and delicious canapés. There are two sofas, a 42 inch LCD screen showing the aircraft's position and views from its external cameras and mood lighting to create a calming ambience. Along with the OnBoard Lounge, all of Emirates' A380s are equipped with Wifi, and more than 2,100 channels of inflight entertainment on the award winning ice

system, as well as Onboard Shower Spas - supported by 25 multi-national cabin crew.

Emirates has been flying to Kuwait since 1989 and serves Kuwait City with 7 daily services, including its iconic flagship A380. The A380 service between Kuwait and Dubai is the world's shortest A380 flight, at just one hour and 45 minutes.

The Emirates A380 flying to Kuwait offers 14 First Class Private Suites, 76 mini-pods in Business Class and 399 seats in Economy Class.

There are currently 36 A380 destinations on the Emirates network, setting the industry benchmark for both A380 connectivity and customer experience.



Travel card is the first of its kind in the region and offers security and comfort to frequent travelers. In collaboration with

their cards locally or abroad. ABK is proud to be in partnership with Emirates Airline and we invite everyone to visit the



**KUWAIT:** Haneen Alrumaihi handing the cheque to the winner.

## BURGAN BANK ANNOUNCES THE VALUE ACCOUNT DRAW WINNER

**KUWAIT:** Borgan Bank yesterday announced Ahmad Mahmoud Ahmad Hussain as the winner of its Value Account draw. The lucky winner took home a cash prize of KD 4000 which was presented to him by Haneen Alrumaihi Assistant General Manager - Head of Marketing.

The Value Account has been re-launched with more added value features that have been designed for expatriates living in Kuwait. Account holders can now obtain a free credit card for one year, apply for a loan, and receive a chance to win KD 4,000 on a quarterly basis. All expatriates with salaries between KD 150 and KD 400 are eligible to be a Value account holder.

Borgan Bank's Value account presents a range of merchant discounts to the clients.

Opening a Value account is simple, customers are required to visit their nearest Borgan Bank branch, or simply call the bank's Call Center 1804080 for more details. Established in 1977, Borgan Bank is the

youngest commercial Bank and second largest by assets in Kuwait, with a significant focus on the corporate and financial institutions sectors, as well as having a growing retail, and private bank customer base. Borgan Bank has majority owned subsidiaries in the MENAT region supported by one of the largest regional branch networks.

The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Borgan Bank's brand has been created on a foundation of real values - of trust, commitment, excellence and progression, to remind us of the high standards to which we aspire. "People come first" is the foundation on which its products and services are developed.

## DEUTSCHE BANK TO CUT 2015 BONUSES AFTER RECORD LOSS

**FRANKFURT:** Deutsche Bank is sharply cutting 2015 bonuses as it expects a record loss for the year due to writedowns, litigation charges, restructuring costs and tough trading conditions, three people familiar with the matter said. While employees of Germany's largest lender will only be notified about their individual bonuses in March, they have already been told that payout pots for individual divisions will shrink by at least 25 to 30 percent, they added.

"For staff, 2015 will be very likely one of the worst years ever," a Deutsche Bank manager, who declined to be named, said. Another person familiar with the matter said all employees paid above union-negotiated collective wage agreements, such as investment bankers, would be affected. Deutsche Bank declined to comment. Over the last five years, the lender has left compensation largely unchanged and usually paid out 38.5 to 40 cents to staff for every euro in revenues. On his first day as chief executive of Germany's largest

bank on July 1, John Cryan warned employees not to expect only "sweetness and light in the coming months", adding that they must repair a reputation damaged by misconduct. When he laid out the lender's new strategy in October and announced 9,000 job cuts, he also said bonuses would be cut as staff needed "to share something of the burden" of the losses.

And late in November, Cryan publicly said that bankers in general were still paid too much. Last week, Deutsche Bank said it expected to report a 2015 net loss of about 6.7 billion euros (\$7.26 billion), sending its shares down 10 percent and renewing analysts' concerns that it might now need to raise more capital to strengthen its finances.

Deutsche Bank has announced in the past that it plans to raise the fixed part of salaries while future bonus payments would depend not only on employees' individual performance but also on the bank's overall performance. —Reuters

## PEACOCK GROUP SIGNS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH DRAGONPASS

**KUWAIT:** Peacock concierge group announced the signing of a strategic partnership with the global company DragonPass, this announcement comes to form the features of a historic partnership between the most important companies providing luxury services (Personal assistance) in Kuwait and the Gulf and DragonPass international forming DragonPass Middle East and North Africa.

Hassan Al-Suwaidi, President of Peacock Concierge Group companies has expressed his pleasure to sign this partnership and the success of Peacock Concierge company in exceeding the required international standards to conclude such agreements of an international professional character.

He added, that this only proves the excellence and the effectiveness of Peacock Concierge company and all of the companies emerged from the parent company and the quality of services provided, which contributed to the spread and expansion within the Gulf region and attracting a large number of elite and refined customers under its umbrella, from Bahrain, Kuwait, Dubai, Saudi

Arabia and soon Qatar, in addition to many effective partners acting in various vital sectors such as banking, telecommunication and others who led with us this successful

access to more than 850 airport Lounges around the world in addition to two exclusive services for travelers concierge card holders to indulge in a culinary experience

beliefs on not just what our customers and Peacock Concierge Group card holders and all other affiliated companies; Kuwait Concierge, Bahrain Concierge and Diamond (Dubai) Concierge, are entitled to but also deserve for absolute luxury and a unique travel experience."

For his part, Kehun Cai, Chairman of DragonPass, expressed satisfaction about the partnership with Peacock Concierge and transforming the scope of the study to the scope of implementation in a opulent market such as the Middle East and North Africa. He said optimistic that the success and development indicators are favorable specially with Peacock Concierge Group companies at the level of this promising region, and that this partnership comes as a prelude to enrich the region's professional service and its quality.

To finish, Al-Suwaidi expressed the extent of his desire and aspirations to provide more distinctive services and the constant search for more successful channels for partnerships, which in return will contribute to more success and further satisfy customers.



**Hassan Al-Suwaidi (left) and Kehun Cai.**

journey and the global launch.

Hassan Al-Suwaidi revealed that DragonPass Middle East and North Africa is of a high-crafted global nature and in conformity with the international quality standards to provide comprehensive services within the airports, which grants

with discounts in more than 1000 restaurant inside Airports around The world and a complete relaxation and comfort experience with the introduction of discounted treatments offered in 100 airports spas.

He added, "This embodies our

## ETIHAD AIRWAYS TO REBUILD 3 SCHOOLS IN KENYA FOR UNDERPRIVILEGED CHILDREN

**ABU DHABI:** As part of its ongoing commitment towards global education, Etihad Airways has helped to renovate three schools in the remote areas of Kakamega County in western Kenya to create a brighter future for underprivileged children.

A senior delegation from Etihad Airways visited Kenya to officially open the Likuyani primary school, nursery and special needs boarding school. The much-improved facilities, with a student capacity of 1,700, were handed over to the school's administration after a year of building repairs and improvement work.

The comprehensive project included refurbishment of the schools' infrastructure including classrooms and staff rooms, and the construction of a new playground, dining hall, kitchen and lavatories for both boys and girls.

In addition, the schools were also supported with new uniforms and shoes for students. This will help students who used to walk to school barefoot causing foot injuries. The renovation will improve hygiene and reduce the number of hygiene-related illnesses that the students and staff are currently suffering from.

Madhad Obeid Al-Saher, Diplomatic Attaché from UAE Embassy in Kenya joined the Etihad Airways delegation headed by Khaled Al-Mehairbi, Senior Vice President of Government and Aero-political Affairs. The delegation also included Ali Al-Shamsi, Vice President of Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Hub, and Joan Mwaniki, Etihad Airways' General Manager Kenya, along with the airline's Abu Dhabi and Nairobi-based staff.

Rael Ruto, wife of the current Deputy President of Kenya, William Ruto, and Chairperson of Joyful Women's Organization-Kenya, accompanied the Etihad Airways' delegation during their one-day visit. Nearly 1,700 care packages with school bags and stationery were distributed, while 20 wheelchairs and blankets were provided to the special needs boarding school.

Rael Ruto, said: I want to personally thank the entire Etihad Airways family for this generous contribution, which has made a big difference in the lives of the Likuyani Primary School students. We appreciate your great support and commitment to the education of the underprivileged. As a result of your kindness and generosity, students now have modern facilities, a playground for the little ones, and conveniences for the students living with disabilities.

"We shared our dreams for Likuyani Primary with Etihad Airways, now the rest is history. Thank you Etihad Airways."

Principal Secretary of the Kenyan Ministry of Education, Dr. Belio Kipsang, General Manager of Philips EA, Mary Kuria and other senior officials representing banks and tourism entities also took part in the community event.

Khaled Al-Mehairbi, who also serves as Chairman of Etihad Airways' Sports and Social Committee, said: "As the UAE flag carrier, we are socially committed towards improving global education and creating a brighter future for underprivileged children. We extend our thanks to the Etihad Airways team, sponsors and suppliers for their support of the project. Collectively,

we have improved the students' learning environment which will help them pursue their studies."

His Excellency Abdul Razak Mohamed Hadi, UAE Ambassador to Kenya, stressed that the UAE continues to maintain a strong humanitarian presence in addition to supporting relief efforts in the wake of natural disasters anywhere in the world.

"I would like to sincerely thank the Government of Kenya represented by Her Excellency Rael Ruto, His Excellency Governor Wycliffe Oparanya, Etihad Airways' family and everyone who helped bring this project together. This project will no doubt cement the growing relations between two brotherly nations," he added.

The UAE Ambassador to Kenya valued the cooperation of Kenyan President His Excellency Uhuru Kenyatta in supporting education, health and water supply among other projects in the different parts of Kenya.

The renovation project was funded by money raised through a series of charitable initiatives that took place in Abu Dhabi, in cooperation with the Emirates Red Crescent, including two events - 'Run for a Cause' and the 2nd Etihad Airways World Aviation Football Cup.

The airline's initiative to support Kenya is part of an earlier agreement on humanitarian and social cooperation between Etihad Airways and Emirates Red Crescent. Over the last four years Etihad Airways has also supported education for children in need in Yemen, Morocco and Sri Lanka.

## RUSSIA ALLOTS \$1.7BN FOR REAL ECONOMY IN ANTI-CRISIS PLAN

**MOSCOW:** The Russian government has set aside 135 billion rubles (\$1.7 billion) to help the real economy in a draft anti-crisis plan, two senior officials said, and may use a separate 340 billion ruble cushion to dampen social discontent, according to a third source.

Battered by low oil prices, Western sanctions and a falling ruble, Russia is torn between the need to support its shrinking economy and its desire to preserve funds to help it navigate one of its worst downturns since Vladimir Putin came to power.

Two senior officials told Reuters on condition of anonymity that an anti-crisis plan had been drawn up which earmarked 135 billion rubles to help parts of the real economy. The funds were drawn from unspent budget money from 2015, they said. The railway and agricultural machinery industries and the consumer goods manufacturing and construction sectors would receive some of the funds, one of the sources said. Russia's car industry has already been promised 50 billion of the 135 billion rubles, the other source said.

The finance ministry, which controls the anti-crisis fund, is against spending all the

money, one of the senior officials said. A final decision on which sectors will benefit and by how much had yet to be agreed. Most of the aid will be in the form of subsidies and state guarantees to share the risk with banks and reduce borrowing costs.

"Our revenues have fallen because of recent events on the oil market, not grown, so why should we discuss an increase in spending?" one of the sources said. The finance ministry declined to comment.

### QUELLING DISCONTENT

Parts of Russian industry have struggled to get bank loans because the banking sector itself is not able to access Western finance due to sanctions related to the Ukraine crisis. One of the sources said funding for the anti-crisis package could, if necessary, be increased thanks to 340 billion rubles in funds accrued from freezing pension transfers. The likelihood of that happening was "very low" however, the source said. Several economic advisers to Putin say his preference is to preserve the country's reserves even if that means economic growth suffers. The economy is expected to shrink by

up to 1 percent this year after contracting by 3.9 percent in 2015.

The 340 billion rubles-accumulated thanks to a moratorium on transferring money to non-state pension funds- may in part be used to keep a lid on social discontent by supporting employment and helping offset increases in drug prices, one of the officials said.

Parliamentary elections are due to be held in September and a presidential election in 2018. Sources have previously told Reuters that the 340 billion rubles may be used later this year to increase pensions. Russia said it was prepared to spend up to 2.3 trillion rubles on anti-crisis measures in 2015. That included state guarantees and support for the auto industry and other sectors. It did not enact all the measures it envisaged.

Russia's banking system received around 1 trillion rubles in support in late 2014 and the authorities are currently considering how much money they are willing to spend on helping state development bank VEB. Sources familiar with those discussions have told Reuters the amount will be less than initially planned. —Reuters



**MOSCOW:** Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, right, talks with Russian Deputy Premier Olga Golodets, during a visit to Moscow's Plekhanov Economy University in Moscow yesterday. —AP



## NO INJURIES OR PRODUCTION IMPACT AFTER FIRE AT IPHONE PLANT IN CHINA

**SHANGHAI:** A small fire broke out on Sunday night on the roof of a factory complex where iPhones are assembled in China, but Taiwan-based tech giant Foxconn Technology Group, which runs the factory, said nobody was hurt and manufacturing was unaffected. The fire

took place at a plant in Zhengzhou, in Henan province, the key supplier to Apple Inc, according to a statement from Foxconn.

"The fire was brought under control by the fire department shortly after it was reported. There were no injuries

associated with this incident and there is no impact on the manufacturing operations of that facility," a spokesman said.

In May 2011, a dust explosion at a Foxconn factory that made iPads in the western Chinese city of Chengdu killed

three people and injured 15. Foxconn's listed unit Hon Hai Precision Industry Co, which assembles the bulk of Apple's latest smartphones, saw its December revenues slump by a fifth and full-year sales miss expectations.

The results came amid growing con-

cerns about slowing shipments of Apple's latest iPhone 6S models. Apple is expected to report first-quarter revenue slightly below estimates on Tuesday for the first time in six quarters, according to Thomson Reuters StarMine. —Reuters



## CEO ANNOUNCES MAJOR SHAKEUP AT TWITTER

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Twitter is overhauling its top management said CEO Jack Dorsey, who announced the shakeup yesterday as the social network struggles to boost its profitability and prospects for growth. The revamp originally was reported by the Wall Street Journal and tech news website Re/code, before Dorsey confirmed the departure of several senior executives in a tweet sent out early yesterday. Leaving the company are Alex Roetter, head of engineering; product chief Kevin Weil; Katie Stanton, the head of media; and Skip Schipper, Twitter's vice president of human resources.

"I'm forever grateful to @aroetter, @katie, @skipschipper & @kevinweil for everything they've given to Twitter. They are absolutely amazing!" Dorsey wrote at his @jack Twitter account, adding that he was "sad" they are leaving. Dorsey, in a longer statement, addressed what he called "inaccurate press rumors" about the overhaul, saying the departing executives "have chosen to leave the company."

"All four will be taking some well-deserved time off. I'm personally grateful to each of them for everything they've contributed to Twitter and our purpose in the world," Dorsey wrote. "They are phenomenal people!"

He added that Twitter's chief operating officer Adam Bain "will be taking on additional responsibilities" as part of the shakeup, as will chief technology officer Adam Messinger. The Journal reported that Twitter planned to take on two new board members as early as this coming week, at least one of whom it said was a high-profile executive in the media industry.

The newspaper reported that as a condition of returning as chief executive last year, Dorsey had told Twitter that all board members must eventually be replaced. The panel includes fellow co-founder Evan Williams, one of the largest individual owners of

company stock, according to the Journal. Twitter declined to respond to an AFP request for comment.

Dorsey currently is managing two firms, Twitter and mobile payments startup Square-both multi-billion dollar companies struggling to achieve profitability. He is credited with coming up with the idea for Twitter when eventual co-founder Evan Williams gave workers at blogging startup Odeo two weeks to work on fun new projects as a way to break up the daily routine.

### Sewing and yoga

Dorsey ran Twitter from 2007-2008 but was pushed out of the CEO chair. He was reportedly a better engineer than a boss, known to leave early for personal pursuits such as sewing or yoga classes. He returned as interim chief executive after then-CEO Dick Costolo resigned last June, and took the job on a permanent basis in October, as Twitter deals with persistent concerns over its growth prospects.

Twitter stock recently hit a new record low and the number of users has been increasing more slowly than the company would like. At the end of September, it had 320 million active users-four million more than three months earlier.

Twitter reports fourth-quarter earnings on February 10. In a separate development late Sunday, Jason Toff, general manager at Vine the video-sharing site owned by Twitter-also announced his departure from the company.

