

Alghanim employees spread financial literacy among students



UK plans £344m expansion for London City Airport



Farewell Philae: Earth severs link with silent comet probe



Cain hits better than he pitches as Giants beat Reds 9-7



MPs DEMAND IRAN APOLOGY FOR OFFENDING HH THE AMIR

DASHTI JAILED FOR 14 YEARS, SIX MONTHS IN ABSENTIA



Min 30°
Max 47°
High Tide 05:31 & 18:50
Low Tide 12:29

SAUDIS, KUWAIT FILE COMPLAINT AT UN AGAINST IRAN

NEW YORK: Saudi Arabia and Kuwait late on Tuesday presented a complaint to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon regarding repeated transgressions and assaults committed by Iranian military boats over the waters of the submerged area adjacent to the area divided between Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. The permanent missions of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to the UN, in the complaint, informed Ban of the Iranian assaults over the waters of the Divided Submerged Area, on which Saudi Arabia and Kuwait solely have exclusive sovereign rights to explore and benefit from its natural wealth.

According to the document, the latest incident of these infringements was committed by one vessel and two armed speedboats displaying the Iranian flag. Each boat had three armed individuals onboard, as this infringement took place at 13:35 on Wednesday, April 20, 2016, while another infringement of an Iranian Hendijan 1401 vessel took place at 07:32 on Thursday, April 21, 2016.

These two vessels and two boats approached the Al-Dorra well No. 3 (D3) in the Al-Dorra field (coordinates 63 58 28 North, 16 06 49 East) existing inside

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IS BOMBING KILLS 44 IN SYRIAN CITY



QAMISHLI, Syria: Residents gather at the site of a bomb attack in this northeastern city yesterday. — AFP (See Page 13)

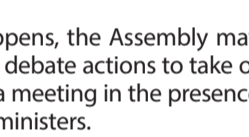
By B Izzak

KUWAIT: A number of MPs yesterday strongly criticized Iran over remarks aired by Fars news agency deemed insulting to HH the Amir, who a day earlier criticized Iran in a speech at the Arab summit. MP Abdullah Al-Turajji said the government must summon the Iranian ambassador to officially protest the abusive statements by the Iranian news agency and demand an official apology.

He said that if Iran does not send an apology, the government should recall the Kuwaiti ambassador from Tehran and take other diplomatic measures, especially since the insult was directed at the head of state. Turajji said the National Assembly will not accept Iran's continuous interference in Kuwait's internal affairs and is expecting an urgent move by the government. If nothing happens, the Assembly may call for an emergency session to debate actions to take or the Assembly bureau may hold a meeting in the presence of the prime minister and other ministers.

MP Mohammad Al-Jabri called on the government to issue a clear response against those who undermine the Amir. MP Ahmad Al-Azemi also strongly condemned Iran for its abuse of HH the Amir and insisted that Kuwait should not accept Iran's interference in its internal affairs and should reject Iran's terror acts.

Abdulhameed Dashti



Continued on Page 13

GOVT ACCEPTS PLAN TO IMPOSE HEALTH INSURANCE ON VISITORS

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: MP Khalil Al-Saleh said his proposal to impose fees for health services presented to expats who come to the country on a visit visa, that he submitted at the start of the last parliamentary term, has been accepted by the government although it was opposed by the foreign ministry when it was discussed at the parliamentary health committee on May 23, 2016.

He said the government was convinced that the proposal is correct and a first step towards reducing the pressure on government hospitals and stop medicine

wastage. Saleh said that imposing a comprehensive health policy for visitors to Kuwait will guarantee lesser squandering and preserve public funds, besides limiting the chaos in presenting treatment and activating the role of the private sector.

He said the proposal commits the sponsor who applies for a visa for an expat to attach a health policy, and based on that, the visitor receives health service in private hospitals while in the country. He said his proposal is similar to what is available in the region, stipulating that those who wish to visit to produce a health insurance policy to receive the service free of charge.



Ford Motor Company has terminated its dealership agreement with Arabian Motors Group WLL for the Ford and Lincoln brands in Kuwait effective as of 27 July 2016.

After this date, Arabian Motors Group WLL no longer serves as an authorized dealer for the Ford and Lincoln brands in Kuwait.



CLINTON MAKES HISTORY WITH NOMINATION FOR PRESIDENT

OBAMA STEPS UP TO BAT FOR EX-RIVAL

SCIENTIFIC CENTER CEO MUTAWA DIES

KUWAIT: Kuwait Scientific Center, one of the bodies of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences, announced the death of its CEO and Chairman Mijbel Suleiman Al-Mutawa yesterday following a sudden heart attack. He was 62 years old. The Scientific Center's Public Relations and Marketing Manager Nawaf Al-Rudaini said the center was saddened by the death of Mutawa, especially since he was at work on Tuesday with his usual vibrancy.



Mijbel Al-Mutawa

Rudaini said Mutawa, who was head of the center since its establishment in 2000, was known for his politeness and encouraging Kuwaiti youth in order to create a generation able to take over future responsibilities and enhance the scientific and knowledge level in Kuwait. He said efforts of Mutawa and his outstanding administrative skill enabled the center to cover its operating expenses from its own revenues, to be the only center of its kind in the world to make this achievement. He added the Scientific Center did not only place itself on the map of Kuwait and the Middle East, but it also left a mark on the world map as an advanced scientific center during the reign of Mutawa. — KUNA

PHILADELPHIA: US President Barack Obama was to step onto the Democratic convention stage yesterday to champion former political foe Hillary Clinton, defend his own legacy and bury Donald Trump's chances of reaching the White House. Clinton on Tuesday became the first woman to win the presidential nomination of a major US political party, teeing up the November showdown with Republican Trump. Democrats had "put the biggest crack" yet in the glass ceiling for women, she said in a video message to the convention.

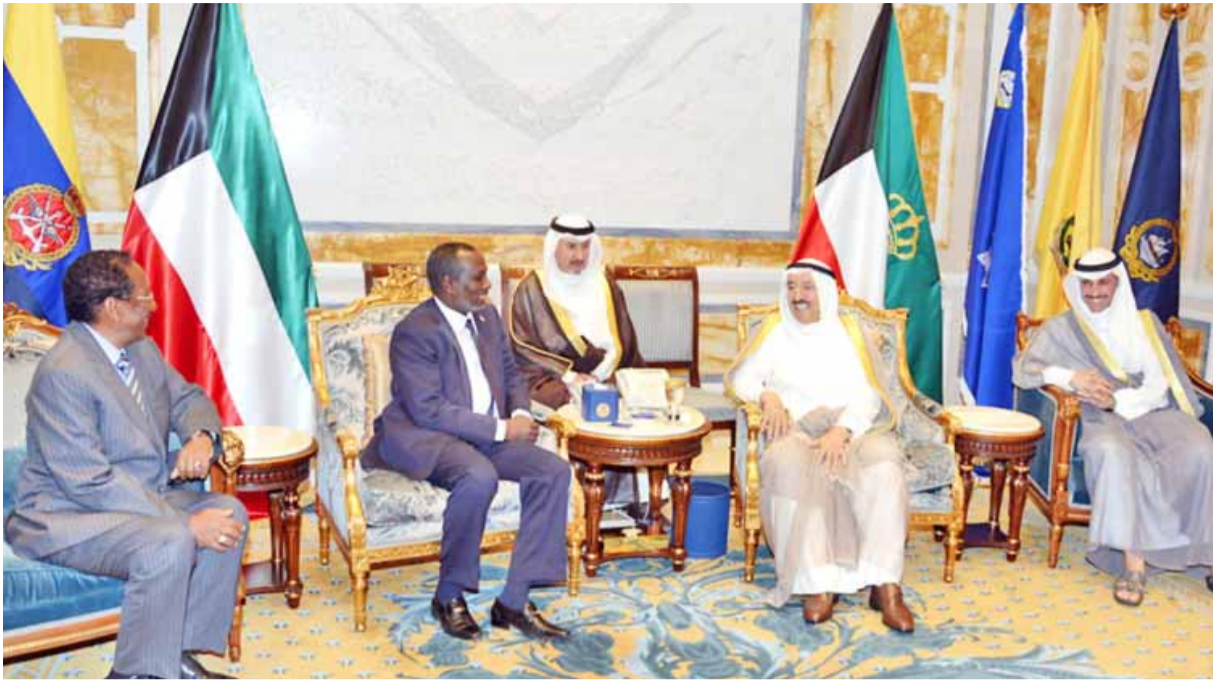
But Trump launched a pre-emptive attack at an incendiary press conference, contemptuously putting down Obama as a "disaster" and making a provocative call for Russia to hack Clinton's email. It came only hours before Obama was to take the stage at the Democratic National Convention to make the case that America's first black president should be followed by its first female president.

Delegates earlier heard a deeply personal testimonial from former president Bill Clinton, who described a great friend, wife and mother who suffers the slings and arrows of politics to be "the best darn change-maker" Americans could hope for. The current commander-in-chief was likely to offer a harder edge. Expect Obama to "focus on how secretary Clinton has the judgment, the toughness, and the intellect to succeed him in the Oval Office," said White House spokesman Eric Schultz.

In the twilight of his second term, Obama faces ever-dwindling opportunities to address the nation, mold his legacy and influence the 2016 race. But yesterday, the 44th president had a prime-time chance when he appeared before thousands of delegates in Philadelphia and tens of millions of viewers at home. The White House said Obama has been working on his speech for weeks. Yet this touchstone presidential moment has been a decade or more in the making. The address bookends Obama's career-launching address to the Democratic convention in 2004, his contentious 2008 primary battle with Clinton and his eight years in office.

Aides said Obama was to make a familiar case for what has been achieved during his two terms, highlighting America's recovery from the Great Recession.

Continued on Page 13



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Djibouti's National Assembly Speaker Mohamed Ali Houmed, in presence of Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Al-Ghanem.



Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Djibouti's National Assembly Speaker Mohamed Ali Houmed. — Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos

AMIR MEETS DJIBOUTIAN LAWMAKER

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Al-Ghanem who was accompanied by visiting Djibouti's National Assembly Speaker Mohamed Ali

Houmed and the accompanying delegation. The meeting was attended by Amiri Diwan Advisor Mohammad Daifallah Sharar and head of the honorary delegation MP Ahmad Lari. The visiting official had earlier met Acting Prime Minister and Foreign

Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah as well. Earlier yesterday, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Ghanem and Sheikh

Sabah Al-Khaled, while His Highness the Crown Prince met Ghanem, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled and Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister and Acting Defense Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. — KUNA

KUWAIT RANKED 34TH IN GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS INDEX: MINISTER

KUWAIT: The State of Kuwait has won the 34th place of the Global Competitiveness Index, said Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa. In a statement on Tuesday, the minister added that Kuwait made progress after moving from the 40th place to the 34th in the competitiveness rankings, referring to an international praise of Kuwait's improvement in education system.



Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa

that the Ministers' Council has assigned Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA), in collaboration with General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development, and Kuwait National Competitiveness Committee, to reach unified perceptions on competitiveness reports and improve business environment in the country. He underlined the importance of taking part in international evaluations constantly to know strengths and weaknesses so as to improve education process and meet requirements as well as cooperate with international institutions and organizations working in this field.

He noted that the report of the Global Competitiveness Index 2015/16 is an annual assessment of the factors which contribute to enhancing production and development in the economies of the countries in the world.

The result of index is a comprehensive reading which has links to many institutions, he said, indicating that the ministry's responsibility is to know factors behind the decline in the quality of education through taking a number of measures to improve education in Kuwait. He noted

and meet requirements as well as cooperate with international institutions and organizations working in this field.

He affirmed the importance of benefiting from practical experiments of Arab and foreign countries in the field of TQM in raising educational system efficiency and its quality in accordance with the report's recommendations. — KUNA



Alghanim Industries employees volunteering at AAG.

ALGHANIM INDUSTRIES EMPLOYEES SPREAD FINANCIAL LITERACY AMONG 4,806 STUDENTS THROUGH INJAZ-KUWAIT PROGRAMS

KUWAIT: With the end of the 2015/2016 school year, Alghanim Industries, one of the largest private companies in the region, announced the number of its employees who volunteered in the different programs of INJAZ-Kuwait. Alghanim Industries was the biggest contributor of volunteers for INJAZ-Kuwait this year, with 263 employees volunteering 1,382 hours of their time to work with students across different programs offered by INJAZ-Kuwait, in which 4,806 students participated from middle school, high school, and university levels.

With this contribution, Alghanim Industries has more than doubled its goal of equipping 2,000 students per school year with the necessary skills that will directly improve their career prospects, following the commitment made by the CEO of Alghanim Industries, and the Chairman of INJAZ-Kuwait, Omar Kutayba Alghanim. The World Economic Forum's Regional Business Council for MENA, which was chaired by Alghanim, invited business leaders and organizations to join a collaborative effort to making 100,000 youth job-ready by 2017. Part of the New Vision for Arab Employment Initiative, partner companies will introduce incremental corporate initiatives for skill development, fostering entrepreneurship and connecting talent to markets. Alghanim Industries was one of nine founding partners of the initiative.



Alghanim Industries CEO Omar Kutayba Alghanim



INJAZ-Kuwait CEO Rana Al-Nibari

countries, increases our responsibility as a leading company in the region. We value the role education plays in developing the economy, and in finding creative solutions for the challenges we face today. Alghanim Industries is proud to be one of the largest supporters of INJAZ-Kuwait, an organization that has been spreading financial literacy among school and university students for years."

Kuwait's future

CEO of INJAZ-Kuwait, Rana Al-Nibari said: "We at INJAZ-Kuwait appreciate the continuous participation and support of our partners in the private. It reaffirms INJAZ's stance in investing in Kuwait's future by spreading financial literacy and educating the country's youth in entrepreneurial and business culture. Alghanim Industries is a perfect example of this construc-

tive partnership, where it exerts all effort to support us and encourages all of its employees to volunteer with us to guide and educate the students. We are pleased by our relationship with Alghanim Industries, and look forward to having more of these fruitful partnerships with other companies in the private sector."

INJAZ-Kuwait is a nonprofit organization committed to preparing and empowering youth in Kuwait to succeed in the global economy. INJAZ - Kuwait provides K-12 students with hands-on learning in entrepreneurship, work readiness, and financial literacy. Alghanim Industries supports its efforts to provide Kuwait's youth with the skills they need to build successful careers in the future. For the past five years, Alghanim Industries employees have contributed the most volunteers relative to other companies supporting INJAZ-Kuwait.

Semester	First	Second	Total
Number of Volunteers	111	152	263
Number of Students Participated	1,239	3,567	4,806
Number of Hours Volunteered	580	802	1,382

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY ALLOCATES EIGHT SEATS FOR KUWAITI STUDENTS

AMBASSADOR, GOVERNOR DISCUSS INVESTMENTS

CANBERRA: Western Sydney University has allocated eight seats in human medicine major yearly to Kuwaiti students, head of the Kuwait Cultural Office in Australia Dr Fahad Al-Ajmi announced yesterday.

Ajmi met with the university president Barney Glover and other officials where they signed the agreement to assign eight seats for Kuwaiti students starting from this year until five years, the office said in a statement. Ajmi praised the partnership between the cultural office and the university especially that this number of students is unprecedented compared with foreign students. Meanwhile, Glover expressed happiness for the strengthening of relations between the office and the university, expressing the university's keenness to support the Kuwaiti students' career while they are pursuing their education there. Western Sydney University, is an Australian multi-campus university. It was founded in 1989, and is currently ranked among the top 400 in the world in the 2014 QS World University Rankings and 19th in Australia in 2015.

Investments

In other news, Kuwait's oil and food investments in Western Australia were the focus of talks Kuwait's Ambassador Najib Abdulrahman Al-Bader discussed with Kerry Sanderson, the region's governor. Following the meeting with Sanderson at the presidential palace, Al-Bader said that it was part of the efforts to promote bilateral ties in all fields, according to a press release by the Kuwaiti embassy. He added that he had conveyed greetings of the Kuwaiti leadership to

the Western Australian Governor. During the meeting, Sanderson reiterated keenness on boosting ties with Kuwait, for mutual benefit. The press release said the two sides had addressed various issues of common concern, focusing on the Kuwaiti oil and food investments in the region.

Bader noted that Kuwait is among Australia's top 20 trade partners. The envoy stressed the importance of the Western Australian city of Perth for Kuwait, mainly for investments reasons. The Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUFPEC) has various activities there.

In addition, the Livestock Shipping Services company is based in the city, Bader said, noting that Kuwait tops the list of Middle Eastern importers of Australian sheep, according to Australian official data. Moreover, there are 170 Kuwaitis studying engineering in Perth.

Bolstering ties

Separately, Bader and the Speaker of the Western Australian Legislative Assembly Michael Sutherland held a meeting in the City of Perth, discussing means to bolster ties. According to a statement by the Kuwaiti embassy, the two officials touched on issues of regional and international importance.

Ambassador Bader conveyed greetings of Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem to the Australian lawmaker. Meanwhile, Sutherland expressed Australia's utter commitment to develop relations with Kuwait. Sutherland took Ambassador Bader on a tour of the historical building of the Western Australia Legislative Assembly. — KUNA

Spirit of volunteerism

Commenting on this achievement, Omar Kutayba Alghanim said: "I am proud of Alghanim Industries' employees and their spirit of volunteerism that helped us achieve these great results. With the help of our employees, we were able to spread financial literacy to 4,806 students from different educational levels and we aim to continue our contributions through volunteering during the next school year."

He added: "Our support stems from our awareness of the challenges we face in the region. Youth unemployment rates and an education gap, resulting from wars in Middle Eastern



CANBERRA: Head of Kuwait Cultural Office in Australia Dr Fahad Al-Ajmi (right) is seen during the signing ceremony. — KUNA

KUWAIT UNIVERSITY TO OPEN 13 CLINICS

KUWAIT: The Kuwait University (KU) is planning to open 13 clinics at its many locations to offer medical services to students and the academic community in general. The University Secretary General Dr Mohammad Abdulatif Al-Fares made the statement in a

press release on yesterday. This is part of a strategy to provide requirements of public and preventive safety in the university, making it easier for ambulances to reach destination in case of emergency, he added.

The clinic will offer first aid assistance and

services, Fares said. He referred cooperation and the Ministry of Health saying that an ambulance station has been opened at the university in Khalda, as a first stage. Other ones will follow in affiliate buildings in Kaifan and Shuwaikh. — KUNA

NEW MEDICINE HIGHLY EFFECTIVE AGAINST VIRAL HEPATITIS: MOH

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Health announced yesterday the use of a new immunity medicine for patients suffering from viral hepatitis with a 99 percent favorable response to treatment. The new medicine is being administered to 300 Kuwaiti patients with hepatitis C, said Dr Ahmad Al-Fadhli, a specialist in liver disease and Gastroenterology at the ministry, in a statement issued by the ministry. He urged Kuwaiti patients with hepatitis C to seek the advice of their health providers to determine if they could be suitable to be treated with the new medicine. Kuwait is the first country regionally and the



Dr Ahmad Al-Fadhli

sixth internationally to use this new medicine for patients with viral hepatitis.

In a related notion, the ministry is making appropriate plans to launch an awareness health campaign today on the disease of viral hepatitis, in time for celebrating World Hepatitis Day (July 28). The campaign will involve airing messages on the ministry's YouTube channel, social network sites, and through SMS. There will also be a panel discussion about viral hepatitis tomorrow at the Shaab Al-Bahri medical center focusing on wiping out this disease by 2030. — KUNA

AL-AHMADI REFINERY'S GAS PROJECT PASSES INSPECTIONS

KUWAIT: A project to build a new Tail Gas Treatment system in Al-Ahmadi refinery at a cost of more than KD 15 million has passed all inspection tests, Deputy Acting Director General of Al-Ahmadi refinery Fahad Al-Daihani said yesterday.

One of the refinery's key accomplishments this year is to bring that project to fruition, Al-Daihani noted during the 10th meeting of Al-Ahmadi refinery employees, saying that one of the factories affiliated with Al-Ahmadi refinery has ramped up its production from 40 thousand barrels daily

to 43 thousand barrels. Moreover, he also pointed out that work on a number of projects dealing with gas production and storage in the refinery is to start soon.

Meanwhile, engineer Shujaa Al-Ajmi said that the Tail Gas Treatment system is amongst the most pivotal environmental projects to be completed this year, adding that new gas production lines are being studied. The annual meeting brings together all employees and engineers of Al-Ahmadi refinery to address any concerns or issues they may have. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah heads the fifth meeting of the Public Authority for Youth. — KUNA

SHEIKH SALMAN ATTRIBUTES YOUTH STRATEGY TO LEADERSHIP SUPPORT

KUWAIT: Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah yesterday conveyed his gratitude for the country's leadership for their support of the youth, calling them the future of the nation.

Sheikh Salman, who is presiding over the fifth meeting of the Public Authority for Youth (PAY), said that support from the country's leadership will bolster PAY's vision and plans for the youth. He also announced that PAY's new strategy will be unveiled on August 11, coinciding with 'International Youth Day.' Moreover, he noted

that the meeting yielded the final draft of a vision that aims to cater to the needs of the youth, helping them to better contribute to the development and growth of the nation.

Meanwhile, PAY General Manager Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi noted that "the incessant support given to us by the country's leadership has facilitated the works of PAY and the implementation of this new strategy."

Furthermore, Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs official Waleed Al-Ammar said that the new strategy aims to instill national values in youth, in addition to various virtues, as he

underscored the need for youth to eschew all forms of violence and extremism.

In addition, PAY official Jassim Al-Rubayan noted that the new strategy will be carried out in conjunction with state institutions and government bodies, adding that the youth were the ones who forged this strategy by way of voicing their opinions in a number of workshops and seminars held over the years. The meeting, which was attended by officials from across the country's government spectrum, highlighted the fact that support of the youth is needed to ensure a more prosperous and better tomorrow. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Kuwait's Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Mohammad Khaled Al-Khoder meets the Peninsula Shield Forces (PSF) Commander Major-General Hassan bin Hamza Al-Shehri. — KUNA

CHIEF OF STAFF, PENINSULA SHIELD FORCES COMMANDER DISCUSS COOPERATION

KUWAIT: Military cooperation featured high on the agenda of talks held yesterday between Kuwait's Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Mohammad Khaled Al-Khoder and the Peninsula Shield Forces (PSF) Commander Major-General Hassan bin Hamza Al-Shehri.

During the meeting with the PSF delegation, Khoder lauded the deep-rooted ties among the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC),

and keenness to promote them, the Ministry of Defense Directorate of Moral Guidance and Public Relations said in a press release.

They also discussed issues of common concern. The meeting was attended by Deputy Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Sheikh Abdullah Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah, and Army Commander Major General Sheikh Khalid Al-Saleh Al-Sabah. — KUNA

MUNICIPALITY CONTINUES ITS INTENSIVE INSPECTION CAMPAIGNS

By Meshaal Al-Enezi and agencies

KUWAIT: Kuwait Municipality confirmed yesterday it was continuing its intensive inspection campaigns for various activities in the governorates under the slogan 'Your Health Matters' which include food, restaurants, cooperative societies, markets and malls.

The municipality said in a press statement that the irregularities removal department of the capital governorate in coordinating with Public Hygiene and Road Works Department carried out a wide-scale inspection campaign which resulted in lifting and removing 45 irregularities that included metal barriers, plastic cones and electronic gates. The emergency team in the Ahmadi Municipality also carried out a wide-scale inspection campaign in Fahaheel industrial zones, including shops, restaurants and advertising

shops, the statement added. The statement asserted keenness of the regulatory bodies to monitor any violation and apply the law on all violators.

In other news, Kuwait Municipality released a statement in response to several complaints about speed bumps' painting, in which it clarified that putting paintings on speed bumps is not its responsibility, adding that this job calls under other ministries. The Municipal Council had received many complaints on that regard, which made some members send questions to the executive apparatus at the municipality.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Municipality's legal and technical teams held meetings with fines' collecting team at the Public Prosecution. The two sides discussed the mechanism to implement a project that helps enforce final court orders pertaining with municipality-related cases.



KUWAIT: These handout photos released by the Interior Ministry yesterday show a number of people arrested during a police crackdown in Salmiya.

SCORES ARRESTED IN SALMIYA CRACKDOWN

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Hawally police carried out a security campaign in Salmiya during which 71 wanted persons and violators were arrested. Police

enquired about 687 persons, 10 were arrested for suspicion of having drugs, 10 were wanted for civil cases, five had expired residency permits, 16 others were in violation of residency permits, five were absconding and 25 did not carry their IDs.

Also, 43 traffic citations were issued, two vehicles were impounded and two others were caught. Separately, Hawally firemen put out a fire that broke out in a vehicle in Jabriya co-op society's parking lot. No injuries were reported.



A fireman puts out a fire in a car in Jabriya yesterday.



KUWAIT TACKLES CLIMATE CHANGE AT APA STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING

ISLAMABAD: A Kuwaiti delegation discussed measures to control climate change in a meeting with Chairman Senate of Pakistan Raza Rabbani yesterday. The meeting was held on the sidelines of a two-day Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) meeting of standing committee on Economic and Sustainable Development Affairs in Pakistan's federal capital Islamabad.

In an interview after the meeting, the Kuwait delegation head MP Hmoud Mohammad Al-Hamdan told that matters of mutual interest were discussed during the meeting. "We thanked the Senate of Pakistan for hosting the meeting and expressed appreciation to their efforts for regional cooperation in Asia," said Hamdan.

The MP further said we discussed the issue of climate change and environmental issues that have a negative impact on the population. The Chairman Senate extended his greetings to the Emir of Kuwait, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. He extended an invitation to the Speaker of the state of Kuwait, Marzouq Ali al-Ghanem to visit Pakistan.

Hamdan said that "Pakistan is an important Muslim country that has close ties to the Gulf states and we want to have benefits from its experiences in number of fields including technology and nuclear science." Kuwaiti MP Dr Khalil Abdullah Apple, who is also a member of Kuwait

delegation, told KUNA that Kuwait is an active member of APA and attends all its meetings. During the current session of the Standing Committee meeting, many countries have come up with number of ideas to increase cooperation among the Asian states. Dr Khalil Abdullah stressed

that APA should develop a mechanism to bind its member states to ensure the implementation of the proposals approved by APA. He expressed his hopes that APA would follow a procedure to implement the resolutions passed by the association to increase its significance. — KUNA



ISLAMABAD: The Kuwaiti delegation meets with Chairman Senate of Pakistan Raza Rabbani. — KUNA

ILLEGAL RESIDENTS' SITUATION IN KUWAIT IMPROVING: OFFICIAL

KUWAIT: The situation of illegal residents in Kuwait is improving and the government will look into further measures to better serve this sector of society, an official said yesterday.

In a speech to the conference on the UN Convention against Torture in Geneva, Head of the status adjustment department in the Central Apparatus for Illegal Residents Affairs Colonel Mohammad Al-Wohaib said that the apparatus was further working on improving the situation of stateless people, noting that his country was considering granting the citizenship to a number of illegal residents, according to a press release by the Apparatus.

On the other hand, efforts carried out by the apparatus had resulted in some 8,000 illegal residents revealing their original citizenships, said the official, adding that those individuals were also given facilities to improve their living standards in Kuwait.

He noted that there was a special law which enabled children of Kuwaiti mothers to acquire citizenship, adding that on the legislative level, a draft law had been prepared to grant around 4,000 people the Kuwaiti citizenship this year. Kuwait is keen on boosting and protecting human rights and it is willing to join all international conventions and accords aimed at achieving these goals, said Wuhaib. — KUNA

In Brief

KUWAIT CONDEMNS FRENCH CHURCH ATTACK

KUWAIT: Kuwait on Tuesday strongly condemned the terrorist attack against a Church in the French southern suburbs of Rouen, Normandy, where a priest was killed by the attackers. "This heinous crime, which is rejected by all faiths and laws, affirms anew how these terrorist groups target the security of mankind and stability of the world," a foreign ministry source said in a statement. Kuwait, he affirmed, was in full solidarity with France's battle against these terrorist groups and supported the Paris government's measures to maintain the country's security and stability. — KUNA



AP CHIEF WELCOMES YEMEN TALKS ULTIMATUM

NOUAKCHOTT: President of the Arab Parliament Ahmad Al-Jarwan welcomed on Tuesday the ultimatum by the State of Kuwait to the Yemeni parties so as to end the UN-brokered peace negotiations. Following the conclusion of the 27th Arab League Summit, Jarwan said in a statement that Kuwait and His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah have exerted all possible efforts so as to render the talks a success. "Kuwait has been hosting the talks for a long time," he said. "The Yemeni parties will be responsible for the failure of the talks." — KUNA



MINISTRY CONFIRMS BLACKOUT IN JAHRA

KUWAIT: Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) said a technical failure caused electricity blackout in Al-Jahra Area Tuesday, and technicians were working on restoring power. A technical failure happened in one of the major power stations thus losing 31 megawatts affecting the commercial area in Jahra, Dr Meshaan Al-Otaibi, MEW spokesman and Assistant Undersecretary for Planning and Training, Otaibi, in a statement, said work was underway to restore electricity as soon as possible. He said mobile generators were brought to provide electricity in vital areas. — KUNA



of the day



KUWAIT: Skyscrapers in Al-Watayah, a main suburb in Al-Qiblah district of Kuwait City. — KUNA

PEARL DIVING TRIP KICKS OFF TODAY



KSSC Chairman Major General Fahad Al-Fahad

KUWAIT: The 28th Pearl Diving Trip kicks off today with the 'Dasha' ceremony, to be held at the Kuwait Sea Sports Club (KSSC) in Salmiya starting from 8:30 am. The voyage, which is held through August 4, 2016, is organized under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. At least 193 youth men are participating in the trip on board of 13 diving ships, presented by His Highness the Amir as well as the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. KSSC Chairman Major General Fahad Al-Fahad commended the participants, saying that their perseverance to brave the extreme weather conditions and participate in the heritage-revival trip reflects the true mettle of Kuwait's youth.



KUWAIT: Kuwait Red Crescent Society's Secretary General Maha Al-Barjas participates in the 'Donate a Toy' campaign. — KUNA



Kuwait Red Crescent Society workers offer aid locally.

'DONATE A TOY' CAMPAIGN CONCLUDES

KRCS STRESSES COOPERATION WITH PRIVATE SECTOR

KUWAIT: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS), in collaboration with Fantasy World, concluded the 'Donate a Toy' campaign that was kicked off at the beginning of the Holy month of Ramadan. KRCS Secretary General Maha Al-Barjas told the press yesterday that donations made during this campaign will be delivered to children of unfortunate families listed on the KRCS' records.

The 'Donate a toy' campaign has deeper meaning that just collecting toys for underprivileged kids, it ticks morals and emotions and it teaches fortunate children concepts of "voluntarism" and "social responsibility." Separately, Head of KRCS' local aid department

Mariam Al-Adsani stressed the society's cooperation with the private sector in charity work. KRCS is continuing to support social and charity works especially during the holy month of Ramadan, Adsani said. KRCS, with support of the private sector, have helped more than 3,000 families during the last holy month of Ramadan, she added. The aid included clothes, blankets, school tools and food stuff, in addition to iftar meals, Eid Al-Adha clothes and coolers. The society is working to keep up with the latest humanitarian developments in the local arena, stressing importance of delivering help to needy people all over the world. — KUNA



Head of Kuwait Red Crescent Society's local aid department Mariam Al-Adsani.