"Personal update! I'm joining Google to work on VR (virtual reality). So much exciting potential there," wrote Toff, who also had the title Director of Product at Twitter. "The decision to leave Vine was hard. I love the team, am so proud of what we've done and know there are incredible things ahead for them," Toff tweeted. —AFP

## MH370 HUNT LOSES HI-TECH SONAR PROBE TO UNDERSEA VOLCANO

**SYDNEY:** An underwater sonar vehicle used in the search for missing Malaysia Airlines plane MH370 has now been lost to the deep ocean floor after hitting an undersea volcano, Australian officials said yesterday. The "towfish", pulled behind a search ship and fitted with survey instruments, plunged to the bottom of the remote southern Indian Ocean on Sunday.

"The towfish collided with a mud volcano which rises 2,200 metres from the sea floor resulting in the vehicle's tow cable breaking," the Joint Agency Coordination Centre (JACC) announced. "The towfish and 4,500 metres of cable became separated from the vessel and are now resting on the sea floor," the statement added.

Australia is leading the search for the Boeing-777 that vanished on March 8, 2014 en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing with 239 people onboard. The aircraft is thought to have crashed after diverting from its course but the undersea hunt has so far found no sign of it.

Last July, a two-meter-long wing part known as a flaperon washed up on a beach on the Indian Ocean island of Reunion, giv-

ing the first firm evidence that the flight met a tragic end. Another barnacle-encrusted piece of metal found in Thailand at the weekend has prompted speculation it too could be from MH370 with a specialist team due to examine it, however ocean current modelling suggests it is unlikely to be from the missing plane. Australian officials said there were no injuries to crew in Sunday's incident onboard the Fugro Discovery and it was thought that the towfish could be recovered.

The ship was Monday returning to the western Australian port of Fremantle so a replacement cable could be fitted, a journey which is expected to take until Saturday. "During the journey, the spare towfish on board Fugro Discovery will be readied for future search activities," the JACC statement said.

The key instruments in the towfish are side scan sonar and multi-beam echo sounders that look for man-made objects on the sea floor. Earlier this month searchers uncovered a 19th century shipwreck deep underwater, their second wreck find in the nearly two-year long mission. —AFP



**NAKHON SI THAMMARAT:** A Malaysian official (C) takes pictures of a piece of suspected aircraft debris after it was found by fishermen on January 23, at a beach in the southern province of Nakhon Si Thammarat yesterday. —AFP

## STUDY REVEALS HYBRID CLOUD 'GREAT ENABLER' OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

### HYBRID CLOUD HELPS COMPANIES APPROACH GOALS

**DUBAI:** EMC Corporation (NYSE:EMC) announced the results of a new study showing that IT and business executives agree that digital transformation and the use of hybrid clouds are key to competitive success in the digital age. Conducted by IDG Research Services, the study reveals that organizations must "think digital" to enhance customer experiences, increase flexibility, drive business opportunities, and decrease costs. With 92 percent of respondents stating that their organization's competitive strategy calls for digital business initiatives and 90 percent calling digital business a "top priority" for the next one to three years, the transformative power of digital business is a key driver for IT today.

#### Drivers behind these digital technology investments include:

- Improving the customer experience (87 percent of respondents indicated this was a critical or very important goal)
- Acquiring new customers (86 percent)
- Increasing innovation (82 percent)
- Enabling real-time business decisions (81 percent)

#### Initial goals

The transformation to digital business is complex and takes time, but 63 percent of respondents indicated they are well on their way to achieving their initial digital transformation goals. That said, IT leaders are still facing hurdles including:

- Budget and resources (38 percent)
- Fragmented computing environments (30 percent)
- Lack of the right technologies (29 percent)

To solve these challenges, IT leaders are turning to hybrid cloud environments, embrac-

ing a modernized infrastructure that involves two or more delivery models, including a traditional data center, a private cloud, a managed private cloud and a public cloud. A whopping 83 percent of respondents currently use or plan to use a hybrid cloud environment, and 73 percent agree that a hybrid cloud model creates a path to digital business.

The survey data indicates that digital transformation enabled by hybrid cloud helps organizations increase IT agility and makes implementing digital business initiatives a faster, easier and less expensive process. Furthermore, survey results show that, by reducing IT costs, hybrid cloud enables investment in digital transformation, and the most

aggressive hybrid cloud adopters are also the most advanced at digital transformation. Of those surveyed, organizations with a significant number of hybrid cloud workloads are three times more likely than non-adopters to be approaching their digital business and infrastructure readiness goals.

#### Jeremy Burton, President, Products and Marketing, EMC Corporation said:

"Becoming digital is a priority for nearly every business on the planet. But how to get there is not as obvious. This study makes it perfectly clear that hybrid cloud - and the savings and agility it brings with it - is a key enabler to becoming a digital business."

- New study by IDG Research Services provides strong proof that by increasing IT agility, hybrid cloud makes implementing digital business initiatives faster, easier and a less expensive process
- 92 percent of respondents indicate their

organization's competitive strategy calls for digital business initiatives

- 63 percent indicated they are on their way to achieving digital transformation goals
- 73 percent believe that hybrid cloud creates a path for digital transformation



**This handout image released by the European Southern Observatory on January 25, 2016 and captured with the OmegaCAM camera on ESO's VLT Survey Telescope in Chile, shows an unusually clean small galaxy. IC 1613 contains very little cosmic dust, allowing astronomers to explore its contents with great clarity. —AFP**

## INDIA TO BUILD SATELLITE TRACKING STATION IN VIETNAM THAT OFFERS EYE ON CHINA

**NEW DELHI/HONG KONG:** India will set up a satellite tracking and imaging center in southern Vietnam that will give Hanoi access to pictures from Indian earth observation satellites that cover the region, including China and the South China Sea, Indian officials said. The move, which could irritate Beijing, deepens ties between India and Vietnam, who both have long-running territorial disputes with China.

While billed as a civilian facility - earth observation satellites have agricultural, scientific and environmental applications - security experts said improved imaging technology meant the pictures could also be used for military purposes. Hanoi especially has been looking for advanced intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance technologies as tensions rise with China over the disputed South China Sea, they said.

"In military terms, this move could be quite significant," said Collin Koh, a marine security expert at Singapore's S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies. "It looks like a win-win for both sides, filling significant holes for the Vietnamese and expanding the range for the Indians." The state-run Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) will fund and set up the satellite tracking and data reception center in Ho Chi Minh City to monitor Indian satellite launches, the Indian officials said. Indian media put the cost at around \$23 million.

India, whose 54-year-old space program is accelerating, with one satellite launch scheduled every month, has ground stations in the Andaman and Nicobar islands, Brunei, Biak in eastern Indonesia and

Mauritius that track its satellites in the initial stages of flight. The Vietnam facility will bolster those capabilities, said Deviprasad Karnik, an ISRO spokesman.

#### Quid Pro Quo

But unlike the other overseas stations, the facility will also be equipped to receive images from India's earth observation satellites that Vietnam can use in return for granting India the tracking site, said an Indian government official connected with the space program.

"This is a sort of quid pro quo which will enable Vietnam to receive IRS (Indian remote sensing) pictures directly, that is, without asking India," said the official, who declined to be identified because he was not authorised to speak to the media. "Obviously it will include parts of China of interest to Vietnam."

Chinese coastal naval bases, the operations of its coastguard and navy and its new man-made islands in the disputed Spratly archipelago of the South China Sea would be targets of Vietnamese interest, security experts said. Another Indian official said New Delhi would also have access to the imagery. India has 11 earth observation satellites in orbit, offering pictures with differing resolutions and areas, the ISRO said. Indian officials had no timeframe for when the center would be operational.

"This is at the beginning stages, we are still in dialogue with Vietnamese authorities," said Karnik. Vietnam's Foreign Ministry confirmed the project, but provided few other details. Chinese Foreign Ministry

spokeswoman Hua Chunying told a regular briefing that Beijing hoped the facility "will be able to make a positive contribution to pushing forward relevant cooperation in the region". China's Defense Ministry said the proposed tracking station wasn't a military issue. Vietnam launched its first earth observation satellite in 2013, but Koh said it was not thought to produce particularly high resolution images.

#### Blurred lines

Security experts said Vietnam would likely seek real-time access to images from the Indian satellites as well as training in imagery analysis, a specialized intelligence field. "The advance of technology means the lines are blurring between civilian and military satellites," said Trevor Hollingsbee, a retired naval intelligence analyst with Britain's Defence Ministry. "In some cases, the imagery from a modern civilian satellite is good enough for military use." Sophisticated military reconnaissance satellites can be used to capture military signals and communications, as well as detailed photographs of objects on land, capturing detail to less than a meter, Koh and other experts said.

The tracking station will be the first such foreign facility in Vietnam and follows other agreements between Hanoi and New Delhi that have cemented security ties. India has extended a \$100 million credit line for Hanoi to buy patrol boats and is training Vietnamese submariners in India while Hanoi has granted oil exploration blocks to India in waters off Vietnam that are disputed with China. —Reuters



## NANO-THIN PRESSURE SENSOR COULD AID BREAST CANCER EXAMS

**TOKYO:** Super-thin bendable sensors developed by Japanese and US scientists could someday be used in special gloves to detect breast lumps and make a digital record of the exam, the scientists said in a report. The nanofibre sensors are as thin as 3.4 micrometers-less than half the thickness of kitchen wrap-according to research published in the online version of British science magazine Nature Nanotechnology. "Healthcare practitioners may one day be able to physically screen for breast cancer

using pressure-sensitive rubber gloves to detect tumors," the researchers said in a statement before the publication.

A square sheet 4.8 by 4.8 centimeters (1.9 inches) in size has 144 locations that can measure pressure, said the research teams led by Tokyo University professor Takao Someya and Harvard University's Zhigang Suo. The sheet is so flexible it can detect pressure changes accurately even when twisted like cloth-a development claimed as a global first. "Sensitive human

fingers of a veteran doctor may be able to find a small tumor, but such perceived sensation cannot be measured," Someya told AFP yesterday. But digitization of the sensations means that they could be shared with other doctors who could theoretically experience the same sensations as the physician who performed the examination, he said.

Many researchers are developing flexible pressure sensors but they are vulnerable when bent and twisted, which makes it

difficult to detect pressure changes accurately, the Tokyo University and Harvard researchers say. The nanofibre pressure sensor they have developed can be bent over a radius of as small as 80 micrometers-"equivalent to just twice the width of a human hair"-they say. When tested on an artificial blood vessel, the sheet successfully detected "small pressure changes and speed of pressure propagation", Sungwon Lee, a leading researcher in Someya's team, said in the statement.

Someya stressed that the development would one day enable the equivalent of medical palpation-examining a patient by physical touch-by doctors in different locations from the patient. "The new sensor would make it possible to measure the human sensation so that findings by palpation could even be shared remotely," he said. "In the future, we would be able to record and make tangible certain sensations that can only be perceived by an experienced doctor."—AFP

## RAT POISON SALES BOOM IN NIGERIA OVER LASSA FEVER FEARS

‘LASSA DOESN’T DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN THE RICH AND THE POOR’

**KANO, Nigeria:** Sales of rat poison have taken off in Nigeria following an outbreak of Lassa fever that has left at least 76 people dead and sparked fears of contagion across the country. In the northern city of Kano, the capital of one of 17 states where the haemorrhagic virus has been recorded, there have been "unprecedented

the product to rid their homes of rats that cause the disease," he told AFP. Abubakar Ja'afar, who works in Kano's largest market, said he had never seen sales so high in his 20 years in the trade, with traders in other cities reporting similar increases in sales. "I used to get between five and 10 clients a day but now I get at least 30 cus-

naira and 4,000 naira every day," said one, Awwalu Aminu, 40, in Kano.

### ‘Culture of silence’

Nigeria's health minister Isaac Adewole said earlier this week 212 suspected cases have been recorded of Lassa, which is endemic in rats in west Africa. Outbreaks are not uncommon and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates there are between 100,000 to 300,000 infections in west Africa every year, with about 5,000 deaths. In 2012, there were 1,723 cases and 112 deaths in Nigeria. Last year, 12 people died out of 375 infected, according to the Nigerian Centre for Disease Control.

The virus is spread through contact with food or household items contaminated with rats' urine or faeces. Africa's most populous country was praised for its containment of Ebola in 2014, despite initial fears it could spread rapidly in densely populated urban areas after the first case in Lagos. But while the government maintains it has the spread of Lassa under control, specialists have voiced concern about under-reporting and Nigeria's capacity to deal with the outbreak. The first case dates back to last August in the northwestern state of Niger but was not detected until late last year.

Public awareness campaigns have since been mounted and surveillance ramped up of primary and secondary contacts of those with the disease. The government has also blasted a "culture of silence" and vowed sanctions against medical professionals who fail to inform the authorities of suspected cases.

### Refuse collection

Lawan Bello used to ignore rats in his home, bothering more about the damage the rodents could cause to personal effects such as clothing, furniture and food. But the latest outbreak-and the wider publicity about its spread-has changed his attitude. "Every few days I buy rat poison and use it in my home to kill rats and I will continue until my house is free of them," he said. "I'm scared of Lassa and that has made me hate rats the most." Killing rats may be one solution to the problem but effective waste disposal has long been a major problem in Nigeria's big cities. "Everywhere you turn you see heaps of refuse which provides a breeding ground for rats," said Idris Musa, a community health worker in Kano. "Rats breed fast and it is very difficult to beat rats' breeding rate with rodenticide." In 2007, Kano was producing 2,000 tons of garbage every day but refuse collectors could only clear 800 tons, according to the city's refuse disposal agency.—AFP



**YAMANOUCHI, Japan:** Japanese wild monkeys known as "snow monkeys" groom each other in a hot spring at the Jigokudani Wild Monkey Park in Yamanouchi town, Nagano prefecture.—AFP

## CHINESE SCIENTISTS CREATE ‘AUTISTIC’ MONKEYS

**PARIS:** Scientists in China have engineered monkeys with a human autism gene and symptoms, in the hopes of unlocking a treatment for the debilitating but little-understood disorder, a study said yesterday. The "transgenic" macaques behaved similarly to humans afflicted with autism, the team wrote-making repetitive gestures, and displaying anxiety and poor social interaction. This meant they could serve as a reliable animal model for researching the causes of, and possible cures for, autism in humans-a feat welcomed by other specialists not involved in the study.

"Our findings pave the way for the efficient use of genetically engineered macaque monkeys for studying brain disorders," the authors asserted. Until now, animal studies of autism have relied mainly on lab mice-a species very far removed from humans in terms of genes, behavior and physiology. So the team led by Zilong Qiu of the Institute of Neuroscience in Shanghai, created special test tube monkeys, giving them multiple copies of the MECP2 gene thought to be linked to autism in humans.

The monkeys were borne by surrogate females, and their behavior studied as they grew up. The researchers observed "an increased frequency of repetitive circular locomotion, increased anxiety, reduce social interaction", among other behaviors. Humans can suffer a range of behavioral anomalies under the umbrella of autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Often sufferers are unable or unwilling to communicate or interact with others, sometimes cripplingly so. Some patients have delays in cognitive development, whereas others can have dazzling gifts in fields such as maths or music. The brain structure of autism suffer-

ers is different to that of other people, but the exact cause or causes remain unclear, though genetics are strongly implicated. There is no cure, and behavior therapy is the main intervention.

### Passed on to offspring

One of the monkeys transferred the transgene to its offspring, which also displayed autistic behavior-strengthening the hypothesis of a genetic root for autism, the study authors said. Qiu said the team would now scan the brains of their monkeys to try and identify circuit deficiencies. "Once we identify this brain circuit (problem) associated with the autism-like behavior, we will use therapeutics such as gene editing tools... to manipulate this MECP2 transgene in the transgenic monkey," he explained.

They could then begin to test potential treatments in the macaques-members of the closely-related primate family-a first step towards a possible human drug or therapy. Qiu insisted the team's methods met international ethical standards. Other scientists hailed the study as an "exciting development". "Developing sophisticated animal models of autism has always represented a significant challenge for scientists," said James Cusack, research director at the autism charity Autistica. "This excellent research has developed a more sophisticated model of autism which may further our understanding of autism and could eventually lead to the development of more tailored treatments," he said through the Science Media Centre. University of California psychiatry professor Melissa Bauman said the work "opens the possibility to explore genetic risk factors in a species more closely related to humans."—AFP

## CHILD OBESITY AN ‘EXPLODING NIGHTMARE’ IN DEVELOPING WORLD

**GENEVA:** Childhood obesity has reached alarming rates globally and become an "exploding nightmare" in the developing world, including Africa where the number of obese and overweight children under five has nearly doubled since 1990, a WHO commission said yesterday. The authors of the report from the Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity stressed that the epidemic has historically not been treated as a grave public health issue and was regarded by some as a product of lifestyle choices by individuals and families. But following two years of research in more than 100 countries, the authors underscored that governments and global health organizations were central to reversing the scourge.