KUWAIT: The National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) was honored by Capital Governor Thabet Al-Muhanna for organizing its 20th annual social program during this year's holy month of Ramadan.



KUWAIT: (From left) Yousef Al-Ibrahim, Khalid Mahdi, and Khaled Al-Hashash attend the press conference. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER, SME EXHIBITION HELD IN FEBRUARY

EVENT TO ENHANCE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY SYSTEM IN KUWAIT

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (GSSCPD) held a press conference yesterday to announce a national exhibition under the auspices of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. The Knowledge Transfer and Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) expo takes place on February 20-22, 2017.

Khaled Mahdi, Secretary-General of the GSSCPD, said that the expo is applying the recommendations of the 'Contemporary Functions of States from a Knowledge Economy Perspective' national conference which was held under the auspices of the Amir in February, which shows the seriousness of the government in supporting and enhancing the knowledge economy system in Kuwait by increasing institutional and community awareness and involvement of the private sector in financing, implementation, management of activities and knowledge projects.

He noted that the idea of the expo is to transfer knowledge through small and medium enterprises, as the development plan aims to enable the private sector to lead development through partnership between the public and private sectors represented in the partnership body or through privatization of some sectors of the state by the Supreme Council, or through the body to encourage direct investment, as well as the development of small and medium enterprises.

Mahdi stressed the importance of enhancing the knowledge-based economy that makes a platform to connect all

parties to achieve the desired goals through the national expo. "I hope that through this exhibition, we can deliver knowledge, creative goods and investment opportunities and present them directly to young Kuwaitis, investors and initiators to start economic and commercial activities in Kuwait," he pointed out.

Youth projects

Yousef Al-Ibrahim, Advisor at the Amiri Diwan, said that the Diwan was the first supporter of the project, pointing out that His Highness' orders are to support youth projects that reflect on the private sector and initiatives. "The Amiri Diwan has supported the knowledge economy conference before, because we believe that the knowledge-based economy can propel the Kuwaiti economy to advanced stages quickly," he said.

Khaled Al-Hashash, Head of Kuwait Center for Knowledge, added that the exhibition focuses on four sectors - energy (include all related industries, especially renewable energy and gas), information and communication technology, light industry and finally public health and beauty. He said that the expo aims to attract more than 300 international companies operating in the above sectors from 15 countries from Asia, America and Europe.

The Knowledge Transfer Expo is an annual knowledge economy flagship event. Each year, a new theme is chosen that focuses on a specific knowledge economy applications in the business world. This year, the expo provides a one-stop marketplace featuring a full range of knowledge-based business opportunities and solutions for small- and medium-sized enterprises.



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Crime

Report

Woman accused of polygamy

KUWAIT: The Hawally prosecutor received a complaint by an expatriate who said his wife is married to another man. He said that he married a divorced Egyptian woman and agreed to keep her children in the house. He also agreed to keep their marriage secret so that her ex-husband does not take the children. He said that his wife changed her behavior and kept leaving the house frequently, so he followed her, until the woman's son dropped a bombshell when he said his mother was still married to his father when she married him and that she forged the marriage contract claiming she was divorced and took a large dowry. Detectives are investigating.

Drug dealers arrested

Acting Director of Drug Control General Department (DCGD) Colonel Waleed Al-Duraei sent two Indians to the prosecution for possessing 3.5 kg of marijuana. Tips were received by Duraei about an Indian (30) who became well-known in the drug trade, so an undercover agent was sent to him to buy 500 gm of marijuana near the suspect's house in Fahaheel, and the arrest was made during the exchange. When police went to his house, they found another kilogram. He told police he bought the drugs from an Indian woman and led police to her house, where 2.5 kg of the substance was found. She said she brought the weed with her a few months ago with the intention to trade.

Dual nationality

A citizen was charged with having dual nationality and driving while intoxicated. A security source said Nuwaiseeb customs officers noticed a motorist was behaving abnormally, so he was searched, and they found an ID of a Gulf citizen although he gave officers his Kuwaiti passport. Investigations are underway.

Kidnap charges

Authorities are investigating the claims of a citizen that she was kidnapped by a taxi driver, who categorically denied her accusation. A security source said the woman called police to tell them a Pakistani driver had kidnapped her, and was refusing to stop while driving on Fahaheel Expressway towards Ahmadi. A police patrol then stopped the taxi in Sabah Al-Salem. Policemen took the two to Nugra police station, where the Pakistani driver was surprised by the accusation and denied it. He said she claimed the kidnapping after a dispute over the fare. Investigations are ongoing.

Man beats own mother

Sulaibiya detectives are working hard to arrest a man who beat his mother in her house. The woman called police and told them what happened, so they went to the house, but the son had already escaped. As soon as the patrol car returned to the station, a call came from the same woman, saying her daughter had swallowed pills to commit suicide. Police and paramedics rushed back and transferred the girl to hospital. — Al-Anbaa



CAPE TOWN, EIGHT SOUTH AFRICAN HOTELS IN TOP US TRAVEL MAGAZINE'S BEST OF LISTS HIGHER THAN ROME, BELOW FLORENCE

KUWAIT: Cape Town has come in 10th out of the world's top 15 cities named in the 2016 Travel and Leisure magazine awards, and is the top city in Africa and the Middle East. Among the world's top 100 hotels, South Africa had eight.

These were the Cape Grace (at 97), Singita Kruger National Park (95), Madikwe Safari Lodge tied 84th (with La Casa Que Canta, Mexico), the Saxon Hotel, Villas and Spa (75), La Residence in Franschhoek (70), Lion Sands Game Reserve (60), Singita Sabi Sand (18), Londolozi (13). Singita's Grumeti in Tanzania came 11th,

Tongabezi Lodge in Zambia 36th, and Momo Camp and Little Momo in Botswana 29th.

In the Best Safari Lodges in Africa Category, South Africa was way ahead. Said T&L, "South African properties made up about two-thirds of the list, with a full four lodges - and Beyond Kirkman's Kamp, Lion Sands Game Reserve, Singita Sabi Sand, and Londolozi - located in the Sabi Sand Game Reserve area, bordering renowned Kruger National Park."

— (Source: www.sapeople.com)



KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) organized a sign language course for employees at CBK Academy in Faiha, in order to enable staff members to interact with clients with hearing disabilities.

HUMANITY LAW

By Dr Nermin Al-Houti

Away from the laws that give the state the right to demand all the money owed by the citizen for the distinguished and subsidized services including electricity and water, today we have a stand that holds the humanitarian spirit.

Before the arrival of Ramadan, we had a precedent set and a public opinion issue when the municipality cut power to some violators. With the spirit of humanity, power was restored to those who were affected.

Then MPs and officials began discussing how to find ways and mechanisms to force citizens and expats to pay government dues, because this is a

Why should the children and the elderly bear the punishment of power cuts?

legitimate right of the state and cannot be disputed, yet our words today are directed to the minister of electricity and water, because he is the decision maker, and we should agree that paying is something that cannot be argued with, except the method.

Our complaint today is rather an appeal to not cut power during summer. There are some cases where people are complaining against the way the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) sent its demands.

A woman said she was surprised by a message received on her phone warning about a power cut within one week from the date of the message if she does not pay the due amount.

Your Excellency the minister, Kuwait is facing an extreme heat wave, and there are amounts owed by some who cannot pay, while some families are not in Kuwait. Our question to you is: Why should the children and the elderly bear the punishment of power cuts? Why is an ultimatum not sent, bearing in mind that the majority of those who complained were not given prior warning.

From the daughter of Kuwait to the decision maker, the Minister of Electricity and Water - I will not argue over the right of the government, being among those citizens who demand protection of public funds, but ask you to have a rather different method or postpone it. If there is no other way to recover the state's right from citizens, have the power cuts by the start of October.

— Translated by Kuwait Times



An old-fashioned 'Nadafah' craftsman teasing cotton to stuff it in furniture.



A modern day 'Nadafah' shop.

AL-NADAFAH: REVIVAL OF OLD COTTON-TEASING CRAFT



KUWAIT: 'Al-Nadafah' has reclaimed its spot as a cultural craft that can be practiced in modern-day Kuwait. A long stick is used to manually beat or tease the cotton or wool, later used as stuffing for pillows, mattresses or furniture. Nowadays, the long stick is replaced with a teasing machine and the cotton is replaced with sponge. 'Al-Nadafah' offers a different feel to the furniture, which is why some people still prefer the hand-made to the machine-made. — KUNA



Inside a modern day 'Nadafah' shop.



Modern day 'Nadafah' craftsmen stuffing furniture with cotton.



Kremlin denies interference in US presidential campaign

THE CONFLICTS THAT HAVE PLAGUED INDIA FOR DECADES



NORMANDY: Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray Mayor Hubert Wulfranc, center left, delivers his speech to the media in front of city hall a day after an hostage taking left a priest dead in Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray. — AP

FRANCE AIMS TO EASE RELIGIOUS FEARS

CHURCH ATTACK HIGHLIGHTS MAJOR SECURITY FAILINGS

PARIS: French President Francois Hollande yesterday sought to head off religious tensions and defuse criticism over security failings after jihadists killed an elderly Catholic priest in his church. Hollande met with top religious leaders as a violence-weary France mourned Tuesday's attack, which came less than two weeks after the Bastille Day truck massacre that killed 84 people in the southern city of Nice.

France's large Catholic community was in shock after two men stormed into a church in the northern town of Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray during morning mass and slit the 86-year-old priest's throat at the altar. Another man was left seriously injured in the attack. One of the attackers was identified as French jihadist Adel Kermiche, 19, who was awaiting trial on terror charges and had been fitted with an electronic tag despite calls from the prosecutor for him not to be released. "We are stunned, because we did not know it was dangerous to be a priest these days in France," said Pierre Amar, a priest from Versailles near Paris.

Residents of Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray were struggling to come to terms with the bloodshed in their small town, so far from France's tourist hubs. They made their way to a makeshift memorial to lay flowers, candles and messages of peace—a ritual that has become chillingly familiar from Brussels and Paris to Nice and Munich, all cities that have been struck by attackers inspired by the Islamic State group.

'A war of religions'

Kermiche and his accomplice entered the centuries-old stone church of Saint Etienne, taking hostage the priest, Jacques Hamel, three nuns and two worshippers. One nun managed to flee and alert police. The two jihadists were gunned down by police after leaving the church, marching three hostages in front of them, shouting "Allahu akbar" (God is greatest).

Prime Minister Manuel Valls has warned that the goal of the attack, claimed by Islamic State jihadists, was to "set the French people against each other, attack religion in order to start a war of religions". In an editorial, Le Monde newspaper recalled a key strategy of IS, to eradicate the so-called "grey zone" in which Muslims live peacefully alongside other religions, making it so uncomfortable for them to do so that they are forced to join ranks with the jihadists. "France comes under attack because it is made up of one of the biggest Muslim communities in Europe.

The jihadists' aim is to provoke violent revenge attacks that will create a religious war in our country," wrote the daily.

Dalil Boubakeur, the head of France's Muslim community, voiced his "deep grief" at the attack which he described as a "blasphemous sacrilege which goes against all the teachings of our religion". Following the meeting with Hollande he urged stepped-up security at places of worship. "We deeply desire that our places of worship are the subject of greater (security) focus, a sustained focus," he said.

Hollande also met his defence and security chiefs, who tried to find new ways to reassure a jittery population as his government comes under fire from the opposition over the repeated attacks, some nine months ahead of a presidential election. Defence Minister Jean Yves Le Drian said the 10,000-member Sentinelle military force—deployed after an attack in January 2015 — would be spread out more in areas outside Paris. Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve vowed that events taking place across the country over the summer months, in which the majority of French people flock to holiday spots, would take place under tight security. He said local government officials should cancel events "if conditions do not allow for optimal security".

'Where are the police?'

The government, already under pressure after the Nice attack, faced more questions over security weaknesses after it emerged one of the church attackers was known to anti-terror investigators. Paris prosecutor Francois Molins said Kermiche twice tried to travel to Syria under a false identity. After his latest arrest in Turkey in May 2015, he was held in custody until March this year when he was released and fitted with the electronic bracelet.

He was allowed him to leave his house on weekdays between 8:30 am and 12:30 pm, Molins said. Le Monde reported that he had spent time in a psychiatric unit, showing signs of psychological problems reported in many of the attackers inspired from afar by IS. "It should not be possible for someone awaiting trial on charges of having links to terrorism to be released" on house arrest, said the deputy chief of France's police union, Frederic Lagache. Mohammed Karabila, who heads the regional council of Muslim worship for Haute Normandie, where the church attack took place, asked simply: "How could a person wearing an electronic bracelet carry out an attack? Where are the police?" — AFP

FRANCE PRIEST ATTACKER WAS 'SYRIA OBSESSED TIME-BOMB'

SAINT-ETIENNE-DU-ROUVRAY: One of the assailants who slit the throat of an elderly French priest had dreamed of going to Syria and threatened to attack churches-but seldom visited his local mosque, neighbors said. Adel Kermiche, 19, had been known to the French authorities before Tuesday's shock church attack in a Normandy town and was described by one acquaintance as a "time bomb".

Kermiche and another unidentified man stormed the centuries-old stone church in Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray, taking priest Jacques Hamel hostage along with three nuns and two worshippers before slitting the elderly cleric's throat. He lived in his parents' modest home-less than two kilometers from the church-where he spent much of the day under curfew, fitted with an electronic tag while awaiting trial for alleged links to terror. A family member had raised the alarm after Kermiche went missing destined for war-torn Syria in March 2015.

German authorities arrested him shortly afterwards as he attempted to transit the country using his brother's identity. He was returned to France where he was detained on March 23 last year for "criminal association in connection with terrorism" and preparing a terrorist act. He was released on bail but banned from leaving the Seine-Maritime region of northern France. Six weeks later

he fled the family home once again and was ultimately traced to Turkey where he was detained on May 13 last year.

He was arrested on his return to France and remanded in custody before being released on bail subject to a curfew as he awaited trial for links to terrorism. "We knew he wanted to go to Syria," said a 60-year-old neighbor of the assailant's family, who added that he "never saw him go to the mosque" that the family attended. "He never spoke to us," said the neighbor. "The last time I saw him was on Friday. He was playing football in his garden."

Sister Danielle, a nun who managed to escape the hostage situation and alert police, described how the attackers made Hamel kneel at the altar in his white vestments. "In the church everyone was shouting 'stop, you don't know what you're doing'. But they didn't stop. They forced him (Hamel) to get down on his knees. He tried to struggle, he tried," she told RMC radio. "They recorded it. They did something like a sermon around the altar in Arabic," she added. Danielle then fled the church in a daring escape after which she was able to call police. Three other hostages escaped unharmed while one worshipper had severe knife injuries to his throat. 'Hyperactive child' — AFP

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BAHRAIN CLERIC ON TRIAL FOR MONEY LAUNDERING

DUBAI: Bahrain's top Shiite cleric went on trial yesterday on charges of illegal fund raising and money laundering, judicial sources said, just weeks after the Sunni-ruled kingdom revoked his citizenship. Sheikh Isa Qassim is accused of collecting funds illegally and has deposited more than \$10 million in his private bank accounts, attorney general Haroun Al-Zayani said in a statement on the official BNA news agency.

Qassim, considered the spiritual leader of the majority Shiite community in Bahrain, allegedly kept other amounts in cash to avoid legal controls, said the statement, accusing him of hiding the source of the money. Authorities also accused him of purchasing properties worth more than one million dinar (\$2.65 million) in an attempt to legitimize the funds. Two of his aides, Sheikh Hussein Mahrus and

Mirza Al-Obaidli, are also on trial in the same case.

The three defendants did not appear in court for the hearing, held amid tight security, witnesses said. The next hearing will be on August 14. On June 20, Bahrain said it had revoked Qassim's citizenship, accusing him of sowing sectarian divisions. Since then dozens of Shiites have staged a sit-in outside his home in the village of Diraz, which

authorities have cordoned off. The move against Qassim prompted criticism from Bahrain's Western allies as well as its foe Iran, which the kingdom accuses of fuelling unrest among its Shiite community.

Bahrain has been shaken by unrest since security forces crushed Shiite-led protests demanding a constitutional monarchy and an elected prime minister in 2011. Despite repeated calls from

their Western allies, Bahrain's rulers have made no concessions to the Shiite opposition and have intensified a crackdown on critics.

This month, a court ordered the dissolution of the kingdom's main Shiite opposition bloc, Al-Wefaq, which was the largest group in parliament before its lawmakers resigned en masse in protest at the crushing of demonstrations. — AFP

HAMAS MEMBER SAID TO BE BEHIND RABBI ATTACK KILLED

HOUSE HIT AND DEMOLISHED BY ANTI-TANK MISSILES

SURIF, Palestinian Territories; Israeli forces fired anti-tank missiles at a house in the West Bank after a shootout overnight, killing a Hamas member accused of a deadly attack on a rabbi, authorities said yesterday. Several other people were arrested in the hours-long raid in the village of Surif, near Hebron.

Military footage showed a house being hit with an anti-tank missile then further demolished with an earthmover. The military said soldiers surrounded the house where the Hamas member was hiding out and exchanged fire with him. Afterwards, the house was struck with anti-tank missiles and the militant's body was found inside. He was identified as Mohamed Fakih, 29, and Hamas hailed him as a "martyr".

"After extensive research, we found the hide-out of the terrorist who killed Michael Mark," Colonel Roman Gofman, commander of the brigade that led the operation, said in a video distributed by the military. "We besieged the house and exchanges of fire took place after he opened fire at the soldiers. We responded and the terrorist was killed in battle. His house was destroyed on him."

Soldiers carried away Fakih's body and arrested three people, who were led away with their eyes covered and loaded into military vehicles, an AFP photographer witnessed. The official Palestinian news agency reported five people were arrested and said several villagers were injured, with Palestinian ambulances denied

access to the site by Israeli soldiers. The Israeli army reported three arrests over the course of the investigation that began after the July 1 attack that killed the rabbi. It called them part of a cell "affiliated with Hamas," the Islamist movement that runs the Gaza Strip and which has a strong presence in parts of the West Bank, particularly Hebron.

Flashpoint city

The July 1 attack saw a car targeted by gunfire south of Hebron, leading to a crash that killed Mark and wounded three family members. It was among a series of attacks in the Hebron area at the time, including a June 30 stabbing by a Palestinian in the Jewish settlement of Kiryat Arba that killed a 13-year-old girl. Hebron is the scene of frequent tensions in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Several hundred Israeli settlers live in the heart of the city under heavy military guard among around 200,000 Palestinians.

Fakih had served time in Israeli jail for links to the Islamic Jihad movement and joined Hamas while in prison, according to Israel's Shin Bet security service. It issued a statement saying a Palestinian security official was arrested earlier this month on suspicion of driving Fakih to the scene of the rabbi attack. Fakih's brother and cousin were also held on suspicion of helping him to hide after the attack, the statement added.

Hamas said in a statement it "hails the Al-Qassam martyr Mohamed Fakih, who was martyred after a gun battle that lasted more than seven hours with occupation forces in Surif." The Al-Qassam Brigades are Hamas's armed wing. Violence in the Palestinian territories and Israel since October has killed at least 218 Palestinians, 34 Israelis, two Americans, an Eritrean and a Sudanese, according to an AFP count. Most of the Palestinians killed were carrying out knife, gun or car-ramming attacks, according to Israeli authorities. Others were shot dead during protests and clashes, while some were killed in Israeli air strikes in the Gaza Strip. — AFP



SURIF: Palestinian inspect the house that was severely damaged in an exchange of fire between Israeli soldiers and Palestinians during an operation to find the men accused of murdering an Israeli rabbi earlier this month. — AFP

PALESTINIAN MEDICS CAUGHT IN THE TURMOIL OF CONFLICT

DAHRIYA, Palestinian Territories: When a Palestinian doctor stopped to help a family of Israelis targeted in a West Bank shooting, it was hailed as a rare moment of compassion in a bitter conflict. Ten months of violence between Israelis and Palestinians have deepened suspicions between the two sides, with doctors and medics saying they come under greater scrutiny at times of increased tensions. Some Israeli and Palestinian medics say they have been attacked while working, but all insist that politics is far from their minds when they respond to a medical emergency.

Ali Shroukh, who lives in the town of Dahriya in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, said he did not think twice when he rushed to assist the Israeli shooting victims, and rejected the label "hero". Shroukh was on his way to Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem to pray on July 1 when

shots were fired at a car carrying a family of Israeli settlers south of the flashpoint West Bank city of Hebron, causing a crash that killed the father. He said he stopped to help even though he knew from the car's number plate that the passengers could be Israeli settlers. "I am not a hero," Shroukh told AFP. "I followed my religion, my conscience and my profession. It is a humanitarian mission to stop and help."

Stark example

He said doctors "make an oath to help an enemy before a friend". Shroukh said he has received messages of congratulations from around the world, including from Palestinian and Israeli doctors, praising him for putting politics aside. But keeping politics out of the medical profession, like most things in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, is near impossible. Medics

have been accused of bias and of abandoning wounded people from the other side. One stark example of this is in Jerusalem.

The Israeli government does not formally draw a distinction between predominantly Jewish west Jerusalem and Palestinian-dominated east Jerusalem, which Israel occupied in 1967 and later annexed. But the Israeli medical service Magen David Adom (MDA) says it will only enter parts of east Jerusalem with a police escort for security reasons—which can lead to delays of more than 30 minutes in people receiving vital treatment, some medics say. In their absence, the Palestinian Red Crescent (PRCS) tries to fill the gap, while MDA first responders who live in east Jerusalem or volunteers from the United Hatzalah group also rush to the scene, often on motorbikes, to provide first aid until ambulances arrive. Palestinian Ramzi Batesh, who works for United Hatzalah, said the rescue group established an east Jerusalem branch of the originally Jewish organization because the time gap was leading to lives lost.

Medics threatened

Responders in east Jerusalem are all Palestinians, except for Jewish volunteer Josh Wander. He said he has had stones thrown at him as he raced to provide care while wearing his yarmulke skull cap, but that those in need are

rarely concerned about his religion. "I have never faced hostility from the people calling me," Wander said. "I have only found appreciation from the people in need. (But) I have had issues in the past going into certain neighborhoods and coming out of certain neighborhoods."

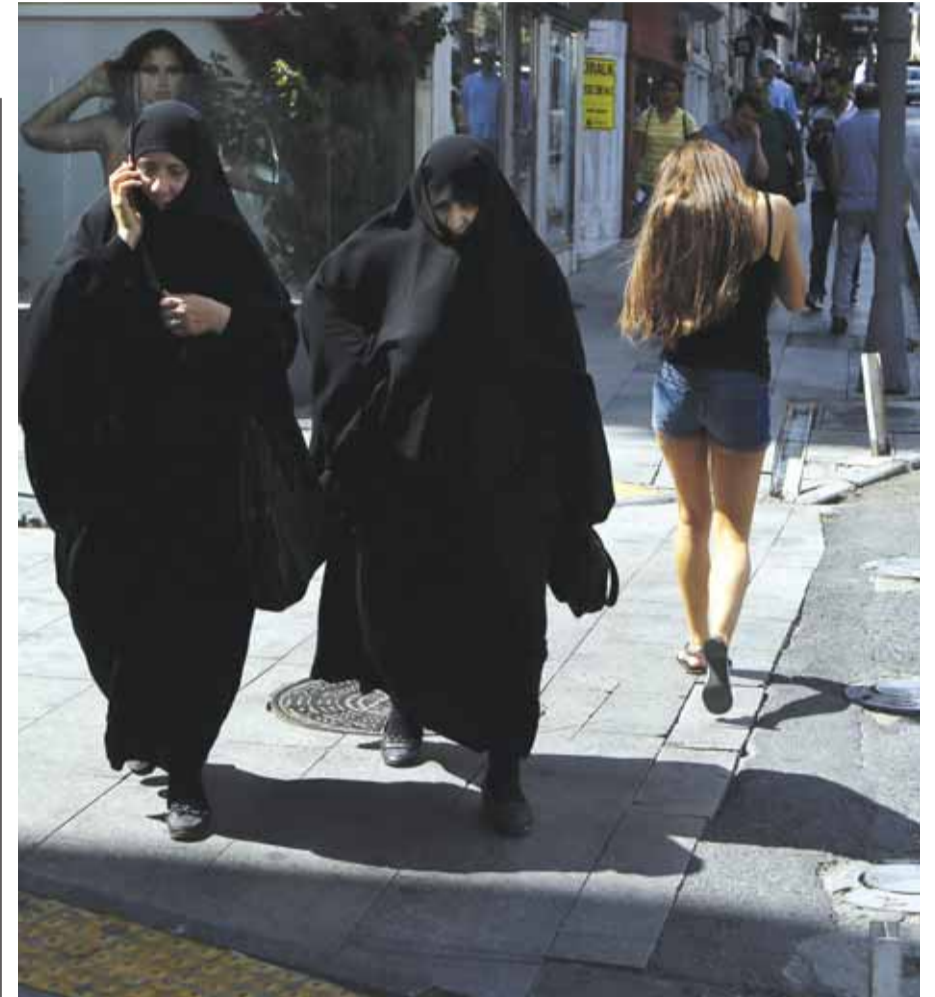
Violence since last October has killed 217 Palestinians and 34 Israelis, with Israeli authorities saying that most of the Palestinians killed were carrying out knife, gun or car-ramming attacks. Palestinian medics say they are regularly prevented from reaching wounded people by Israeli soldiers, and AFP journalists have witnessed soldiers threatening medics. A video that circulated last year showed Israeli forces firing pepper spray at PRCS medics during a dispute amid clashes in the West Bank. Last year, an Israeli woman claimed that PRCS medics refused to treat members of her family after an attack near a settlement in the West Bank in which her husband and son died.

A fine line

The Israeli government accused PRCS of failing to remain neutral, with wide Israeli media coverage condemning the medics. However an internal probe by the International Committee of the Red Cross later rejected the claim that its Palestinian affiliate refused to treat Jewish victims. — AFP



DAHRIYA, Palestinian Territories : Palestinian doctor, Ali Shroukh, walks down the stairs at his private clinic on July 11, 2016 in the southern West Bank village. — AFP



ISTANBUL: Women walk at a shopping street. — AP

TURKEY PM WARNS THAT POST COUP CRACKDOWN NOT OVER

ANKARA: Turkey's prime minister warned yesterday that the crackdown following a failed coup was not over, as authorities issued arrest warrants for dozens of former newspaper staff. A senior minister also revealed that a major army shake-up had been planned just before the putsch-suggesting elements in the military made the dramatic move because they knew they were about to be purged.

Since the attempted power grab on the night of July 15, more than 15,000 people have been detained and more than 8,000 of them remain in custody, according to the latest interior ministry figures. "The investigation is continuing, there are people who are being searched for. There could be new apprehensions, arrests and detentions," Prime Minister Binali Yildirim told Sky News, according to the network's translation of his remarks. "The process is not completed yet," he said.

In the attempted coup, renegade soldiers sought to topple President Recep Tayyip Erdogan but were stopped by crowds of civilians and loyalist security forces. At least 270 people were killed on both sides. Turkey blames the botched putsch on US-based preacher Fethullah Gulen, who strongly denies the accusations and demands that the United States resist calls for his extradition. But Yildirim said Turkey was "determined" to secure his removal. "We shared all the details with them and, from this point on, the task falls on the shoulders of the US government," the prime minister said.

'Planned purge'

Energy Minister Berat Albayrak, who is Erdogan's son-in-law, said Turkish authorities had been planning a major purge of the military and other institutions to remove Gulen-linked elements ahead of the coup attempt. He suggested parts of the armed forces had wanted to act against the government as they knew they were about to be expelled.

"They were going to take really important steps to remove Gulenist officers and generals from the armed forces. We were already working on this," said Albayrak, who

was with Erdogan on the coup night. Turkey yesterday issued arrest warrants for 47 former staff of the once pro-Gulen Zaman newspaper suspected of links to the reclusive cleric. An official who declined to be named said the snoop covered "executives and some staff including columnists", describing Zaman as the "flagship media organization" of the Gulen-led movement. In March, Zaman and its English-language sister newspaper Today's Zaman were taken over by state-appointed administrators and it has since taken a strongly pro-government line.

Several former staff are believed to have since left Turkey. The official insisted the warrants were not related to what individual columnists had previously said or written. But "prominent employees of Zaman are likely to have intimate knowledge of the Gulen network and as such could benefit the investigation", the official explained. Earlier in the week, Turkey issued another 42 arrest warrants for journalists which London-based rights group Amnesty International described as a "draconian clampdown on freedom of expression". Sixteen of those 42 have so far been detained, according to state-run news agency Anadolu.

New military shake-up

A large-scale shake-up of the Turkish armed forces is expected to be announced when the country's Supreme Military Council meets today. With 143 generals and more than 3,000 soldiers arrested on suspicion of coup links, there are gaping holes in the command structure which will have to be filled. Tens of thousands of Turkish civilians have also lost their jobs since July 15. Erdogan is set to visit Russia on August 9 to repair ties harmed by the downing of a Russian warplane by Turkish jets last year, in an apparent shift in diplomatic strategy. "We will see more developed relations and that is what needs to take place," Yildirim said of ties with Russia. The EU meanwhile appointed a new ambassador to Turkey and repeated warnings that Ankara must respect democracy and human rights for ties to prosper. — AFP

SYRIA REGIME STRIKES KILLS 16 IN REBEL-HELD ALEPPO

BEIRUT: Syrian government air strikes and artillery fire killed at least 16 civilians yesterday in rebel-held neighborhoods in the east of Aleppo city, a monitor said. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said seven people had been killed in the Sakhr neighborhood and another seven in Al-Ansari district. Two more were killed in the Sukari and Bustan Al-Qasr neighborhoods, the monitor said, adding that the toll could rise because people were still trapped under the rubble. The renewed strikes came as Syria's army officially announced it had surrounded the rebel-held east of the city.

Opposition neighborhoods of Aleppo have been effectively besieged since July 7, when government troops advanced to within firing range of the sole remaining supply route into the east. They have continued to advance, seizing the road itself and at least one rebel-held neighborhood in the north-west of the

city. "Our armed forces... cut all the supply routes and crossings used by terrorists to bring mercenaries, weapons and ammunition into eastern neighborhoods of Aleppo," the army said in a statement carried by official media.

It added that "in order to stop the bloodshed" fighters were being offered the opportunity to lay down their arms, "settle their situations" and remain in or leave Aleppo. A day earlier the military said it had sent text messages to residents and fighters in Aleppo urging rebels to lay down their weapons and identifying "safe passages" for civilians wishing to leave. Once Syria's economic powerhouse, Aleppo has been roughly divided between rebel control in the east and government control in the west since mid-2012. More than 280,000 people have been killed in Syria since the conflict began in March 2011 with anti-government protests that were met with a regime crackdown. — AFP

TURKEY'S JUSTICE MINISTER DENIES COUP DETAINEE TORTURE CLAIMS

ANKARA: Turkey's justice minister Monday denied claims by a human rights group saying that suspected plotters of the July 15 coup have been subjected to torture in detention. Bekir Bozdag, minister of justice, said on his Twitter account, "There has not been any torture or assault of detainees in custody," in response to allegations by Amnesty International. Bozdag added, "The claims of torture and assault make up a package misinformation campaign formed by members of the Fetullah Terrorist Organization/Parallel State Structure (FETO/PYD), one which is untrue and distorted." The group said Sunday that it had evidence the detainees have been tortured as well as beaten and even raped.

Meanwhile, the Justice Ministry issued a statement saying that Turkey is a constitutional state, and that it meets national and international criteria on human rights law even amid a state of emergency. "The health conditions of the

detainees were checked by doctors after the detention and during custody, in line with detention regulations," the statement said. The ministry added that contrary to Amnesty claims that Turkey lacks an institution which monitors detention conditions, Turkey's Human Rights and Equality Institution is continuing to fulfill its duties.

The deadly coup attempt began late July 15 when rogue elements of the Turkish military tried to overthrow the country's democratically elected government, killing at least 246 people and injuring more than 2,100 others. The government said the attempted coup was organized by followers of US based preacher Fetullah Gulen. Gulen is accused of a long-running campaign to overthrow the state through infiltrating Turkish institutions, particularly the military, police, and judiciary, forming a parallel state. - Report courtesy of Turkish Embassy of Kuwait



IMPHAL: In this Wednesday, Aug 20, 2014 file photo, Irom Sharmila, center, walks out of a security ward after her release in Porompat district. — AP

INDIAN ACTIVIST TO END 16-YEAR HUNGER STRIKE

NEW DELHI: A 44-year-old activist who has been on a hunger strike for nearly 16 years to protest alleged brutality by India's military said Tuesday that she will end her fast and run in state elections. Irom Sharmila told a court in the northeastern state of Manipur that she'll give up her fast on Aug 9 and stand as an independent candidate in elections early next year.

Sharmila has not eaten any food voluntarily since Nov 5, 2000, when she began her protest against an Indian law that suspends many human rights protections in areas of conflict. Three days earlier, 10 civilians were killed by paramilitary troops in Malom, a small town on the outskirts of Imphal, the Manipur state capital. Three days after she started her hunger strike, she was arrested on charges of attempting suicide - a crime in India - and prison officials at a government hospital in Manipur have since force fed her through a tube in her nose.

"The only way to bring change is electoral process. I will stand as an independent candidate from Malom constituency,"

Sharmila told reporters outside the court on Tuesday, according to a statement from Amnesty International. She said the single issue on her agenda would be the removal of the law that allows the military to act with impunity. The Armed Forces Special Powers Act is in effect in Indian-ruled Kashmir and northeastern areas wracked by separatist insurgencies. The law says troops have the right to shoot to kill suspected rebels without fear of possible prosecution and to arrest suspected militants without a warrant. It also gives police wide-ranging powers of search and seizure.

It prohibits soldiers from being prosecuted for alleged rights violations unless granted express permission from the federal government. Such prosecutions are rare. Sharmila has spent most of her detention in the hospital, where doctors make sure her condition is stable. She also is required to report to a local court every 15 days. Her long hunger strike has garnered her support from across the world, and Amnesty International has called her a prisoner of conscience. — AP

MYANMAR REBELS HOLD MEET AS SUU KYI YEARNs FOR PEACE

MAI JA YANG: Leaders of Myanmar rebel armies held talks in a war-hit border town yesterday, state media reported, as they prepare for a major peace conference with a government desperate to end insurgencies that have plagued the country. Myanmar has been racked for half a century by ethnic rebel wars in its resource-rich frontier states, leaving tens of thousands dead or displaced.

Some groups have signed ceasefires but several other rebel armies are still fighting the nation's army — including in the northern state of Kachin, where yesterday's talks were held. Aung San Suu Kyi, the democracy activist leading the country's first civilian government, says ending the fighting is essential if Myanmar is to rise from the ashes of junta rule. She wants to restart full peace talks within weeks. This week's summit, held in a Kachin town ravaged by years of warfare, brought together "leaders representing 17 ethnic armed groups to search for common ground in working toward a federal system for the country", state-run Global New Light of Myanmar reported yesterday. The negotiators, many sporting traditional clothing, gathered in a hall in Mai Ja Yang, a town ringed by displacement camps on the bor-

der with China, which also sent an envoy to the talks. Peace is hard to secure.

Distrust in the still-powerful military runs deep and the rebel groups themselves are divided - with four pulling out of the Mai Ja Yang talks at the last minute. The conflicts are complex and fuelled in part by the illegal trade in drugs, timber and jade, much of which is funneled across the border to China. Rebels use the proceeds to buy guns. The former military-backed government launched a peace dialogue but failed to secure a nationwide ceasefire with all groups.

Suu Kyi has promised a greater level of federal autonomy in a bid to secure peace, but has yet to spell out how it would work. It is a promise her independence hero father also made in 1947. It was ignored by the junta that took control several years after his assassination and ruled over Myanmar for almost 50 years. Suu Kyi's ability to wrest a peace deal or decentralize the government will depend heavily on the support of the military, which remains a potent political and economic force. It holds the keys to any charter changes, runs crucial government ministries and dominates the economy's most lucrative sectors. — AFP



KACHIN STATE: In this photograph taken on July 26, 2016, a Myanmar armed rebel secures a hilltop overlooking Mai Ja Yang where Myanmar ethnic rebel leaders and representatives are gathering for a four day summit in the town controlled by the Kachin Independence Army. — AFP

2 INDIAN MUSLIM WOMEN BEATEN FOR CARRYING BEEF

NEW DELHI: Two Muslim women have been beaten up at a railway station in central India on suspicion of carrying beef, an offence in many parts of the Hindu-majority country, police said yesterday. The meat the women were carrying has since turned out to be buffalo, but police in Madhya Pradesh state said they were attacked on Tuesday at a busy station, apparently

after a group of vigilantes raised suspicions.

Video footage broadcast on local television channels showed a group of women slapping, kicking and punching the two as a large crowd gathered. The two women were subsequently arrested on suspicion of carrying beef. Tests found it was actually buffalo, and they now face the lesser charge of carrying

commercial quantities of meat without a license. Cows are revered by Hindus and slaughtering them is illegal in most Indian states.

Several states also bar the sale and possession of beef, and there has been a recent upsurge in attacks by vigilantes from the Hindu right on people suspected of killing cows.

"We had prior information and had

deputed force to arrest them but unfortunately some people attacked them," said Manoj Sharma, district police chief of Mandasaur where the incident occurred.

None of the people who attacked the two women had been arrested for the assault, Sharma said. It comes days after a group of low-caste Hindu men were beaten by vigilantes in the west-

ern state of Gujarat on suspicion of killing a cow - a charge they denied. The men said they were taking the dead cow to be skinned - a task commonly given to low-caste villagers in India, where the animals roam freely.

Opposition parties raised the latest attack in parliament yesterday and demanded the government act against vigilante groups. — AFP

A LOOK AT THE CONFLICTS THAT PLAGUED INDIA FOR DECADES

DISPUTES STEM FROM CENTURIES OF DISCRIMINATION

NEW DELHI: India has been plagued with often deadly political disputes for decades: A decades-old confrontation between protesters and armed forces in Kashmir has claimed tens of thousands of lives. A festering conflict with Maoist rebels cuts a wide swath across many of the country's states. A host of insurgencies fuel violence in the northeast.

Many of these conflicts date back to India's independence in 1947 from British colonial rule, when maps were drawn without adequate consideration given to the schisms it would create between ethnic groups. Many other disputes stem from centuries of discrimination and exploitation that still have not been addressed or resolved. These long-simmering conflicts could have an impact on how quickly India, the world's fastest-growing economy, succeeds in its aim of becoming a leading global power. A look at three major conflicts:

MAOISTS

India's Maoist conflict began as an armed struggle in the late 1960s, when poor peasants in the village of Naxalbari in West Bengal state demanded land rights. The uprising was crushed, but the conflict spread across vast tracts of central and southern India. Rebels inspired by Chinese revolutionary leader Mao Zedong have been fighting ever since, staging hit-and-run attacks against Indian authorities. They demand a greater share of wealth from the area's natural resources and more jobs for farmers and the poor.

Just last week, at least 10 Indian paramilitary soldiers were killed in an ambush by Maoist rebels in dense forests in the eastern Indian state of Bihar. The government's response was to send more troops, but the rebels had fled deep into their forest hideouts. Since the 1980s, Maoist rebels have recruited thousands of poor villagers and indigenous tribespeople, training them in the use of arms and explosives to target government officials, security forces and state installations. Over the past decade, the rebels have acquired smuggled Chinese-made shoulder rocket launchers, and explosives and mines that they have used to deadly effect.

The government has called them India's greatest internal security threat. Thousands have died on both sides, but little has changed in the struggle. Many Indians have grown weary of the conflict. Politicians debate whether a military operation to flush the rebels out of their jungle hideouts is preferable to offering better economic opportunities to assuage the rebel fury.

NORTHEAST INSURGENCIES

In India's remote northeast, government forces battle dozens of ethnic insurgent groups who push a welter of demands ranging from independent homelands to maximum autonomy within India. More than 21,000 people have been killed in insurgency-related violence in northeast India, according to the South Asia Terrorism Portal.

The most prominent of those conflicts, that of

the Naga people, has been on the boil since the mid-1950s. Naga leaders Isak Chishi Swu and Thuingaleng Muivah signed a truce with New Delhi in 1997 and been engaged in peace talks ever since. Swu died earlier this month, but Muivah said the peace talks would carry on. "Things are on track and we are expecting to reach an acceptable solution to the long-standing Naga issue soon," Muivah said recently. Several other insurgencies in the northeastern states of Mizoram, Manipur, Tripura and Assam - all of which share borders with either Myanmar or Bangladesh - are keeping Indian security forces on a near-constant counterinsurgency mode.

The government has cease-fire agreements with more than 40 insurgent groups in the region, and over the years it has signed peace agreements with six. Those deals gave ethnic groups more autonomy, but India has rejected their demands for separate homelands. This resulted in the splintering of several insurgent groups, with some factions carrying on with hit-and-run guer-

and Pakistan shortly after the two archrivals gained independence in 1947. New Delhi initially grappled with largely peaceful anti-India movements in its portion of Kashmir. However, political blunders, broken promises and a crackdown against dissent resulted in a full-blown armed rebellion against Indian control in 1989. Thousands of Kashmiris crossed over to Pakistani-controlled Kashmir for arms training, returned with guns and grenades, and joined the armed struggle against India for a united Kashmir, either under Pakistan rule or independent of both.

Kashmir became a battleground, with rebel groups ratcheting up bloody attacks aimed at Indian security forces and pro-India Kashmiri politicians. India responded with a massive militarization of Kashmir, saying it was fighting a Pakistan-sponsored proxy war. Soldiers empowered with emergency impunity laws carried out a brutal military crackdown.

At least 68,000 people have died in Kashmir since 1989. Kashmir rebels suffered a major setback after 9/11, as the US pressured Pakistan to



ASSAM: In this June 7, 2014 file photo, relatives mourn by the coffin containing the body of a police officer Nityananda Goswami, who was killed in a rebel attack, as they load his body in a vehicle during his guard of honor function in Gauhati, in the northeastern Indian state. — AP

rilla strikes. Neighboring Bhutan and Bangladesh are cooperating with Indian authorities to expel insurgent leaders and cadres operating from their territories. New Delhi is trying to reach a similar agreement with Myanmar.

KASHMIR

Clashes between protesters and Indian forces in the Indian-controlled portion of Kashmir this summer again highlight the challenge that the restive Himalayan region has posed for Indian policymakers ever since it was split between India

rein in militants. The militancy was largely crushed, but many Kashmiris remain opposed to Indian rule. In recent months, demonstrations by unarmed protesters have often led to intense clashes between rock-throwing Kashmiri youths and armed government soldiers. New Delhi and Islamabad have yet to find common ground to resolve the dispute. The churning is again producing a new generation of homegrown militants, something which has deeply worried Indian establishment. — AP

INDIA SIGNS \$1 BILLION DEAL FOR SPY PLANES

NEW DELHI: India has signed a billion-dollar deal with Boeing to buy four maritime surveillance planes, defense and aviation sources said yesterday, as it looks to counter China in the Indian Ocean. The deal for four P-8I aircraft follows India's earlier purchase of eight of the planes from the American aerospace giant in 2009. "The deal has been signed. The delivery dates are being worked out," a defense ministry source told AFP, adding that the deal was worth more than a billion dollars.

India has already deployed its original eight long-range P-8I aircraft to track submarine movements in the Indian Ocean. The navy is looking to beef up its fleet to strengthen its capabilities against submarines and surface ships. "India has a vast maritime border and these planes are meant for long-range surveillance," a Boeing official told AFP, adding that a clause in the earlier agreement provided for New Delhi to purchase four more planes. "The

navy will likely deploy them in the Indian Ocean and Bay of Bengal to counter Chinese influence in the seas," the official said.

India, the world's number one defense importer, is in the midst of a multi-billion dollar upgrade of its Soviet-era military hardware. The country has signed several big-ticket defense deals since Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party stormed to power in 2014. Other deals have been mired in bureaucratic wrangles, however, notably the agreement to buy 36 Rafale fighter jets from France's Dassault Aviation which has been pending since 2012.

Modi's government has raised the limit on foreign investment in the defense sector and encouraged tie-ups between foreign and local companies. Modi, a hardline Hindu nationalist, has also called for the manufacturing of defence equipment locally and cut down reliance on expensive imports. — AFP

LANDSLIDES KILL 58 ACROSS NEPAL

KATHMANDU: At least 58 people have died in floods and landslides triggered by heavy rains in Nepal, the government said yesterday. Another 20 people are missing and the Nepal army is racing to evacuate hundreds more from flooded villages as the waters rise. The home ministry spokesman said 58 people were confirmed dead and another 20 were still unaccounted for.

"Our teams are working continuously in search and rescue operations, as well as to provide relief," deputy spokesman Jhanka Nath Dhakal told AFP. Images released by the army,

which is involved in the operation, showed villagers waiting on rooftops to be evacuated in motorboats.

Scores of people die every year from flooding and landslides during the monsoon rains in Nepal and neighboring India. Earlier this month, two children were killed when a school in the capital partially collapsed in heavy rains. The situation is particularly desperate this year because millions of Nepalis are still living in tents or makeshift huts after a devastating earthquake that killed nearly 9,000 people in 2015. — AFP

PRESSURE MOUNTS ON INDONESIA TO CALL OFF LOOMING EXECUTIONS

CILACAP: Indonesia will be "on the wrong side of history" if it proceeds with a fresh round of executions this week, rights groups warned yesterday, as authorities confirmed 14 prisoners will face the firing squad. A group of drug convicts including foreigners have been given notice of their executions and could be put to death as early as Friday, though authorities remain tight-lipped about specific details.

Attorney-General Muhammad Prasetyo said yesterday that 14 people including prisoners from Nigeria, Pakistan, India and Zimbabwe had been

put in isolation and would be executed this week. "They still have the right to see their family. We have also asked what their last requests are," Prasetyo told reporters. Family members and embassy officials visited the condemned prisoners yesterday on Nusakambangan Island, home to a high-security prison where Indonesia conducts executions.

Indonesia—which has some of the toughest anti-drugs laws in the world—executed 14 drug convicts, mostly foreigners, in two batches last year. Activists intensified pressure on Indonesia's leader this week, urging him not to pro-

ceed with the third round of executions since he took office in October 2014. "Indonesian President Joko Widodo, popularly known as 'Jokowi', will be putting his government on the wrong side of history if he proceeds with a fresh round of executions," Amnesty International said in a statement.

"Sadly, he could preside over the highest number of executions in the country's democratic era at a time when most of the world has turned its back on this cruel practice," added the group's Southeast Asia head Josef Benedict. Human Rights Watch urged Widodo to

call off the executions and avoid a "potential diplomatic firestorm," referring to the global criticism Indonesia attracted when it put to death eight drug convicts in April 2015, including two Australians and a Brazilian.

Citizens from Indonesia, Nigeria, India, South Africa, Pakistan and Zimbabwe would be executed in this round, said lawyers from the Jakarta-based Community Legal Aid Institute, who had visited some of the inmates in prison this week. Lawyers for some of the condemned inmates have been making last-minute bids to save their clients

from the firing squad. A letter from Indonesian convict Merri Utami to Widodo asking for clemency was sent on Tuesday.

Activists lobbying on behalf of Pakistani prisoner Zulfiqar Ali said they would also consider making a final appeal, despite alleging their 52-year-old client was tortured into confessing. "We've seen how Indonesia's legal system is full of flaws. Jokowi can actually put a moratorium on executions, he has the right to do so," said Al Araf, the director of Indonesian rights group Imparsial. — AFP

JAPAN'S KNIFE ATTACKER GRINS BEFORE CAMERAS

HE WANTED ALL DISABLED PEOPLE TO 'DISAPPEAR'

TOKYO: A Japanese man who admitted murdering 19 people at a centre for the mentally disabled grinned at news cameras yesterday before being questioned about the country's worst killing spree in decades. Police searched the home of the 26-year-old, who reportedly said he wanted all disabled people to "disappear", after the knife rampage that left his victims in pools of blood, including some who were stabbed in the neck.

With a blue jacket draped over his head,

shocked Japan, as has the carnage at the Tsukui Yamayuri-en centre in the city of Sagamiara outside Tokyo.

Questions were being asked about why he had been allowed to leave the hospital where he was admitted in February for mental evaluation following his explicit threats. In a sign that the care centre feared its former employee, public broadcaster NHK-citing Kanagawa prefectural officials—said the facility in April set up 16 security cameras to watch out for him after

the same neighborhood as the care centre. Local media said Uematsu has told police that he wants to apologize to bereaved families about the sudden loss of their loved ones, though he still justified what he did. "I saved those with multiple disabilities," he told police, according to private broadcaster TV Asahi which cited investigative sources. Uematsu broke into the care centre in the forested hills of Sagamiara in the early hours of Tuesday. He reportedly tied up two caregivers before stabbing residents using a total of five knives—leaving a total of 26 people injured, 13 of them severely.

'Appalling'

He quickly turned himself in at a police station, carrying bloodied knives and admitting to officers: "I did it." Uematsu reportedly also said: "The disabled should all disappear." Security camera footage taken near the centre showed a vehicle arriving there shortly before the attack began. The driver opened the boot to remove objects before walking toward the facility.

At around 2:50 am, shortly after an emergency call was made to police from the centre, the footage shows the driver dashing back to the vehicle, carrying a large bag. Uematsu left his job at the care home and was forcibly hospitalized in February after telling colleagues he intended to kill disabled people at the centre. But he was discharged 12 days later when a doctor deemed he was not a threat. He had previously delivered a letter to the speaker of the lower house of parliament in which he threatened to kill hundreds of disabled people, outlining a broad plan for night-time attacks against Tsukui Yamayuri-en and another facility.

In the rambling letter he presented a vision of a society in which the seriously handicapped could be euthanized with the approval of family members since "handicapped people only create unhappiness". The top-selling Yomiuri Shimbun daily called the case "appalling" and urged a probe of the decision to release Uematsu from medical care. "It is a matter of great regret for society to let such a serious stabbing incident happen," it said in an editorial which also called for increased security at care facilities. Japan has one of the lowest rates of violent crime in the developed world. The killing spree is believed to be the nation's worst since 1938, when a man armed with an axe, sword and rifle went on a rampage that left 30 people dead. — AFP



SAGAMIHARA: This video frame grab taken from footage supplied by Japanese broadcaster TBS on July 27, 2016 shows murder suspect Satoshi Uematsu grinning inside a vehicle as he departs to the prosecutor's office from a local police station. — AFP

Satoshi Uematsu was escorted out of a police station into a waiting van before a crowd of flashing cameras. Inside the vehicle with the jacket removed, he smiled broadly in footage broadcast on morning news shows. Uematsu's self-styled mission to rid the country of the mentally disabled laid out earlier this year in a long letter that came to light Tuesday—has

he was discharged from the hospital. An official at the Tsukui police station where Uematsu was held after the attack declined to comment on the investigation, only confirming that he was being transported to prosecutors for questioning. Plainclothes police officers were seen searching his house where yellow tape declared it a no-entry zone. The two-storey dwelling is in

HOODED TEEN SPEAKS AS AUSTRALIA ANGER ON JUVENILE ABUSE MOUNTS

SYDNEY: A teenage boy shown hooded and shackled in images from a juvenile detention centre that shocked Australia has apologized for his crimes as anger mounted over the scandal yesterday. The treatment of Dylan Voller has become the focus of outrage after graphic evidence was broadcast of prison guards assaulting mostly indigenous boys in the Northern Territory, including stripping them naked and using tear gas.

It prompted an appalled Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull to order an inquiry into the treatment of young inmates. In one video from last year, Voller, then 17, is shown hooded and shackled to a mechanical restraint chair and left alone for two hours. A former guard at the Don Dale Centre in Darwin told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, whose Four Corners programme exposed the abuse on Monday, he had seen the boy put in the chair at least three times.

Voller, who has been in and out of custody since he was 11 and is now in an adult prison, thanked the ABC for "getting the truth out there" in a hand-written letter released by his lawyer yesterday. "I would just like to thank the whole Australian community for the support you have showed for us boys as well as our families," said Voller, who has previously been convicted of crimes including car theft and robbery. "I would also like to take the opportunity to apologise to the community for my wrongs and I can't wait to get out and make up for them."

Northern Territory Chief Minister Adam Giles has insisted he was not aware of the extent of the abuse, as calls mounted for him to resign after comments he made in 2010 urging criminals to be put "in a big

concrete hole" resurfaced yesterday. The Northern Territory News headlined its front-page "Sack the lot of them", while The Australian broadsheet said in an editorial: "Juvenile detention horror a window on our shame."

Rights groups have called for the royal commission to be Australia-wide, but Turnbull ruled this out, saying it risked becoming too cum-

bersome. "This royal commission, which will be done in collaboration with the Northern Territory government, will be focused on the youth detention centres and youth detention practices in the Northern Territory that were the subject of the Four Corners program," he said yesterday.

The Northern Territory has one of the highest crime rates in

Australia, with indigenous offenders making up more than two-thirds of the prison population.

According to Amnesty International, Aboriginal children are 26 times more likely to be jailed than their non-indigenous counterparts as they struggle to deal with poor education, high unemployment rates, and substance abuse. — AFP

HK ACTIVISTS IN COURT OVER ELECTION RULES

HONG KONG: Hong Kong pro-democracy activists challenged controversial new election rules in court yesterday after candidates for an upcoming vote were asked to sign a form saying the city is an "inalienable" part of China. Critics have slammed the new stipulation as political censorship and an attempt to deter candidates in September's parliamentary elections from advocating self-determination or independence from Beijing. It comes as some young campaigners are calling for more distance or even a complete breakaway from the mainland as fears grow that freedoms in the semi-autonomous city are disappearing due to Beijing interference.

At least 13 pro-democracy candidates have refused to sign the declaration. Hong Kong's High Court said yesterday it would not make a ruling on the challenge over the legality of the form-brought by two pro-democracy political groups—before the end of the nomination process Friday, as activists had wanted. Instead the case was adjourned until August.

"The public should be angry...if candidates have to be screened based on their political views," activist Avery Ng of the League of Social Democrats told reporters, adding he was "disappointed" with the delay in the court decision. Edward Leung of Hong Kong Indigenous—a "localist" group pushing for independence from Beijing—said everyone had the right to stand. "This is definitely political censorship if someone is not approved to stand in the election,"

Leung told reporters outside court. It is not yet clear whether those candidates who have refused to sign the form will be barred from running.

Some have told local media their candidacy has been confirmed despite opting out of the declaration. Others have said they have been quizzed by election officials over their stance on independence. Leaders of several pro-independence groups have announced they are running for the legislature in September, as well as other pro-democracy campaigners who are calling for self-determination for Hong Kong.

Beijing and Hong Kong officials have repeatedly said that advocating independence goes against the city's mini constitution and that independence activists could face legal consequences. Election authorities in Hong Kong introduced the new declaration form earlier this month. It sets out three constitutional points, including the description of Hong Kong as a "local administrative region" of China. Hong Kong was returned from Britain to China in 1997 under an arrangement that guarantees civil liberties unseen on the mainland.

But concerns have grown that such freedoms are now fading. That negative sentiment was exacerbated by the disappearance last year of five Hong Kong-based booksellers from a firm that published gossipy books about leading Chinese politicians. All resurfaced on the mainland where they were investigated over trading banned books. — AFP



SEOUL: Foreign veterans of the Korean War and their family members salute during a commemorative ceremony marking the 63rd anniversary of the Armistice Agreement and UN Forces Participation in the Korean War. — AP

N KOREA FLOATS PROPAGANDA FLYERS IN RIVER FOR 1ST TIME

SEOUL: South Korea yesterday accused rival North Korea of floating propaganda leaflets down a river in the first such incident. South Korea's military discovered dozens of plastic bags, each carrying about 20 leaflets, near the estuary of Seoul's Han River close to the tense Korean border last Friday, according to the South's Defense Ministry. Seoul is only an hour's drive from the border.

The leaflets contained threats to launch missile attacks and a repeat of the North's long-running propaganda such as that the North won the 1950-53 Korean War, a ministry official said, requesting anonymity because of department rules. The war ended with no one's victory. An armistice that stopped the fighting has yet to be replaced with a peace treaty, leaving the Korean Peninsula split along the world's most heavily fortified border and at a technical state of war. Yesterday marked the 63rd anniversary of the armistice's signing.

North Korea recently warned of unspecified "physical" measures in response to a US plan to deploy an advanced missile defense system in South Korea by the end of next year. North Korea last week fired three ballistic missiles into the sea, according to Seoul defense officials. The rival Koreas resumed old-fash-

ioned, Cold War-era psychological warfare in the wake of North Korea's fourth nuclear test in January.

Seoul began blasting anti-Pyongyang propaganda broadcasts and K-pop songs from border loudspeakers in retaliation for the North's atomic detonation. Pyongyang quickly matched Seoul's campaign with its own border broadcasts and launches of balloons carrying anti-South leaflets across the border.

The latest discovery of propaganda leaflets marks the first time for North Korea to use a river to send leaflets, according to the South Korean defense official. He said North Korea is believed to have used a river because the direction of wind isn't favorable in the summer to fly propaganda balloons from north to south.

Many in South Korea believe their broadcasts could sting in Pyongyang because the rigidly controlled, authoritarian country worries that the broadcasts will demoralize front-line troops and residents and eventually weaken the grip of absolute leader Kim Jong Un. Nearly 30,000 North Koreans have fled to South Korea since the end of the Korean War, mostly for political and economic reasons. South Koreans defecting to the impoverished, authoritarian North is highly unusual. — AP



SEOUL: Vietnamese protesters hold their national flags, anti-China placards and a banner that reads: "We oppose China because they escalate tensions on the waters of the South China Sea" during a rally against China near the Chinese Embassy. — AP

PHILIPPINES LOBBIED ASEAN ON SEA ROW VERDICT: GOVT

MANILA: The Philippines said yesterday it had "vigorously" lobbied Southeast Asian nations to take a united stance critical of Beijing's claims to most of the South China Sea, but insisted a diluted statement remained a victory. After initially denying doing so, Foreign Secretary Perfecto Yasay said he lobbied his counterparts at a meeting of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Laos this week to refer to the verdict in a statement issued on Monday.

The statement avoided mentioning this month's ruling by a UN-backed tribunal in The Hague that Beijing's claims to almost all of the strategic waterway had no legal basis, instead calling merely for "self-restraint". Asked at a news conference in Manila if he pushed for ASEAN to refer to the ruling, Yasay said: "Yes, vigorously." However he said the statement was a "victory" for ASEAN, as it referred to upholding principles of international law.

Legal challenge

The Philippines, under the previous administration of Benigno Aquino, launched the legal challenge in 2013 against China's

claims to most of the sea. China insists it has sovereign rights to nearly all of the sea, including waters approaching ASEAN members the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei. Efforts to forge a united ASEAN front on the issue have crumbled in recent years as China has successfully lobbied Cambodia and Laos, which are members of the bloc but Chinese allies. The Philippines has also adopted a more moderate stance on China under the new government of President Rodrigo Duterte, who has courted closer Chinese economic and political ties since taking office on June 30.

Yasay initially said on Tuesday he had not asked ASEAN members to refer to the ruling in its end-of-meeting statement. "No. Never, never did. Please don't put words into my mouth," Yasay told reporters in Vientiane when asked if he had called for a reference. "The other countries are not part of our filing of the case before the arbitral tribunal so why would we insist that it be put in the ASEAN statement?" Back in Manila yesterday, Yasay denied making those comments. "I never said those things, all right? And please don't put words into my mouth," he told reporters. — AFP



PHILADELPHIA: Former US president Bill Clinton addresses the second day of the Democratic National Convention at the Wells Fargo Center on Tuesday. — AFP

CLINTON MAKES HISTORY WITH NOMINATION...

Continued from Page 1

Obama will also try to leverage his vast popularity among Democrats to unify a party scarred by the bruising primary campaign between Clinton and leftist Bernie Sanders. The four-day confab in Philadelphia - the City of Brotherly Love - has so far been less than fraternal.

Despite entreaties from party leaders, Sanders' supporters have booed a pastor who mentioned Clinton's name and even jeered Sanders when he did the same. Having fought his own bitter primary against Clinton eight years ago, Obama could offer a conciliatory message. But so far in the campaign, Obama's most potent role has been as a foil to Trump. Early yesterday, he told NBC that while "anything is possible" when it came to November's election, Trump appeared unprepared. "What I think is scary is a president who doesn't know their stuff and doesn't seem to have an interest in learning what they don't know," he said, referring to Trump.

Trump hit back at a press conference near Miami, essentially inviting Russia to hack into Clinton's email, and deriding Obama as "the most ignorant president in our history". "Russia, if you're listening, I hope you're able to find the 30,000 emails that are missing," Trump said, referring to emails Clinton sent and received while secretary of state but deleted on grounds they were personal and not work-related. The FBI concluded this month that

Clinton had been "extremely careless" in her handling of classified material via a private email server, but did not recommend that she face criminal charges.

Republicans see the missing emails as a smoking gun, however. Clinton's campaign fired back: "This has to be the first time that a major presidential candidate has actively encouraged a foreign power to conduct espionage against his political opponent," spokesman Jake Sullivan said. "This has gone from being a matter of curiosity, and a matter of politics, to being a national security issue."