"What's the big message? It's not the kid's fault," commission co-chair Peter Gluckman told reporters. Biological factors, inadequate access to healthy foods, a decline in physical activity in schools and the unregulated market-

ing of fattening foods are among the drivers of a worsening epidemic that requires a coordinated global response, the report said. If not reversed, "the obesity epidemic has the potential to negate many of the health benefits that have contributed to the increased longevity observed in the world," added the report, commissioned by the UN's World Health Organization.

Gluckman conceded that the commission's policy recommendations-which range from promoting healthy lifestyles to higher taxes on sugary drinks-may seem like common sense. But, the commission noted, common sense strategies have not been adequately implemented anywhere in the world, with the number of obese and overweight children under five growing from 31 million to 41 million between 1990 and 2014. "To date, progress in tackling childhood obesity has been slow and inconsistent," the report said.

### Lower-income countries

Child obesity "is an exploding nightmare in the developing world," Gluckman said. The figures have surged in Africa, with the number of overweight or obese children under five nearly doubling from 1990 to 2014, from 5.4 million to 10.3 million. The rate of increase in Asia was difficult to quantify, Gluckman said, but Asia currently accounts for nearly half (48 percent) of young children categorized as overweight or obese. The report notes that in wealthier countries, poorer children are more likely to be obese, partly due to the relative affordability and abundance of fatty fast foods and high-sugar snacks. Conversely, in poorer countries the children of wealthier families are more likely to be obese, including in cultures where "an overweight child is often considered to be healthy."

### Biology, solutions

The report outlines biological pathways that can expose children to an elevated risk of obesity once they are born. The first, called the "mismatch" pathway, results from even subtle malnutrition during pregnancy and early childhood, which can impact gene function and make a child far more likely to excessively gain weight. The second, the developmental pathway, can occur when a mother entering pregnancy is obese or has pre-existing diabetes. This "predisposes the child to increased fat deposits associated with metabolic disease and obesity," the report said.

The report's recommendation call for an integrated response among governments, global health institutions and individuals, with Gluckman stressing that urging individuals to eat well and keep fit was not enough. "Dieting and exercise alone is not the solution," Gluckman said. "We have responsibilities on behalf of the world's children to stop them from being overly obese."

Asked about multi-national food corporations that mass produce fattening products, he said that some had breached international conventions on food marketing, but declined to name names. Rather than shaming such companies, Gluckman said it was crucial to make the private sector "part of the solution", by using carrot-and-stick strategies to incentivize healthier products.—AFP



**KANO, Nigeria:** A vendor sells bags of rat poison in northern Nigeria's largest city of Kano.—AFP

ed" purchases of the pest control product. The head of the city's chemicals traders, Shehu Idris Bichi, said sales have have increased four-fold since the outbreak was first announced earlier this month.

"Traders are doing brisk business because people are making unprecedented purchases of

tomers... people you don't expect because of their social status," he said.

"Lassa doesn't discriminate between the rich and the poor". Vendors using megaphones and hawking their wares on carts have become commonplace. "I was making up to 500 naira (\$2.5, 2.3 euros) a day but now I make between 2,000



**GENEVA:** China's Margaret Chan, General Director of the World Health Organization, WHO, addresses her statement, during the WHO Executive Board session, at the World Health Organization (WHO) headquarters in Geneva.—AFP



## GLOBAL FUND RUSHES HIV DRUGS TO UGANDA AMID SHORTAGE

**KAMPALA:** The Global Fund, a partnership that sends HIV drugs to poor countries, says it plans to send a 12-month advance supply of anti-retroviral therapy to Uganda, after the East African country ran out three months before the end of last year. Health activists say about 240,000 patients on publicly funded treatment programs were affected by the shortage, which began last September, forcing them to modify their treatments or stop altogether. Private-sector clinics were not impacted. The government said a weak currency and insufficient foreign exchange had hampered its ability to finance drug imports. Some activists said they suspected runaway election spending was behind the shortfall, but officials denied the charge. President Yoweri Museveni is seeking to extend his threedecades in power in the Feb. 18 presidential elections in Uganda about 1.5 million people, or about 4 percent of the population, live with the HIV virus, of whom about 820,000 receive antiretroviral (ARV) drugs, which help keep the patient's viral load low and prevent transmission. "The Global Fund has already delivered shipments of drugs as scheduled for existing patients and is front-loading an additional 12-month supply of drugs," Seth Faison, the Fund's head of communications, said in an

email response to questions, adding the 12-month supply would arrive next month. Faison said the first consignment of the new supply would arrive in Uganda in February. But he acknowledged that front-loading the delivery of drugs, while not increasing the total amount of drugs it sends, was a "short-term solution."

"The government needs to mobilize resources to fill the gaps and find a long-term solution," Faison said. The Geneva-based Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, a public-private partnership set up in 2002 which has made impressive progress in tackling epidemics of those three deadly infectious diseases. Uganda has made dramatic gains against HIV/AIDS, bringing the infection rate down from about 18.5 percent in 1992, according to United Nations figures.

But Joshua Wamboga, who heads the Uganda Network of AIDS Service Organizations (UNASO), said that "drug holidays" - when a patient stops taking prescribed medication - could spur the development of drug-resistant HIV strains and cause patients to be more vulnerable to opportunistic infections, like malaria. "NO ARVs means death," he said. "If you have a virus that kills you and you don't get treatment, you die." —Reuters

## OMANI MAN TESTS POSITIVE FOR MERS IN THAILAND

**BANGKOK:** Thai health officials are trying to trace dozens of people who may have come into contact with an elderly Omani man who tested positive for Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), the Health Ministry said yesterday. The 71-year-old arrived in Thailand on Friday with a fever which doctors in Oman could not treat, the ministry statement said. "He tested positive for the MERS virus," and was quarantined in a Bangkok hospital, the statement said, adding "He is tired but conscious". But authorities are looking for more than 250 people who may have come into contact with the man.

Of those, 37 were at "high risk" of contracting the virus, the ministry said, without giving further details. It

is the second recorded case of the virus in a kingdom which is visited by millions of people each year and is a hub for medical tourism. The first case was also of an elderly Omani man, who was admitted to hospital in June last year but discharged weeks later after he was treated and declared virus-free.

The MERS virus first appeared in 2012 in Saudi Arabia. South Korea was hit hard by an outbreak in 2015 which killed 36 people and caused panic across Asia's fourth-largest economy. The virus is considered a deadlier but less infectious cousin of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), which killed hundreds of people when it appeared in Asia in 2003. —AFP

## TOXIC CHEMICALS FOUND IN MOST OUTDOOR GEAR

**BERLIN:** Greenpeace said yesterday that hazardous chemicals were "widely present" in a range of outdoor gear it tested, from clothing and footwear to backpacks, tents and sleeping bags. The environmental activist group said out of 40 products tested, only four were free of per- and polyfluorinated chemicals (PFCs). The study showed that toxic chemicals are "still widely present in products by brands such as Jack Wolfskin, The North Face, Patagonia, Mammut, Norrona and Salewa, especially in the production of footwear, trousers, sleeping bags and some jackets," said the report.

PFCs are used to add waterproof and dirt-repellent finishes to outdoor apparel, but are hazardous to the environment and human health, said Greenpeace. "Once released into the environment most PFCs break down very slowly. They can remain in the environment for many years after their release and are dispersed over the entire globe," the report said. The pollutants have been found in secluded mountain lakes and snow, can accumulate in the livers of Arctic polar bears and be detected in human blood, the report said.

Greenpeace said studies had shown that some PFCs "can cause adverse impacts ... on the reproductive system and the immune system, as well as being potentially carcinogenic in animal tests". The group said an independent laboratory had tested 11 jackets and eight trousers, seven pairs of shoes, eight backpacks, two tents, two sleeping bags, one climbing rope and one pair of gloves.

The four products that did not contain PFCs were jackets by Vaude and Jack Wolfskin, a backpack by Hagl's and a pair of gloves by The North Face, said Greenpeace, adding that this showed it is possible to produce outdoor gear without PFCs. The group urged all outdoor apparel companies to join its 'Detox My Fashion' campaign that aims to quickly remove hazardous chemicals from the entire manufacturing supply chain of the textiles industry. "Phasing out PFCs by 2020, as some outdoor clothing brands aspire to do, is not ambitious enough," the group said. "It is not acceptable that their products continue to release persistent and potentially hazardous chemicals into the environment for another five years." —AFP



**LONDON:** Bill Gates (left), co-founder of Microsoft, Britain's Finance Minister George Osborne (second left) and Britain's Secretary of State for International Development, Justine Greening (third left), are pictured during a visit to the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine in northwest England yesterday. —AFP photos

## BRITAIN AND BILL GATES ANNOUNCE £3 BILLION TO ERADICATE MALARIA 'THE WORLD'S DEADLIEST KILLER'

**LONDON:** Britain's finance minister and tech billionaire Bill Gates unveiled yesterday a plan to spend billions to eradicate "the world's deadliest killer" malaria. Chancellor George Osborne and Gates announced £3 billion (\$4.28 billion, 4 billion euros) in funding over the next five years for research and to support efforts to eliminate the mosquito-borne disease, in a joint article in The Times. "When it comes to human tragedy, no creature comes close to the devastation caused by the mosquito," the two wrote. "We both believe that a malaria-free world has to be one of the highest global health priorities."

The fund would be made up of £500 million a year from Britain's overseas aid budget for the next five years, as well as \$200 million this year from The Gates Foundation, with more donations to follow. There were 438,000 malaria deaths in 2015, most of them of children aged under five, and the majority of them in Africa, according to the World Health Organization. Efforts to control the disease have made significant progress in the last 15 years, but are threatened by the spread of resistance to antimalarial drugs and to insecticide, the WHO said in its World Malaria Report 2015.

"If new insecticides are not introduced by 2020, the situation will become critical and deaths could surge," Osborne and Gates wrote, adding that fighting diseases required collaboration between private companies, governments and charities. "We are optimistic that in our lifetimes we can eradicate malaria and other deadly tropical diseases, and confront emerging threats, making the world a safer place for all," the article concluded.

**Vaccine trials**  
Microsoft co-founder Gates has turned his attention from software to fighting disease and other ills around the world with his wife, under the auspices of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The charity has disbursed more than

\$28 billion and provided funding for the world's most clinically advanced malaria vaccine, Mosquirix developed by GlaxoSmithKline. Mosquirix, or RTS,S, is the first malaria vaccine to reach Phase III clinical testing-the final stage before market approval-and the first to be assessed by regulators. It received a nod from European regulators in July.

A WHO expert panel in October recommended pilot roll-outs of the vaccine to young children in several areas of sub-Saharan Africa, before considering wider use. The WHO is expected to follow the panel's recommendations, which could result in Mosquirix becoming the first licensed vaccine

against a parasitic disease. But a decision still lies a way off.

In April last year, the results of a years-long trial with 15,500 children in seven African countries were published in The Lancet medical journal-announcing mixed success. Only around a third of the children who received the vaccine were protected for the full duration of the trial, researchers found. But even so, the vaccine has the potential to prevent millions of cases and could save thousands of lives. The new announcement comes days after the philanthropist Gates revealed plans for a \$100 million scheme to cut malnutrition in Nigeria. —AFP



**LONDON:** Bill Gates (left), co-founder of Microsoft, and Britain's Finance Minister George Osborne, address the media during a visit to the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine.

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Suleiman Al-Shatti



(From left) Sheikh Khaled Al-Sabah, Italian ambassador, Mesh'al Suleiman Al-Shatti, Ismael Al-Shatti.



Engineer Mesh'al Suleiman Al-Shatti



Mesh'al Al-Shatti welcoming Osama Al-Shatti



Mahmoud Al-Shatti, Rashed Al-Shatti, Abdullah Al-Shatti



Italian ambassador, Lebanese ambassador, Mesh'al Suleiman Al-Shatti and stylist, Zeyad Antoon.



Mesh'al Suleiman Al-Shatti and the Italian ambassador.



Group photo inaugurating Engineer Mesh'al Suleiman Al-Shatti's Diwaniya.

## ENGINEER MESHAL SULEIMAN DAWOOD AL-SHATTI INAUGURATES DIWANIYA

Engineer Meshal Suleiman Dawood Al-Shatti, prepared a gala dinner on the occasion of the inauguration of his Diwaniya in the Sadeq area, in the presence of a number of local dignitaries, friends, and family in the community. This is in order to enhance communication within the community, and to support social ties. In addition, it is meant to improve educational and social activities, to develop the community further, and to reenergize the community's role in society.



## SULTAN CENTER'S 'HEALTHY LIVING' CAMPAIGN

Check out some images from the 'Healthy Living' campaign which is a part of TSC's "Because We Care" initiative that has been taking place across all of TSC's stores as part of its ongoing support to the community. This campaign highlights choices that contribute to a healthy lifestyle, with a weekly range of activities set to underline the importance of healthy dieting, physical exercise and food storage and handling.

## AUK WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM WINS THE UAAK FINALS

The AUK Women's Basketball team triumphed in the University Athletics Association of Kuwait (UAAK) finals. Playing in the finals opposite the Australian College of Kuwait (ACK), they earned the winning title with an impressive score of 29-19. This is the 4th year in which AUK has participated in this league, and was among several universities and colleges in Kuwait competing for the championship. Led by Coach Wessam Mohammad, the team's efforts did not go unnoticed as he praises their performance throughout the competition, "We approached all games with the same mentality as a final game, we got better all the way to winning the championship. Special thanks to Dean Hanan Muzaffar and Mr Omar Mehdi for their great support; to all the fans who stood by our side throughout the tournament. And finally, thanks to all the players for their determination,

desire and unselfish play." The team displayed outstanding athleticism and drive throughout the season, and went undefeated in all their games. AUK annually participates in the University Athletics Association in Kuwait (UAAK) a country-wide tournament for private universities. In addition AUK offers other intercollegiate athletic which allow student-athletes to compete locally and regionally against universities in the following sports: soccer, basketball, volleyball, tennis, table tennis, squash, and swimming. The American University of Kuwait (AUK) is an independent, private, equal opportunity, and co-educational liberal arts institution of higher education. The educational, cultural and administrative structure, methods and standards of AUK are based on the American model of higher learning. The language of instruction is English.







—Photos by Joseph Shagra

# FAUCHON PARIS OPENS NEW CONCEPT EXCLUSIVELY FOR KUWAIT

The latest concept, by Fauchon Paris “Le Gourmet Café” held its spectacular grand opening ceremony on Sunday 24th January. Unlike any other venue under the luxury French brand, “Le Gourmet Café”, brings to Kuwait a unique and sophisticated experience in every way.

The lavish ceremony was filled with entertainment and flair creating an experience different to any other, with the guest of honor HE Christian Nakhlé - Ambassador of France, along with many other distinguished guests and socialites both from Kuwait and abroad. The guests were greeted by their hosts, Mr Emad Bukhamseen, Chairman of Gourmania

and members of the Bukhamseen family.

Like entering a new world, a long gold carpet extended from the mall entrance to the event foyer. Along the golden path were illuminated jewelry showcases displaying Fauchon's latest culinary masterpieces. The entire foyer in the heart of the ground floor came to life during the event with elegant curtains concealing the restaurant interior until the dramatic unveiling.

The man behind this new concept is CEO of Gourmania International, Mohammed Bseiso, and together with Fauchon Paris, the concept was created and developed. “Fauchon is one of Kuwaits most popular dining destinations

and the opening of our fifth outlet, less than one hundred meters away from our outdoor seasonal Café, meant that this one had to be significantly different while still maintaining the brand identity of Fauchon” explained Mohammed. “A change to the look would not be enough and a ‘twist’ was needed to enhance the customer experience” he added.

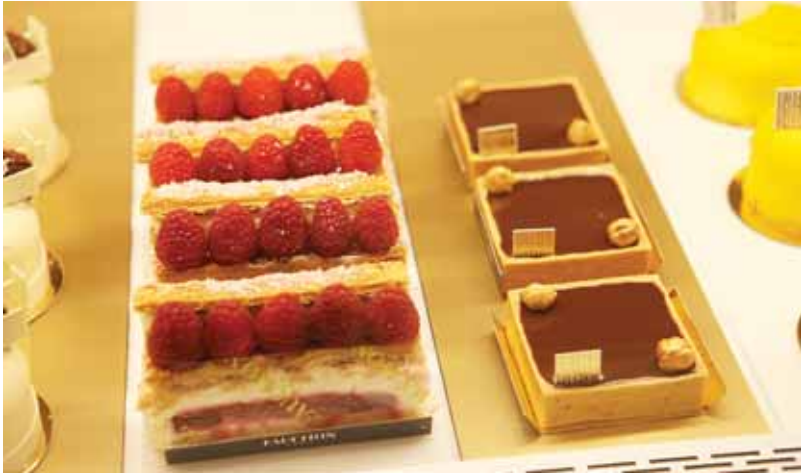
One of the new “twists” is the introduction of a Gourmet and Caviar Bar, serving Michelin Star level, haute cuisine with delicacies such as Kobe beef, escargot, fresh oysters and variations of home-made fois gras created by Fauchon chefs Nicolas and Reddy. “If there was only one place in Kuwait to target patrons of

this range of cuisine, then it would be right here in Salihiya” Mohammed explained.