Obama has already tried to convince voters that Trump does not have the judgment or demeanor to be commander-in-chief. The 44th president has contrasted the seriousness of the task at hand - fighting the Islamic State group, addressing high levels of gun violence, healing racial divides - with the tone of Trump's insult-laced populist campaign. Delegate-goers got another dose of that message on Monday, when First Lady Michelle Obama spoke. "I want someone with the proven strength to persevere, someone who knows this job and takes it seriously, someone who understands that the issues a president faces are not black and white and cannot be boiled down to 140 characters," she said. While the White House has posited a Clinton win as a third Obama term, a Trump presidency would almost certainly undo key parts of Obama's legacy. — AFP

MASSIVE IS BOMBING KILLS 44 IN SYRIAN KURDISH CITY

QAMISHLI, Syria: A massive bomb blast claimed by the Islamic State group killed at least 44 people and wounded dozens yesterday in the Kurdish-majority Syrian city of Qamishli. It was the largest and deadliest attack to hit the city since the beginning of Syria's conflict in March 2011. Syrian state media gave a toll of 44 dead and 140 injured in the bombing, which hit a western district of the city where several local Kurdish ministries are located.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitor gave a toll of 48 dead, adding that children and women were among those killed. Kurdish officials said the attack was carried out by a suicide bomber driving an explosives-laden truck, adding that the blast detonated a nearby fuel container. An AFP journalist saw devastating scenes in the bomb's aftermath, with distraught civilians, some covered in blood, staggering through rubble past twisted metal and the burned-out remains of cars.

One man running along the streets was completely covered in blood, his shirt drenched red. He was gripping the arm of a small boy whose face was grey and red with blood and dust. They ran past a hysterical woman who was crying and screaming, her clothes torn. A girl and boy stood next to her, apparently in shock. Children could be heard screaming as smoke rose from small fires that continued to burn amongst the rubble. Civilians and local security forces with guns slung across their backs worked to carry the dead and wounded from the remains of damaged and destroyed buildings.

US Probes Civilian Casualties

The Islamic State group claimed the attack in a statement circulated on social media, calling it "a response to the crimes committed by the crusader coalition aircraft" in the town of Manbij, a bastion of the jihadist group in Syria's Aleppo province. Kurdish fighters have been a key force battling the jihadists in north and northeastern Syria and are the main component in the Syrian Democratic Forces alliance currently seeking to oust IS from Manbij. They are backed by air strikes launched by the US-led coalition fighting IS in Syria and Iraq.

Civilians have been caught up in the fighting and yesterday, 800 residents fled the town for areas under SDF control, the Observatory said. Also Wednesday, a spokesman for the US-led coalition said it had opened a formal investigation to

determine whether its strikes near Manbij last week had killed civilians. The Observatory reported that 56 civilians were killed in strikes as they fled a village near Manbij on July 19, and Colonel Chris Garver said there was sufficient credible evidence of civilian victims to warrant a probe.

Qamishli is under the shared control of the Syrian regime and Kurdish authorities, who have declared zones of "autonomous administration" across parts of north and northeast Syria. It has regularly been targeted in bomb attacks, many of which have been claimed by IS. But a source in the Kurdish Asayesh security forces told AFP that "this is the largest explosion the city has ever seen".

The area that was targeted houses several Kurdish administration buildings including the defense ministry and was considered a secure zone, with multiple checkpoints and security measures in place. "This blast is the biggest in Qamishli in terms of both the toll and the damage since the beginning of the war," Observatory director Rami Abdel Rahman said.

Hospitals Swamped

Local officials said hospitals in the city had been swamped with casualties from the attack. And Syrian state television carried an appeal from the governor of Hasakeh province, where Qamishli is located, urging residents to "go to public and private hospitals to donate blood for the victims of the terrorist bombings". More than 280,000 people have been killed in Syria since the war began with anti-government protests that were met with a regime crackdown.

In Aleppo city, at least 18 people were killed in government air strikes and artillery fire Wednesday on rebel-held neighborhoods in the east of the city, the Observatory said. The Syrian army, meanwhile, officially announced it had severed "all the supply routes and crossings used by terrorists to bring mercenaries, weapons and ammunition into eastern neighborhoods of Aleppo". The opposition-held east has been effectively under siege since July 7, when government forces advanced within firing range of the sole remaining route in. Aleppo was once the country's economic powerhouse but it has been ravaged by war and divided roughly between government control in the west and rebel control in the east since mid-2012. — AFP



Mountains from the South African Drakensberg mountain range on the outskirts of Harrismith are seen covered with snow after an unusual cold front gripped the country yesterday. A cold front moving in from the west brought snow to parts of KwaZulu-Natal and the Free State. Stormy weather across the country has caused chaos and disaster. — AFP

MPS DEMAND IRAN APOLOGY FOR OFFENDING...

Continued from Page 1

Meanwhile, the criminal court yesterday sentenced controversial MP Abdulhameed Dashti to 14 years and six months in jail in absentia for insulting Saudi Arabia and Bahrain and urging people to join Lebanon's Hezbollah. The court sentenced Dashti, who has been living in Britain for the past four months, to 11 years and six months for insulting Saudi Arabia on Twitter, calling on people to join the Lebanese group Hezbollah and spreading false news about alleged Saudi interference in Kuwaiti institutions. In a second case, he was sentenced to three years in jail for insulting Bahrain and the 2011 Saudi military intervention in the Gulf nation to assist the government against protests.

Dashti, a staunch supporter of Tehran and Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad, described the verdicts on his Twitter account as "very strange" and "oppressive", and vowed that he will not back down. He did not say whether he will come back to contest the jail terms.

According to the ruling, if Dashti returns to the country, he will be arrested immediately to start serving the sentence. He will not be able however to challenge the rulings while he remains overseas.

Dashti also faces several other similar cases of mainly insulting Saudi Arabia on Twitter or issuing statements to the media, accusing the Saudi government and the Wahhabi religious school, predominant in the kingdom, of spreading terrorism in the region and the world. MPs repeatedly debated Dashti's controversial statements against Saudi Arabia and demanded in a session a few months ago to revoke his membership in the house. But eventually, the Assembly accepted a letter from Dashti claiming he was undergoing medical treatment in Britain.

In May last year, Dashti filed a request to question the foreign minister over Kuwait's participation in the Saudi-led attack on Yemen's Houthi rebels, but the Assembly rejected the move, saying it was against the constitution. Dashti was elected in the July 2013 general polls.

SAUDIS, KUWAIT FILE COMPLAINT AT UN...

Continued from Page 1

the Saudi-Kuwaiti submerged divided zone, which may lead to confrontations that threaten peace and security in this region, noted the joint document. It is known that Saudi Arabia and Kuwait solely have exclusive rights to explore and benefit from the hydrocarbon wealth in the Dorra field and the divided submerged area.

The governments of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait express "their deep demurral and dissatisfaction about these repeated assaults and transgressions; and demand from

the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to stop these transgressions and assaults in order to preserve their interests," it stressed. It also asked for negotiations to begin with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait as one party, and Iran as the other party, to determine the maritime delimitation separating the waters of the divided submerged area and the waters of the Iran in accordance with the provisions of international law. Nevertheless, both the governments of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait did not receive any response from the government of Iran despite their repeated call for negotiations to determine these borders, it noted. — KUNA

Kuwait Times

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Focus

'MAID DETECTIVES'
SEEK TO SAVE WOMEN
FROM TRAFFICKING

By Beh Lih Yi

Rima Jayanti has not had formal training in detective work but with her sharp eye and gut instinct, her task is to spot Indonesian women at Jakarta's bustling airport in danger of being sent abroad to a life of domestic servitude. Making her rounds, the 23-year-old quickly points out groups of women likely heading abroad to work as maids. "We can tell from their appearance - sometimes with a bit of instinct too - who are the potential victims and where they are going," Jayanti said.

Domestic helpers going to the Middle East tend to wear an Islamic headscarf, be middle-aged and elusive when asked about their plans, she said. Women travelling to Hong Kong or Taiwan meanwhile usually have short hair, wear sneakers and are younger. Some 2.3 million Indonesians are working as maids in wealthier countries in Asia and the Middle East, risking abuse including the non-payment of wages and physical assault.

Jayanti is part of a small team of "maid detectives" from Jakarta-based rights group Migrant Care, tracking down potential victims of human trafficking, and offering advice to others leaving of their own free will on how to look after themselves. They have had some small successes since they began work last year. They rescued a woman who had been brought to the airport by a maid agent, only to discover she was about to be sent to Saudi Arabia against her will.

Women often approach a maid agent to help them secure a placement abroad and handle the paperwork. While most work within the law, some have been accused of trafficking women. "Some women do not know where they are going and what type of job they are getting into, making them vulnerable to human trafficking," said Migrant Care's advocacy program manager Mike Verawati.

High Demand for Indonesian Maids

Maids make up more than a third of the six million Indonesians working abroad, attracted by promises of higher salaries. Last year, migrant workers sent home some \$9.4 billion in remittances, according to official data. But stories abound of maids being sent abroad against their will, enduring horrific abuse and living in slave-like conditions. A Hong Kong woman was convicted last year of beating her Indonesian maid, denying her food and confiscating her passport.

Jakarta last year summoned the Saudi Arabian ambassador after two Indonesian maids were executed in the Gulf state within a week, one for killing her allegedly abusive employer. Complaints of mistreatment of Indonesians in the Middle East and the ensuing diplomatic rows prompted Jakarta announced in May 2015 to permanently ban maids from moving to the region. Maids already working there were allowed to remain.

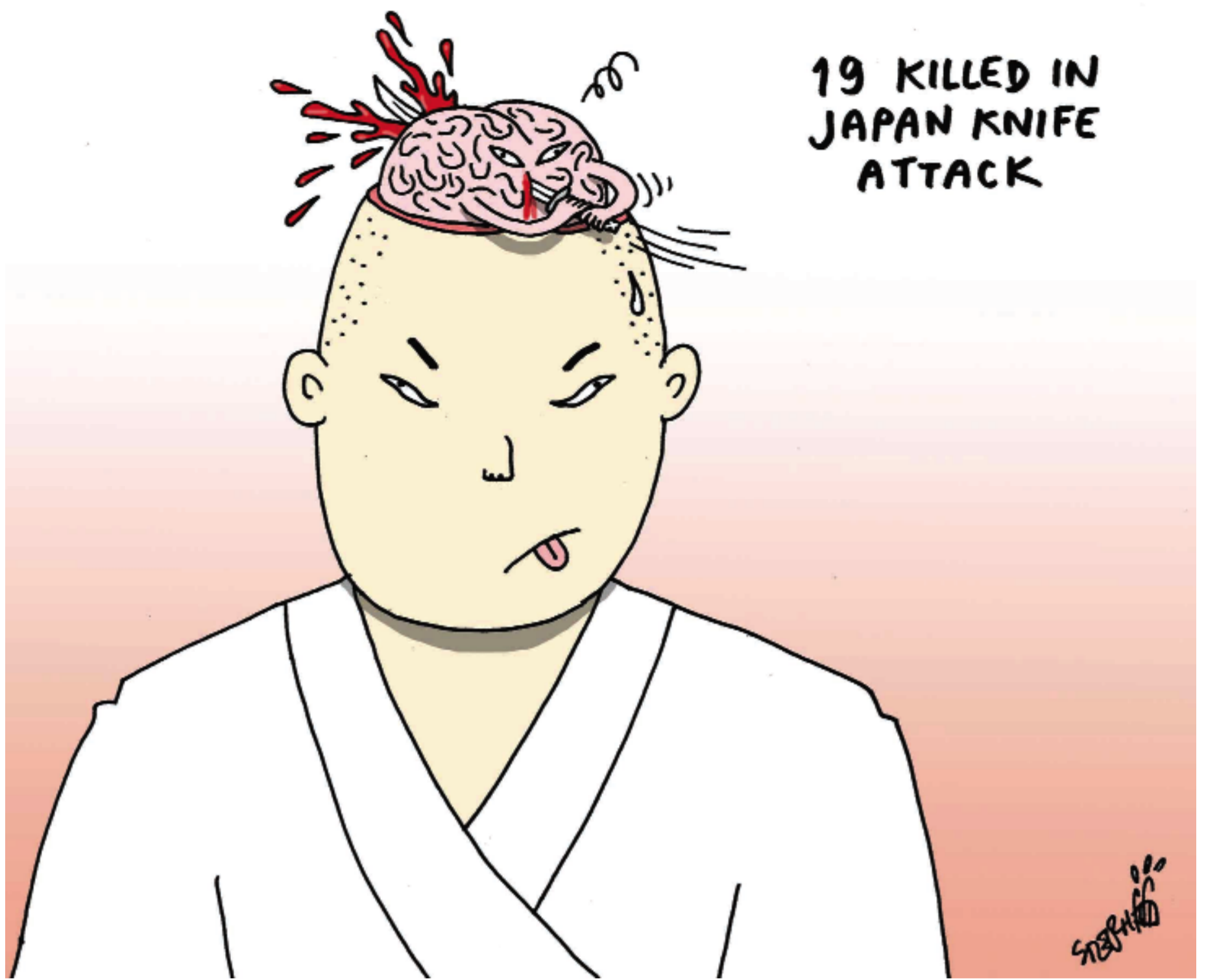
But groups like Migrant Care and the National Advocacy Network of Domestic Workers - two of the Indonesia's leading organizations fighting for maids' rights - have criticized the ban. They say it restricts women's rights to employment and puts them in greater danger by driving underground an industry which already has a dark side to it. In March, Indonesian police busted a human trafficking ring which allegedly sent up to 600 Indonesians to work as domestic helpers in the Middle East, local media reported.

'I Like Working in Saudi'

A Migrant Care survey found 1,020 women interviewed at the airport between March 2015 and May this year were heading abroad to work as maids, with the majority going to the Middle East. Most travelled on tourist or special pilgrimage visas, lured by promises of salaries of at least \$300 a month. Sri, who only gave her first name and has worked in Saudi Arabia in the past, said she was heading back in the hope of finding employment there again. "I like working there - my work can support my family," the 40-year old said, wearing a white headscarf and travelling with 16 other women. She was spotted by the "maid detectives". As Sri spoke, a maid agent lurked in the background, taking photos of her talking.

Officials from the foreign ministry and the government's migrants' protection agency, BNP2TKI, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation they have advised domestic helpers against travelling illegally. "Maybe one or two are leaving illegally." — Reuters

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CHINA EMERGES MORE MUSCULAR AFTER ASEAN MEET

By Vijay Joshi

Daring to take on China in a territorial dispute in the South China Sea, the Philippines went to an international tribunal for justice, and won big. But it turned out to be a pyrrhic victory. Beijing came back with such ferocity and manipulative diplomacy that other Southeast Asian countries that have similar disputes with it are apparently backing down. One by one, their positions became clear at meetings this week of Asia-Pacific and Southeast Asian nations, a gathering that was supposed to unanimously call out China for a host of actions in the resource-rich South China Sea - building artificial islands and military airstrips, sending warships, staging live-firing exercises and shooting away fishermen from other countries.

And so, the four-day conclave in Vientiane, the Laotian capital, ended Tuesday with China's muscles bulging more than ever, and the vaunted unity of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations in disarray. "Neither China nor ASEAN emerged from the Vientiane meetings with honor," said Ian Storey, a senior fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, a Singapore-based think tank. "It's a sad state of affairs when expectations of ASEAN being able to do anything to lower tensions in the South China Sea are zero, and instead the focus is on whether it can get its act together."

Philippine Foreign Secretary Perfecto Yasay Jr sought to put a positive spin on the developments. "Whether or not you will say that this is a triumph of China or a triumph of the Philippines, or a defeat of China or a defeat of the Philippines, the fact is clear," he told reporters in Manila on Wednesday. "This is a victory for ASEAN for upholding the very principles of international law and ... more importantly, pursuing our negotiations in the dispute in a peaceful manner." "Be that as it may, the

actual resolution of this dispute between China and the Philippines is a matter between China and the Philippines," he said, reflecting a position that suits China perfectly.

Coup de Grace

The first coup de grace China dealt was at an ASEAN foreign ministers' meeting, where it successfully prevented a joint communique from mentioning the July 12 ruling by the Hague-based arbitration panel in favor of the Philippines. While the communique did express concerns about the tensions in the South China Sea, it did so without naming China. A milestone around the neck of ASEAN - Southeast Asia's main grouping - is that it can issue statements only when there is consensus among all 10 members. China leveraged that by ensuring that Cambodia and Laos would not provide that consensus. Both countries receive massive aid from China, which recently announced a \$600 million package to Cambodia.

"As an association, ASEAN loses power and relevance when it punts on the most important regional issues," said John Ciorciari, a Southeast Asia expert at the University of Michigan. "Yet ASEAN operates by consensus, and when push comes to shove, national interests tend to trump regional solidarity. Aid has won China some close friends in Southeast Asia, and Cambodia in particular has been quite willing to cast vetoes on communique language inimical to Chinese interests," he said.

China does not accept the arbitration panel's ruling, and says all disputes should be settled bilaterally through negotiations. It did not participate in the panel's hearings, and insists that almost all of the South China Sea, which is ringed by claimants China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, the Philippines and Taiwan, belongs to it historically. It also accuses outside parties - the United States, Japan and Australia - of

needing ASEAN countries and raising tensions. After ASEAN's failure to rebuke China, those three countries issued a joint statement in Vientiane saying they strongly oppose "any coercive unilateral actions that could alter the status quo and increase tensions".

China lashed out at them yesterday, with Foreign Minister Wang Yi saying in a statement that the three countries were "fanning the flames" of regional tension. "Now it is the time to test whether you are peacekeepers or troublemakers," he said. Diplomats who attended the Laos meetings said it was interesting to see that claimant countries appeared less enthusiastic than others in wanting to rebuke China. Even the Philippines was not too forceful in asking for strong language in the joint ASEAN statement. It repeatedly pointed out that the ruling by the arbitration panel was the result of its "unilateral" lawsuit, implying that ASEAN should not get involved.

Malaysia's foreign minister didn't even show up for the meetings. At a later meeting of ASEAN and Asia-Pacific nations, Brunei took pains to praise China's leadership, according to diplomats who attended the meeting. And on Tuesday, Vietnam's deputy foreign minister, Le Hoai Trung, told AP that his country prefers bilateral dialogue with China, which Beijing wants. The Philippines is in a tight spot because even though it went to the tribunal and won, that was under the previous government of Benigno Aquino III. President Rodrigo Duterte, Aquino's successor, has made friendly overtures to Beijing and is leaning toward bilateral negotiations.

But the bottom line is that the tribunal's decision, although legally binding, is non-enforceable. The arbitration panel didn't take a position on who owns the disputed territories, which include reefs and rocky outcroppings in the vast sea. It concluded only that many of them are

legally rocks, even if they've been built into islands, and therefore do not include the international rights to develop the surrounding waters.

Concessions

Now it is up to China to decide what concessions it wants to make, and how much pressure the smaller countries can take. "At this point, it (the ruling) is not a magic stick ... it's not a solution to everything, but rather it needs to be combined with other measures," said Tran Viet Thai, deputy director of the Institute of Strategic Studies, a Vietnamese government think tank.

China is showing no signs of slowing down its efforts to exert control over the South China Sea. State-run companies are joining forces to offer luxury cruises in the waters. Three companies dealing in shipping, tourism and construction will contribute to running as many as eight cruise liners by June 2017 to service a region through which an estimated \$5 trillion in global trade passes each year. They're also building four docks, which will be able to handle 2 million passengers a year.

One of China's main cellphone carriers, China Telecommunications Corp, has extended 4G service to several disputed South China Sea islands. Its competitor China Mobile Communications Corp already offers similar services. Along with creating new islands by piling sand on top of coral reefs, China has built airstrips, harbors and lighthouses that is says will benefit fishermen and ship owners who transit the strategic waterway. Clearly, China is not giving up the sea - tribunal or no tribunal - yet the ruling will continue to hang over it like a dagger. "It's impossible for (the ruling) to be irrelevant," US Secretary of State John Kerry told reporters in Manila, where he made a stop after the Laos meetings. But "we are not trying to create a confrontation. We are trying to create a solution," he said. — AP

INDIA FARMERS SEIZE LAND REGISTRATION OFFER

By Manipadma Jena

When the Indian state of Telangana announced a three-week window for free registration of land that had exchanged hands via handwritten notes on plain paper, the offer triggered more than a million applications. All over the southern Indian state the sale of land on notes known as "sada bainamas" has been customary because of widespread inability to pay the registration fees, illiteracy or ignorance of the law. Around a million farmers in Telangana lack secure title to land bought this way, according to a 2014 survey carried out in the state by Landesa, a U.S. based charity.

Guram Muttaya is a beneficiary of the registration drive and one of many farmers who occupy land they have been cultivating for 30 to 40 years on the strength of informal documents. "Registering the land will bring me government agriculture loans, compensation for crop damages and crop insurance too," Muttaya told the Thomson Reuters Foundation, holding up a torn piece of paper bearing a signature.

The piece of paper is his only proof of ownership of a fifth of a hectare of land he bought in Kannayapally village 27 years ago for \$67 and whose market value has risen to \$3,000. Studies have shown that broadly distributed secure land rights for farmers can help to pull families out of poverty and boost sustainable economic development.

No Records

As many as 70-85 percent of those who own land pur-

chased on plain paper are poor farmers who rely on the land for their livelihoods, according to a government-commissioned report in 2006, the latest data available. Absent from government land records and lacking a document proving legal title, the farmers are never recognized as legal owners and are deprived of institutional benefits over decades. More than a third of Telangana's 35 million people depend on land cultivation for their livelihood.

High labor costs, low mechanization and reliance on rain for irrigation in more than half of cultivated land in the semi-arid state have left many farmers struggling to make ends meet. Meanwhile, the property sector has boomed and the price of land - like Muttaya's plot - has risen steeply, prompting some descendants of those who sold their land on plain papers to refuse to honor "sada bainamas". Almost a million land-related complaints have been filed at the state's revenue offices over the two previous years, according to the Landesa survey.

Digital Records

Since last year, in a bid to clean up its land records, the state has been digitalizing and storing individual records using the Telangana Land Records Management System. E Venkatachary, a land and revenue official in Nalgonda district, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation the new online application process would help poor farmers. "This time the scheme is wholly targeted at the disadvantaged and tribal farmers," he said. "To ensure transparent land records for them in future and eliminate graft that illiterate farmers may be victims of, we intro-

duced an online applications process at dedicated customer service centres."

Electronic applications include biometric authentication linked to the unique identification number (IUD) created for all Indian citizens. "At each stage, as we scrutinize applications, upload notices to be served to applicants, and finally generate titling certificates, we can only log in with our IUD authentication," said Chandra Vadana, a tax inspector in the village of Parthy.

Venkatachary said "sada bainama" transactions constitute 5 to 10 percent of agricultural land in most villages. "It (sada bainama) is the backbone of the land administrative system as it pertains to poorest of farmers and regularizing their right is important," Venkatachary said. Previous offers by the government to register informal land sales had attracted far fewer applicants than the one launched in June, with the one prior to that, in 2009, garnering just 70,000 applications. This time an awareness campaign spread the message, said Venkatachary.

Landesa produced a book about "sada bainama" that explained the process of registration in the local language and the scheme was publicized by the media, he said. There are still hurdles to be overcome though as many of the applications are likely to be found ineligible, or could lead to legal disputes. Tax inspector Vadana said in at least 20 percent of applications, descendants of the sellers were disputing that their relative ever sold the land, alleging the signature was false or demanding the market price for land occupied for up to 20 years. — Reuters

POULSEN TURNS DOWN RIO TO PREPARE FOR BUNDESLIGA

BERLIN: Striker Yussuf Poulsen has turned down the chance to play for Denmark at the Rio Olympics to help get newly promoted RB Leipzig ready for the Bundesliga season. The 22-year-old was selected for the Danish team to play at the Rio Games from August 5 to 21, but the forward has opted to stay behind to help Leipzig prepare for their first season in Germany's top flight, which opens on August 26. The final for the men's Olympic football tournament takes place on August 20 and, had Denmark progressed that far, Poulsen would have struggled to be included when Leipzig kick off their first Bundesliga campaign the following weekend. Having only been created in 2009, when energy drink manufacturer Red Bull took charge, RB Leipzig have won three promotions in the last seven seasons to reach the Bundesliga. And Poulsen wants to be included for their opening match against Hoffenheim on August 28. "It wasn't an easy decision for me, for the last few weeks I have been thinking a lot about my goals and made my decision after some constructive talks with those in charge at the club," he told German daily Bild. — AFP



SONNY BILL WILLIAMS TARGETS OLYMPIC GOLD FOR NZ

WELLINGTON: Sonny Bill Williams passes for a superstar in this part of the world where rugby holds a rare pre-eminence over all other sports.

When he competes in rugby sevens at the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro next month it's likely his light, which shines brightly in New Zealand, will be eclipsed by stars in sports with a bigger international reach.

But few athletes competing in these Olympics could claim to approach Williams' versatility and by the end, if rugby sevens has captured a wider audience, Williams likely will be among its most recognized names. When New Zealand Rugby appealed to its high-profile players to compete in sevens at Rio, Williams was one of only two All Blacks to answer the call: the other, Liam Messam, didn't make the final cut.

Williams has already to his credit two Rugby World Cup winner's medals, has competed at a Rugby League World Cup and also has collected titles in Super Rugby and Australia's National Rugby League. He has been, also, the New Zealand professional heavyweight boxing champion.

To demonstrate prowess in rugby's three formats - rugby union, rugby league and rugby sevens - and to excel also at boxing, even in the face of moderate opposition, proves that Williams is an athlete of rare scope and talent.

The magnitude of his profile and popularity should have brought him a windfall in endorsements, yet he rarely promotes anything other than charitable causes. And he has made decisions throughout his career which have come at a cost.

As a much younger man he quit a contract in Australian rugby league to play rugby union in France for the Toulon club, which is famous for its lavish salaries. That hardened the view among detractors that he flips from one club or sport to another, pursuing only his own interests.

But Williams, who grew up with his parents and four siblings in subsidized housing in the Auckland suburb of Mount Albert, says his career choices have never been based on financial considerations.

"My manager in my early 20s put me into a bad investment and I was in debt," Williams recently told the New Zealand Herald newspaper. "People thought I was living the dream in Toulon but I had to pay \$750,000 to get out of my (rugby league) contract."

OFFERS

Williams recently signed a three-year deal with New Zealand Rugby in the face of



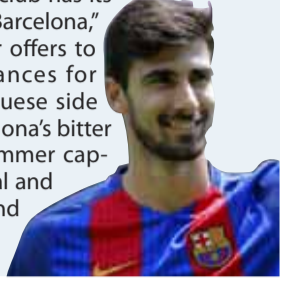
LONDON: In this Oct. 24, 2015 file photo, New Zealand's Sonny Bill Williams runs with the ball during the Rugby World Cup semifinal match between New Zealand and South Africa at Twickenham Stadium in London. Williams passes for a superstar in this part of the world where rugby holds a rare pre-eminence over all other sports. — AP

EXTRA SUBSTITUTE TRIAL SET FOR FA CUP'S LATTER STAGES

LONDON: England's Football Association plans to let teams make an additional, fourth, substitution in extra-time from the quarter-finals onwards of next season's FA Cup, the governing body said yesterday. The rule change, which still requires approval from the International Football Association Board (IFAB), the game's global law-makers, will see teams who have made all three changes during the regulation 90 minutes of a quarter-final, semi-final or final tie permitted one more substitute during the 30 minutes of extra-time. FA chief executive Martin Glenn said on www.thefa.com: "With the Cup now adopting a straight knock-out format from the quarter-finals onwards (there will be no replays in any matches from the stage), the introduction of a fourth substitute in extra-time will bring extra intrigue and interest." The additional substitute scheme is the latest planned change to the FA Cup, the world's oldest senior knockout football competition, after officials decided to banish replays from the last eight onwards in a bid to reduce fixture congestion. — AP

BARCELONA UNVEIL NEW SIGNING ANDRE GOMES

BARCELONA: Barcelona paraded Portuguese midfielder Andre Gomes at the Camp Nou yesterday after his 55-million-euro capture from Valencia on a five-year deal. The 22-year-old, part of Portugal's European Championship-winning side, has a release clause of 100 million euros (\$110 mn, £84 mn) and will cost an initial 35 million euros, with 20 million in add-ons. Gomes, who agreed the move last week, said he chose the Spanish champions because he felt it gave him the best chance to progress as a player. "Every club has its own personality. The one that suits me the best is Barcelona," the player said, adding that he had rebuffed other offers to move to other clubs. Gomes made 77 appearances for Valencia in two seasons after joining from Portuguese side Benfica. He was also believed to be a target of Barcelona's bitter rivals Real Madrid. Gomes is Barcelona's fourth summer capture, after they re-signed Denis Suarez from Villarreal and snapped up defenders Samuel Umtiti from Lyon and Lucas Digne from PSG. — AFP



Chris Froome

FROM YELLOW TO GOLD, FROOME EYES ROAD TO GLORY

LONDON: Chris Froome underlined his love of yellow with a third Tour de France triumph on Sunday, now the British rider has his eyes on Olympic glory alongside the golden sands of the Copacabana.

The 31-year-old missed out on gold at London 2012, settling for a bronze in the time trial, but looks almost unbeatable at present and will be the man to overcome in the Rio road races. Froome's victory in the Tour's individual time trial last week, a brutal 17km uphill slog, was so dominant that he finished 21 seconds ahead of second-placed Dutchman Tom Dumoulin who could miss Rio after breaking his wrist in France.

So the 31-year-old will be clear favourite for TT gold over two laps of Rio's 29.8km course boasting the 1.2km Grumari hill, at an average gradient of seven percent, and the 2.1km Grota Funda climb plus a high-speed section next to the Atlantic. "It almost feels like a TT through the Ardennes at points," Team Sky rider Froome, who claimed a third Tour de France title in four years on Sunday, said.

"It's not a mountain TT because you have this flat section you do twice. Ordinarily I would say a climber should do really well but with this flat section you need someone who can really hold the speed up at 55kmh on the flat. I really liked it." The time trials will be held on Aug. 10, with the women doing just one lap of the 29.8km circuit.

INTRIGUING SPECTACLE

Before that, though, the men's and women's road races taking place on the first weekend of the Games will provide an intriguing and unpredictable spectacle set against the backdrop of Rio's lush landscape.

The 144-strong men's race on Aug. 6 will tackle 256.5km, taking in four laps of the Grumari loop, a tricky cobbled section, and three loops of the 'Canoas/Vista Circuit' including an 8.9km climb, a fast descent and a 20km flat to the finish. The 67-rider women's race, over half the distance, will see Britain's world road champion Lizzie Armitstead and Dutch Olympic champion Marianne Vos likely battling for gold. Froome, bidding to do what no man has ever done by winning the road race and TT at the same Games, cannot count on his usual selfless Team Sky support for the mass-start race that begins and finishes in Flamengo Park.

The five-man British team, like those from other powerhouse nations, will probably work together to maximise medal prospects, but fellow Sky riders Geraint Thomas and Ian Stannard have eyes on the podium as will Adam Yates, who finished fourth on the Tour, and Steve Cummings who brilliantly won stage seven. Italian former Tour de France winner Vincenzo Nibali, Tour runner-up Romain Bardet of France, Spain's Alejandro Valverde, Poland's mountain man Rafal Majka, Portugal's Rui Costa,

Belgium's Greg Van Avermaet and Froome's trusty Dutch Team Sky protector Wout Poels will all be in the mix too.

FANS' FEAST

Australian Richie Porte is another rider to watch and his team mate Simon Clarke, a late call-up for the injured Simon Gerrans, said the race could be a feast for fans. "It's going to be one of the most unique one-day races we've ever seen," Clarke, who said he will ride for Porte, forecast. "It's going to be chaos."

Slovakia's road world champion Peter Sagan is likely to concentrate on the cross-country event having deemed the road race profile not favourable.

Froome though, like most of the top riders, has already familiarised himself with the rolling Rio course and liked what he saw. Having raced lightly early in the year with Rio a big priority, he has plenty left in the tank.

"The second circuit, you literally go right next to one of the Favelas there," he said at Sky's training camp in Mallorca this year. "It'll be an amazing experience."

"I just felt if there was a one-day course I could win, it would look something like this." "Having said that, it's such a complicated thing. You can't rely on too much teamwork with four team mates and that amount of climbing. It's every man for himself." — Reuters

DURANT SHINES IN FIRST GAME AT NEW HOME ARENA

OAKLAND: Oh yeah, Kevin Durant fully planned on putting up the initial shot for the U.S. as he played his first game at Oracle Arena since joining the Golden State Warriors.

Kyrie Irving promised to get the ball in his hands to do so, too. Cheered all night long by his basketball-crazed new fan base, Durant knocked down a 3-pointer on the Americans' first touch and slammed home a dunk the very next time down the floor. Then, another pretty one-handed jam just a few minutes after that. He scored the first 10 points for the United States. What a performance for Golden State's newest big star to help lead the US Olympic team past China 107-57 on Tuesday night for a third dominant victory in as many exhibition games.

"It was amazing. The atmosphere was great, energy was great. The fans showed me major love, so I appreciate that," he said. "It was good to get out there in front of them and play well."

Durant, who finalized his two-year contract with the Warriors on July 8, scored all 13 of his

points during a 131/2-minute span of the first half while playing his first game at his new home, Oracle Arena.

He was the first American player back on the floor after halftime to get in some more shots, all while Warriors general manager Bob Myers stood close by along the sideline.

Booted in Los Angeles a couple days back, Durant received a far friendlier reception in the Bay Area he will now call home. He emerged for pregame warmups to huge roars. He departed the court before the game to a swarm of autograph hounds hanging over the railings in the tunnel - and kindly obliged. One person held a sign that read, "KD is not a Villain." "Certainly you wouldn't want to be introduced after KD in line," said coach Mike Krzyzewski, noting Durant's big defensive strides. "The crowd, the welcoming for Kevin was fantastic. I know he appreciated it very much." Durant received a rousing standing ovation when introduced along with Warriors All-Stars Draymond Green and Klay

Thompson. Also cheered was former Golden State forward Harrison Barnes, part of this past season's runner-up team that squandered a 3-1 series lead to the Cleveland Cavaliers to miss out on a repeat title.

SUPPORT

The sellout crowd went nuts again when Durant checked back into the game at the 2:32 mark of the third quarter. "I didn't lose sleep over today. I just wanted to be myself. ... I knew I was going to pull the first shot since like yesterday. Luckily it went in," he said. "I'm not going to lie, it felt a little weird for these fans to be cheering me on like that obviously being somewhere for so long and then making a change."

Krzyzewski's latest star-studded roster sure looks untouchable just more than a week before the Rio Games begin. DeMarcus Cousins had 21 points and 11 rebounds, Carmelo Anthony scored 20 points and Thompson added 15 points with four 3-point

ers and five assists.

Chants of "M-V-P! M-V-P!" greeted Durant in the building where Stephen Curry has won the past two NBA MVPs, becoming this first unanimous winner last season.

Curry - who opted out of playing for the Americans in their Rio Olympic run - had a courtside seat to watch with his wife, Ayesha. He put on a little shooting show after the game. Durant took a moment to chat with Curry. Warriors assistant coach and former member of the Thunder staff Ron Adams was an early arrival to watch Durant's warmup routine. At his introductory news conference, Durant joked, "Ron Adams was the only reason I came."

"Being one of the best players in the world, he's easy to play with," Krzyzewski said. Before joining Golden State, Durant and the Oklahoma City Thunder blew a 3-1 lead to the Warriors in the Western Conference finals. He is ready to chase a championship with Curry and Co. Green, joined on the court by Durant

and Thompson, took the microphone before tipoff to thank the fans. "We appreciate the support," he said. "We look forward to going on to Rio and winning the gold."

It will be the second straight Olympics the Americans have three teammates on the roster. Durant, James Harden and Russell Westbrook represented the US four years ago at the London Games.

The next stop for Krzyzewski's team will be in Chicago to face Venezuela on Friday night at United Center before wrapping up its pre-Olympic tour against Nigeria on Monday in Houston. He wants the Americans to tone down a little bit of the flash that he considered his players having too much fun.

China, which lost to the Americans 106-57 on Sunday, and the US also meet in their Olympic opener Aug. 6. A moment of silence was held for former Warriors great Nate Thurmond, a Hall of Famer who died earlier this month at age 74 after a short bout with leukemia. — AP

EX-GERMAN FA BOSS NIERSBACH TO APPEAL FIFA BAN

BERLIN: Wolfgang Niersbach, the former president of the German Football Association (DFB), said yesterday that he will appeal the one-year ban imposed on him by FIFA's ethics committee. The 65-year-old was banned on Monday over misconduct surrounding Germany's successful 2006 World Cup bid.

Niersbach resigned from the German FA last November amid accusations the DFB used a slush fund of 10 million Swiss

francs (6.7 million euros, \$8 million, according to the exchange rate at that time) in 2000 to buy the right to host the tournament. Niersbach confirmed reports to SID, an AFP subsidiary, that he wants "to lodge an appeal after consultation with my lawyer" and wants to "get written reasons for the judgment if nothing else".

FIFA's ethics committee found Niersbach guilty of failing to report findings about possible unethical conduct and

conflicts of interest during the bidding process. In 2006, the former sports journalist was the vice-president of the 2006 World Cup organising committee and was in charge of media and marketing. Niersbach says he has "acknowledged and regretted" his mistakes, but described the punishment as "inappropriate and excessive". He had hoped to have his name cleared before the hearing in Zurich, although investigators had wanted a two-

year ban. Niersbach had insisted that quitting his job should have been punishment enough because he was not directly accused of paying bribes or financially benefiting from corruption.

The ethics committee suspension has forced his immediate removal from posts he currently holds on the FIFA Council and UEFA executive committee. FIFA opened a probe on March 22 targeting six people including Niersbach and Franz

Beckenbauer, the German football legend and World Cup organising committee chief, over their roles in the bidding process, amid allegations of bribery.

The FIFA investigation followed the release of a report commissioned by the DFB which found that Germany may have bought votes to secure the tournament. The report linked Beckenbauer to a suspect deal with disgraced former FIFA bigwig Jack Warner. — AFP

SHILTON NO LONGER VIEWS HART AS ENGLAND'S NO 1

COVENTRY: Joe Hart's below-par performances at Euro 2016 mean he should no longer be considered an automatic choice as England's number one goalkeeper, according to former international great Peter Shilton. England were surprisingly knocked out by rank outsiders Iceland in the last 16 in France last month and Manchester City keeper Hart acknowledged he "didn't perform personally to the level that's required to push through to the quarter-finals". "It wasn't a good tournament for Joe, his concentration levels didn't seem to be great," Shilton told Reuters in an interview while playing in this week's Farmfoods British Par-3 Golf Championship at Nailcote Hall near Coventry. "I think maybe he's come back to the pack, alongside Jack Butland and Fraser Forster, and it's all to play for now. All goalkeepers make mistakes but the best ones make fewer and he obviously came unstuck at the Euros."

Shilton is England's most capped keeper, having made 125 appearances for his country between 1971-90. The twice former European Cup winner with Nottingham Forest in 1979 and 1980 believes Hart, 29, is over-rated. "I've always said I don't think Joe is as good as a lot of people think he is," said the 66-year-old Shilton. "He's a good keeper but he's prone to making errors, and not just for England. "There's competition now and in my eyes he's not an automatic choice at the start of this season. "New manager Sam Allardyce has reportedly said that Joe was too highly strung in the tunnel before games in the Euros and he is going to tell him to calm

down but after 60-odd games for England you should know that anyway."

Shilton said Stoke City keeper Butland and Southampton rival Forster were getting better all the time. Butland's chances of going to Euro 2016 were wrecked when he fractured his ankle in a 3-2 friendly win over Germany in Berlin in March. "I think they're both improving," said Shilton in reference to the two England goalkeeping understudies. "They've both had some bad luck."

"Butland was very unlucky when he injured his ankle but I believe he's got character and will come back strongly this year."

Shilton did not exactly give a ringing endorsement to the Football Association's decision this month to bring in Allardyce as manager to replace Roy Hodgson. "A lot of people may be looking at a couple of things, a) Sam has never won a big trophy and b) the style of football he plays," said the former Southampton, Stoke, Leicester City and Derby County keeper. "Sometimes though a manager can only play a style with the players he's got. Sam's an Englishman, he's experienced, he's come up through the ranks ... and he seems a logical choice. "You do want an Englishman in charge but by the same token you want the right man in charge," said Shilton. "We could maybe have put in Harry Redknapp, who plays a better type of football, with a younger man under him."

"But he's been out of the game for a couple of years now and that's probably gone against him. Hopefully Sam can pick up the debris left from the Euros." — Reuters



SHENZHEN: Borussia Dortmund's players attend a training session with teammates in Shenzhen, south China's Guangdong province yesterday, ahead of the International Champions Cup football match between Manchester City and Borussia Dortmund. — AFP

UNGRATEFUL HIGUAIN 'BETRAYED' NAPOLI

MILAN: Gonzalo Higuain "betrayed" Napoli by joining rivals Juventus, claimed club owner Aurelio De Laurentiis despite pocketing 90m euros (\$98.8m, £75.3m) for the sale of the Argentine striker.

In the most unlikely move of the Serie A summer transfer period, Higuain ended his fairytale three-year spell with Napoli on Tuesday when he agreed to a record five-year deal with the Italian champions that is expected to earn him 7.5m euros a year. As Juventus fans mostly rejoiced, their Napoli counterparts reacted by posting photos of their idol's Napoli shirt in the toilet. And De Laurentiis, despite a bulging bank account, was not far behind in slamming the 28-year-old striker whose record tally of 36 goals last season took Napoli to the brink of ending their 26-year wait for the Serie A title.

He told Corriere dello Sport: "Some people say that to speak of betrayal is exaggerated, but I think the opposite because there is the full sense of betrayal in this (Higuain) choice because of the ingratitude shown."

"Obviously I have to consider the role played by Juventus, but I expected a different kind of behaviour (from Higuain)." Higuain was feted as the King of Napoli only two months ago when he broke Gunnar Nordahl's 66-year-old record of 35 goals in a single Serie A season as the Azzurri battled Juve for a 'scudetto' title they last won in 1990. In the end, Napoli finished second but Higuain was undoubtedly the star of last year's campaign. De Laurentiis slapped a 94.7m euros buyout clause into his contract but when Juventus offered 90m euros over two instalments, the Napoli owner buckled. De Laurentiis conceded the transaction was above board. But he said Higuain's snap decision to quit Napoli, following advice from his brother and agent, reflected the "unscrupulous" nature of the modern game. "True, there was the clause so there was no formal impropriety... but the unscrupulous nature of football means there is no respect



NAPOLI: Juventus' forward Gonzalo Higuain from Argentina holds his jersey at the Juventus' head-quarter in Turin yesterday. In the most unlikely move of the Serie A summer transfer period, Higuain ended his fairytale three-year spell with Napoli on Tuesday when he agreed to a record five-year deal with the Italian champions that is expected to earn him 7.5m euros a year. — AFP

for sentiment," added De Laurentiis. "We understood, as soon as Higuain's brother spoke, that we might run the risk of having to look for a new centre-forward. "But we didn't think that risk was serious, or that he (Higuain) could simply wipe clean his three years spent with Napoli." Higuain was undergoing a medical in Turin on Wednesday morning ahead of signing a five-year deal that will make him the third most expensive signing in history after Gareth Bale and Cristiano Ronaldo. He will be officially unveiled today.

But Higuain's shock move to what remains the most potent, revered and hated club in

Italy was met with mixed reaction. For Italian icon and one-club man Francesco Totti, who is set to play his final season with Roma, it is a disaster that smacks more of "business than passion". "Look at what's happened now with Gonzalo Higuain leaving Napoli for Juventus. It's a disaster," said Totti. "But, it's completely normal now that when a foreigner comes to Italy he has the possibility of going to another team to make more money."

Napoli already had their sights set on Inter Milan striker Mauro Icardi, although Polish international Arkadiusz Milik (Ajax) is tipped as a more realistic replacement for Higuain. — AFP

FIVE MOST EXPENSIVE TRANSFERS

LONDON: Five most expensive transfers after Italian champions Juventus splashed out 90 million euros (\$98.8m, £75.3m) to prise Argentina striker Gonzalo Higuain away from Napoli on Tuesday:

Gareth Bale (WAL) Spurs to Real Madrid £85.1m 2013

Welsh forward whose performances for an attractive Spurs side launched Real into a massive bid. The English side could not refuse such advances and let their star man go. He has built on his career at the Santiago Bernabeu with two Champions League titles, scoring in the final of the first of the two against Atletico Madrid. His experience in La Liga helped him lead Wales in their memorable run to the Euro 2016 semi-finals. Bale also scored a stunning winner in the Copa del Rey final against Real's arch rivals Barcelona in 2014.

Cristiano Ronaldo (POR) Manchester United to Real Madrid £83.7m 2009

Real Madrid came calling for the Portuguese master with what was then a world-record bid. Ronaldo was keen to join anyway, and since arriving in the Spanish capital he has become their all-time top goalscorer and consistently set records in the Champions League, which he has won three times in his career, twice with Real. He has achieved all this despite the hottest of competition from Barcelona's Argentinian superstar Lionel Messi, who still leads in the overall La Liga scoring charts.

Gonzalo Higuain (ARG) Napoli to Juventus £75.3m (90m euros, \$98.8m) 2016

Juventus paid the biggest fee for a domestic transfer in history when they matched Higuain's buy-out clause of 90 million euros to bring the Argentinian to Turin from Napoli on Tuesday. The 28-year-old former Real Madrid striker top-scored in Serie A last season with a record-equaling 36 goals as Napoli finished second to Juve. Coach Massimiliano Allegri led Juventus to a

record fifth consecutive league title in 2016, but he will be hoping that Higuain can help his side improve in Europe, after following up their 2015 Champions League final defeat to Barcelona with a last-16 exit at the hands of Bayern Munich.

Luis Suarez (URU) Liverpool to Barcelona £75m 2014

Barcelona didn't hesitate to sign the striker despite his shame at the World Cup finals when for the third time he bit an opponent, this time Italy defender Giorgio Chiellini.

As a result Suarez was unable to play competitively or train with them for four months, but once his ban was over he repaid them in full. No disgraceful incidents have followed and he ended his first season with them by scoring in the Champions League final win over Juventus. His trident attacking partnership with Messi and Neymar yielded a La Liga record for three forwards of 122 goals that campaign. Scored a hat-trick to seal the league title for Barca last term and went on to complete the domestic double in a season in which he grabbed a staggering 58 goals.

Neymar (BRA) Santos to Barcelona £71.5m 2013

Off the pitch alleged shenanigans over how much went to the player, his family and to the selling club itself have dogged Barcelona over the transfer of Neymar, who on the pitch has shone for them in their brilliant three-pronged attack. The Brazilian shrugged off an injury that ended his 2014 World Cup campaign early to play a pivotal role in Barcelona's Champions League success.

Like Suarez, he scored in that final against Juventus, and collected La Liga and Copa del Rey winners medals.

There was no let up last term either as he scored in the cup final against Sevilla. Legal problems still hover over the transfer despite a high court judge ruling that he didn't believe it could be pursued in the courts-as the prosecutor takes issue with that decision. — AFP

NO MAN CITY PLAYERS OVERWEIGHT: GUARDIOLA

SHENZHEN: Pep Guardiola denied dictating to his Manchester City players exactly what they can eat and said none were overweight, after Gael Clichy claimed the new manager had banned junk food and exiled out-of-shape stars. Speaking in China, where City are on a money-spinning pre-season tour, the French defender told the Guardian newspaper and other British media that former Barcelona and Bayern Munich coach Guardiola had wasted no time in laying down the law.

"You often hear managers say being healthy is really important. With him, if your weight is too high, you're not training with the team. That is the first thing and you can hear it a lot, but for my part it's the first time any manager has really done it," Clichy said.

"So we have a few players who are not training with the team yet. "He cut out some juice and pizza and all the heavy food is not allowed," added the 31-year-old.

There has been plenty of attention paid to Guardiola's new regime on and off the pitch since his high-profile arrival this summer, but the Spaniard denied taking a dictatorial approach with his players. "The nutritionist is

the boss. I'm not a chef. He decides what they have to eat," he said, speaking in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen, the latest leg of their stop-start China tour. He also denied his players had returned to training out of shape: "No, they are not overweight. I want my players fit. For me that is important... I need to get my players absolutely fit."

'NO HOLIDAY'

City's pre-season preparations took a hit on Monday when their derby against Manchester United was called off because of the poor pitch at Beijing's 'Bird's Nest' Olympic Stadium, following heavy rain. Guardiola, who will be under pressure to inspire ambitious City to silverware in his first season, now wants to get on with the business of playing football. He revealed that the club were making a frantic push to line up an English Championship or non-league club for a friendly next week to replace the lost Beijing game. "We haven't travelled here to China for just a holiday, we have travelled here to play games," said Guardiola. "Maybe it's a lesson for the people who organised the games. The pitch is the most important thing."

The City players arrived in Shenzhen on Tuesday and were given scorching late afternoon workouts, and again Wednesday, as they dusted off the disappointment of the cancelled Manchester derby.

Guardiola said he had been enjoying putting the City squad through its paces and assessing the quality at his disposal.

"Every manager has his own ideas," he said. "But it's impossible to achieve even one victory if the players don't want it. They are comfortable with the challenge and they are trying to understand me and I am trying to understand them as soon as possible."

The heat in Shenzhen remains as it was in Beijing - baking - but there seems little chance of any similar heavy downpours.

So City have been able to get on with the business at hand-getting match ready for Borussia Dortmund, who breezed past United 4-1 in Shanghai last Friday.

Guardiola's men can expect much of the same Thursday from last season's Bundesliga runners-up in front of what is expected to be a sell-out crowd of around 40,000 at the Shenzhen Universiade Stadium. — AFP



SHENZHEN: Manchester City's head coach Pep Guardiola attends a team training session in Shenzhen, south China's Guangdong province yesterday. — AFP

Sports

Frustrated Spieth back to basics in PGA title bid



Ungrateful Higuain 'betrayed' Napoli



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BALTIMORE: Colorado Rockies' Carlos Gonzalez (5), David Dahl (26) and Charlie Blackmon (19) celebrate the team's 6-3 win over the Baltimore Orioles in a baseball game, Tuesday, in Baltimore. — AP

ROCKIES ROUGH UP TILLMAN AND BEAT ORIOLES

BALTIMORE: It didn't matter to the Colorado Rockies that Chris Tillman was unbeatable at Camden Yards, where the Baltimore Orioles rarely lose regardless of who's on the mound. On Tuesday night, the Rockies emphatically spoiled Tillman's bid to become the first 15-game winner in the majors. Colorado's Carlos Gonzalez and Trevor Story had two RBIs apiece to lead the surging Rockies past the first-place Baltimore Orioles 6-3 on Tuesday night. Colorado has won five of its past six games and rebounded from a disappointing series opener when they lost in the 10th inning on a throwing error by right-hander Jordan Lyles. Tillman (14-3) gave up six runs and nine hits in five innings. The right-hander retired six of the first seven batters but needed 89 pitches to get 15 outs.

MARLINS 5, PHILLIES 0

Giancarlo Stanton drove in two runs to lead Miami to a win over Philadelphia at Marlins Park. Marlins center fielder Ichiro Suzuki, who started the day needing four hits to reach 3,000, went 1-for-5 and also stole a base. Both of Stanton's RBI hits came on shots to the opposite field.

CARDINALS 3, METS 2 (GAME 1)

Jedd Gyorko hit a two-run home run in the third inning, and St. Louis defeated New York in the opener of a doubleheader. The Cardinals opened their 10-game road trip in a mostly empty stadium, and all the runs were scored in the opening four innings.

METS 3, CARDINALS 1 (GAME 2)

Bartolo Colon pitched seven strong innings and combined with two relievers on a three-hitter as New York earned a split of their doubleheader against St. Louis with a victory in the nightcap. Colon (9-5) rebounded from three consecutive starts that did not last beyond 5 2/3 innings by allowing a run and three hits. It was the fifth time he lasted at least seven innings and allowed one run this season.

WHITE SOX 3, CUBS 0

James Shields threw 7 2/3 scoreless innings, and Adam Eaton homered as the White Sox earned their fourth straight win, defeating the Cubs at US Cellular Field. Shields, who was booed off the mound on June 8 following a rough first start for the White Sox after being obtained from the San Diego Padres, left to a standing ovation Tuesday. He allowed only four hits while striking out five and walking four.

MARINERS 7, PIRATES 4

Seattle ace Felix Hernandez, in his second start back from a calf injury, gave up three runs over the first two innings before settling down to lead the Mariners to a win over Pittsburgh at PNC Park. Hernandez (5-4) pitched six innings, giving up all four runs on nine hits, with three strikeouts and a walk. Steve Cishek pitched the ninth for his 24th save.

BRAVES 2, TWINS 0

Adonis Garcia homered and Lucas Harrell pitched six strong innings to lead Atlanta to a win over Minnesota at Target Field. Almost 25 years since playing in one of the most epic World Series of all time, won by the Twins with a 1-0 victory in Game 7, the Braves and Twins locked up in another low-scoring game. The stakes were a little different this time around; both Atlanta and Minnesota have the worst records in their respective leagues.

TIGERS 9, RED SOX 8

Tyler Collins walked with the bases loaded in the seventh inning to force in the winning run, and Detroit edged Boston

at Fenway Park. Collins worked a two-out, full-count walk from Red Sox reliever Robbie Ross Jr. (1-2), allowing Justin Upton to trot home from third. Blue Jays 7, Padres 6 (12 innings) Toronto scored three runs in the bottom of the 12th inning including the winner on a wild pitch-to come back and defeat San Diego. With Edwin Encarnacion batting, Paul Clemens uncorked a wild pitch that allowed Devon Travis to score the winning run from third.

YANKEES 6, ASTROS 3

CC Sabathia snapped a six-start winless streak and New York claimed its third consecutive series with a victory over Houston at Minute Maid Park. Sabathia (6-8) produced his best start since mid-June, allowing just two runs on four hits and two walks with five strikeouts over 6 2/3 innings. He has surrendered at least four runs and seven hits in each of his six starts dating back to a 4-1 win over the Twins on June 16.

ANGELS 13, ROYALS 0

Yunel Escobar had five hits, matching his career high, and Carlos Perez contributed four hits, including a home run, as Los Angeles topped Kansas City. Johnny Giavotella had three hits, including two doubles, and Kole Calhoun drove in four runs as the Angels accumulated 22 hits, equaling their season high. Mike Trout drove in three runs with two hits.

INDIANS 7, NATIONALS 6

Francisco Lindor's RBI single capped a three-run bottom of the ninth inning as Cleveland rallied for a wild win over Washington at Progressive Field. Reliever Bryan Shaw (2-4) got the win for Cleveland while Nationals closer Jonathan Papelbon (2-4) took the loss.

ATHLETICS 6, RANGERS 3

Sonny Gray remained undefeated in Texas, Josh Reddick drove in three runs and Oakland beat the Rangers at Globe Life Park. The A's evened the three-game series at a game apiece against the American League West leaders. Texas had its three-game winning streak snapped.

BREWERS 9, DIAMONDBACKS 4

Scooter Gennett and Jonathan Villar each hit two-run singles in the eighth inning as Milwaukee rallied for a victory over Arizona at Miller Park. Gennett put Milwaukee ahead 4-3 with an RBI single in the sixth, but an error on left-hander Will Smith led to Arizona tying the score in the seventh.

DODGERS 3, RAYS 2

Yasmani Grandal's seventh-inning home run was the difference as Los Angeles held on for a victory over Tampa Bay before 46,960 fans at Dodger Stadium. Dodgers starter Bud Norris blanked the Rays for 6 1/3 innings, striking out six and allowing just two hits with two walks (one intentional). Norris (6-9) also recorded his 1,000th strikeout during the win, striking out Kevin Kiermaier in the fourth.

GIANTS 9, REDS 7

Matt Cain (2-6) belted a three-run home run in San Francisco's four-run second inning, and he went 5 1/3 innings to win for the first time since May 21. Five relievers followed Cain with closer Santiago Casilla surrendering a ninth-inning run before posting his 22nd save. The Giants, who led 5-0 after three innings, held on for only their second win in 10 games following the All-Star break. — Reuters

MLB results/standings

St. Louis 3, NY Mets 2; Colorado 6, Baltimore 3; Seattle 7, Pittsburgh 4; Toronto 7, San Diego 6 (12 Innings); Detroit 9, Boston 8; Miami 5, Philadelphia 0; Cleveland 7, Washington 6; Chicago White Sox 3, Chicago Cubs 0; NY Mets 3, St. Louis 1; Oakland 6, Texas 3; Milwaukee 9, Arizona 4; Atlanta 2, Minnesota 0; NY Yankees 6, Houston 3; LA Angels 13, Kansas City 0; LA Dodgers 3, Tampa Bay 2; San Francisco 9, Cincinnati 7.

American League				National League			
Eastern Division				Eastern Division			
W	L	PCT	GB	W	L	PCT	GB
Baltimore	58	41	.586	Washington	58	42	.580
Toronto	57	44	.564	Miami	54	46	.540
Boston	55	43	.561	NY Mets	53	46	.535
NY Yankees	52	48	.520	Philadelphia	46	56	.451
Tampa Bay	38	61	.384	Atlanta	34	66	.340
Central Division				Central Division			
Cleveland	57	41	.582	Chicago Cubs	59	40	.596
Detroit	53	48	.525	St. Louis	53	47	.530
Chicago White Sox	50	50	.500	Pittsburgh	51	48	.515
Kansas City	48	51	.485	Milwaukee	43	55	.439
Minnesota	37	62	.374	Cincinnati	39	61	.390
Western Division				Western Division			
Texas	58	43	.574	San Francisco	59	41	.590
Houston	54	46	.540	LA Dodgers	57	44	.564
Seattle	51	48	.515	Colorado	48	52	.480
Oakland	46	55	.455	San Diego	43	58	.426
LA Angels	45	55	.450	Arizona	41	59	.410

FEDERER TO MISS REST OF SEASON, INCLUDING OLYMPICS, US OPEN

RIO DE JANEIRO: Roger Federer is sitting out the rest of this season, including the Rio de Janeiro Olympics and US Open, to protect his surgically repaired left knee.

Federer wrote on his Facebook page Tuesday that he needs "more extensive rehabilitation following my knee surgery earlier this year."

"The doctors advised that if I want to play on the ATP World Tour injury free for another few years, as I intend to do, I must give both my knee and body the proper time to fully recover," Federer said.

The owner of a record 17 Grand Slams titles turns 35 on Aug. 8, so the reference to "another few years" might give his fans increased hope of seeing Federer continue to wield a racket for quite some time.

His agent, Tony Godsick, wrote in an email to The Associated Press that Federer's plan is to "be ready for the start of next year."

Federer is the first member of tennis' so-called "Big 4" - a group that also includes No. 1-ranked Novak Djokovic, 14-time major champion Rafael Nadal and 2012 gold medalist Andy Murray - to pull out of the Rio Games, where that sport's competition starts on Aug. 6, a day after the opening ceremony.

Federer often has spoken about how much the Olympics mean to him, in part because he met his wife, Mirka, when both were athletes at the 2000 Sydney Games. Federer won a silver medal in singles for Switzerland four years ago in London, and he teamed up with Stan

Wawrinka to win a gold medal in doubles at the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

In Brazil, Federer was expected to play singles, doubles with Wawrinka, and mixed doubles with Martina Hingis. He is the second big draw who will be missing from the Rio tennis tournament: Five-time major champion Maria Sharapova won't be there because she is serving a two-year doping ban.

The arthroscopic procedure Federer had on his knee in February, repairing torn cartilage, was the first operation of his lengthy and accomplished career. Federer said he got hurt while preparing a bath for his twin daughters.

He's also had back issues this season, missed the French Open to end his record 65-appearance streak at major tournaments, and did not win a title of any sort in 2016 - making it the first year since 2000 that he will finish without at least one trophy.

So after participating in every single Grand Slam tournament from the 2000 Australian Open through the 2016 Australian Open, Federer will be sitting out two of the last three this year. He is a five-time champion at the US Open and was the runner-up there to Djokovic last year. Federer, who has spent more weeks at No. 1 than anyone in the history of the ATP computerized rankings, currently sits at No. 3, having gone 21-7 this season. Depending on how other players fare, of course, Federer's ranking will tumble over the course of the rest of the year. — AP

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LONDON: British Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammond (center), and British Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport and Minister for Aviation, Lord Tariq Ahmad (right) listen to London City Airport CEO Declan Collier, as they pass beneath a British Airways aircraft during a tour of the airport in east London yesterday. — AFP

£344 MILLION EXPANSION FOR LONDON CITY AIRPORT AIRPORT OWNED BY CANADIAN-KUWAITI CONSORTIUM



LAGOS: A street vendor looking on as he sells his wares on a road of Lagos. — AFP

NIGERIA'S LAGOS BANS STREET SELLING NO HAWKING, NO TRADING

LAGOS: Every morning, Mama Biliki prepares small bags of popcorn outside her ramshackle house in Ajegunle, one of Lagos' poorest neighborhoods, to sell by the roadside for 50 naira each. On a good day, she reckons she can earn about 5,000 naira (\$16, 15 euros) hawking them to pedestrians and motorists stuck in the traffic jams that plague Nigeria's biggest city.

But the governor of Lagos state, Akinwunmi Ambode, is getting tough on street selling, leaving Mama Biliki and others like her with an uncertain future. "I appeal to the government to allow us to hawk on the streets since we don't have money to rent a shop, so we can continue to feed our families," she said. "Even those with a shop, they don't sell as much as me who hawks in the streets. There are so many taxes on shops that it doesn't allow them to make a profit."

In Nigeria's financial hub, a noisy, overcrowded melting pot of some 20 million people, hawkers can be seen everywhere, snaking between the cars in choking fumes and oppressive heat. Hungry drivers or passengers in packed danfos (public minibuses) can buy snacks of spicy plantain chips and roasted peanuts, and quench their thirst with cold drinks. It's possible to do some grocery shopping while the traffic idles in snaking, honking queues: pre-packed fruit and vegetables and dried noodles from boxes are offered hopefully at car windows.

Elsewhere, there are Nollywood DVDs on sale at traffic lights; hats from every Nigerian region; basketball hoops; mobile phones; and at Christmas time, a whole variety of festive decorations. And it's always clear when there's a fuel shortage: hawkers sell rubber pipes and plastic funnels to get petrol from the jerrycans of illegal roadside traders. Goods are seasonal and predictable. But now the hawkers-who provide a measure of service to gridlocked commuters with no time to shop-risk up to six months in jail and a fine of 90,000 naira if they're caught.