Another spectacular new feature of this outlet reverts back to Fauchon's roots of serving the finest in world class desserts and pastries. In addition to the much loved Fauchon classics there is now a mesmerizing “Interactive Dessert Collection” prepared live in an open pastry kitchen and served on the table by one of Fauchon's talented chefs. The idea and inspiration of having this collection emerged from the desire to “get out of the box and take an already great product to an even higher level” said Mohammed. The creation of these dishes took several months in the mak-

ing by award-winning chefs, Daniel Jongsma and Antione Chassonnery, developed exclusively for this branch. The desserts move, change, open, close and crack - the interactivity between the dish and the customer is what makes this collection truly unique and one of a kind.

If this isn't enough, “Le Gourmet Café” will be launching the “CENT'aime” which will be sold at the price that the name suggests, 100KD per plate. This dessert takes originality and culinary artistry to a new level and worth every penny. However the details of this distinctive creation are secretly guarded and yet to be revealed in the near future.



# AOU TRAINING CENTER ORGANIZES OFFICE WORKSHOP

The Training Center of Arab Open University (AOU) organized a workshop on (Microsoft Office Applications) for the employees of Oula Fuel Marketing Company. It was delivered by Naif Al-Fadli who stressed on the importance of such workshops, which are organized by the Center, in serving the whole community. The workshop addressed a theoretical and practical application of Office Programs, namely, Word, Excel and Outlook.

Al-Fadli pointed out the aim of this workshop is to develop skills of the participants and enable them to create and edit documents, insert texts and drawings, professionally prepare official letters, and use the Excel application in creating tables and processing formulae. The workshop also delivered the Outlook application, which is used to send emails and prepare timetables.

At the end of the workshop, the participants expressed their pleasure for attending this kind of workshops that develop their skills. Then, the director of the Center, Dr Sami Nasser Khalifa present the certificates to them.







00:20 Misfit Garage  
01:10 Gold Rush  
02:00 Gold Divers  
02:50 Catching Monsters  
03:40 Storage Hunters UK  
04:05 The Liquidator  
04:30 Storage Wars Canada  
05:00 What Happened Next?  
05:30 How Machines Work  
06:00 Yukon Men  
06:50 Wheeler Dealers  
07:40 Misfit Garage  
08:30 Storage Hunters UK  
08:55 The Liquidator  
09:20 Storage Wars Canada  
09:45 What Happened Next?  
10:10 How Machines Work  
10:35 Gold Rush  
11:25 Gold Divers  
12:15 Catching Monsters  
13:05 Storage Hunters UK  
13:30 The Liquidator  
13:55 Storage Wars Canada  
14:20 Yukon Men  
15:10 Wheeler Dealers  
16:00 Misfit Garage  
16:50 What Happened Next?  
17:15 How Machines Work  
17:40 Bear's Wild Weekend With Stephen Fry  
18:30 Dual Survival  
19:20 Troy  
20:10 The Liquidator  
20:35 Storage Wars Canada  
21:00 Running Wild With Bear Grylls  
21:50 Dual Survival  
22:40 River Monsters  
23:30 Wheeler Dealers



00:35 Mythbusters  
01:20 How It's Made  
02:08 Strangest Weather On Earth  
02:55 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
03:42 How The Universe Works  
04:29 Mythbusters  
05:16 Strangest Weather On Earth  
06:03 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
06:50 Prototype This  
07:37 How Do They Do It?  
08:23 Mythbusters  
09:08 How The Universe Works  
09:53 Prototype This  
10:38 How It's Made  
11:23 How The Universe Works  
12:08 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
12:53 Prototype This  
13:38 Mythbusters  
14:23 How It's Made  
15:10 How The Universe Works  
16:44 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
17:31 Prototype This  
18:18 How The Universe Works  
19:05 Mythbusters  
19:50 Food Factory  
20:40 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
21:25 How It's Made  
22:15 How The Universe Works  
23:00 Food Factory  
23:45 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?



00:15 California Investigator  
00:40 Who On Earth...  
01:30 The Haunted  
02:20 Ghost Lab  
03:10 House Of Horrors:  
Kidnapped  
03:35 House Of Horrors:  
Kidnapped  
04:00 California Investigator  
04:45 Who On Earth...  
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  
15:05 Dr G: Medical Examiner  
15:55 Fatal Encounters  
16:45 On The Case With Paula Zahn  
17:35 Murder Shift  
18:25 I Almost Got Away With It  
19:15 The Will  
20:05 Deadly Affairs  
20:55 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones  
21:45 California Investigator  
22:10 Who On Earth...  
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  
01:40 Violetta  
02:30 Violetta  
03:15 The Hive  
03:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
04:10 Violetta  
05:00 Violetta  
05:45 The Hive  
05:50 Mouk  
06:00 Lolirock  
06:25 Sofia The First  
06:50 That's So Raven  
07:15 Gravity Falls  
07:40 Jessie  
08:05 Shake It Up  
08:55 That's So Raven  
09:45 Austin & Ally  
10:35 A.N.T. Farm  
11:25 Jessie  
12:20 Hank Zipzer  
12:45 Fish Hooks  
13:10 Good Luck Charlie  
13:35 I Didn't Do It  
14:00 Dog With A Blog  
14:30 H2O  
14:55 Girl Meets World  
15:20 Liv And Maddie  
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  
21:35 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 E! News  
03:15 Escape Club  
04:10 E! Entertainment Special  
05:05 Beyond Candid With Giuliana  
06:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
07:50 Style Star  
08:20 E! News  
09:15 Giuliana & Bill  
11:10 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills  
12:05 E! News  
13:05 House Of DVF  
14:05 Fashion Bloggers  
15:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
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 E! News  
23:00 Dash Dolls



00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
01:00 Staten Island Cakes  
02:00 Mystery Diners  
03:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin  
04:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games  
06:00 Chopped  
07:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin  
08:00 Chopped  
09:00 Grandma's Secret Cookbook Special  
10:00 The Kitchen  
11:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics  
12:00 Chopped  
13:00 Guy's Big Bite  
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
15:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin  
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 Coronation Street  
02:30 Murdoch Mysteries  
03:25 Endeavour  
05:15 The Chase  
06:10 Cook Me The Money  
07:05 Coach Trip  
07:30 Endeavour  
09:20 Murdoch Mysteries  
10:15 The Chase  
11:10 Coach Trip  
11:35 Pick Me!  
12:30 Cook Me The Money  
13:25 Emmerdale  
13:50 Coach Trip  
14:20 Coronation Street  
14:45 Murdoch Mysteries  
15:35 Pick Me!  
16:30 Vera  
18:20 Cook Me The Money  
19:10 Coronation Street  
19:35 Pick Me!  
20:30 Vera  
22:20 Coronation Street  
22:50 Emmerdale  
23:15 Cook Me The Money



02:30 The Big C  
04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
05:30 Young & Hungry  
07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
08:30 Young & Hungry  
11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
11:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
17:30 The Goldbergs  
19:00 Modern Family  
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon

22:30 You're The Worst  
23:00 The Big C  
23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers



00:00 Defiance  
01:00 Quantico  
02:00 Rosewood  
03:00 Allegiance  
04:00 Drop Dead Diva  
05:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
07:00 Drop Dead Diva  
08:00 Witches Of East End  
09:00 Quantico  
11:00 Drop Dead Diva  
12:00 Coronation Street  
12:30 Coronation Street  
13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
14:00 Witches Of East End  
15:00 Live Good Morning America  
17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
18:00 Witches Of East End  
19:00 Complications  
20:00 The Night Shift  
22:00 Supergirl  
23:00 Scream Queens



00:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
01:00 Good Morning America  
03:00 Satisfaction  
04:00 Blood & Oil  
05:00 Good Morning America  
07:00 Coronation Street  
08:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
09:00 Supernatural  
10:00 Coronation Street  
10:30 Coronation Street  
11:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
12:00 Resurrection  
13:00 Shark Tank  
14:00 Supernatural  
15:00 Survivor: Cambodia  
16:00 The Voice  
18:00 Shark Tank  
19:00 Supernatural  
20:00 Resurrection  
21:00 Shark Tank  
22:00 Satisfaction  
23:00 Blood & Oil



00:00 John Wick  
02:00 Bounty Killer  
04:00 Big Ass Spider!  
06:00 The Assault  
08:00 Jurassic Attack  
12:00 Assassin's Bullet  
14:00 I Am Legend  
14:00 Dying Of The Light  
16:00 The Assault  
18:00 Assassin's Bullet  
20:00 Special ID  
22:00 The Day



00:00 Bounty Killer-PG15  
02:00 Big Ass Spider-PG15  
04:00 The Assault-PG15  
06:00 Jurassic Attack-PG15  
08:00 Assassin's Bullet-PG15  
10:00 I Am Legend-PG15  
12:00 Dying Of The Light-PG15  
14:00 The Assault-PG15  
16:00 Assassin's Bullet-PG15  
18:00 Special ID-PG15  
20:00 The Day-PG15  
22:00 Dragon Blade-PG15



00:00 Adult World  
02:00 Until She Came Along  
04:00 The Misadventures Of The Underheads  
06:00 Roommates  
08:00 The Nutty Professor (1996)  
10:00 The Misadventures Of The Underheads  
12:00 Until She Came Along  
14:00 Renaissance Man  
16:15 The Nutty Professor (1996)  
18:00 The Lego Movie  
20:00 The First Time



01:00 Escobar: Paradise Lost  
03:00 Tracks-PG15  
05:00 Snitch-PG15  
07:00 Mr. Pip-PG15  
09:00 Half Of A Yellow Sun-PG15  
11:00 Snitch-PG15  
13:00 Breathless-PG15  
15:00 Won't Back Down-PG15  
17:00 Half Of A Yellow Sun-PG15  
19:00 A Thousand Times Good Night-PG15



00:00 Choke  
02:00 Mood Indigo  
04:30 Vanity Fair  
07:00 The Trouble With Bliss  
09:00 Serial (Bad) Weddings  
10:45 When A Man Loves A Woman  
13:00 Vanity Fair  
15:30 The Darjeeling Limited  
17:15 Serial (Bad) Weddings  
19:00 At Any Price  
21:00 The Postman Always Rings Twice  
23:00 The Hidden Face



01:00 Shiver-PG15  
03:00 Bears-PG  
05:00 The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge Out Of Water-PG  
07:00 Blended-PG15  
09:00 About Alex-PG15  
11:00 No Good Deed-PG15  
13:00 Christmas In Conway-PG15  
15:00 The Book Of Life-PG  
17:00 About Alex-PG15  
19:00 St. Vincent-PG15  
21:00 What We Do In The Shadows-PG15  
23:00 Deliver Us From Evil-18



01:15 Minuscule: Valley Of The Lost Ants  
03:00 Mamma Moo And Crow  
04:30 Marvel's Thor: Tales Of Asgaard  
06:00 Bamse And The City Of Thieves  
07:45 Blue Elephant 2  
09:45 Delhi Safari  
11:30 Columbus In The Last Journey  
13:00 Mamma Moo And Crow  
14:30 Dixie And The Zombie Rebellion  
16:00 Echo Planet  
18:00 Delhi Safari  
20:00 The Olsen Gang In Deep Trouble  
22:00 Dixie And The Zombie Rebellion  
23:30 Echo Planet



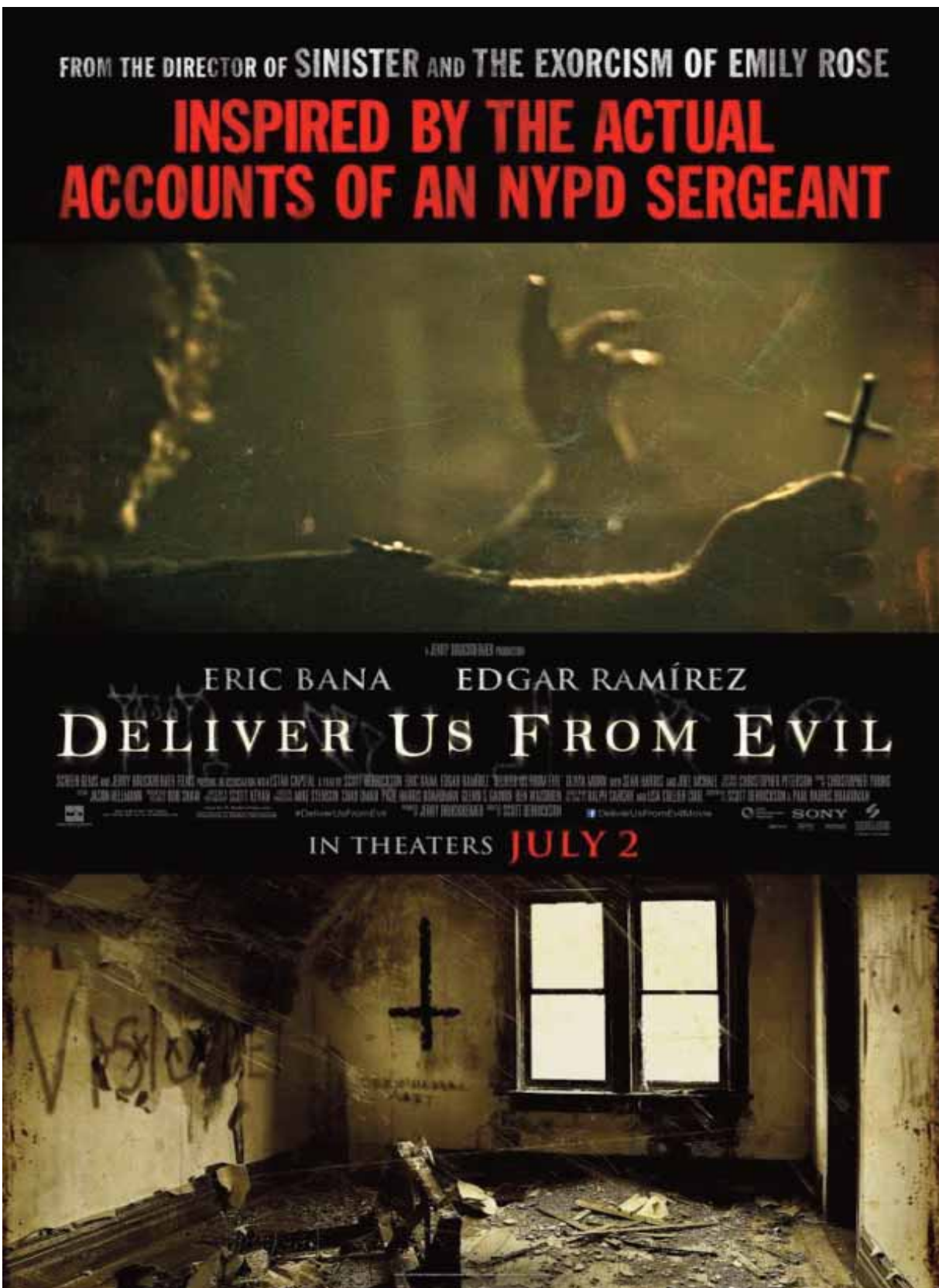
00:00 The Liability-PG15  
02:00 Stolen Child-PG15  
04:00 A Madea Christmas-PG15  
06:00 Not Safe For Work-PG15  
08:00 Mr. Peabody & Sherman  
10:00 Trigger Point-PG15  
12:00 The Numbers Station-PG15  
14:00 Bully-PG15  
16:00 Mr. Peabody & Sherman  
18:00 Welcome To The Punch  
20:00 Serena-PG15  
22:00 Wild-18



03:35 True Confessions  
05:20 Natural Causes  
06:50 Beat Street  
08:35 Death Rides A Horse  
10:30 Waking Up In Reno  
12:05 Jakob The Liar  
14:00 Hercules  
15:35 Adventures Of Hercules  
17:10 Seven Years In Tibet  
19:20 Waking Up In Reno  
21:00 Blown Away  
23:00 Dirty Rotten Scoundrels  
00:50 Desperately Seeking Susan  
02:35 Blue Steel



03:00 Killer Kids  
04:00 I Married My Killer  
05:00 Born To Kill  
06:00 The Haunting Of...  
07:00 I Married My Killer  
08:00 Surveillance Oz  
10:00 I Killed My BFF  
11:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
12:00 Crime Stories  
13:00 Homicide Hunter  
14:00 After The First 48  
15:00 I Killed My BFF  
16:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
17:00 Crime Stories  
18:00 The First 48  
19:00 After The First 48



## DELIVER US FROM EVIL ON OSN MOVIES HD

20:00 Homicide Hunter  
21:00 Crime Stories  
22:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
23:00 When Life Means Life  
00:00 They Took Our Child, We Got Her Back  
01:00 Sex, Fame And Murder  
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 Pirates  
09:05 Sofia The First  
09:30 Miles From Tomorrow  
09:55 The Hive  
10:55 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  
12:40 The Hive  
12:50 Handy Manny  
13:15 Jungle Junction  
13:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
14:00 Sofia The First  
14:25 Doc McStuffins  
14:50 Henry Hugglemonster  
15:15 Zou  
15:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
15:55 Loopdidoo  
16:10 Miles From Tomorrow  
16:35 Jake And The Never Land  
Pirates  
17:00 Sofia The First  
17:25 Jungle Cubs  
17:50 Aladdin  
18:15 Gummi Bears  
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 Jungle Cubs  
22:25 Aladdin  
22:50 Gummi Bears  
23:20 Lilo And Stitch  
23:45 Cars Toons  
23:50 Zou



07:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
07:25 K. C. Undercover  
07:50 Supa Strikas



H03:00 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  
06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants  
07:00 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  
12:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
13:00 Breadwinners  
13:48 Get Blake  
14:12 Rabbids Invasion  
14:36 100 Things To Do Before High School  
15:00 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn  
15:24 SpongeBob SquarePants  
16:12 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  
19:00 100 Things To Do Before High School  
19:24 Max & Shred  
19:48 SpongeBob SquarePants  
20:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
21:24 Breadwinners  
22:12 Sanjay And Craig  
23:00 SpongeBob SquarePants  
23:48 Henry Danger  
00:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn  
00:36 Max & Shred  
01:00 100 Things To Do Before High School  
01:24 Sanjay And Craig  
02:12 SpongeBob SquarePants



04:00 Rake  
05:00 Subconscious Password  
05:15 The Odds  
06:45 Chorus  
08:20 Heartland  
10:00 California Solo  
11:35 Produced By George Martin  
13:05 Pinter's Progress  
14:00 Hamlet  
15:50 Discovering: Hamlet  
16:40 Welcome To Pine Hill  
18:05 Produced By George Martin  
19:35 Hopscotch  
21:20 Iconoclasts  
22:20 Discovering: Hamlet  
23:10 Hamlet  
01:00 The Strongest Man  
02:45 Bottled Up



03:40 World's Worst Mum  
04:30 Jon & Kate Plus 8  
05:00 Little People, Big World  
05:30 Cake Boss  
06:00 Say Yes To The Dress: Ai Bridesmaids  
06:25 Randy To The Rescue  
07:15 Hoarding: Buried Alive  
08:05 Say Yes To The Dress: The Big Day  
08:55 Randy's Wedding Rescue  
09:45 Jon & Kate Plus 8  
10:10 Little People, Big World  
10:35 My Five Wives  
11:25 Cake Boss  
11:50 Catwalk 30+  
12:40 Randy To The Rescue  
13:30 Belief  
14:20 Oprah: Where Are They Now?  
15:10 Jon & Kate Plus 8  
15:35 Little People, Big World  
16:00 Hoarding: Buried Alive  
16:50 My Five Wives  
17:40 Cake Boss



JOHN WICK ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD



# CLASSIFIEDS



## KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (21/01/2016 TO 27/01/2016)

**SHARQIA-1**  
LOST IN THE SUN 12:15 PM  
LOST IN THE SUN 2:30 PM  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 4:30 PM  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 6:30 PM  
LOST IN THE SUN 8:30 PM  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 10:30 PM  
LOST IN THE SUN 12:30 AM

**SHARQIA-2**  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 12:15 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 2:00 PM  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 3:45 PM  
THE 5TH WAVE 6:45 PM  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 9:15 PM  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 12:15 AM

**SHARQIA-3**  
RIDE ALONG 2 1:00 PM  
THE BOY 2:45 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 4:45 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 6:45 PM  
THE BOY 8:45 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 10:45 PM  
THE BOY 12:45 AM

**MUHALAB-1**  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 11:30 AM  
KUNG FU STYLE 1:30 PM  
DILWALE - Hindi 3:30 PM  
DICTATOR - Telugu 3:30 PM  
OUR BRAND IS CRISIS 6:30 PM  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 8:45 PM  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 10:45 PM  
OUR BRAND IS CRISIS 12:45 AM

**MUHALAB-2**  
RIDE ALONG 2 12:00 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 2:00 PM  
THE REVENANT 4:00 PM  
SOGGADE CHINNI NAYANA -Telugu 4:00 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 7:00 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 9:00 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 11:00 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 1:00 AM

**MUHALAB-3**  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 11:45 AM  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 2:45 PM  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 5:45 PM  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 8:45 PM  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 11:45 PM

**FANAR-1**  
OUR BRAND IS CRISIS 11:45 AM  
OUR BRAND IS CRISIS 2:00 PM  
OUR BRAND IS CRISIS 4:15 PM  
THE REVENANT 6:30 PM  
OUR BRAND IS CRISIS 9:30 PM  
THE REVENANT 11:45 PM

**FANAR-2**  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 1:00 PM

DARKNESS DESCENDS 3:00 PM  
DILWALE - Hindi 5:00 PM  
DICTATOR - Telugu 5:00 PM  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 8:00 PM  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 10:00 PM  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 12:05 AM

**FANAR-3**  
RIDE ALONG 2 12:30 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 2:30 PM  
KUNG FU STYLE 4:30 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 6:30 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 8:30 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 10:30 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 12:30 AM

**FANAR-4**  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 12:15 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 1:30 PM  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 3:15 PM  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 6:15 PM  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 9:15 PM  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 12:15 AM

**FANAR-5**  
THE BOY 11:45 AM  
THE BOY 1:45 PM  
THE BOY 3:45 PM  
THE 5TH WAVE 5:45 PM  
THE BOY 8:15 PM  
THE 5TH WAVE 10:15 PM  
THE BOY 12:45 AM

**MARINA-1**  
LOST IN THE SUN 11:30 AM  
THE 5TH WAVE 1:30 PM  
OUR BRAND IS CRISIS 3:45 PM  
LOST IN THE SUN 6:00 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 7:00 PM  
THE REVENANT 8:00 PM  
OUR BRAND IS CRISIS 10:15 PM  
LOST IN THE SUN 12:30 AM

**MARINA-2**  
RIDE ALONG 2 12:00 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 2:00 PM  
THE REVENANT 4:00 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 7:00 PM  
THE REVENANT 9:00 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 12:05 AM

**MARINA-3**  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 12:30 PM  
KUNG FU STYLE 1:30 PM  
KUNG FU STYLE 3:30 PM  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 5:45 PM  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 8:45 PM  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 11:45 PM

**AVENUES-1**  
KUNG FU STYLE 11:30 AM  
THE 5TH WAVE 1:30 PM  
THE 5TH WAVE 4:00 PM  
TWO COUNTRIES - Malayalam 6:30 PM

THE 5TH WAVE 9:30 PM  
THE 5TH WAVE 12:15 AM

**AVENUES-2**  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 12:00 PM  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 2:15 PM  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 4:30 PM  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 6:45 PM  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 9:00 PM  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 11:30 PM

**AVENUES-3**  
OUR BRAND IS CRISIS 1:00 PM  
OUR BRAND IS CRISIS 1:30 PM  
OUR BRAND IS CRISIS 3:45 PM  
OUR BRAND IS CRISIS 6:15 PM  
OUR BRAND IS CRISIS 8:45 PM  
OUR BRAND IS CRISIS 11:15 PM

**360°- 1**  
RIDE ALONG 2 11:45 AM  
RIDE ALONG 2 1:45 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 3:45 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 5:45 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 7:45 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 9:45 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 11:45 PM

**360°- 2**  
KUNG FU STYLE 12:15 PM  
KUNG FU STYLE 2:15 PM  
KUNG FU STYLE 4:15 PM  
DILWALE - Hindi 6:15 PM  
DILWALE - Hindi 9:30 PM  
THE BOY 12:30 AM

**360°- 3**  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 1:00 PM  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 3:15 PM  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 5:30 PM  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 7:45 PM  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 10:00 PM  
DARKNESS DESCENDS 12:15 AM

**AL-KOUT.1**  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 12:15 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 1:30 PM  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 3:15 PM  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 6:15 PM  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 9:15 PM  
MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic 12:15 PM

**AL-KOUT.2**  
RIDE ALONG 2 11:30 AM  
THE 5TH WAVE 1:30 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 3:45 PM  
THE 5TH WAVE 5:45 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 8:15 PM  
THE 5TH WAVE 10:15 PM  
RIDE ALONG 2 12:45 AM

## APARTMENTS FOR RENT

### 1 & 2 BEDROOMS - HALL -2 BATH - KITCHEN - BALCONY

Furnished & Unfurnished At Shaab With Sea View Including Water & Electricity - Satellite - Shaded Car Parking - Fully Furnished & Unfurnished - Free Maintenance

Contact: **99494337 - 67600972**

## REQUIRED KITCHEN STAFF

(visa transfer immediately)  
Indian or Filipino  
For a good salary

Career.kuwait.01@gmail.com

**69999081**

## FOR SALE

**Mitsubishi** Lancer 2015  
GLS, 2000 kilometer only,  
free accidents, dark silver, 5  
years warranty. Price KD  
3600. Tel: 55305433.

(C 5115)  
**26-1-2016**

## SITUATION WANTED

Looking job in Kuwait, sister in India, ground handling, airport + air ticket, working in India, Indian Airline. Contact: 65853374.  
(C 5117)  
**26-1-2016**

## CHANGE OF NAME

**I Hozefa**, holder of Indian Passport No. J5394193, Mohammediya colony, VPO Galiyakot, Dist Dungerpur,

## FOR RENT

For rent new high end apartment  
**2B + 2B + kitchen, living room.**

Behind 4th Ring Road  
(Maidan Hawally)

Tel: **65797760**

## REQUIRED NURSES

To work in cosmetic dermatology clinic, Experience with laser machines preferred.

Contact:  
[aliamed@yahoo.com](mailto:aliamed@yahoo.com)

Rajasthan - 314026, hereby change my name from Hozefa to Hozefa Fauji.  
(C 5116)  
**25-1-2016**

## Prayer timings

**Fajr: 05:18**  
**Shorook 06:41**  
**Duhr: 12:01**  
**Asr: 15:00**  
**Maghrib: 17:21**  
**Isha: 18:41**

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page ([www.kuwait-airport.com.kw](http://www.kuwait-airport.com.kw))

**In case you are not travelling, your proper cancellation of bookings will help other passengers to use seats**



### Arrival Flights on Tuesday 26/1/2016

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
PGT	5620	Istanbul	04:35
THY	6376	Istanbul	05:05
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:40
THY	770	Istanbul	05:55
FDB	5061	Dubai	06:30
BAW	157	London	06:40
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	06:55
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
IRC	6507	Shiraz	10:30
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40
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
KAC	382	Delhi	13:50
FBA	831	Al Najaf	14:05
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
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
MSR	614	Cairo	17:50
JZR	325	Al Najaf	17:50
JZR	777	Jeddah	17:55
KAC	502	Beirut	18:00
UAE	875	Dubai	18:00
FDB	063	Dubai	18:05
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
QTR	1088	Doha	21:00
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
QTR	1082	Doha	22:00
JZR	125	Bahrain	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
FDB	071	Dubai	23:45
THY	764	Istanbul	23:50
JAI	574	Mumbai	23:55
MSC	403	Asyut	23:55

### Departure Flights on Tuesday 26/1/2016

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
PGT	5621	Istanbul	06:25
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
KAC	787	Jeddah	09:25
ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40
KAC	513	Tehran	09:45
KAC	101	London/New York	09:55
KAC	541	Cairo	09:55
UAE	856	Dubai	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
KAC	539	Sharm el-Sheikh	11:25
GFA	214	Bahrain	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

UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
JZR	324	Al Najaf	14:25
PAL	669	Dubai/Manila	14:55
KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
FDB	058	Dubai	15:10
QTR	1079	Doha	15:10
FBA	832	Al Najaf	15:15
AXB	394	Kozhikode	15:20
KAC	617	Doha	15:45
SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
GFA	222	Bahrain	15:45
KAC	613	Bahrain	15:50



CROSSWORD 1149

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		12	13	14
15				16									17		
18				19							20	21			
22			23		24			25		26					
			27	28			29	30			31				
32	33	34				35				36			37		38 39
40											41				
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50					51						52		53		
54			55			56		57							
			58						59						
60	61	62				63	64					65	66	67	68
69						70					71				
72						73				74			75		
76						77							78		

ACROSS

1. A defensive missile designed to shoot down incoming intercontinental ballistic missiles.  
4. A size of paper used especially in Britain.  
12. A fatal disease of cattle that affects the central nervous system.  
15. An anxiety disorder characterized by chronic free-floating anxiety and such symptoms as tension or sweating or trembling of light-headedness or irritability etc that has lasted for more than six months.  
16. Ratlike rodent with soft fur and large ears of the Andes.  
17. An anticipated outcome that is intended or that guides your planned actions.  
18. Thigh of a hog (usually smoked).  
19. Used by Maoris for thatching.  
20. State in northeastern India.  
22. By bad luck.  
24. Half the width of an em.  
25. In an artful manner.  
27. Military action involving the use of electromagnetic energy to determine or exploit or reduce or prevent hostile use of the electromagnetic spectrum.  
29. A lyric poem with complex stanza forms.  
31. A garment that covers the head and face.  
32. A special loved one.  
35. Genus of large deciduous nut-bearing trees.  
37. A commercial leavening agent containing yeast cells.  
40. A communication system linking different rooms within a building or ship etc.  
42. A support or foundation.  
43. A master's degree in business.  
44. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.  
45. A colorless and odorless inert gas.  
46. A soft wet area of low-lying land that sinks underfoot.  
50. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.  
54. Of or relating to words.  
58. Located on a side.  
59. Either of two large African antelopes of the genus Taurotragus having short spirally twisted horns in both sexes.  
60. Submerged aquatic plant having narrow leaves and small flowers.  
63. Someone whose business is advertising.  
65. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls.  
69. God of fire.  
72. Prolific Spanish playwright (1562-1635).  
73. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).  
75. The sense organ for hearing and equilibrium.  
76. Not only so, but.  
77. Dragonflies and damselflies.  
78. Psychoactive substance present in marijuana.

DOWN

1. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).  
2. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.  
3. Designer drug designed to have the effects of amphetamines (it floods the brain with serotonin) but to avoid the drug laws.  
4. Having much flesh (especially fat).  
5. A slender double-reed instrument.  
6. A South American river 1,500 miles long.  
7. (often followed by 'of) A large number or amount or extent.  
8. Large black diving duck of northern parts of the northern hemisphere.  
9. Stiff coarse fiber from the outer husk of a coconut.  
10. Before noon.  
11. The state prevailing during the absence of war.  
12. Of or relating to or located at the base.  
13. The granite-like rocks that form the outermost layer of the earth's crust.  
14. An annual award for outstanding achievements in television.  
21. A vehicle resembling a bicycle but having skis instead of wheels.  
23. Characterized by absence of emotional agitation.  
26. Any of various coarse shrubby plants of the genus Iva with small greenish flowers.  
28. Fate personified.  
30. Any of various hard resins from trees of the family Dipterocarpaceae and of the genus Agathis.  
33. Constituting the full quantity or extent.  
34. A drug (trade names Atarax and Vistaril) used as a tranquilizer to treat anxiety and motion sickness.  
36. An affirmative.  
38. An immunoglobulin E that is formed as an antibody against allergens (such as pollen).  
39. A percussion instrument consisting of a pair of hollow pieces of wood or bone (usually held between the thumb and fingers) that are made to click together (as by Spanish dancers) in rhythm with the dance.  
41. A resident of Kansas.  
47. Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.  
48. (Old Testament) The minister of the Persian emperor who hated the Jews and was hanged for plotting to massacre them.  
49. Black tropical American cuckoo.  
51. Harsh or corrosive in tone.  
52. Stem of the rattan palm used for making canes and umbrella handles.  
53. Of time long past.  
55. (Old Testament) The first of the major Hebrew prophets (8th century BC).  
56. Hired for the exclusive temporary use of a group of travelers.  
57. Stay the same.  
61. American novelist (1909-1955).  
62. Any tree or shrub of the genus Inga having pinnate leaves and showy usually white flowers.  
64. Panel forming the lower part of an interior wall when it is finished differently from the rest.  
66. Having relatively few calories.  
67. A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.  
68. Made from residue of grapes or apples after pressing.  
70. A corporation's first offer to sell stock to the public.  
71. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.  
74. A highly unstable radioactive element (the heaviest of the halogen series).