Governor Ambode called the petty traders an "environmental nuisance but also... (a) security threat to citizens."

"Street traders and buyers will henceforth be arrested and prosecuted," he said in a statement earlier this month. "The Task Force on Environmental Sanitation and Special Offences has been mandated to ensure the law of the state against street trading is enforced to the letter."

Negative effect

For the traders, though, the crackdown could rob them of a lifeline. Despite Nigeria's nominal status as Africa's leading economy, most of its 180 million people live in dire poverty. Shadrach Ogona, who sells cooking utensils on the road, said: "We're not criminals, we have (qualifications). We're trained. Most of us are trained in one thing or another. "Please, let the government do what is reasonable." Kingsley Shokun, who sells books, said many of the hawkers were not on the road by choice.

"We're not enjoying selling here," he protested. Nigeria's economy has been built on oil but with global prices low since 2014, the flow of money has dried up-not that it ever reached the majority in the first place. Inflation rocketed to 16.5 percent in June-the highest for nearly 11 years-driving up the cost of living, particularly for fuel and food.

Nigeria's dependence on oil has been laid bare, with little domestic manufacturing or industry to plug the gap. Unemployment among young graduates has been estimated at nearly 45 percent. According to Chinedu Bosah, secretary of the Campaign for Democratic and Workers' Rights (CDWR), banning the hawkers could have a negative effect. "One hawker was knocked down by a truck as he tried to evade arrest. "What is going to be the alternative? The alternative will only be crime. And the government keeps spending money for security, reinforcement. It doesn't pay society," said Bosah. — AFP

LONDON: The British government hailed a £344 million (410 million euro, \$450 million) investment to expand London City Airport yesterday as evidence Britain was "open for business" despite its Brexit vote. Finance minister Philip Hammond was at the airport to cheer the announcement by the Canadian-Kuwaiti consortium which owns the airport, a business travel hub located close to Britain's financial centre. The "ambitious growth plans will boost international connections, strengthening the City of London's links to destinations across the world, and send a clear signal that Britain is open for business," he said.

The investment will expand the airport terminal, create more space for planes to taxi and add new stands to allow bigger planes to use the airport. The Finance Ministry said it expected the expansion would create 1,600 airport jobs for staff, as well as 500 construction jobs and could

contribute £1.5 billion to the British economy by 2025. Flights from City go to Europe as well as New York. Last year it had a record 4.3 million passengers-an 18-percent increase from 2014. Its expansion had been blocked by then London mayor Boris Johnson, who is now the foreign minister.

But the new mayor Sadiq Khan lifted the ban. The plan is being launched as proposals to expand one of London's two main airports-Heathrow and Gatwick-appear to be stalled due to environmental concerns despite demands for increased capacity. City airport was bought earlier this year by a consortium of Canadian and Kuwaiti investors from US fund Global Infrastructure Partners. The sale was announced by Alberta Investment Management Corporation, Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System (OMERS), and Wren House, an arm of the Kuwait Investment Authority. — AFP

UAE'S PACIFIC CONTROLS IN TALKS OVER 1.4 BILLION DIRHAMS DEBT

DUBAI: Pacific Controls, a Dubai-based technology company, is in talks with banks about restructuring debts of 1.4 billion dirhams (\$381 million), sources said, one of the largest firms to have to do so since the emirate's economy began to slow. It is also set to be the highest-profile example to date of a company receiving assistance from a special mechanism set up by the United Arab Emirates' banking federation to help firms struggling to repay debt, the sources said.

Launched in 2000, the privately owned company benefited from the boom in the UAE's economy as it provided technology services to local businesses, more recently expanding into cloud computing and the internet of things. Gulf economies have cooled since lower oil prices began to squeeze revenues in 2014, with governments cutting spending and delaying projects. Pacific Controls' clients include a number of state institutions, such as Dubai Civil Defense and the Roads and Transport Authority, government controlled companies including telecoms firm Etisalat, as well as banks, hospitals and schools, its website showed.

It also has clients outside the UAE, such as Saudi Arabian telco Etihad Etisalat (Mobily) and King Abdullah University of Science & Technology (KAUST). It has encountered difficulties in part because of delayed payments from some of its clients, the sources said, declining to specify which owed money or how much the firm is owed. Pacific Controls has not made payments on short-term bilateral loans for working capital, sources said. But payments related to a 1 billion dirham longer-term facility had mostly been met, although the principal on a June repayment was only 80 percent covered, one of the sources added.

Many businesses have found it hard to repay hefty debts after the slowdown hit their balance sheets, although so far this has mostly been among small and medium sized enterprises and companies with debt issues lingering from the emirate's 2009-10 financial crisis. "Pacific Control

Systems group has been in the midst of an organizational restructuring exercise. The comprehensive exercise will help streamline the operations of the company," the company said in a statement yesterday. "The management of Pacific Controls is confident of a turnaround on account of Pacific Controls' intrinsic technology innovation, investment in infrastructure and sincerity towards the purpose of the group and its operations."

Intervention

Given the importance of Pacific Controls to the local economy, the sources said that it was in no danger of collapsing and a solution would be reached. Among the predominantly-UAE lenders on its main loan are Dubai Islamic Bank, National Bank of Fujairah and United Arab Bank. One of the sources said the company had used short-term loans to fund long-term capital expenditure projects. With revenue yet to accrue from these schemes, its cashflow position was then compounded by disruption from delayed payments. Lenders this month asked the UAE Banks Federation to help reach an agreement with the company and mediate between the short and long-term lenders, the sources said.

Under the federation scheme launched in March, companies in difficulty could agree a new voluntary arrangement with lenders. It was brought in due to the absence of an effective UAE insolvency law and after a jump in so-called 'skipping' cases by SMEs which was forcing banks to set aside more cash for bad loans. The UAE Banks Federation declined to comment. The Dubai Media Office didn't immediately respond to a request for comment. KPMG has been appointed as financial advisor to assist with the restructuring and turnaround of Pacific Controls, the company said. It has also selected a new CEO, as Dilip Rahulan - who was the firm's chief executive and executive chairman - is currently recuperating from illness. He will stay on as chairman. — Reuters

THE ER DEPARTMENT FIGHTING THE US OPIOID PAINKILLER CRISIS

'IT LED TO THE EPIDEMIC THAT WE'RE DEALING WITH TODAY'

PATERSON, US: Opioid abuse has turned into a public health crisis in America, blamed for the deaths of tens of thousands of people. But one hospital is determined to reverse the epidemic. Since January, St Joseph's Regional Medical Center, which boasts the largest emergency room in New Jersey, has stopped prescribing opioid painkillers in all but essential cases, slashing overall use by more than 40 percent.

While these powerful drugs are an "excellent" medication for terminal cancer patients or those with a broken leg, for the vast majority there are far safer courses of treatment, says emergency medicine chief Mark Rosenberg. "In our first 60 days, we were absolutely shocked," Rosenberg said. "We had 300 patients. And out of those 75 percent of them did not need opioids." "It's just a remarkable change of our prescribing habits and our management of patients' acute pain," he added.

In 2014, 14,000 people died from an opioid overdose in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Since 1999, these powerful painkillers have caused 165,000 deaths. The problem dates back to the 1990s but critics accuse President Barack Obama of being slow to respond to the scale of the epidemic, comparing his delayed reaction to Ronald Reagan's sluggish response to the HIV/AIDS crisis.

Back in the mid-1990s, drug companies, professionals and authorities promoted opiates as a compassionate medicine that would end pain and minimized concerns that they were addictive. "It led to the epidemic that we're dealing with today," says Andrew Kolodny, chief medical officer at Phoenix House Foundation, which treats addiction, and executive director of Physicians for Responsible Opioid Prescribing. Clean for three months, former heroin addict Erik Jacobsen, 24, is determined to turn his life around after getting hooked on the class A narcotic.

Endless cycle

It all began when he popped a quarter of one of his grandfather's painkillers in order to impress a girl he fancied. "She was using it," he told AFP at Odyssey House, a treatment center in New York's East Village. "That's why I got into it." He never tried to get them legally from a doctor. He didn't have to, they were so easy to buy on the street in

Gordon Heights, a hamlet an hour's drive from celebrity summer resort the Hamptons on Long Island. "There were so many kids that would get 200 pills a month and they'd sell it. And then they'd still owe their dealers because they were using more than they were selling. It would just be an endless cycle."

That was until local authorities realized there was a problem, doctors clamped down on prescriptions and the police got involved. "There was one night I couldn't find any pills. So I tried heroin. And from there, I never went back," he said. He knew three people who died of an overdose, including a close friend. "I just kind of accepted the possibility that one day I might die," he said. "It's horrible... It's just crazy what it does to your body," he said.

White problem

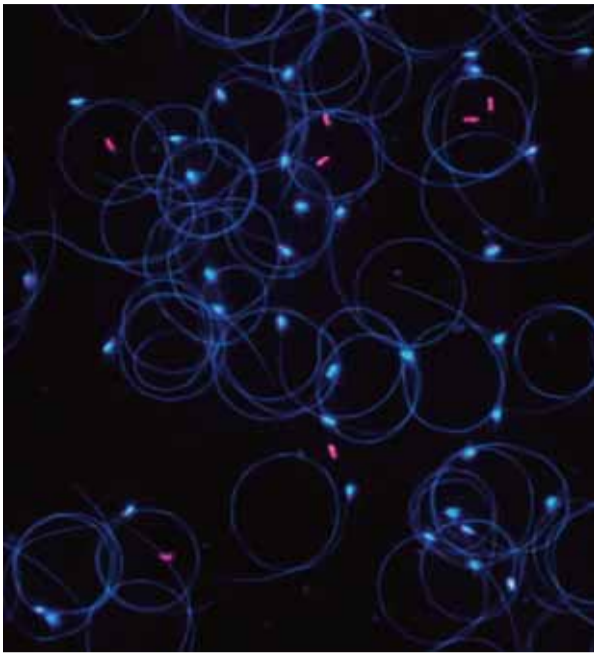
He got help when he was arrested and hauled before a judge, who ordered him to enter a treatment program or go to jail. He likes Odyssey House and their approach but he is full of regret. "I lost everything," he said. He and his fiancée broke up because of his drug use and three of his best friends still refuse to talk to him. "I want my life back," he said. He believes America's opiate addiction is getting worse and wants to do more to help others before it's too late.

"It's scary," he said. "The people that were young in my town at least, they didn't realize what they were getting into," he said. "You don't really comprehend how intense it is when you try this thing." Experts say the opioid epidemic is a white problem. While heroin use is on the decline in inner city New York, painkillers are most abused in suburbs and rural areas—generally wealthier, whiter areas. Rosenberg says St Joseph's one-year fellowship, offered since January to New Jersey professionals, teaches safe alternatives, how to support patients to best manage pain and explain to them the dangers of opioids.

Next January, the program will expand to doctors, nurses and educators from across the United States and around the world, with enquiries already in from Britain, Canada, Scandinavia and Turkey. "If you can sleep, if you can walk, then pain is not going to be your enemy. That's what our goal is, to make you functional in pain, not to eliminate it completely," said Rosenberg. "We need to do something."—AFP



Paterson, United States: Dr Mark Rosenberg explains the 'Alternatives to Opioids' or 'ALTO' program which he leads at St Joseph's Medical Center in Paterson, New Jersey.—AFP



WASHINGTON: This photo provided by Lars Straub shows a microscopic image of sperm of a honey bee drone. The red sperm is dead. The blue is alive.—AP

COMMON PESTICIDE APPEARS TO REDUCE LIVE BEE SPERM

WASHINGTON: A new study finds that a commonly used insecticide kills much of the sperm created by male drone honey bees, one reason why the bees are dwindling. The class of insecticide called neonicotinoids didn't kill the drones. But bees that ate treated pollen produced 39 percent less live sperm than those that didn't, according to a controlled experiment by Swiss researchers published yesterday in the journal Proceedings of the Royal Society B.

It essentially acted as an accidental contraceptive on the drones, whose main job is to mate with the queen—but not one that prevented complete reproduction, just making it tougher, said Lars Straub, lead author of the study and a doctoral student and researcher at the University of Bern. Drones, which are the product of unfertilized eggs, don't gather nectar or pollen and don't sting; they die after mating.

Both the drones that ate insecticide-treated pollen and those not exposed to the chemicals produced about the same amount of sperm. The difference was clear when the researchers put the sperm under the microscope: The bee that didn't have pesticide in its pollen produced on average 1.98 million living sperm, the one with neonicotinoids in its food about 1.2 million. "There's a reduction in sperm viability and the amount of living sperm, but that doesn't mean there's no living sperm at hand," Straub said.

Queen failure

The big question is there still enough of sperm that survive to do the job, he said. Queens generally have one mating flight and store sperm. Study co-author Geoffrey Williams, a senior bee researcher at the University of Bern, said the team doesn't know how the insecticides might be damaging the sperm, but it seems to be happening after they are produced. This comes on top of a study published earlier this year in PLOS One that reported the high rate of US honey bee colonies dying coincides with failures of queens.

And the queen failure was linked to drones' dead sperm. "Queen failure is a big problem and this helps explain it," said US Department of Agriculture bee scientist Jeff Pettis, who wasn't part of the neonicotinoid study but was lead author of the PLOS study on queen health. "It's not the queens themselves, it's the drones. It's significant." There are many problems - mites, parasites, disease, pesticides and poor nutrition - that seem to combine to shrink the numbers of bees and other pollinators, Straub, Pettis and other scientists said. Pettis said he guesses that poor sperm health may account for about a third of the problem.

Neonicotinoid-maker Bayer Crop Science spokesman Jeffrey Donald said the firm's scientists will review the study, but in general "artificial exposure to pesticides under lab conditions is not reflective of real-world experience." Another team of outside researchers, Jerry Bromenshenk and Colin Henderson at the University of Montana, praised the Straub study as careful and significant. But they said in an email there are still unanswered questions on how much this matters.—AP

VENEZUELA FOOD SHORTAGES LEAVE ZOO ANIMALS HUNGRY

CARACAS: Some 50 animals have starved to death in the last six months at one of Venezuela's main zoos, according to a union leader, due to chronic food shortages that have plagued the crisis-stricken South American nation. The fatalities at the Caricuaio zoo in Caracas include Vietnamese pigs, tapirs, rabbits and birds - some of whom had not eaten for two weeks, according to Marlene Sifontes, 52, a union leader for employees of state parks agency Inparques which oversees zoos. Other animals are at risk across the country. Their troubles mirror those of Venezuelans who routinely skip meals or spend hours in supermarket lines, at times chanting "We want food!" or even looting, amid an unprecedented economic downturn in the OPEC nation. "The story of the animals at Caricuaio is a metaphor for Venezuelan suffering," said Sifontes. Authorities have not given numbers, but state prosecutors have opened an investigation into the deaths of "various species of wildlife" at the zoo.

Economic war

Currently, lions and tigers at the Caracas zoo are being fed mango and pumpkin by anxious staff to make up for reduced rations of meat, while an elephant is eating tropical fruit instead of its usual diet of hay, the union leader said. The zoo's management declined comment. President Nicolas Maduro blames the country's problems on an "economic war" waged by local opponents and the United States. His critics say heavy reliance on oil, the price of which has fallen steeply, and unsustainable economic policy are to blame.

As with all shortages in Venezuela, the situation for zoos is worse outside the capital, though wardens are looking for ways to keep animals alive. In La Laguna, a park in the western state of Tachira, administrators said they had to seek donations from local businesses to get fruit, vegetables and meat for the animals. "We are doing all that is humanly possible to ensure the zoo continues to function," said Oslander Montoya, an accountant for the local municipality which handles funding for the zoo.—Reuters



MEXICO: In this photo, fireflies light up in sync in the woods of Piedra Canteada, near Nanacamilpa, Tlaxcala state, Mexico.—AP

MEXICAN FARMERS USING FIREFLIES TO SAVE FOREST

NANACAMILPA: In the village of Nanacamilpa, tiny fireflies are helping save the towering pine and fir trees on the outskirts of the megalopolis of Mexico City. Thousands of them light up a magical spectacle at dusk in the old-growth forests on reserves like the Piedra Canteada park, about 45 miles east of Mexico's sprawling capital city. Piedra Canteada in Tlaxcala state isn't a government-run park, but a rural cooperative that has managed to emerge from poverty and dependence on logging with the help of the fireflies.

For years, economic forces, including low prices for farm produce, forced rural communities like Piedra Canteada to cut down trees and sell the logs. Then, in 1990, community leader Genaro Rueda Lopez got the idea that the forest could bring tourism revenue from campers. Business was slow for years. Then in 2011, community members realized the millions of fireflies that appear between June and August could draw tourists from larger cities where few people have seen them in significant numbers. Indeed, around the world, deforestation and urban growth are threatening the over 2,000 species of fireflies with extinction.

Five years later, the park's cabins and camp spaces are sold out weeks in advance, with the attraction especially popular among families with young children and couples seeking a romantic setting. "The amount of fireflies you see is impressive," said Carlos Landa, a Mexico City native who visited Piedra Canteada this week. "Something that I also find quite impressive is their synchronicity: To turn off and turn on, that is something really spectacular. It's like

Christmas in the forest." The cooperative of 42 families still cuts some trees, but has preserved over 1,560 acres. "We log, we live from the forest, from cutting trees, but in an orderly way," said Rueda Lopez, one of the cooperative's founders. "It's like a garden, you have to remove the branches yourself, the dry parts, the parts with diseases to really grow." He said they have plans to plant over 50,000 pine trees in the areas they log each year. The idea has spread to nearby places in largely rural Tlaxcala, like Granja Interactiva Salma, whose primary business is still crops like corn, wheat, broad beans and peas. But they say firefly tours are a much-needed source of extra income.

"We are trying to treat the whole area here with no herbicides, because it's logical if we have insecticides, that could affect the fireflies," said Hugo Brindis, a certified guide at Granja Salma. "We are talking to biologists and the people who make these chemicals to see which have less of an effect on fireflies and the forest." He said their operation is a reservation-only ranch and they are trying to reduce the amount of people who visit the area, 250 maximum on the weekends, to maintain a sustainable space in the forest.

In Piedra Canteada, the co-op acquired a small sawmill in 1998 so it could sell higher-priced cut lumber instead of just logs. The sawmill gives residents jobs and income beyond the three-month firefly season. But the fireflies are now the main source of income. "We have reduced our wood production, you can say by 60 or 70 percent to preserve the forest and have better amount of tourism," said sawmill manager Salvador Morale.—AP

RECENT DEATHS OF KIDS IN HOT CARS PROMPT PLEAS TO PARENTS

DALLAS: The deaths of four children in hot cars in recent days has brought the number across the US this year to at least 23, nearly matching the total for all of last year and prompting experts to plead for vigilance and warn parents that it can happen to anyone. "It just breaks your heart," said Janette Fennell, founder and president of KidsAndCars.org, a national child safety nonprofit based in Philadelphia. "We've done so much to try to get the word out and maybe that's why last year was down a bit but this year is not looking very good." Four-year-old Samaria Motyka died on Friday in Williamsport, Pennsylvania after her caregiver drove to work instead of taking her to day care. In Dallas, 2-year-old Boi Lei Sang died after being left in a hot car in a parking lot Sunday while his family was in church. Fennell, whose organization tracks such deaths, said the number began dramatically rising in the 1990s with the passing of laws requiring that young children be placed in the back seat to avoid air-bag injuries. "The problem is, when you are out of sight, you can be out of mind," said Fennell, adding that infant and toddler seats now are rear-facing.

The numbers of heatstroke deaths of kids in cars fluctuated in the following decades, averaging 37 such deaths a year since 1998. Last year, with about two dozen deaths, was an unusually low year. The worst was 2010, with 49, according to both a count by Fennell and Jan Null, a research meteorologist at San Jose State University, who also tracks numbers. Not surprisingly, states with warm climates all year and large populations had the most hot car deaths since 1990. Fennell said that there have been 111 hot car deaths in Texas, followed by Florida with 80 and California at 54.

Out of autopilot

The temperature inside a parked car on a 90-degree day will reach 119 degrees in 20 minutes and 133 degrees after an hour, Null said. Parents should get into the habit of always opening their back doors when they leave the vehicle, according to Fennell. Leaving a purse or cell phone in the back seat can help. Other strategies include keeping a stuffed animal in the car seat and placing it in the front seat when the child is strapped in as a reminder that the child is there. Parents also need to make sure their day care calls them if the child doesn't show up, she said.

"It happens to the very best of parents," Fennell said. Sleep-deprived parents become distracted because of a change in routine or thinking about what needs to be done at work. "It is going to take technology to startle someone out of autopilot," she said. In an industry first, General Motors will have as a standard feature in their 2017 GMC Acadia sport utility vehicle a system that monitors its rear doors to remind drivers who have just parked to check their rear seats if they'd opened rear doors at the start of their trip.

She also noted that there is a child seat for sale that alerts the driver if they are leaving the car and the child seat is still buckled. But Null said he doesn't believe technology is a panacea, noting that even if new cars were required to have reminder systems, it would be a slow process for everyone to get that new of a vehicle. "It would be a help, but the biggest thing is education and awareness," Null said, noting his analysis shows about 30 percent of the deaths are the result of kids getting into unlocked cars on their own.—AP

AUSTRALIAN WOMAN FINDS NAPPING SEAL IN CEMETERY

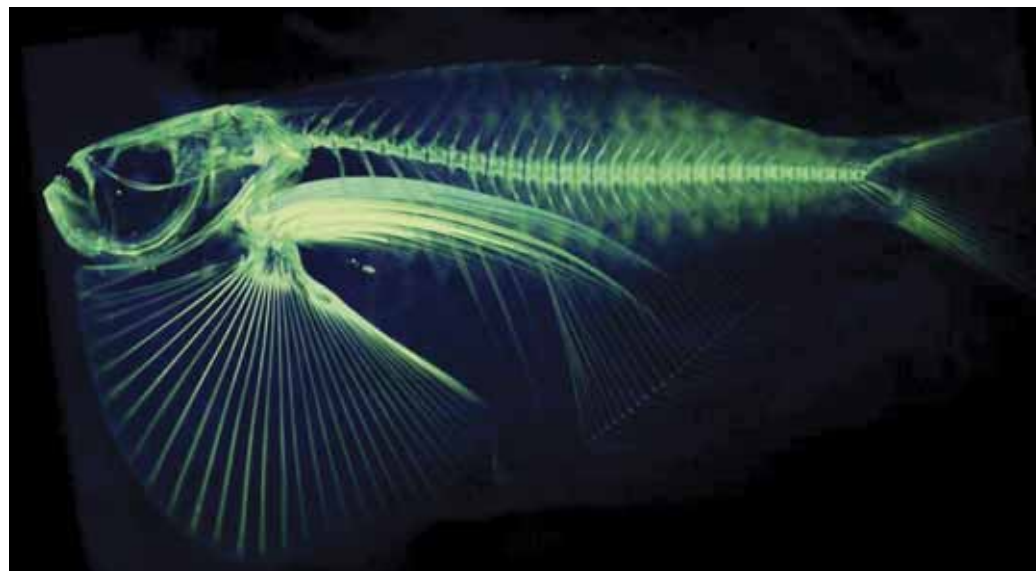
SYDNEY: A woman using the toilets at a local cemetery in Australia had the fright of her life after finding a large fur seal napping in the cubicle. The discovery of the 120-kilogramme animal was even more surprising as he was half a kilometer from the nearest water. "We thought it was a practical joke when we were told," Karina Moore from Devonport Council in north-west Tasmania state said yesterday.

"It's a big mystery. It's very unusual to find a seal so far inland. There's a small creek about half a kilometer away but he would still have had to cross a busy road

and several paddocks to make it to the cemetery." The council called in Parks and Wildlife officials who sedated the seal, which they named Sammy, before moving him to a local beach and releasing him.

Wildlife biologist Rachel Alderman told ABC radio Australian fur seals were common around Tasmania.

"They're a really abundant species all around Tasmania, particularly in Bass Strait, and we've had them turn up in paddocks, people's backyards, and now we can add a toilet block in a cemetery to the list," she said. —AFP



WASHINGTON: In this undated image provided by Adam Summers, a University of Washington professor in the department of Biology and the School of Aquatic and Fisheries Sciences, a scan of the Thoracocarax Stellatus species of fish is shown, with color added by computer to enhance the rendering of the structure of the bones. — AP

WASHINGTON SCIENTIST LAUNCHES PROJECT TO SCAN, DIGITIZE ALL FISH

'INSTEAD OF HAVING TO CUT THEM OPEN, I CAN VISUALIZE THE SKELETONS'

GOODBYE PHILAE: EARTH SEVERS LINK WITH SILENT COMET PROBE

PARIS: Ground controllers bid a final farewell yesterday to robot lab Philae, cutting communications after a year-long silence with the tiny probe hurtling through space on the surface of a comet. "Today communication with Philae was stopped," Andreas Schuetz of German space agency DLR told AFP from ground control in Cologne. "This is the end of a... fascinating and successful mission for the public and for science." The decision to cut the link was taken to save energy on mother ship Rosetta, orbiting around comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko, for the final weeks of its own historic mission.

Its batteries depleted, Philae's last successful communication with Earth was on July 9 last year. The lines had been left open on the very small chance of it coming back to life. Under the hash tag #GoodbyePhilae, the European Space Agency (ESA) tweeted on behalf of Rosetta: "Thinking of the wonderful adventures I had with @Philae 2014 at Comet #67P@." On the eve of the break, Philae tweeted:

"It's time for me to say goodbye. Tomorrow, the unit on @ESA_Rosetta for communication with me will be switched off forever..."

The washing machine-sized probe has been on 67P's surface since November 12, 2014, an exciting part of the ESA's groundbreaking Rosetta mission to probe a comet for clues to the origins of life on Earth. Rosetta remains in 67P's orbit, but as the comet moves further and further away from the Sun with its battery-boosting rays, the spacecraft needs to save all the energy it can.

"We need to maximize the power available to Rosetta's scientific instruments, and thus had no choice but to turn off the ESS," ESA senior science advisor Mark McCaughrean told AFP. ESS stands for the Electrical Support System Processor Unit on board of Rosetta, which was used for Philae to send home the results of its science experiments and intermittent status reports. Rosetta's own mission will come to an end on September 30, when it makes a crash landing to join stranded Philae on the comet surface. —AFP



IN SPACE: This handout file artist impression released by the ESA/ATG media lab shows the European probe Philae separating from its mother ship Rosetta and descending to the surface of comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko. — AFP

HONDURAS REPORTS EIGHT BABIES BORN WITH ZIKA-BIRTH DEFECTS

MEXICO CITY: Honduras' health minister says eight babies with severe birth defects linked to the Zika virus have been born in the Central American country. Dr Yolani Batres said Tuesday at a news conference that five of the babies with microcephaly were born this week. Batres says there are 493 known cases of pregnant women who have been infected with the Zika virus in Honduras. Zika is mostly spread by mosquitoes,

but cases of sexual transmission have also occurred. Some women who contract it during their pregnancies have given birth to babies with microcephaly, which leads to babies with abnormally small heads and improperly developed brains.

The Pan-American Health Organization confirmed that through July 14, Honduras had not reported a case of microcephaly linked to Zika. —AP

SEATTLE: University of Washington biology professor Adam Summers no longer has to coax hospital staff to use their CT scanners so he can visualize the inner structures of sting ray and other fish. Last fall, he installed a small computed tomography, or CT, scanner at the UW's Friday Harbor Laboratories on San Juan Island in Washington state and launched an ambitious project to scan and digitize all of more than 25,000 species in the world. The idea is to have one clearinghouse of CT scan data freely available to researchers anywhere to analyze the morphology, or structure, of particular species.

So far, he and others have digitized images of more than 500 species, from poachers to sculpins, from museum collections around the globe. He plans to add thousands more and has invited other scientists to use the CT scanner, or add their own scans to the open-access database. "We have folks coming from all over the world to use this machine," said Summers, who advised Pixar on how fish move for its hit animated films "Finding Nemo" and "Finding Dory" and is dubbed "fabulous fish guy" on the credits for "Nemo."

He raised \$340,000 to buy the CT scanner in November. Like those used in hospitals, the CT scanner takes X-ray images from various angles and combines them to create three-dimensional images of the fish. With each CT scan he posted to the Open Science Framework, a sharing website, people would ask him, "What are you going to scan next?" He would respond: "I want to scan them all. I want to scan all fish." Then he developed techniques, such as scanning multiple specimens, that made the goal within reach, he said, and suddenly a project that easily could have taken 50 years boiled down to just a few years.

"It wasn't just a joke anymore. We could actually say it and have a hope of actually getting every fish scanned," he said. Scans typically cost \$500 to \$2,000 each, but Summers' project provides free access to scans. Summers recalled how as a graduate student 17 years ago he bribed a hospital technician with Snickers bars to scan large sting rays in its CT scanner. At the time, he wanted to know how an animal with a skeleton composed of cartilage could do such "a crazy thing" as crush hard prey, such as snails and mussels. The medical CT scan helped offer

an answer: The sting ray had mineralized tissue in its cartilage.

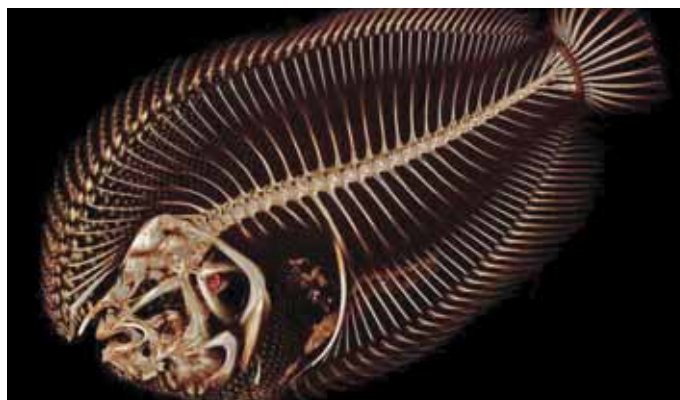
Visualize skeletons

So began his fascination with CT scans as a way to uncover other puzzles: What's the structure of a sting ray's wing? How does one scale in armored fish overlap with another and what are the implications for movement? "It's been a long road from getting them for free, paying some money for them, using hospital facilities in the middle of the night," Summers said. The scanner, about the size of two dorm refrigerators, is housed at the UW's marine lab on Friday Harbor, 80 miles north of Seattle, where Summers is associate director and a professor of biology and aquatic and fishery sciences.

He is also known for his fish photographs - stunning images of fish that have been stained with red and blue dyes to highlight cartilage and bone - which were shown at the Seattle Aquarium. The scanner can handle smaller fish;

about two grapefruits stacked on top of each other. The average fish is about a foot long, so he said he can cover half the world's fish. He's hoping to scan large fish using industrial scanners elsewhere, including at the University of Washington. Malorie Hayes, a graduate student at Auburn University, took Summers up on his offer to use the scanner after hearing him talk about the project at a recent conference.