Yesterday's Solution

G	A	L		Q	U	E	T	Z	A	L		R	A	M	P
A	N	E		A	R	A	R	O	B	A		E	L	I	A
U	N	I	A	T		R	A	D	A	R		F	E	S	S
R	A	G	B	A	G		C	I		V	E	L	V	E	T
		H	E	R	A		T	A	K	A		E	E	R	Y
C	C		L	I	D			C	U	L	E	X			
A	R	C	A		U	Z	B	A	K		V	E	N	A	L
L	E	A	R		S	A	A	L	E		E	D	U	C	E
P	A	D	D	A		M	T		N	M	R		C	I	A
A	T	E		C		I	A		A	I		H	D	L	
C	E	T	A	C	E	A		D	A	N	G	L	A		
			A	R	A			O	M	A	H	A		K	I
D	A	Y	C	A	R	E		L		H	E	B	B	E	L
A	M	A	H		N	Y	A	L	A		G	L	E	B	A
D	O	M	E		E	R	R	A	N	D		A	D	A	M
A	K	A	N		D	A	T	R	I	L		B	A	B	A

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You may find yourself very appreciative of your career and practical skills and you are ready for the workday to begin. A keen interest in what makes things tick and who or what pulls the strings is the hallmark of the mental cycle that now begins in your life. Sex, death and life's other ultimate mysteries and taboos arouse your curiosity. Figuring out ways to make your nest egg grow can be a preoccupation. You may feel like opening up to some new creative venture this afternoon. Research reveals that 80 percent of human communication is non-verbal and you may become interested in taking a course in body language. This may even be fun to take with a friend or family member. There are warm conversations around the dinner table tonight.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Good thoughts and support of friends and family make this a gratifying time. You will find this particular monday will move faster than the average workday. There is plenty of work to keep you busy. You are most persuasive with clients and customers and people trust your research and presentation to others will create a flurry of buyers to your product. It is ideas that count for you now, more than narrowly personal concerns. The new, the unusual and the unorthodox-these are things that instinctively appeal to you, and you may find new ways to perform research or a new approach to other subjects of interest. This afternoon you may relieve your loved one of certain responsibilities. You may even consider trading responsibilities with a family member.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

All sorts of business activity come into play today. Work is concentrated and steady. Broadening your intellectual and spiritual horizons takes on a high priority. You are intent on seeing the big picture and getting to the point. It is a joy to know that things are looking up in the finance and work areas of your life. Today you will have some insight indicating that things are really going to improve-do not worry about delays; they will pass. If you do not have a special love, you may meet that person soon. If you do have a special loved one, you will find many improvements within the relationship at this time. Even though the weather may not be very good right now you may decide to barbecue on an outdoor grill this evening. You will enjoy the evening.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You feel that you are in touch and in harmony with others; the lines of communication are open today. There is a lot of gusto behind what you say and think. You will receive a boost plus some extra support from those around you and this is a most encouraging day. Intensify your efforts with recycling now and encourage others. Later today, nature plays a part in helping you to discover the beauty in your life. An insight about your support system, your mother or other females may be important. You could discover a student or a young person that opens up to you. If you are shopping this evening, be careful that you do not overspend too much just now.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Power struggles may take place today-careful! Pay attention to the motives on both sides. What do you think is at risk here take safety precautions and go easy on caffeine-cold or hot drinks. During days of stress when you are not able to express yourself, the weight of a problem can be carried on your back. Perhaps you can see how important it is to work through your feelings, say no when necessary and work at a balance every day. Some projects could be more costly in time and money than you would want to be involved with just now-think before you obligate your time.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

People that do not know you may not recognize your strengths, especially since your sensitivity is what usually shows. You may appreciate a job that allows you freedom to grow at your own pace. Some wonderful vocations in which you could grow best would be the arts, astronomy, astrology, social work, design, radio and television, law and among other things, literary work. If you are not working in any of these professions, you might consider hobby or volunteer work in these areas. When you have the freedom to express yourself you can become very helpful to yourself as well as humanity. You may find yourself probing and penetrating some strong internal changes. Remember, however, that successful changes come in little steps.

WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

Family Ties

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a special occasion for families.

W	E	H	P	E	N	R	E	L	A	T	I	V	E	S	F
S	T	E	L	P	I	R	T	R	E	H	T	A	F	R	S
S	B	R	O	T	H	E	R	S	A	M	R	W	E	B	R
K	C	M	E	S	D	E	M	P	P	E	O	L	I	O	E
L	I	L	O	H	L	E	A	O	T	O	A	M	D	N	T
O	G	N	A	C	T	R	W	S	T	T	U	E	T	D	S
F	E	E	N	N	E	O	I	Y	I	H	S	S	N	D	I
F	G	U	N	N	C	S	R	O	L	C	E	E	E	A	S
S	A	N	T	E	F	E	N	B	E	W	R	R	R	U	H
P	I	S	I	L	O	S	S	N	F	D	E	E	A	G	U
R	R	W	A	L	N	L	D	T	L	C	N	P	H	S	
I	R	H	I	B	A	O	I	O	I	A	I	P	T	B	
N	A	L	S	F	N	I	H	G	E	R	U	H	E	E	A
G	M	U	D	T	E	C	S	N	Y	Y	N	R	T	R	N
E	O	A	S	Y	N	E	G	O	R	P	T	U	S	N	D
C	D	I	T	N	E	R	A	P	D	N	A	R	G	O	N

ANCESTOR	FATHER	MOTHER	SISTERS
AUNT	FOLKS	NEICE	SON
BOND	GENELOGY	NEPHEW	SPOUSE
BROTHERS	GRANDPARENT	NEWLYWED	STEPPARENT
CHILDREN	HALF BROTHER	OFFSPRING	TRIPLETS
CLAN	HALF SISTER	PARENTS	TWINS
COUSINS	HUSBAND	PROGENY	UNCLE
DAD	KIN	RELATIONS	WIFE
DAUGHTER	MARRIAGE	RELATIVES	
DESCENDANTS	MOM	SIBLING	

Daily SuDoku

3		8			9	5		
	6		8		3			
		9						
	9	1		5				4
		3				2		
2				9		1	3	
					6			
			4		5		9	
		4	2			7		5

hard



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your creative instincts are in full gear today. You perform best when you compete with yourself and you will be able to show off your skills through some idea or problem-solving technique. A sense of emotional coolness or detachment at the personal level, combined with an emphasis on philosophy, is the nature of the cycle you are now entering. It is ideas that count today, more than personal concerns-this may mean that you are a writer and need particular ideas for an article. You may be thinking about making a loved one jealous-don't bother, it will reflect badly on you. You will enjoy and value your own life situation today. A visitor in your home this evening will want to stay longer than necessary and will compliment you on your tastes-patience.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You could be put in charge of some project that requires your special skills. You may not have a choice here, but you need to know that you will be able to handle whatever is put in front of you. In fact, you may be able to acquire some help if you ask before you begin a special project. Your mind will be occupied with many thoughts and you could find that your communication skills suffer this afternoon. You may find it very easy to overdo or to become distracted. There is a sense of testing the limits. This can result in a frustrating and stressful day. Relax . . . There is no need to push. The evening is full of good times. You have a strong urge for social activities with friends and may find yourself enjoying dinner away from home.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

This is an easy, calm day. Ideas and interaction with authority figures or older people may be an important factor of this day. You will learn from the past experiences of another how to create some positive changes in your own life. Working with the unfolding events in the workplace today should be easy for you. This is a day to solve or complete any unfinished business. You and a close friend or loved one may choose this evening to talk about your investments or plan on how you will be saving for the next adventure. You and your loved one may want to visit a bookstore, friends or just enjoy some quiet time together. It is time you do things together and you will be making plans to do more things together in the future.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Respect, status and achievement are central goals for you. Creating a structure to empower and maintain your ideals and principles becomes a high priority, an article of faith. You are in charge today but it may be difficult to know the exact rules. Your energies are up and you are ready for taking charge. Do not pace the floor-the people you lead will want to know you have confidence. Large items or real estate may sell this afternoon-not necessarily on anyone's time schedule, but a real boost to the day! Ambition is a powerful motivation and properly channeled-you will see results in achievements and recognition.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Figuring out how to organize projects and people this monday morning is apt to become a real problem. You could be arranging different groups of people for a tour or for some presentation. Opinions are not enough for you now; they must be backed by authority or evidence and above all they must have practical worth and application. Later this afternoon you may have a better opportunity to study and concentrate on some specific matter-your ambition is intensified. Public speaking may be on the agenda as well-others are listening. This evening you get so wrapped up in the fun things that people have for you to enjoy that you almost forget a promise made earlier. The stress lets up this evening-it is time to celebrate!



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You may find that you really look forward to this workday. A renewed appreciation for your work may be apparent to your superiors-in fact, to everybody. You also may be checking the stock market, studying the gold market or looking for the best investment. You will find a profitable way in which to invest if you can get at least three opinions about your choices. Make a conscious effort to bring a balance between family, friends and business. We all become involved in exciting projects or ideas, but finding ways to bring about a balance in your life will give you that feeling of having-it-all-together. You are most persuasive with others and articulate in your speech and communication. This situation is a natural for self-expression.

Yesterday's Solution

90's Songs 1

L	L	A	Y	M	R	W	E	N	D	A	L	Y	A	D	E	M	O	S
M	A	C	A	R	E	N	A	I	E	V	L	E	V	K	C	A	L	B
F	R	E	A	K	M	E	N	T	R	E	C	Y	L	G	E	M	R	
Y	H	N	R	A	E	L	U	O	Y	I	H	E	O	N	E	T	U	H
C	O	M	E	U	N	D	O	N	E	P	M	U	J	S	A	N	S	Y
I	H	A	C	R	O	S	S	R	O	A	D	S	S	E	A	N	S	I
Y	A	O	E	H	H	M	J	W	S	A	G	E	B	M	V	P	Y	H
T	Z	R	D	O	E	S	O	O	U	N	T	A	I	R	U	A	M	
I	A	S	O	E	T	A	M	V	I	N	S	T	C	H	R	S	W	N
V	R	E	C	H	I	M	R	H	E	A	D	I	T	K	U	L	A	
I	D	R	A	E	R	T	E	T	B	E	W	E	S	R	A	T	I	
T	R	D	E	R	R	A	H	E	L	H	E	R	D	H	E	V	I	
E	E	N	M	E	R	E	R	O	L	G	A	N	I	O				
S	E	I	V	A	E	R	I	M	E	M	E	I	S	A	U	I	N	N
N	M	S	O	O	E	R	A	S	A	S	A	T	M	S	D	R	L	
E	I	D	H	V	L	N	E	N	S	H	S	K	E	H	S	A	Y	
S	L	L	E	A	G	I	N	I	N	U	C	O	S	E	R	M	C	
P	O	B	M	M	M													
E	U	G	O	V	C	O	M	M	A	N	I	W	I	S	H	T	N	U

ALL STAR	HOLE HEARTED	MY ALL	SOMEDAY
ALWAYS	I WISH	NEVER EVER	SUMMERTIME
BLACK VELVET	IESHA	ONLY YOU	TENNESSEE
CARNIVAL	INVISIBLE MAN	PUSH	THA CROSSROADS
COME UNDONE	JOYRIDE	RHYTHM NATION	THE ONE
DO ANYTHING	JUMP	ROAM	TOM'S DINER
EVERY HEARTBEAT	LITHIUM	ROMANTIC	TORN
FREAK ME	LOSER	RUN AWAY	VOGUE
GLYCERINE	MACARENA	RUSH RUSH	WICKED GAME
HAZARD	MMMBOP	SCAR TISSUE	WONDER
HEARTBREAKER	MOVE THIS	SENSITIVITY	YOU LEARN
HEY LOVER	MR. WENDAL	SHOOP	

The hidden





Tuareg Khoulene Alamine (center), an imzad teacher sits with a poet (right) on the sand of the Tagmart plateau.

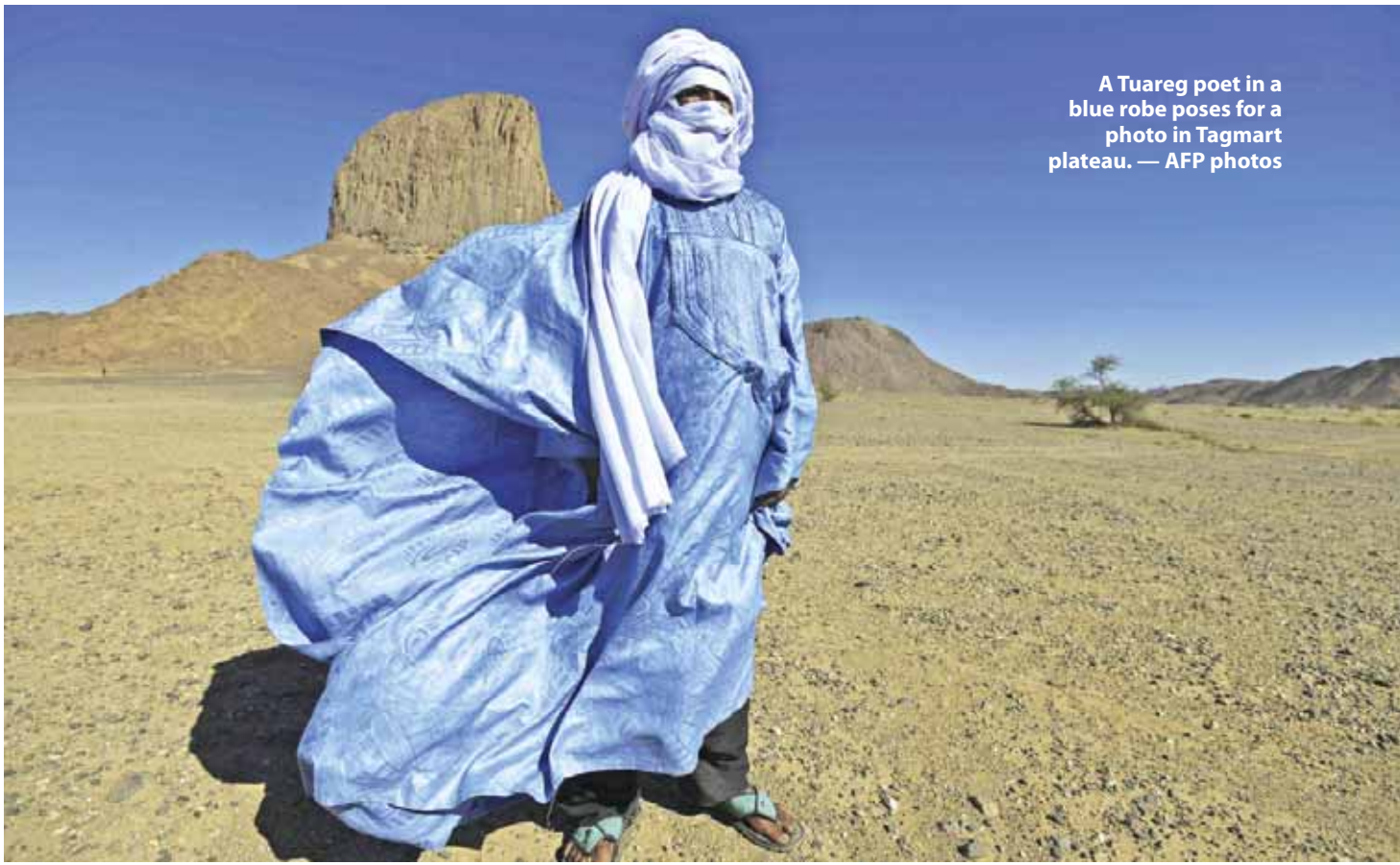


Tuareg Khoulene Alamine (right), an imzad teacher sits with her instrument and a student.



A Tuareg poet in a blue robe poses for a photo.

# Tuareg women-only musical tradition reborn in Algeria



A Tuareg poet in a blue robe poses for a photo in Tagmart plateau. — AFP photos

A single-stringed violin played only by Tuareg women is making a comeback in Algeria as the last of its players come to the rescue of a tradition on the verge of extinction. Women have long played the imzad in the matriarchal Tuareg communities of the Haggar and Tassili mountains of southern Algeria and neighboring desert regions of Niger and Mali. But by the early 2000s, only two women in Algeria still played the unique instrument crafted out of half a gourd shell covered in animal skin, a wooden handle and a string of horse hair.

Young Tuareg women-enticed by modern commercial beats-had lost interest in the instrument, which requires “a certain understanding of time”, German ethnologist Edda Brandes says. But today, thanks to the “Save the Imzad” association, dozens of young women are again learning how to use an arched bow to stroke the imzad’s string in three schools in the vast Haggar region. Men risk a curse if they play the instrument, according to an ancient belief. Khoulene Alamine, who is in her eighties, teaches her art to younger generations in the desert town of Tamanrasset. “I’m happy to be able to pass on this art I’ve been playing since I was 10,” she says. “I hope all girls pick it up... The imzad should be played by young and beautiful girls.”

## Warriors and lovers

The instrument’s discreet, refined lament has traditionally accompanied poetic or popular songs glorifying the feats of past heroes. “There won’t be any music,” warriors would cry after a defeat. On a carpet on the sand of the Tagmart plateau, around 30 kilometers (20 miles) outside Tamanrasset, Alamine sits up straight, holding the imzad over her crossed legs. She plays, her right hand on the bow, her gaze lifted to the

crescent moon that has appeared in the sky. Sitting beside her in the sunset’s red hue, a poet in a long blue robe recites some verses. “The imzad’s sound gives me incredible energy,” Hussein Nekhat says. In Tuareg tradition, the



instrument accompanied courtship meetings called “ahal” that could last long into the night.

Engineer Farida Sellal, who was born in Algiers, witnessed these customs when she was worked as a post office and telecommunications official in Tamanrasset in the 1970s. Her passion for the desert drew her back to the area three decades later. “There were only two women left still playing

the imzad and no more ahal,” she says.

## ‘Heritage of humanity’

When she asked a community leader what had happened, he jokingly replied: “It’s your fault. You brought us the telephone!” In 2003, together they formed the Save the Imzad association. Ten years later, they managed to have the “practices and knowledge linked to the imzad” added to a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity list. Founding member Seddik Khetali travelled from Tamanrasset to plead the instrument’s case at a UN gathering in Azerbaijan.

“I’m the first Tuareg to have spoken in our own language” to the UN cultural agency, he says proudly. The “Home of the Imzad” opened in Tamanrasset, aiming to become a beacon for Tuareg culture. It hosts a recording studio, a dance studio, a stage for performances and a workshop for making the instrument. Inside, imzad maker Cheynoune Zeineb sits cross-legged on a carpet surrounded by several female apprentices. In her fingers, she holds a string of horse hair whose far end is lodged between her toes.

“Making an imzad requires observation,” she says. And patience. It can take several days to make the instrument, whose dried out half of a calabash shell is sometimes picked from the centre’s own garden. A gazelle or goat’s skin is stretched over this sound box and pierced with two sound holes, then decorated with personalized Tuareg motifs. Its handle is made of acacia or oleander wood. Music producer Mehdi Bennacer believes the imzad will now survive, especially with renewed interest worldwide for Tuareg music, such as that of desert blues band Tinariwen. “The search for one’s origins won’t ever end,” he says, and “the sound of the imzad will live on.” — AFP



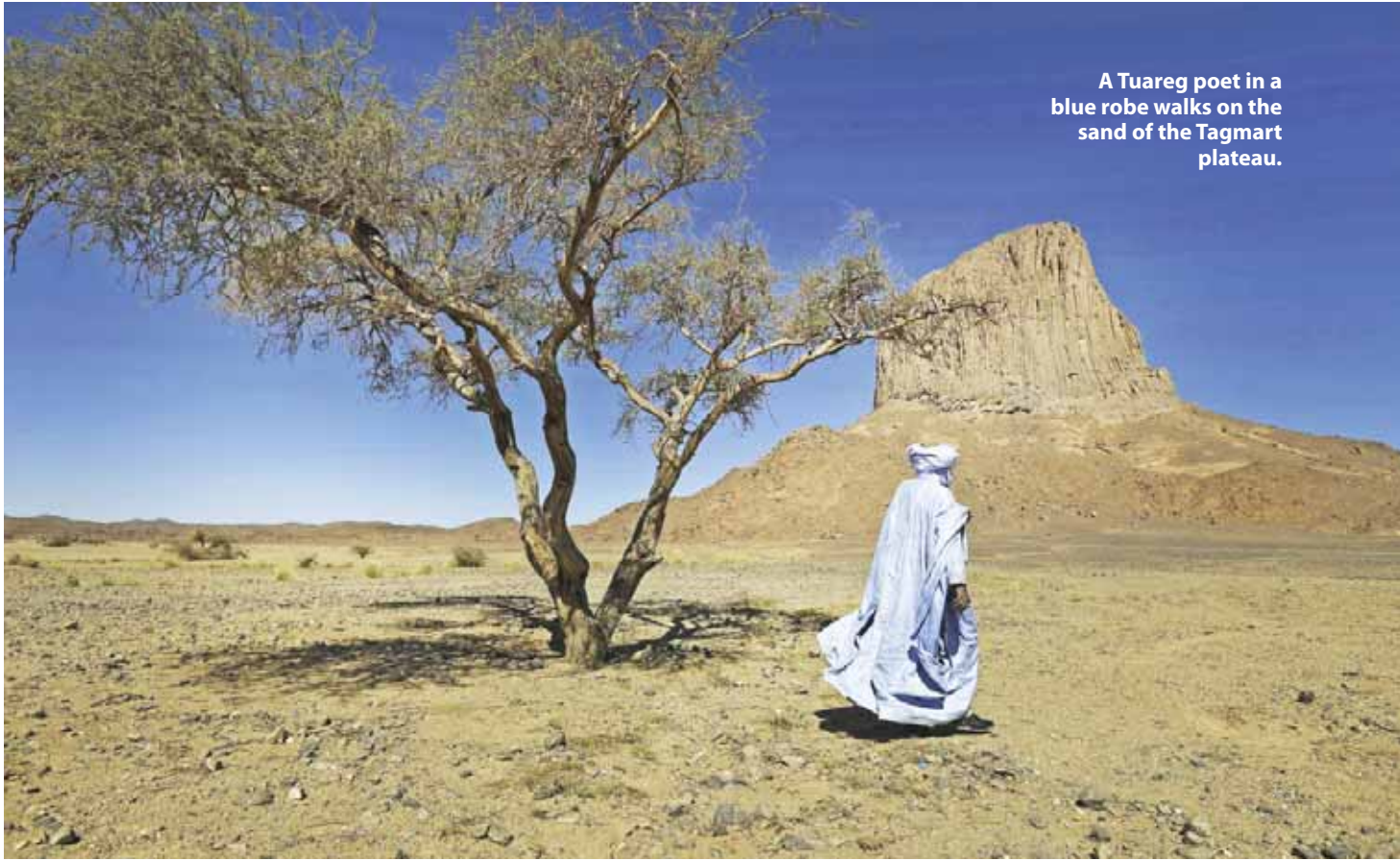
Tuareg women and girls hold imzad instruments as they pose for a photo at the “Home of the Imzad”.



Cheynoune Zeineb , a Tuareg and imzad instrument maker, poses for a picture amid a pile of imzads.



Tuareg women who are imzad instrument makers hold a chord of horse hair while making a new imzad.



A Tuareg poet in a blue robe walks on the sand of the Tagmart plateau.



Tuareg girls hold an imzad instruments.





Actor James Jordan, from left, actress Sara Rodier, actor Jared Harris, actor James LeGros, actress Kristen Stewart, director and writer Kelly Reichardt and actress Lily Gladstone pose at the premiere of 'Certain Women' during the 2016 Sundance Film Festival. — AP

# Sundance film review: 'Certain Women'

Few contemporary filmmakers can do quite as much with quiet as Kelly Reichardt. Superficially empty soundscapes are layered so intricately with the rustle of nature, the brooding of weather and the breathing of preoccupied people that her films come to seem positively noisy to a sympathetic ear. So it is in the marvelous "Certain Women," where the story-telling has a similarly latent impact. Separating the spare narratives of several disparate Montana women—a morally stressed lawyer, a nest-building mother, a lonely ranch hand—waiting indefinitely for their worlds to fall into place, it's a peculiarly riveting examination of the lives lived when even their owners aren't looking.

Crafted with Reichardt's customary calico-textured beauty and expertly performed by such hand-picked ensemble players as Kristen Stewart, Michelle Williams and Laura Dern, this unapologetically open-ended slow burn probably won't convert many viewers to Reichardt's softly-softly sensibility, but it's among her richest, most refined works. Like a number of Reichardt's previous films, "Certain Women" has its roots in the short-story format—one naturally conducive to her flair for teasing larger lives and deeper longings out of passing everyday incidents. Her literary inspiration this time is Montana-based author Maile Meloy, with Reichardt's elegantly apportioned script drawn from her stories "Tome," "Native Sandstone" and "Travis B."

### Gentle joke

The director's chosen title, however, is at once calculatedly vague and mournfully ironic. Read one way, "Certain Women" implies a kind of unnamed randomness to Reichardt's chosen female subjects, as if any number of adjacent women's lives might have been equally worthy of the film's attention. Read another, it's perhaps a gentle joke at the expense of characters for whom certainty is in achingly short supply: It's hardly a spoiler to say that none of the pic's delicate strands hinges on anything like a drastic dramatic decision.

Viewers accustomed to the knotty "Short Cuts" school of multiple short-story adaptation may take a while to acclimatize to the film's patient, clean-edged structure, which opts neither for explicit chaptering nor for

intricate braiding of the three stories in question. Revelation-concerned narrative splicing has become such a familiar feature of the US independent filmmaking scene that it's positively bracing to see Reichardt also acting, with graceful discernment, as her own editor—unfold her mini-dramas one at a time, letting the sometimes faint connections between them emerge with little fanfare, revisiting their principal characters only in the final reels. If Paul Haggis's "Crash" literalized the idea of storytelling as automotive collision, "Certain Women" prefers to let its vehicles pass each other with an acknowledging wave—apt enough for a film in which human contact doesn't come easily

to leads passive emotional complexity to a later section. Focus shifts to a legal case that has become something of a thorn in her side, as construction laborer Fuller (Jared Harris, devastatingly ragged) obstinately pursues an injury claim that a legal technicality prevents him from winning. Taking little heed of her counsel—because she's a woman, Laura concludes with the weariness of experience—he implicates her in a more violent course of action.

### Vintage sandstone

Cut to Gina (Williams), discontentedly wrapping up a rural camping weekend with her husband, Ryan (James Le Gros), and

heartland, Gina's story is the most coolly oblique of the three; what follows is the most bittersweetly open-hearted, as a nameless Native American horse rancher (Lily Gladstone) aimlessly seeks a personal connection at an adult education center. Stumbling by chance into a class on educational law for teachers, she develops an intense but innocent fascination with its young tutor, Beth (Stewart), a socially awkward law graduate who lives many towns over. The two develop a mutually bemused rapport over post-class diner meals, though when Beth abruptly quits the job, the terms of their new, ambiguously platonic friendship become harder to parse.

There are no tidily concrete thematic ties to be found between these slender, piquant slices of life, though all touch on the generalities of human alienation and solitude for which E.M. Forster issued the poetic prescription to "only connect." As with Reichardt's more streamlined miniatures, regional detail accounts for much of the film's lingering resonance, as her characters are molded by (and, in some cases, rail against) the landscape they inhabit. "Certain Women" is the director's fifth film to be set against the pregnant skies and cornbread-colored grasslands of America's Northwest—painted with misty iridescence on 16mm by Reichardt's reliably brilliant cinematographer Christopher Blauvelt—and there's a not-wholly-rueful sense here of indigenous tradition and etiquette passing into history. All the women here, however put-upon, are independent in ways that defy their staid surroundings.

Though this is arguably the most illustrious ensemble Reichardt has ever had to hand, the pic's performance style is as casually organic and democratic as in any of her more scrappily cast early projects. There's complete onscreen parity, for example, between a relative newcomer like Gladstone and a megawatt star like Stewart—both unobtrusively superb—while Williams, in her third collaboration with Reichardt, underplays with terse modesty. Playing most recognizably to a star persona is Dern, if only because said persona has been built on the kind of creased, empathetic decency that makes her a Reichardt natural. — Reuters



Actress Kristen Stewart is interviewed at the premiere of "Certain Women".

ly to the yearning, inward-looking women at its center.

To describe the film's individual segments on paper is not to do them many favors, even when they include such notionally hefty events as an armed hostage situation—as staged by Reichardt, returning to her trademark tender humanism after the icy genre stylings of "Night Moves," surely the lowest-key such standoff in cinematic history. The first story centers on small-town lawyer Laura (Dern), introduced in the postcoital stages of an afternoon tryst with a married man—whose iden-

perma-sullen teenage daughter Guthrie (Sara Rodier). Fatigued by tetchy family life, she pours her efforts into constructing a symbol of idealized domestic unity: a woodland weekend cottage that she intends to build, with preciously modish integrity, entirely from repurposed native materials. Yet this ostensibly noble goal entails a degree of selfish manipulation, as she and Ryan press on doddery family friend (Albert) to sell them the reserve of vintage sandstone on his property.

Drily satirizing the opportunistic exploitation of tradition in the American

## Spike Lee's Michael Jackson doc a tribute to his music

As a young artist, Michael Jackson knew he wanted to be legendary. "I will be magic," he wrote as a teenager, outlining his plans for his career. "I will be better than every great actor roped in one." Jackson's drive to succeed and his striking talent as a singer, dancer and songwriter are the focus of Spike Lee's new documentary, "Michael Jackson's Journey From Motown to Off the Wall," which made its world premiere Sunday at the Sundance Film Festival.

"This film is all about love toward Michael Joseph Jackson," Lee said as he introduced the film, which is dedicated to Jackson's children Prince, Paris and "Bjji" (formerly Blanket), along with family matriarch Katherine Jackson. Beginning with the Jackson 5's earliest songs with Motown Records - featuring a charismatic 9-year-old Michael on lead vocals - the film explores Jackson's growth as an artist and the perfectionist nature that fueled his work ethic.

Archival footage of the Jacksons' performances on "The Ed Sullivan Show," "American Bandstand" and their "Destiny" tour is interspersed with interviews with music industry talents from then and now. Sammy Davis Jr., Gene Kelly, Berry Gordy, Quincy Jones and Questlove, along with contemporary music producers Mark Ronson and Rodney Jerkins, are among dozens of voices in the film. Jackson's brothers Marlon and Jackie also appear on screen, but sisters Janet and LaToya do not.

"Everyone was invited to participate, but we used those who wanted to participate," said Jackson's longtime attorney John Branca, now executor of Jackson's estate and a producer of the film. "Certain (members) of the Jackson family are not quite big fans of (fellow attorney) John and I, but that's fine. We're trying to do right by Michael." This film makes viewers miss Jackson's dynamic dancing and mellifluous voice while deepening their appreciation of his talents and endless efforts to hone them. "I do believe deeply in perfection," Jackson says in a 1976 interview. It captures Jackson's evolution from a breakout child star to a multifaceted adult entertainer determined to transcend barriers of race and genre. Even as a teenager, he dreamed of being able to "translate my music to different countries: Japan, Sweden... even Australia." He took black music to a place where it became human music; Pharrell Williams says in the film. "My music would not be here if it wasn't for his music." Lee goes beyond music, however: Ballerina Misty Copeland credits



Musician Questlove, left, and director/producer Spike Lee pose during the premiere of 'Michael Jackson's Journey From Motown to Off the Wall' during the 2016 Sundance Film Festival. — AP

Jackson for inspiring her love of dance. LA Laker Kobe Bryant says Jackson's approach to his art "impacted everything for me." The late Sidney Lumet, who directed Jackson in the 1978 film "The Wiz," said: "Michael may be the purest talent I've ever seen." The film follows Jackson's career until the release of his groundbreaking 1979 album "Off the Wall," which paved the way for 1982's "Thriller," the best-selling album in history. It doesn't get into Jackson's personal life or any of the legal troubles that would plague him later in life. It's simply a portrait of a man and his music. "Michael Jackson's Journey from Motown to 'Off the Wall'" is set to premiere Feb 5 on Showtime. — AP

## Transgender men find their style, themselves in 'Suited' doc



Director Jason Benjamin, center, poses with producers, Jenni Konner, left, and Lena Dunham for a portrait to promote the film, 'Suited,' at the Toyota Mirai Music Lodge during the Sundance Film Festival. — AP

Derek needed a suit for his wedding. Aiden needed something for his bar mitzvah. Everett wanted a sharp interview outfit. All three found their fit at Bindle & Keep, a custom clothier that specializes in dressing people across the gender spectrum. The New York-based company and its clients are the subject of "Suited," a documentary premiered yesterday at the Sundance Film Festival.

The film introduces viewers to people rarely seen onscreen - transgender men - and shows how finding a suit that highlights their masculinity profoundly affects how they feel and see themselves. Lena Dunham and Jenni Konner produced the film, the third documentary from their Casual Romance production company. It is directed by Jason Benjamin, who also works as the boom-mike operator on Dunham's HBO show, "Girls."

Benjamin was inspired by a newspaper article about the suit-makers, expecting the moment someone put on a perfectly fitted suit for the first time would be a happy one. "In reality," he said, "it turned out to be a much more complex moment that had happiness folded into it." That's what makes "Suited" so much more than a movie about clothes. It's really a story about people, image and gender identity. Benjamin follows his subjects beyond the tailor's office and into the world, exploring the challenges they face as they try to get married, grow up or get jobs.