In two weeks, she'll fly to the lab to scan over 200 species of African barbs, a small freshwater fish. Such fish are rare and difficult to obtain, she said. To look at their skeleton, you typically would have to destroy the specimen. CT scans offer a non-destructive way to study those bones. "Instead of having to cut them open, I can visualize the skeletons," she said. "There are lots of questions that can be answered just by looking at their skeletons." Summers has been fascinated with how researchers are using the scans. Some are making computer graphics models and animating the fish. — AP



WASHINGTON: In this undated image provided by Adam Summers, a University of Washington professor in the department of Biology and the School of Aquatic and Fisheries Sciences, a scan of the Trinectes Maculatus species of fish, also known as the Hogchoker, is shown. — AP

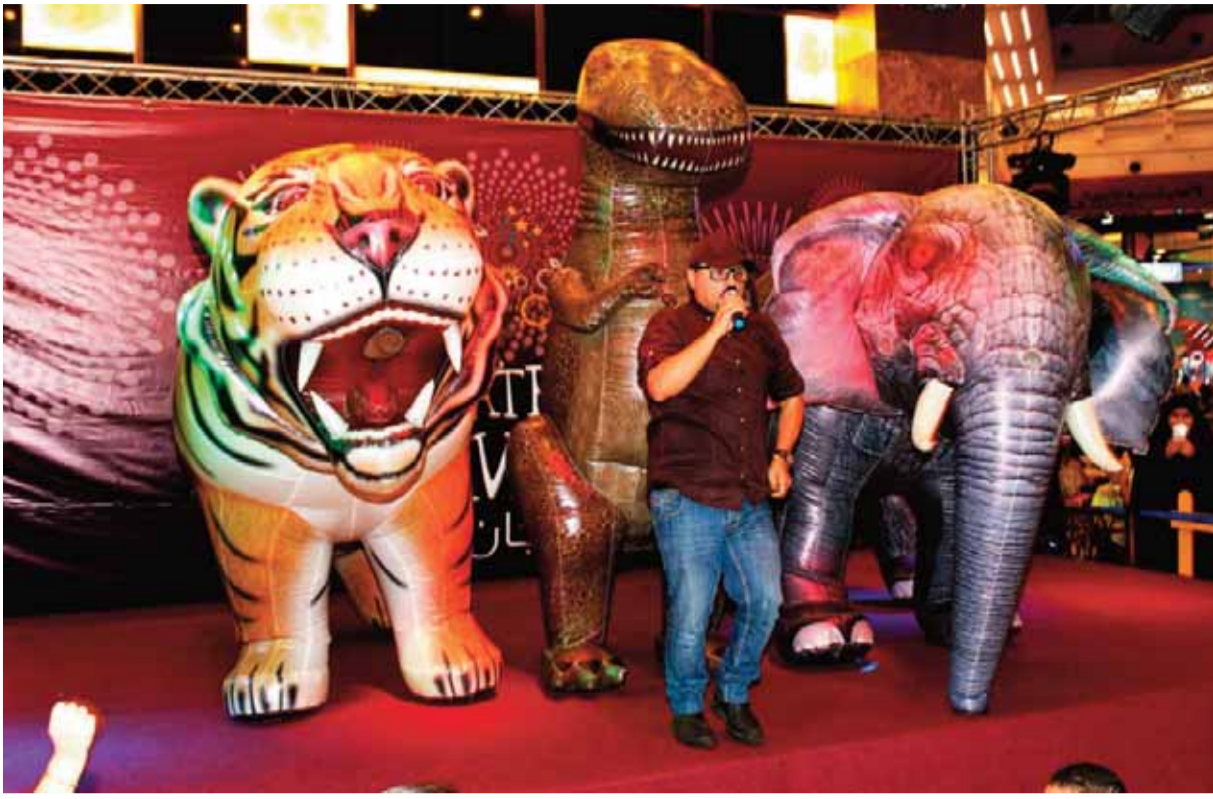
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Kuwait Times
248 33 199

Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
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FANTACY PRODUCTION GROUP HOLDS 'RETURN OF DINOSAURS'

Fantasy Production Group held the "Return of Dinosaurs," a number of characters including the elephant and tiger. The play was meaningful and enjoyable, which was enjoyed by the children. The show also included a magician show and gifts were distributed.



AL THURAYA CITY APPOINTS NEW GENERAL MANAGER



Crowne Plaza Kuwait Al Thuraya City and Holiday Inn Kuwait are delighted to announce the appointment of Antoine Flouty as Area General Manager of both hotels. In his new capacity at Al Thuraya City, Flouty will oversee the complex's operations, which include two five-star hotel properties, nine dining outlets, a 24-hour health and fitness centre, the opulently unique Spa Aquatonic, five ballrooms, 11 meeting rooms, and a 207-seat state-of-the-art auditorium. Flouty joined InterContinental Hotels Group in 1997 and began his career in accounting.

At a later stage, he focused on developing his skills in food & beverage and grew his career from waiter to Assistant Food and Beverage Manager, gaining experience in iconic hotels

like Le Vendome InterContinental and Phoenicia InterContinental in Beirut. His first international assignment was as Director of Food & Beverage at InterContinental Doha, followed by that of Executive Assistant Manager as part of the pre-opening team Crowne Plaza and Staybridge Suites Yas Island in Abu Dhabi.

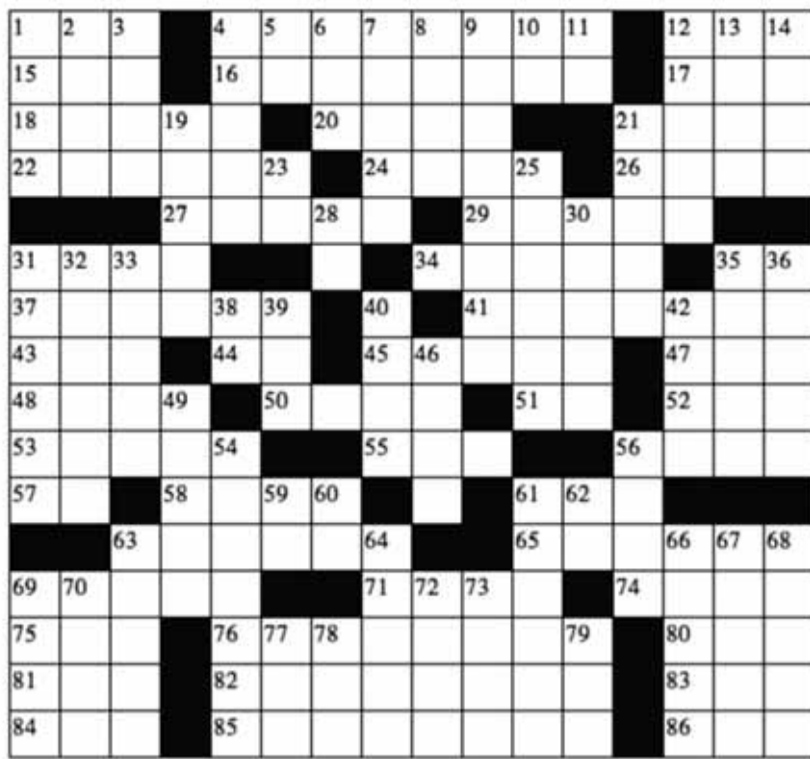
In 2011, he joined InterContinental Regency Bahrain as the Resident Manager and played an instrumental role in managing the team and property during a period of political and civil unrest in the country. His following assignment was as Resident Manager at InterContinental Jordan. Prior to his appointment at Al Thuraya City, Flouty was General Manager at Holiday Inn Downtown Kuwait, a position he took on in August 2014.

Greetings



Happy birthday to you Mrs Bukola! May God guide and protect you as you continue to be a blessing to your family. Greetings from husband, children, Kuwait African International Congregation, friends and well-wishers.

CROSSWORD 1325



ACROSS

1. A condition (mostly in boys) characterized by behavioral and learning disorders.
4. In some classifications considered a suborder of Orthoptera.
12. A chest in which coins from the mint are held to await assay.
15. The Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the Dali region of Yunnan.
16. A person who commits larceny.
17. Electronic warfare undertaken to prevent or reduce an enemy's effective use of the electromagnetic spectrum.
18. A member of the Siouan people formerly living in the Missouri river valley in NE Nebraska.
20. Affected manners intended to impress others.
22. Having branches.
24. Evergreen trees and shrubs having oily one-seeded fruits.
26. United States newspaper publisher (1858-1935).
27. A resident of Iowa.
29. ('cease' is a noun only in the phrase 'without cease') End v 1.
31. A native or inhabitant of Scotland.
34. A brass instrument without valves.
37. The time when something happens.
41. A publication (such as a book) that is reprinted without changes or editing and offered again for sale.
43. (informal) Of the highest quality.
44. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
45. A formal expression of praise.
29. ('cease' is a noun only in the phrase 'without cease') End v 1.
47. An ester of adenosine that is converted to ATP for energy storage.
48. Medium-sized tree having glossy lanceolate leaves.
50. A small ball with a hole through the middle.
51. A colorless odorless gaseous element that give a red glow in a vacuum tube.
52. An undergarment worn by women to support their breasts.
53. People having the same social or economic status.
55. An ugly evil-looking old woman.
57. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
58. Harsh or corrosive in tone.
65. The Mongol people living in the the central and eastern parts of Outer Mongolia.
69. Italian lawn bowling (played on a long narrow dirt court).
71. (Old Testament) In Judeo-Christian mythology.
74. A branch of the Tai languages.
75. A lipoprotein that transports cholesterol in the blood.
76. A clear colorless volatile liquid (alcohol) used as a solvent and antiseptic.
80. A master's degree in business.
81. An agency of the United Nations affiliated with the World Bank.
82. A long slender cigar.
83. Tag the base runner to get him out.
84. Standard time in the 8th time zone west of Greenwich, reckoned at the 120th meridian west.
85. A person who hides aboard a ship or plane in the hope of getting free passage.
86. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
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86. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

1. Little known Kamarupan languages.
2. Fallow deer.
3. The length of a straight line passing through the center of a circle and connecting two points on the circumference.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Ambition takes center stage. Achievements that win you rewards and recognition are yours for the making-but you must make them happen. You cannot simply wait around and expect recognition to happen without the effort. Congratulations with your progress toward using positive assertiveness techniques. At home today you could be expecting guests and besides the snacks and drinks you may want to set out some of the many games you have. If the games are seen, several people will grab hold and enjoy a game or two instead of listening to another person's bowling experience. This way your party will be a relaxed, fun sort of evening with nothing serious planned. You can be a skillful planner that makes a great deal of harmony.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

The business may profit from your ideas today, but politically speaking, you must be careful how you phrase your suggestions. Let others talk in a group meeting today-you take the notebook and keep your notes flowing for reference later. You have animal-like instincts and when it comes to big business, you are always where the action is most intense. Your penetrating mind gets straight to the truth every time. Exciting to be near, you are an entrepreneur, the big wheel. Sometimes you are restless and driven. Communicating with friends or relatives this evening can be an enjoyable break from your busy workday. There is talk of golf, tennis and perhaps, fishing. Lovers, children and other people or things dear to your heart are emphasized now.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You may find that both your personal growth and your career may depend on how you can handle some very sensitive psychological material that may be coming up now. Resolving conflicting opinions and deciding between opposing views or different options is essential now. You must decide one way or another, or else you are stuck in a rut. It's easy to be distracted, so study things through in order to act from a position of knowledge rather than out of ignorance. Your sense of responsibility is so well developed that you always end up managing any situation in which you become involved. You are disciplined, work hard and are good at getting others to work with and for you. Be encouraged, you can make a positive difference in people's lives.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

The daily stress can make you feel as though you would have liked to stay home, under the covers. Before the morning advances however, you are grateful you mustered up the energy to enter into the workplace. You come up with new solutions to an ongoing problem and everyone is congratulatory. You are beginning to understand how cycles of change and industry ups and downs really work. Given to clear headedness, practical insight and vision, you may find several new opportunities that will show off your productive ideas and logic. Survival in business, whether it is your own business or a business for which you work, occasionally depends on your ability to laugh. Relax and enjoy your growth this evening.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Things do not work out magically today but, with your positive attitude, you should see a change in the way life has been unfolding lately. You have grasped some of the difficulties and you and a few co-workers are able to solve problems. You are imaginative and understanding in areas of the mind that are the most personal or private-depth psychology. The words here are: staying power. If there is a job, you can do it. As an exceptional worker, you pour yourself into any task with absolute determination. You take on obligations as though you just cannot get enough. You enjoy discipline, and limitations are seen as opportunities rather than as handicaps. Enjoy the celebration of life. There are surprises this evening.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Leave your mind and your attitude open to the possibilities of change and growth. Double-check your list-make changes where necessary. At one point you may find yourself actually smiling because of the opportunity that is presently available to show your wisdom or talent in some everyday task that takes place. Leading, teaching and the ability to follow will be beneficial to your future and influence people. Home, family, friends and community involvement are where you enjoy relaxing. There may be a scout meeting, a religious gathering or some other get-together that allows you to relax and just enjoy those around you this evening. General good feelings and a sense of support and harmony make this a happy time.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Today could be a frustrating time both at home and at work. Ask yourself if you are taking care of yourself in the ways of nutrition, exercise, rest, play and intellectual stimulation. Today you may find yourself making poor choices, particularly if one of these things is lacking. Choosing the best buy may not be in your best interest this afternoon. It would be best to choose the most passive route possible so that you can be refurbished. Perhaps you are able to close or complete old projects, make phone calls to set up appointments for next week and perform more of this type of activity. Take time after work this afternoon to relax-think about the balance in your life. Plan a sightseeing trip with a friend or a family member for this weekend.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You have a lot of energy to pour into practical and career decisions. Your career or life-path may depend on your talent for responding and making something out of ideas, insights and whatever is challenging. The business world may call for your ability to react and build on opportunities. This may mean you are in a job where you study, coordinate events and help people find what they need. Perhaps you are a politician, a travel advisor, librarian or the manager of a company. It would not hurt to do some serious thinking along the lines of talent versus dollars. You are excellent at what you do and it may just be the time to ask for an increase in salary or benefits. You enjoy some form of sports this evening-be sure to bring plenty of water.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 19)

Your tendency to compromise and settle for less than you dreamed can be a problem. Given the opportunity, you may choose the path of least resistance, willing to bypass some of the things you always wanted in favor of expediency. Career moves must be given special attention now. A business coach may help you find the points to consider when you go for an employee review. If you do not speak up and ask for what you want, you may not get to your goal. You might find that a community college has a class in some sort of business psychology. The timing for these changes is now. Others should find you most enthusiastic. In fact, they may find you extremely intuitive. You enjoy helping others, now it is your turn to collect on a few helpful hints.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

A fusspot or worrywart is something you used to be... Congratulations for evolving. Sarcastic, you are really growing and contributing and just about ready to jump into some leadership position. Many editors or writers stop and wonder if the changes will ever stop. You may have had that insight recently about worry. There is always something... Now is your time. You have fine-tuned and developed into the person and worker or performer that you always wanted to be. Look around you at the company you keep and the achievements you have made and be glad. A pleasant day can be enjoyed as you let the kite full of worries fly away. There are opportunities for self-expression that lends itself to your particular ideas and thoughts.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Fine verbal skills and a natural sense of justice make legal work a distinct possibility. You could be most persuasive with others and eloquent in speech and communication. You must have done well in school debates. The situation is a natural for self-expression and your ideas and thoughts are heard. Working with laws, natural or fabricated, amounts to a real talent. You also have a great interest in new ideas-the truer and more lasting the better. At home this afternoon you may want to write down the music you have been creating in your head. If you do not know how to write the music down consider a tape recording of your melody until you can get someone to write it out. You may be most pleased at the outcome. Wiggle your feet in water this evening.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You may surprise yourself with the results of your labor on a craft project this morning. Whatever you are working on could turn into a handy invention. As a craft worker with an innate critical sense, you are always full of suggestions. If you are working, this creation may be in the form of some advertisement and will create quite a stir. You may be asked lots of questions. How do you do what you do what made you think like this if your complete idea is not accepted, parts of it will be... Kudos to you! You may find yourself and a friendly co-worker hovering over topics of trivia at the noon break. You are quick-minded. This afternoon and evening you take advantage of the community bicycle-sharing system and you enjoy the views.

WORD SEARCH

Fish 3 - Word Search

Find the words hidden in the grid of letters.

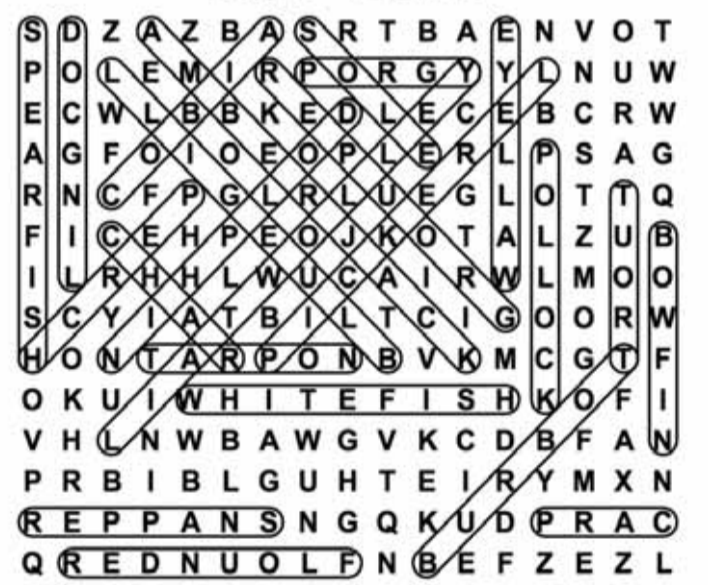


- | | | |
|----------|-------------|------------|
| BASS | MACKEREL | SHEEPSHEAD |
| BLUEFISH | MARLIN | SNOOK |
| BONITO | PADDLEFISH | STEELHEAD |
| CISCO | PIKE | SUNFISH |
| CREVALLE | POMPANO | TILAPIA |
| GOLDFISH | ROCKFISH | TUNA |
| GRAYLING | ROOSTERFISH | WEAKFISH |
| HADDOCK | SHAD | |

Yesterday Solution

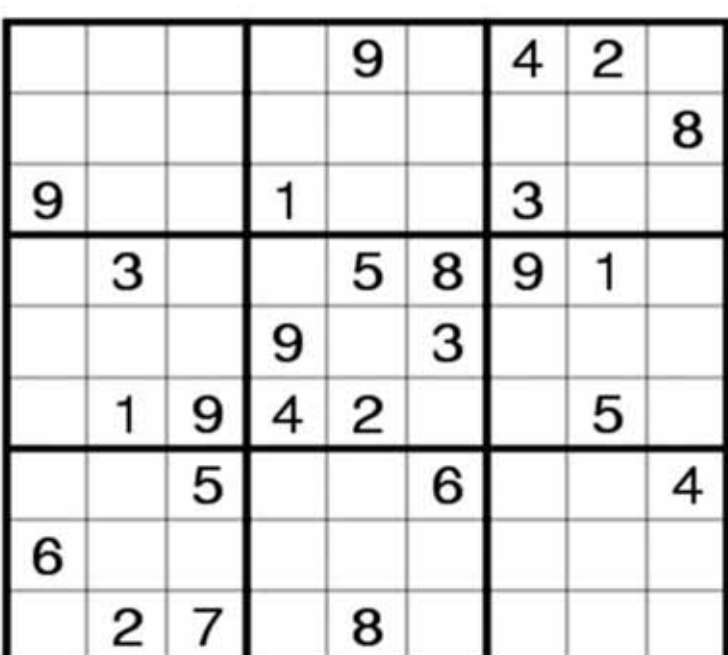
Large Print Word Search Puzzles

Fish 2 - Solution



- | | | |
|-----------|----------|------------|
| AMBERJACK | FLOUNDER | SOLE |
| BLUEGILL | GROUPE | SPEARFISH |
| BOWFIN | LINGCOD | TARPON |
| BURBOT | PERCH | TROUT |
| CARP | PICKEREL | WALLEYE |
| CHAR | POLLOCK | WHITEFISH |
| COBIA | PORGY | YELLOWTAIL |
| DOLPHIN | SNAPPER | |

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution





RECIPES FOR KIDS



Berry and vanilla yoghurt pops

Ingredients

- 2 x 4-hole, 1/2 cup-capacity plastic ice-block moulds.
- 1 cup frozen mixed berries
- 1 1/3 cups apple juice
- 2 x 170g tubs low-fat vanilla yoghurt

Method

1. Blend berries and juice until smooth. Transfer to a jug. Pour berry mixture evenly into each mould. Freeze for 30 minutes or until just firm.
2. Spoon yoghurt evenly over berry mixture in moulds. Place lids on moulds. Freeze overnight or until firm. Serve.

SUDOKU

7		3			5			
	3		2	9		8		
		4		8				3
	4	1	5			6		9
6			7					
		5		4	6	2		
		8			7		4	
	1	3		5				8
5	2			3		1		

Solution

9	6	1	4	3	8	7	2	5
8	2	7	6	5	9	3	1	4
5	4	3	7	2	1	8	9	6
1	3	2	9	4	6	5	7	8
4	8	5	3	1	7	2	6	9
9	7	6	2	8	1	5	4	3
3	1	6	8	7	4	9	5	2
7	9	8	5	6	2	4	3	1
2	5	4	1	9	3	6	8	7



DISNEY THE QUIZ

1. What Disney film contains the classic song 'Be our Guest'?
2. Who keeps a watchful eye over Cinderella making her dreams come true?
3. 'One Jump' is a song from which Disney film?
4. Which Disney film starts in the underwater world of Australia's Great Barrier Reef?
5. The villain, Randall Boggs, appears in which Disney film?
6. In which Disney film will you hear the song 'He's a Tramp'?
7. What is the name of Simba's Disney partner?
8. Which Disney character sings the song 'Who's Been Painting My Rose Red'?
9. What type of animal is Kaa from The Jungle Book?
10. In which city is the 2007 Disney film Ratatouille based?

ANSWERS

1. Beauty and the Beast
2. Fairy Godmother
3. Aladdin
4. Finding Nemo
5. Monsters, Inc
6. Lady & the Tramp
7. Nala
8. Queen of Hearts, Alice in Wonderland
9. A Python / Snake
10. Paris

JOKES

- Q. What do cats read in the morning?
A. Newspapers!
- Q. There were four cats in a boat, one jumped out. How many were left?
A. None. They were all copy cats!
- Q. What is a cat's favorite color?
A. Purrr-ple
- Q. What game did the cat like to play with the mouse?
A. Catch!
- Q. Where did the school kittens go for their field trip?
A. To the mewseum.
- Q. What kind of cats like to go bowling?
A. Alley cats!



Did you know?

- Fast food (or junk food) is the name given to food that can be prepared and served quickly, often served at basic restaurants or in packaged form for convenient takeaway/takeout. It is typically inexpensive to buy but unhealthy to eat.
- Popular forms of fast food include burgers, fries, pizza, fish and chips, kebabs and fried chicken.
- Well known fast food franchises and restaurants include McDonalds, Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC), Pizza Hut, Taco Bell and Burger King.
- As well as at restaurants, fast food is commonly sold at convenience stores and gas stations. Examples of this include hotdogs, meat pies and doughnuts.
- Fast food is often highly processed and produced on a large scale to decrease costs. Ingredients and various menu items are typically prepared at a different location before being sent to restaurants to be cooked, reheated or quickly put together for the customer's convenience.
- While hamburgers, fries and pizza are seen as traditional fast foods, countries throughout the world sell all types of fast food that may not be so well known. Some examples of these include kebabs, Chinese takeaways (fried noodles, rice and meat dishes), sushi and bento type foods in Japan and fish and chips in the UK, New Zealand and Australia.
- Consumers in the USA spend over \$100 billion on fast food every year.
- McDonald's is arguably the world's most well known fast food chain. There are McDonald's restaurants found in over 100 countries around the world and they serve over 40 million customers every day.
- Due to increased awareness of public health and obesity levels, efforts have been made to improve fast food menus by lowering fat levels or at least offering healthier alternatives. While these health concerns are generating more attention, fast food is still linked to worldwide weight gain problems, increased diabetes risks and healthcare costs.

ACTIVITY



Make your own snow globe

What you need

- Small jar (a jam jar is perfect)
- Small ornament or toys
- Beads or buttons
- Glitter
- Water
- Super glue or a hot glue gun
- Ribbon

Activity

1. Gather your supplies.
2. Take the lid off the jar and set it on the table, inside facing up. Glue your ornament and beads, buttons or any other embellishments to the lid.
3. Fill the jar with water and sprinkle some glitter into the water.
4. Once the ornament is dry, screw the lid back on, making sure it is very tight. Turn it up the right way. Shake it to test it out (How cool is a snow globe!).
5. Hot glue or tie some ribbon around the top and bottom to decorate and make it even more special as a gift.

Scooby-Doo Word Search



c m e d d l i n g k i d s r
o y r i s m n e r b s c k t
b s k n n h i j e n i v n o
a t b o a i s n a c k s i h
n e i g o c j o t o l b o p
v r m h i p a n d e d v z e
t y j o s u s n a e y e a t
r m f s c v c a n k d a r s
b a m t o y z v e l m a b f
p c k p o b r i d e n a w e
e h a m b u r g e r t a p v
h i e a y f t o w h e r e e
n n h y g n k a r o x e k n
o e z d a p h n e v y o u r
f v y t n b a p s r g d s a
s h a g g y m c l u e s g w

Help SCOOBY-DOO find the following words:

- clues
- daphne
- fred
- gang
- ghost
- great dane
- hamburger
- meddling kids
- mystery machine
- oops
- scooby
- shaggy
- snacks
- spooky
- velma
- zinks



GOSSIP



Ellie Goulding's not recognized by driver

Ellie Goulding's cab driver told her he didn't like her music. The 'Burn' hitmaker was amused when she used taxi app Uber and her driver told her how he had had someone from her band in his car earlier in the day - but failed to recognize his famous passenger. She tweeted: "Mine said he had someone from Ellie Goulding's band in earlier. But didn't like her music soooo. (sic)" Ellie was tweeting in reply to fellow singer Lorde, who had told her followers how her own Uber driver had spent their journey telling her about having an unnamed famous passenger. And the 'Royals' hitmaker admitted she felt he wasn't as impressed to have her in his vehicle. She tweeted: "uber driver currently busting a nut about the fact that there was a 'celebrity passen-

ger' just before me "I can tell our ride, by comparison, sparkles significantly less for him "i can feel it from the back seat, his dazed glow. he's probably now pretending that i am not here, that they are still together, and alone (sic)" Ellie and Lorde aren't the only stars to have had unfortunate incidents with the taxi app as Kanye West recently almost missed a private showing of Sacha Baron Cohen's latest movie 'The Brothers Grimsby' because his car took him to the wrong place. Sacha, 44, previously said of the hilarious blunder: "Unfortunately, Kanye was brought around to the wrong address. His Uber dropped him off at the wrong address and he ended up sitting on the street for half an hour." And a few weeks later, the 'Famous' rapper hitched a ride with a

paparazzo after his hired car left him stranded. As he walked towards the pile of photographers lingering outside a fitness facility, the 38-year-old rapper clutched his phone as he looked around for the motor he'd rented. He pondered, "Where is this black sedan? before adding to the paps, "Hang on one second. [!] Uber everywhere." The photographer filming the fashion designer immediately offered to give him a lift to "wherever" he needs to go. Kanye replied as a smile spread across his face: "I don't need Uber anymore. I just have the paps take me where I want to go! I'll ride with you then. come on, let's go!"

Tom Holland's superhero advice

Tom Holland was told not to let playing Spider-Man "affect" him by Chris Hemsworth. The 20-year-old actor received a "really lovely" email from his 'Heart of the Sea' co-star - who is known for playing Thor in the Marvel universe - after he landed the role of the superhero and is doing his best to take the Australian hunk's advice. He said: "Once I got cast he sent me a really lovely email about just make sure you keep your feet on the ground and you don't let this affect you. "You keep your family and your friends close and, and that's exactly what I've done." And Chris isn't the only Marvel star to have advised Tom - who made his Spider-Man debut in 'Captain America: Civil War' - as he also received some tips from 'Iron Man' actor Robert Downey Jr. when he screen-tested with him for the coveted role. Tom told E! News: "As you can imagine I was pretty terrified and he came up to me and said, 'Look, I felt exactly the same as you did when I did my test for Iron Man but just relax, let your body take over and, and if it's meant to be it'll happen.'" 'Spider-Man: Homecoming' started shooting two weeks ago and while the British actor is enjoying doing his own stunts, he admits it's also quite terrifying. He said: "I've been scared, for sure. I can't tell you what the stunt was because it'll give something away but I basically had to nose dive like thirty-feet or something like that and, and it was really fun but it's that moment when they're like three, two, one that you're like, 'Ahhh.' But it was awesome."



Rochelle Humes's anniversary tribute to Marvin

The Saturdays singer wed the former JLS star four years ago, and in a gushing Instagram post, she spoke at her joy of being his wife. Posting pictures from their wedding photobooth, Rochelle wrote: "Happy 4th wedding anniversary to the only man for me. My absolute world. Love you forever." And Marvin - who has a three-year-old daughter Alaia-Mai with Rochelle - also took to social media to pay tribute to his gorgeous wife. He wrote: "Happy 4th Wedding Anniversary to the love of my life @RochelleHumes everyday just gets better. I love you (sic)" Marvin, 31, recently revealed how he still can't believe that he got to marry 27-year-old Rochelle. He said: "I fancy Rochelle massively and constantly find myself looking at her thinking, 'Wow, that's my wife.'" Marvin also said how the couple don't want to wait too much longer before giving Alaia a brother or a sister. He shared: "I'm always broody! I love having that little baby in your arms. Rochelle is more broody now than ever because two of her best girl friends are pregnant. "It's all up to the big man upstairs. I think we'll have number two within the next year to 18 months, before Alaia is four."