Being fitted for a suit is an intimate process - especially when one is trying to minimize features that don't fit their self-image. Derek wanted to be sure he would blend in with the other men at his wedding. Everett, an attorney, needed a suit that wouldn't prompt his colleagues to question his gender. Aiden, only 13, was accompanied by his grandmother, who wanted him to feel confident at his bar mitzvah. Dunham said she was moved by the men and their families.

"This movie breaks down certain stereotypes of how a family might react to a person being trans," she said. "It really shows examples of people loving their children, not just in spite of their being trans but because of who they are and because of their bravery." "Suited" is set to air in June on HBO. — AP



From left, actors Kelly Campbell, Emma Greenwell, Xavier Samuel, Kate Beckinsale and Chloe Sevigny pose at the premiere of "Love & Friendship" during the Sundance Film Festival. — AP photos

## Stillman tries Jane Austen in charming 'Love & Friendship'

Whit Stillman, one of our best chroniclers of the modern leisure class, has gone back to the 18th century in "Love & Friendship," an effervescent comedy about a deviously ambitious social climber. The film premiered Saturday night at the Sundance Film Festival. In the film, Stillman's "Last Days of Disco" stars Kate Beckinsale and Chloe Sevigny have traded their early '80s sequins and Lacoste for bustles and petticoats. Beckinsale is Lady Susan Vernon, recently widowed and on the prowl for status, money and comforts, while Sevigny plays a married American all too willing to associate with the notorious Lady Susan.

We enter the story when Lady Susan takes up an extended visit at the estate of her sister-in-law, Mrs Catherine Vernon (Emma Greenwall). There she begins a flirtation with Catherine's younger brother, Reginald De Courcy (Xavier Samuel). No one is particularly keen on the developing relationship between Lady Susan and the young Reginald De Courcy, and that sentiment is especially exaggerated when her neglected and marriage-aged daughter, Frederica (Morfydd Clark), shows up too.

These are only half the players in the game, and it's fun to watch them scheme and spread rumors and make deliciously biting remarks about their supposed friends and family for a brisk 92 minutes. Overall, the film is a charming lark, and a definite departure for Stillman as he evolves here beyond his famously precise, formal language which is usually applied to a more modern setting, whether it be early '80s discos or present day dorm rooms ("Damsels in Distress"). Stillman seems a perfect fit for Victorian comedy and the language and customs of Austen, and it works well, although it does have the effect of burying some of Stillman's distinctiveness. — AP



In this file photo, Mark Wahlberg poses for photographers upon arrival at the premiere of the film "Daddy's Home" in London. — AP photos

## Combs, Wahlberg donating 1 million bottles of water to Flint

A bottled water company owned in part by Sean "Diddy" Combs and Mark Wahlberg is pledging to donate 1 million bottles of water to the residents of Flint, Michigan. AQUAhydrate says it's sending 5,000 cases of water to Flint and will continue to provide bottles to residents until the city's water problems are solved. The company says the water is expected to be delivered Wednesday.

High levels of lead have been detected in Flint's water since officials switched from the Detroit municipal system and began drawing from the Flint River as a cost-saving measure. Wahlberg and Combs first invested and became the face of the Los Angeles-based bottled water company in 2013. Emenim, Wiz Khalifa and Big Sean are among other celebrities who have pledged support and donations to assist Flint's water crisis. — AP



In this file photo, Sean "Diddy" Combs presents the award for best collaboration of the year at the American Music Awards.



# Will Poulter hits Lanvin at finale of Paris menswear season



Models present creations by Lanvin during the men's Fashion Week for the 2016-2017 Fall/Winter collection in Paris. — AP/AFP photos

**Lanvin menswear**

As Lanvin womenswear experiences seismic, identity-changing shifts with the departure of the hugely talented Israeli creative director Alber Elbaz - Lanvin's menswear, under the care of Lucas Ossendrijver, seems to be doing just fine. The Dutch-born designer once again channeled an '80s vibe in a trendy, varied collection full of relaxed, loose-fitting silhouettes. The slight shift in gear this season was Ossendrijver's injection of some color and his exaggeratedly voluminous pants, in the



famed Oxford Bags-style. Shoes in vivid jade green or orange contrasted nicely with his more muted clothes, often defined by multiple layers on coats with flowing shirts. Lanvin is all about romance - even in menswear. There were some wonderful romantic moments - like a long swash-buckling belt or another look that almost evoked the poetry of John Keats with a ringlet hairstyle, loose, timeless red pants and a flowing blue jacket.

**Hermes' high priestess of menswear**

Contemporary yet classical - with a dash of the famed silk neckscarf. That's the tried and tested Hermes moto, as seen in this fall-winter's stylish display that began in color and



ended in black. Designer Veronique Nichanian - who's been called "Hermes' high priestess of menswear" - used pink umber, classic caramel and cream, blue with flashes of turquoise and dove gray to carry the start of the collection, which featured some beautiful, masculine statement jackets. The French designer then threw out the color wheel two-thirds of the way through the 47-piece-collection to introduce a more brooding, slimmer silhouette. Leather - Hermes' niche - was used sexily in sheeny pants, shoes and some perfectly cut zipper jackets. There was no great ground broken here but it was a finely executed show.

**Paul Smith**

Paul Smith baptized the winter



trend for color Sunday in the brightest collection seen this season. The fearless British designer took classic '50s silhouettes - such as suit jackets and coats with exaggeratedly wide shoulders - and injected his own brand of zaniness via an unusually vivid palette. Orange, bright red, vibrant vermilion and green mixed up with off-white, navy and electric blue.

Sometimes it worked. Sometimes it came off a little brash in the 32-piece collection. A classic car coat came in green with a turtleneck in bright coral pink, baggy burgundy pants and a wacky orange belt. Elsewhere, a double-breasted check jacket and creased pants was given a lift with black-and-white speckled sneakers. — AP



Models present creations by Paul Smith.



Models present creations by Hermes.





Models present creations by  
Hermes.



# Versace sexes up haute couture with racy Paris show

Versace got Paris haute couture shows off to a hyper-sexy start with a procession of powerful femme fatales as the big gun designers hit the catwalk yesterday. Donatella Versace presented a series of revealing strappy dresses and short sporty Formula One-influenced combinations that dared women to get into the fast lane. "I think women can be strong and capable of achieving their dreams while being beautiful and elegant," Donatella Versace said later.

"It is a collection dedicated to all the women who follow their own path." The Italian creator, who took over the reins of the high-glamour fashion house from her late brother Gianni, also created an eye-catching line of superhero inspired pieces which seemed to channel Spiderman and the fin de siecle decadence of the artist Aubrey Beardsley's drawings.

## 'My body, my soul'

Her models powered down the catwalk late Sunday to a rap of "my body, my soul", the defi-



ant message being that I will wear what I want to make me feel good and in control. "I move to the beat of my own drum," another lyric declared, the implication being no one should tell women what to wear and what not to wear. The emphasis was on legs with short embroidered dresses and long ball robes cut

away at the front to show off high-heeled pins. This take-no-prisoners feminist sexiness came into its own in power suits and gowns cut with away sections tied together with stringy not-quite-bondage cords.

The Albanian-born British pop star Rita Ora caused a stir when she turned up on the front

row wearing an ultra-sexy orange version of one, while the American model Gigi Hadid also turned heads with a see-through dress, another feature of the collection.

## Leaderless Dior

But the big talking point of the four days of the elite haute couture shows is how France's Christian Dior will cope without designer Raf Simons. The Belgian quit the brand in October for "personal reasons", and with little time to find a replacement, the designers he left behind in the studio have put together the collection themselves. All will be revealed when Dior presents its spring summer creations at the Rodin museum in the French capital. Dior boss Sidney Toledano had earlier told AFP that he was taking his time because find-

ing a successor was like "bringing someone into your family". With its handmade pieces solely within the price range of the world's richest women, haute couture exists only in Paris and is regarded as the pinnacle of fashion. The designation is protected by French law and attributed exclusively by the ministry of industry to selected houses whose clothes are tailored to each client.

Only 14 fashion houses have the right to call themselves haute couture-Chanel, Christian Dior, Givenchy, Jean Paul Gaultier, Maison Margiela, Giambattista Valli, Franck Sorbier, Adeline Andre, Alexandre Vauthier, Alexis Mabille, Bouchra Jarrar, Maurizio Galante and Stephane Rolland. Another 20 are regarded as "guest members" of the elite club. — AFP



Models present creations by Thom Browne.



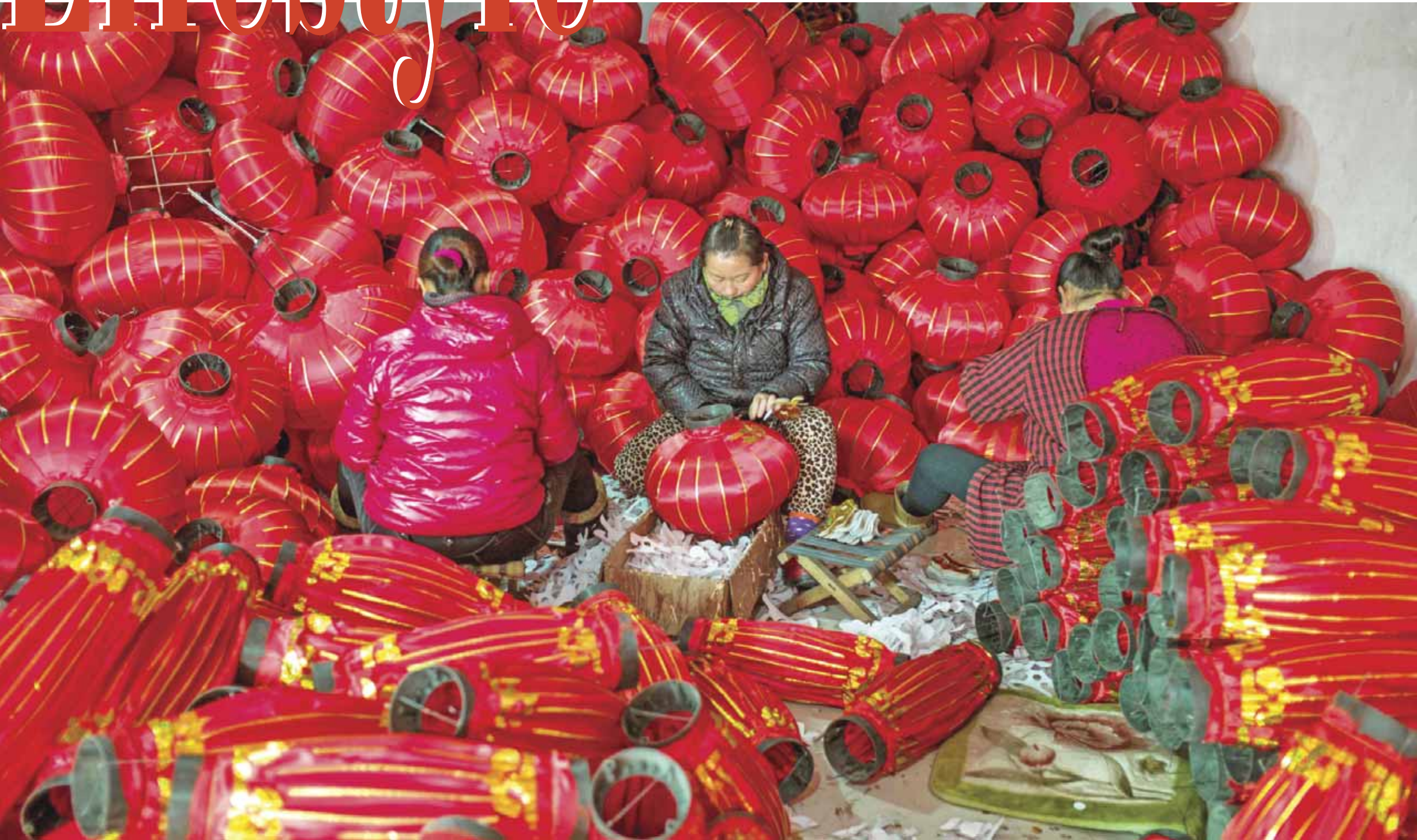


Models present creations for Schiaparelli during the 2016-2017 spring/summer Haute Couture collection fashion presentation.



Models present creations for Dice Kayek.





In this picture taken on January 22, 2016, workers make red lanterns at a factory in the village of Tuntou, in Hebei province southwest of Beijing, for the upcoming Lunar New Year celebrations on February 8. For the past two months, the town has been churning out the pumpkin-shaped lamps in preparation for the biggest holiday of the year in the world's most populous country. Known as the "Spring Festival" in China, the holiday, which falls on February 8 on this occasion, compares in importance to Christmas in the West, and marks a time when for far-flung family members return home for merriment and meals - according to tradition, they must be back by midnight on the eve of the new year. — AFP

# Heroine's welcome home for Philippines' Miss Universe

## Street artist Banksy takes swipe at France on migrant crisis



A new artwork by British artist Banksy opposite the French Embassy, in London, yesterday. — AP

The street artist Banksy has taken a swipe at French authorities for their handling of the migrant crisis in Calais, placing a drawing of the child featured on posters for the musical "Les Miserables" surrounded by tear gas. The elusive street artist placed the mural near the French Embassy in London. His publicist, Jo Brooks, confirmed yesterday that the work was genuine.

The work contains an interactive image that links to a video that shows police using tear gas in a Calais raid. It's not the street artist's first criticism of France. Last month, he tried to underscore the potential of migrants by depicting the late Steve Jobs - whose biological father was from Syria - carrying a black garbage bag and an early model of the Macintosh computer. — AP

Confetti rained down as tens of thousands of shrieking fans paralysed traffic in the Philippine capital yesterday to welcome home the newly crowned Miss Universe, Pia Alonzo Wurtzbach. The 26-year-old model, looking regal in a flowing blue-green gown, waved the Philippine flag while perched on a float designed in the fashion of the competition winner's diamond and sapphire crown that she was wearing. The adoring crowd, many of whom stepped out of their offices and schools, jammed Manila's streets and snapped photos of only the third Filipina to win the Miss Universe title.

Many others screamed and waved at Wurtzbach from the windows of their high-rise offices as busloads of policemen were deployed to secure the homecoming parade. "Pia's victory in Miss Universe made us proud to be Filipino," said 37-year-old housewife Celia Nobleza, who watched the parade carrying her one-year-old daughter. "My dream is for her to become Miss Universe someday. It will surely open many doors for her." Beauty pageants are incredibly popular in the nation of 100 million people, who seek heroes partly to uplift their spirits from crushing poverty, frequent natural disasters and crippling corruption.

Such frenzied homecoming parades have in recent years been seen only for eight-time world boxing champion Manny Pacquiao, who will retire after one last fight in April to pursue a political career. The New York-based Miss Universe pageant is particularly popular in the Philippines, a former US colony. "I hope I can be an inspiration to all of you, not to give up and to always keep studying and

respect your parents and treat each other fairly," Wurtzbach said at a ceremony before the parade.

### Uplifting the nation

Wurtzbach fan Miguelito Herrera, 47, travelled four hours by bus from Cabanatuan City, a commercial center north of Manila, to join yesterday's parade. Herrera credited his love of beauty pageants with helping him overcome bouts of depression after he was laid off from his job as a soda salesman in 2003, and after his mother died from heatstroke in 2013. Being unemployed, Herrera said he was too broke to see a psychologist. "When I see beauty queens, the feeling is so uplifting. It's like we

can endure so much, so many problems. They inspire a lot of people," Herrera told AFP, wearing a white shirt with Wurtzbach's picture printed on it.

Like many other Filipinas who have been successful in international pageants, the Philippine-German Wurtzbach is poised for a successful career in entertainment. She told AFP in an interview on Sunday she had her eyes set on a Hollywood career. "I want to be the Filipina Bond girl," said Wurtzbach, who was a small-time television actress in the Philippines before her breakthrough moment. Wurtzbach was crowned Miss Universe in Las Vegas last month following an epic blunder that played out to an esti-



Miss Universe Pia Alonzo Wurtzbach waves a Philippine flag during her victory homecoming parade.

mated one billion people watching on television around the world.

The pageant host, American comedian Steve Harvey, mistakenly announced Colombian Ariadna Gutierrez as Miss Universe and then corrected himself minutes later. The outgoing Miss Universe, Paulina Vega, took the crown from her humiliated and sobbing compatriot and placed it on Wurtzbach's head. Wurtzbach told AFP on Sunday she would use her new high-profile platform to raise awareness about HIV, especially in her home country where infections are rising. Her week-long homecoming itinerary also includes courtesy calls on parliament and on President Benigno Aquino, a 55-year-old bachelor whom she was rumored to have dated briefly. — AFP



Confetti rain on newly crowned Miss Universe Pia Alonzo Wurtzbach during a victory yesterday. — AP/AFP photos



Police (bottom right and left) hold back fans as thousands of people turn out to see Miss Universe Pia Alonzo Wurtzbach.