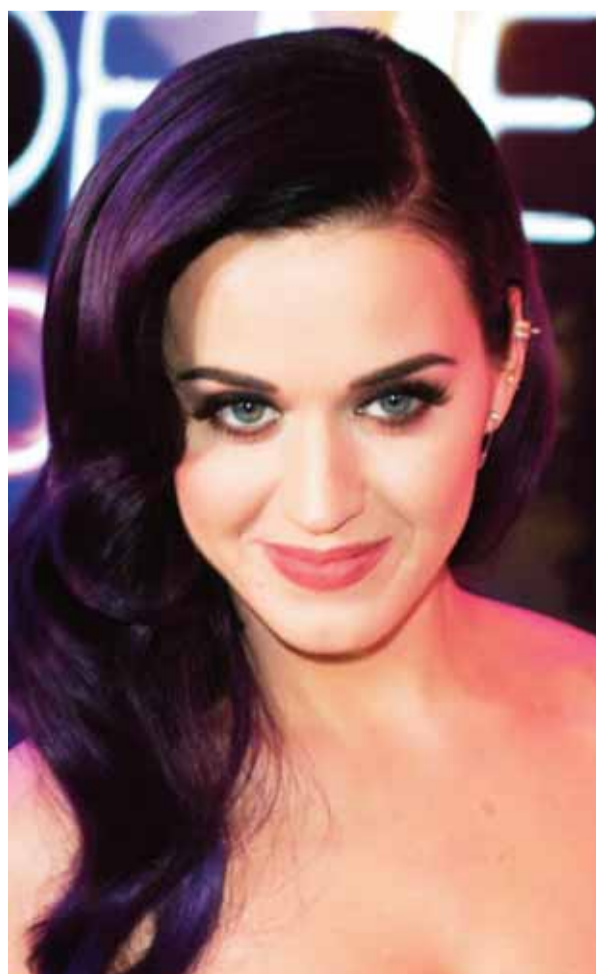


Robbie enjoys her job because she helps out her family

Margot Robbie says the best part of her job is being able to help out her family financially. The 'Suicide Squad' star loves to splash the cash on her loved ones that she banks from her Hollywood roles, but she is cautious about being over generous. Speaking to Stylist magazine, Margot explained: "It's literally the best part of the job, 1000 per cent. But it's also a really weird position. "Someone that has been in the industry longer than me explained it. They said, 'It's like giving out medicine and too much is not going to help, you could end up killing someone by overdosing them, you need to give them enough to achieve what they need at that moment.' I asked, 'But how do you know?' There is no perfect way of doing it, it's just something to be aware of." Margot, 26, and her family weren't well off when she was growing up, and she is very aware of how much things cost and won't waste money. Margot said: "I grew up in a family where you can't leave food on your plate so that would make me anxious." Explaining how she still loves a bargain, she added: "When

I see something like 'half price drinks' I am like, 'Brilliant we should get twice as many of them.'" One drawback of being an in-demand actress though is that the 'Legend of Tarzan' star doesn't get to see enough of her family, especially her mother Sarie. Asked how much time she gets with her beloved mum, the Australian starlet said: "Nowhere near enough, I get snippets of a phone call. In 10 years I don't want to look back and think I missed anything important, so if that means getting on a plane and flying for two days to spend 18 hours at home I'd rather do that." She is so serious about spending time with her family she has specific days off written into her contract. She revealed: "I get it written into my contract because if you just ask for the days off they say, 'Well we'll lose \$50,000 if you do that,' and obviously you don't want to be the person who's like, 'Sure, I don't care if you lose \$50,000.'"

Katy Perry doesn't have any grey hairs



Katy Perry doesn't have any grey hairs, although she has been dyeing her hair since she was 15. The 31-year-old singer songwriter has admitted she hasn't spotted a single silver stray hair amongst her dark tresses "yet", although she has been coloring her locks since she was a teenager and wouldn't have noticed if an odd grey had crept through. Speaking to People magazine the 'I Kissed A Girl' hitmaker said: "I haven't spotted a grey yet - I've been dyeing my hair jet black since I was 15." However, the raven-haired beauty has a relaxed attitude towards the ageing process, and believes visible signs of growing older shouldn't be feared by women. She explained: "[Wrinkles] are not your enemy - they're just proof that you've smiled." And Katy has revealed she has stopped worrying about other people's perceptions of her and is embracing turning 40, although she still has a while to go until she reaches the milestone. She explained: "In your twenties, you spend too much time worrying about what people think of you, and financially, can be sort of a mess. "Your thirties are about independence, loving yourself as you are, financial freedom, consciousness, and good company. I heard your forties are even better." Meanwhile, the California-born star has admitted she is willing to go to any painful measures and experiment with a variety of beauty treatments to keep her looking youthful. She said: "My goals are: to be more SPF-conscious, experiment with facial peels and lasers, take control of the size of my pores, and continuing to try to choose healthy eating habits. "I get lash extensions every two weeks from Lisa Mayer, usually at 7:00 am for 2.5 hours," "Pain is inevitable; suffering is my choice." And Katie has revealed she wants to look like the American television personality Paula Deen when she gets older. Speaking about her inspiration, she simply said: "Paula Deen."



Kerry Katona not fit enough to touch her toes

Kerry Katona was left red-faced when her personal fitness instructor asked her to touch her toes and she couldn't do it. The 35-year-old TV star has seen her weight go up and down over the years but she's currently working hard to get back a fabulous figure. Kerry was getting hot and sweaty on Wednesday but when her coach asked her test her flexibility she couldn't get anywhere near her feet. Her hilarious Twitter post revealed: "My fitness coach told me to bend down and touch my toes. I said, 'I don't have that kind of relationship with my feet. Can I just wave?'" Mother-of-five Kerry won't let her limitations stop her from getting in shape. Despite her toe trauma, the busty blonde motivated herself to go for a jog and work hard. She tweeted: "Just had a great jog feeling amazing now!! Xx "they say you should listen to your body ... So I asked my body if it wanted to work out today and it said 'listen here fatty, do it and die!'" Although she is keen to get in shape, Kerry doesn't put any pressure on her kids to work out as she doesn't want her older daughters Molly, 14, and 13-year-old Lilly-Sue - her kids with ex-husband Brian McFadden - to stress over their body image. The Atomic Kitten singer - who also has Heidi, nine, and Max, eight, from her marriage to Mark Croft, as well as two-year-old daughter Dylan-Jorge, with third spouse George Kay - previously said: "There's nothing wrong with regular exercise, but I don't want my girls obsessing over dress sizes and calorie counting. It's all about feeling good."

Ozzy Osbourne is proud of Jack

Ozzy Osbourne is proud of what a great husband and father his son Jack is. The Black Sabbath rocker recently spent 10 weeks travelling the globe with 30-year-old Jack for new TV show 'Ozzy and Jack's World Detour' and he says it has great to spend with his son, who has two daughters, Pearl, four, and 13-month-old Andy with wife Lisa. He revealed: "He's a very fair-minded guy. He's a great father to his kids and a great husband to his wife. Doing this show has just been a laugh." Jack also loved the experience as he got to bond with his dad. He added to Rolling Stone: "It's kind of awesome to be 30 years old and spending, like, 10 weeks travelling with your dad. By the time you're 30 and married, this type of thing usually doesn't happen. So it was a pretty awesome opportunity." And Ozzy - who also has daughters, Aimee, 32, and 31-year-old Kelly with wife Sharon - was pleased he could rely on his producer son to get them to places. He told Us Weekly: "Jack was able to navigate us to some very remote places." Jack then quipped: "He is a crap navigator. I guess when you're the Prince of Darkness...someone else can read the map." In the show, the father-and-son duo visit iconic locations in countries including England, Cuba and the US. Speaking about Havana, Jack said: "Growing up in America, I've been told Cuba is this evil place. But what I experienced was far from evil."





Demi Lovato's tribute to dog

Demi Lovato has paid tribute to her late dog. The 'Confident' hitmaker was devastated when her beloved pet pooch Buddy was killed in a coyote attack last year and she has taken to her Twitter account to remember him. She wrote: "RIP to my baby boy Buddy. You will forever be my baby angel. I miss you so much.. Wish Batman could've met his big brother. "One year since I lost you. I love you Buddy." Following his death, Demi got a tattoo to pay homage to her dog, which said: "Buddy was here", and was inked in the form of a child's handwriting. Last year,

the 23-year-old singer shared her devastation with her fans with an emotive Instagram post. Alongside a video of herself with Buddy, Demi wrote: "One year ago today, God blessed me with the sweetest little angel and my very first son. Words will never be able to express my love and bond with him. "I felt like he was literally my baby because the connection I had with this little guy was scarily human. I believe he came into my life at the perfect time but he left way too soon and a piece of my heart will always be broken without him in this world." Demi added that despite Buddy's

death, the cute canine will always be part of her life. She continued: "I love you so much Buddy and I miss you every single minute of every single day but you'll live on in my heart with memories like this forever ... RIP my little baby boy and angel. I love you my little lion heart. Your light is inside of me."

Lima mixes avocado with her conditioner

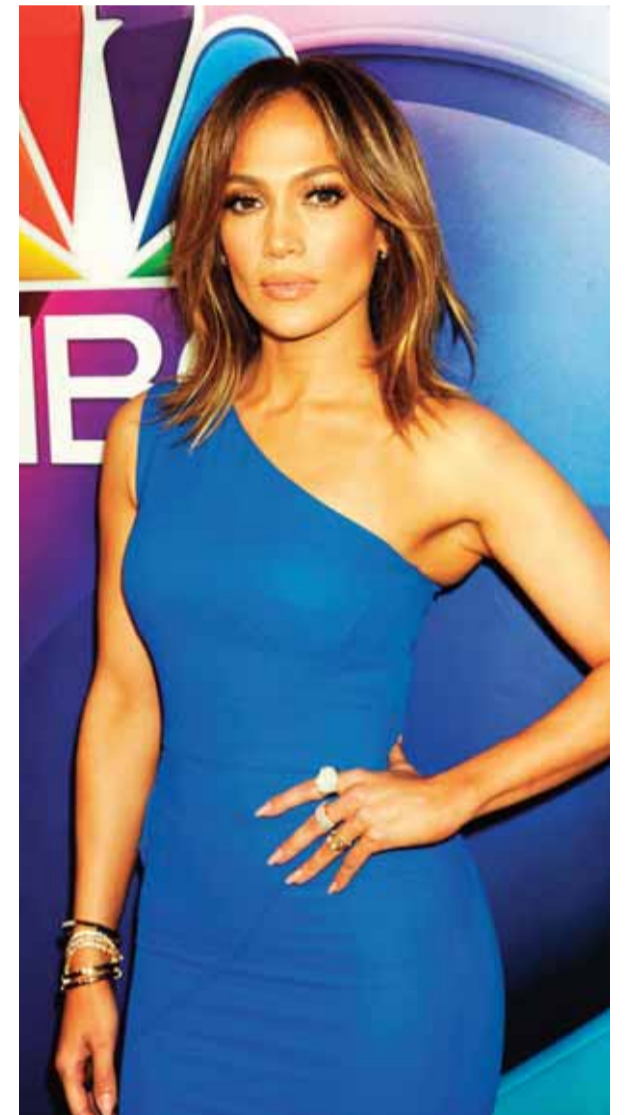
Adriana Lima mixes avocado with her conditioner for "super shiny" hair. The 35-year-old Brazilian supermodel - who signed to Elite Model Management in 1999 after winning Ford's Supermodel of Brazil beauty contest aged 15 - has admitted she "likes" to mix the fruit with the hair product for a deeper condition, although she only uses the concoction on her brunette tresses "just" once a week. Speaking about her beauty hacks, the catwalk icon - who has graced the runway for lingerie giant Victoria's Secret, Prada and Louis Vuitton - said: "I like to mix my conditioner with one whole avocado. So my hair is like super shiny. Just on my hair. Just once a week." And the mother of two - who has six-year-old daughter Valentina and regularly has a hair wrap, which is a traditional hair treatment in her home country. She explained: "In Brazil we do a lot of hair wraps. You wrap your hair around your head with bobby pins. You can do the hair when you sleep and then take it out in the morning. Every Brazilian knows how to do it. Just when it's needed, I do it. Of if I have a nice dinner with my friends, or just because." And Adriana has revealed she follows a simple daily beauty regime as well, which sees her source organic skincare products from a beautician in Paris who tailors the products to suit her skin. Speaking to Elle she said: "I wake up, and I put sunscreen ... so I do not have a lot on my skin. But I like to use products from my facial guy that I go to in Paris. His name is Herve Herau and I like to use his facial cleanser. There is a serum and a light lotion for the day. And everything that he makes, he

makes himself, and is organic. I carry his products and just do all of it to myself in the morning. He is a different type of facialist. When you go in it's not like there is a menu, he builds everything for you, for your skin."



Jennifer Lopez and Giuseppe Zanotti shoe collection

Jennifer Lopez is set to collaborate with Giuseppe Zanotti on a new fashion range. The 47-year-old singer songwriter has partnered with the Italian fashion designer to create a footwear and accessories line called Giuseppe for Jennifer Lopez, which the 59-year-old believes was a "natural evolution" for the pair because he has always been "inspired" by the 'Ain't Your Mama' hitmaker. Speaking to Vogue online about the forthcoming fashion venture, Giuseppe said: "I've always been inspired by Jennifer and love the way she looks in my shoes. "It was a natural evolution to collaborate together." And the 'Wedding Planner' actress - who founded her eponymous clothing label JLO by Jennifer Lopez in 2001 - has admitted she has held a longstanding passion for extravagant footwear and has hinted she is also excited to work with Giuseppe. She explained: "I think it goes without saying that like every other girl, I love a killer pair of shoes. Whether I'm walking the red carpet or dressed casually, the right shoes complete my outfit to make me feel beautiful, sexy, and fearless." Giuseppe announced the news on his Instagram account, which saw him post a picture of him in discussion with the mother of two - who has Maximilian and Emme, both eight years old, with her ex husband Marc Anthony. Alongside the post, he wrote: "A Special Release: Giuseppe Zanotti and Jennifer Lopez are joining creative forces in an exclusive, new capsule collection. #GiuseppexJennifer launches worldwide in January 2017 @JLO #GiuseppeZanotti (sic)" And Giuseppe has teased the forthcoming capsule, which will include crystal encrusted boots, embellished wedge trainers and platform shoes, as well as two leather handbags, will be the perfect amalgamation of the duos style. The creative mastermind - who is known for his embellished stiletto heels and 18 carat gold menswear trainers - explained: "[It will be] like Jennifer, sensual, sophisticated, modern but also playful and edgy. "Everything you would expect from the both of us - bad-high heels with shapes that are fierce and, of course, have some sparkle!" Jennifer and Giuseppe's collection is set to hit stores in January next year.



Kylie Jenner wants to open a Kylie Cosmetics store

The 18-year-old 'Keeping With the Kardashians' star - who built up her beauty empire over two years before launching this year - has teased she would like to open a shop for her make-up brand, and has revealed plans for an outlet to accompany her e-store are "on the menu" for her ever evolving cosmetics company. When Kylie was asked by a fan whether she will open a cosmetics shop via Twitter, she replied: "Dats on the menu (sic)." Meanwhile, Kylie was forced to redesign her e-store earlier this year after it continually crashed on customers due to the high volume of traffic drawn to the platform. Speaking previously about the amendments made to the web page, she said: "I'm going to change our holding page ("the line" which keeps my site from crashing because of the mass amounts of people) and find an alternative that still keeps my site up and running. I don't like it either. But I love you guys and my passion for my

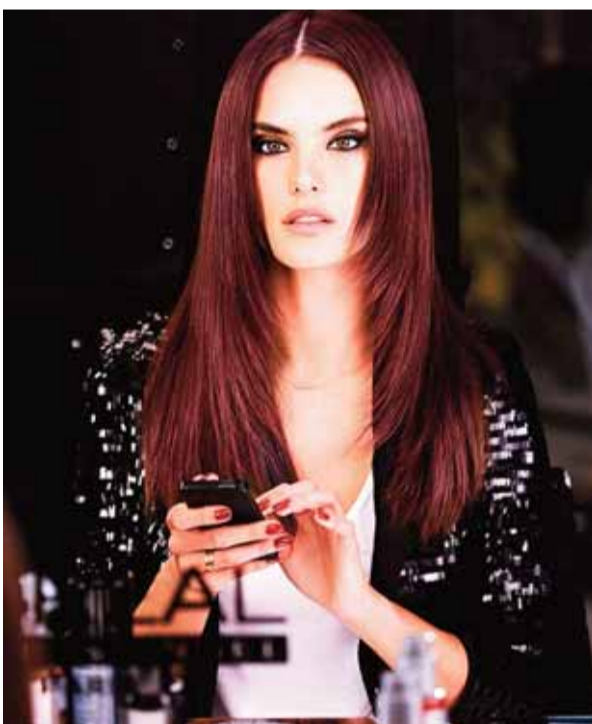
business is very serious. For the many people who got their hands on one of my glosses or mattes I can't wait to see you in them." And the teen entrepreneur - who boasts a make-up capsule expanding over 15 lip kits, which include a lipstick and lip liner duo, seven lip glosses, four mattes as well as the recent Kyshadow eye make-up palette - unveiled three shades in her debut lipstick launch has revealed she never intended to release the "two nudes" Candy K and Dolce K to Kylie Cosmetics at the same time. Speaking previously about her plans for the beauty brand, she said: "I wasn't going to do two nudes during my original launch, which included Dolce. But I just loved Candy so much, I didn't care!" Although the brunette beauty has always intended to make the matte shade a "pink-nude", although she had to experiment with the color a little. She explained: "I was looking for a good pink-nude."



Tara Palmer-Tomkinson says no to more cosmetic surgery

Tara Palmer-Tomkinson has vowed to not have any more cosmetic surgery. The 44-year-old socialite's hard partying in the 90s resulted in her cocaine use spiraling out of control and eventually caused her nasal septum to collapse and have to be repaired with a rhinoplasty procedure in 2006 to correct the shape. In 2011, she had fillers injected into her nose to give it a more natural looking appearance but she says those days of relying on doctors are over now. Speaking to Closer magazine, Tara said: "I look this way - I'm not going to go out and have surgery. I'm 44 and it definitely hits you; there is pressure to have surgery. I find it hard and I buy every anti-ageing cream there is. But I'm not going to change myself." Tara now chooses to deal with her issues with her appearance and the ageing process from

within. She said: "I have a good psychiatrist, I read a lot of psychology and I believe that to be a kind person is so much more important." Tara - who is Prince Charles' goddaughter - also takes a more natural approach to her appearance these days, and takes a lot of exercise to maintain her athletic figure. She said: "I have a salsa teacher twice a week, do body control stretches, eat healthily and drink lots of water." Tara hasn't completely said goodbye to her party girl lifestyle though, and does permit herself the odd glass of wine. The former 'I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here!' contestant said of her vices: "I'm someone who plans not to smoke or not to drink coffee, but I'm also not going to abstain from drinking wine - I can have the odd glass."



Alessandra Ambrosio collects Barbie dolls

The Victoria's Secret Angel has always been a huge fan of Mattel's iconic blonde doll and now has an extensive collection which includes toys made as far back in 1959 - the year the doll was launched. Alessandra loves to hunt the dolls down online and in shops and although she used to get embarrassed by her collecting obsession she now pretends they are for their seven-year-old daughter Anja. The Brazilian catwalk beauty - who also has three-year-old son Noah with her husband Jamie Muzur - said: "(I love Barbies) including antique ones from the 50s. I have about 60, although I can now claim I buy them for my daughter!" Over the years Alessandra has also amassed a lot of lingerie sets from her job with Victoria's Secret and she doesn't like to get rid of any because you can "never have too many". In 2014, Alessandra modeled the Dream Fantasy Bra which cost \$2.5 million and was made from 16,000 rubies, diamonds and sapphires, all of which were strung together with 18 karat gold. Ruth Handler was inspired to create Barbie after watching her daughter Barbara playing with paper dolls as if they were adults. She also noticed Barbara couldn't properly dress her dolls in the clothes she had made them. Ruth along with the help of her husband Elliot - who worked for toy manufacturers Mattel - developed and launched Barbie and instantly had a hit on their hands which has lasted to this day. Reese Witherspoon is producing a film about Ruth after securing the movie rights to Robin Gerber's book 'Barbie and Ruth', which documents her rise to success with the doll.

Blake Lively wants 'Gossip Girl' reunion

Blake Lively thinks it would be "fun" to bring back 'Gossip Girl'. The 28-year-old actress became a household name after playing Serena van der Woodsen in the drama series, which ended in 2012, and she believes her former castmates would "enjoy" a reunion series. She said: "I don't know, it would be fun. We had such a great time doing that that I think we all would really enjoy that." And when told by E! News presenter Marc Malkin that he misses the show, Blake - who is expecting her second child, a sibling for 19-month-old daughter James, with husband Ryan Reynolds - admitted she does too. She said: "I miss it sometimes, too!" The 'Shallows' actress took the time to consider what her former TV alter ego is up to at the moment, and thinks the fashionista is in a good place.

She said: "She's probably on vacation, living it up... She hasn't been in touch." Meanwhile, 'Gossip Girl' executive producer Josh Schwarz admitted he hasn't even considered the possibility of bringing back the show, which ran for 12 seasons. He said: "We haven't really explored some of those conversations. Maybe, I don't know. We haven't really thought about it." However, he did admit that because "the Internet has changed" so much, it would be interesting to see the show in an age of Snapchat, Instagram and other current social media apps. It was previously revealed that Rumer Willis was the first choice to play Serena in the show. CW's casting director David Rapaport said: "I think the network initially pitched us Rumer Willis for Serena. "I love Rumer, she's grown into quite an

amazing actress and person, but that, to me, was based on protecting the investment of a television show where creatively, these lesser-known girls really captured the essence of the show and carried it for six years." And David also revealed that Ashley Olsen was considered for the part of Blair Waldorf, which eventually went to Leighton Meester. Speaking about others who tested for the show, he said: "I read so many people. I think at the end of the day, we tested Blake, Katie Cassidy, who is now on 'Arrow', and this girl who was (Serena) on the 'Gossip Girl' book." -Bang Showbiz

Your hair is part of your personality



We've all went through a phase where we struggle with our hair being extremely dry and weak after bleaching. It's the summer and many of us fantasize about our dark tans, blonde locks and summer love, but we never truly think about the damages we can cause to either our hair and skin. The thing is, we can all change the color of hair as much as we want, but it is very important to take care of our hair after we've done whatever we want, or else we'll just end up with extremely unhealthy and damaged hair. Many times we want to go for a color change, and most of the times we want to go lighter or add in some highlights or lowlights, where we must bleach our hair for the perfect shade of blonde, bronde, honey, you name it! We tend to forget or not even notice that not only the bleaching can ruin the quality of our hair, but what's even worse is what we do to our hair after we've bleached it!

The very first thing you want to STOP using is shampoo after you've bleached your hair for an entire week. Yes, a week. The reason is because the peroxide in the bleach has already stripped your hair raw from all the natural oils that your hair normally contains, and shampoo contains sodium lauryl sulfate which will only damage your hair more and keep it dry as the Sahara Desert! Stick to using deep moisturizing condition-

ers for a week, I know it might be hard to do so but trust me, you will thank me later if you didn't know this fact.

Stay away from flat irons

For a month after bleaching, always try to use leave in conditioners, as well as deep moisturizing conditioners, because this will help you lock in the moisture in your hair which will allow it to repair itself faster and hopefully go back to what it was before you've bleached it. For that extra extra moisture, add Extra Virgin Olive Oil to your shampoo, conditioner or just leave it in your hair after you have shampoo'd and conditioned your hair.

Stay away from flat irons, curling irons, any sort of tool that you use that gives off heat because it will only make everything worse. Try to keep the hairstyling only for occasions, and you'll notice how fast your hair will be repaired.

If you are REALLY suffering from how dried up and burnt looking your hair is, or how obvious the tips of your hair are, you might want to consider going for a trim, or chopping off a chunk of your hair to make it at least look healthier.

Seafood diet

Always add protein to the outer layer of your hair, your hair

is basically made out of protein. One thing I did, when I went much lighter I really hated how my hair looked like because no matter how I styled it, washed it, moisturized it, it would always look awful! So I started thinking of almost every way possible and what I started to doing is going on a seafood diet. I know it might sound irrelevant of ridiculous but it actually worked! Omega-3 packed foods and protein filled foods will always be good for you, however they are essential for not only having healthier hair, but also better skin and nails.

If all of the above fails, then you've either went for a really bad and unprofessional hairdresser or just considering shaving it all off! Nothing is worse than having burnt hair, it makes me insecure actually, because my hair has become a part of my personality, sounds weird but it's true! Ladies, please consider the damages you are about to cause before going for that drastic change, and most importantly always consider the type of hair you've got, because sometimes your hair cannot tolerate the bleach. Enjoy your locks!

Art with heart: Making children's health wards less scary

For Dorkas Kaya and other young patients with HIV, seeing the walls of their residential treatment facility transformed with broad splashes of color and graffiti-like scribbles brought a singular reaction: "Whoa!" Artist Jose Parla spent several days last week decorating bedrooms, hallways and common areas of the Incarnation Children's Center in his signature improvisational style, the latest project in a charitable effort that commissions top contemporary artists to make pediatric health facilities less intimidating. "We were all like 'whoa,' yelling, 'cause it's so different," said Kaya, a 19-year-old who has been in the center for three years. "I like the colors. It brings life to the place."

The nonprofit RxArt's simple mission is to help children heal through the power of art by taking their mind off their surroundings, even for just a little while. They've brought in an impressive roster of artists to pediatric wards across the country to create original works on walls, ceilings, floors, even medical equipment. In fact, former art dealer Diane Brown founded RxArt 15 years ago out of her own claustrophobia of CAT scan machines.

"I was having a CAT scan and I was terrified," she recalled. Her only escape was using her imagination to think about a painting by one of her favorite artists, Matthew Ritchie. When the test was over, she realized she had hardly been aware of it. She decided, "I'd like to do this for other people, but in case they didn't have my imagination or background, I would have to be more concrete."

Amusement park ride

RxArt has since worked with such artists as Jeff Koons at Advocate Children's Hospital in Oak Lawn, Illinois; Kenny Scharf at Kings County Hospital Center in Brooklyn; Urs Fischer at the Cedar-Sinai Maxine Dunitz Children's Health Center in Los Angeles; and John Monti at Children's Hospital Boston. Thirty-two projects are complete. Seven more are in the pipeline.

Koons' project decorated a CAT scan machine with decals of his iconic monkey images. "Having the monkey faces on the scanner ... feels more like this would be like an amusement park ride, something that's a fun experience, not something to be frightened

of," the celebrated pop artist says in a RxArt video of his project created in 2010. Brooklyn artist Parla, whose exuberant works hang in One World Trade Center and the Brooklyn Academy of Music, created a mural in the rooftop garden of the 21-bed Incarnation center in upper Manhattan.

"It's a free-flowing piece" with positive words over it such as "incarnation" and "love," said Parla, who also decorated rooms with specially designed wallpaper with his signature graffiti-like motifs. A recent \$1 million grant from the Gerard B. Lambert Foundation has allowed RxArt to secure artists for more ambitious projects and expand to more cities.

Large panda paintings

There is no cost to the institutions, and while the artists are offered \$10,000 honorariums, Brown said it's insignificant when compared with what they can make in their studios. Turner Simkins, whose 14-year-old son Brennan spent three years at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee, with acute myeloid leukemia, said the large panda paintings by Rob Pruitt in the hospital's multipurpose room are a cheerful respite from despair. Simkins, who lives in North Augusta, South Carolina, said Pruitt's work, made of shimmering mirrored discs the children can touch, "gives the kids something to think about besides their condition. Something cheerful ... affects your spirit, demeanor and how you start the day."

RxArt is in the midst of designing studies to assess whether visual art can also help children heal. Some past medical research has suggested that pleasant environmental stimuli, like natural sunlight and music, might affect patient well-being or help motivate health care workers to deliver better care, though there isn't evidence yet of a strong correlation. "A positive and comforting environment can have a major impact on patients' experiences," said Dr. Barry Collier, physician-in-chief at Rockefeller University Hospital. "This is especially true for pediatric patients who are a particularly vulnerable population." — AP



Specially-designed wallpaper by artist Jose Parla lines the top of a teenage patient's room at the Incarnation Children's Center, Thursday in New York. — AP photos



Specially-designed wallpaper by artist Jose Parla decorates a wall inside the dining hall at the Incarnation Children's Center.



Kenny Scharf paints a hallway with his art at Kings County Hospital Center in the Brooklyn borough of New York.



Photo provided by RxArt shows a CT Scanner room decorated with artwork by Jeff Koons, from left; Monkey and Hanging Heart (Violet/Gold) at Advocate Children's Hospital in Oak Lawn, Illinois.



Photo provided by RxArt shows a CT Scanner room featuring three artworks by Jeff Koons, from left; Monkey, Hanging Heart (Violet/Gold) and Dog Balloon at Advocate Children's Hospital in Oak Lawn, Ill.



Artist Jose Parla paints a mural at the Incarnation Children's Center in New York.



Logan Lerman poses for a portrait on Tuesday, July 26, 2016, to promote his film, 'Indignation,' in New York. — AP

In 'Indignation,' a maturing Logan Lerman changes course

Logan Lerman is already one of the most sought-after young actors in Hollywood. You might then expect the 24-year-old to have a steady lineup of dystopian young-adult adaptations or house-party comedies in the pipeline. But his latest is in a different direction entirely: industry veteran James Schamus' Philip Roth adaptation, "Indignation." The role, Lerman says, is exactly the kind of material he's attracted to, and he doesn't mind turning down more cookie-cutter (and lucrative) parts in order to find his own path.

"Let the other actors take the bad roles," he joked in a recent interview, only using a different word for "bad." "I'm trying to figure out who I am through the choices I make. I don't know myself well enough. I'm still trying to figure out what person I want to be." In "Indignation," which opens Friday, Lerman stars as Marcus Messner, the only son of a Jewish butcher in Newark, New Jersey. While the Korean War is raging, he goes to a Christian college in Ohio, where his rigid principles are challenged by a forward but fragile young woman (Sarah Gadon) and a rigid and judgmental dean (Tracy Letts).

Veteran stage actor

The directorial debut of Schamus (the longtime writing and producing partner of Ang Lee and the former head of Focus Features), "Indignation" is a revelation of the maturing talent of Lerman. His performance is subtle and smart, but also with the kind of confident charisma that can make stars out of young actors. In the film's lengthy 20-minute centerpiece, he volleys back and forth with Letts, holding his own with the Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright and veteran stage actor. "It was terrifying, but I like that. I mean, I didn't enjoy myself. But I wanted the challenge. I want to be the guy who can take the responsibility to try to tackle difficult obstacles," says Lerman. "When we got to set it was like two boxers getting ready for the fight."

I had trained and been focused and brought a lot of caffeine." And he won the admiration of Letts. "One of the great joys for me was Logan. He was a complete unknown to me," says Letts. "He's so good in the role and so smart and so prepared. He's the real deal. I left very impressed with Logan Lerman." Lerman, a Los Angeles native, made his feature film debut at the age of 8 in 2000's "The Patriot." Child actor roles continued to mount up: playing a young version of Mel Gibson and a child Ashton Kutcher; playing the son of Christian Bale ("3:10 to Yuma") and of Russell Crowe ("Noah").

Glorified credit

The biggest hint to Lerman's ability came in Stephen Chbosky's adaption of his own novel, "The Perks of Being a Wallflower," a tender coming-of-age tale. His leading breakthrough was playing Percy Jackson in the demigod franchise, but the more crucial turning point may have been the rewarding experience of co-starring in David Ayer's World War II tank drama "Fury." "After 'Fury' he just said, 'Look, I'm not going to do anything unless I want to do it.' He gets these offers every five minutes for more money than god," says Schamus. "What can I say? He showed up off-book, lines memorized, ready to work and he can mano-a-mano with Tracy Letts." Lerman is also, for the first time, a producer of the film. He calls it a "glorified credit" but acknowledges a deeper involvement in the process is important to him. "That's the only way I work now," says Lerman, who's also producing one of his next films, "Sidney Hall," a drama about a young novelist overwhelmed by sensation success. "I just want to find films that I like and help them get into production and do whatever I can to make it happen."

And in that pursuit, Schamus - long synonymous with intelligent adult dramas - has been an inspiration. "It's a privilege to spend a minute with him, let alone hours and days. He's a wonderful mentor," says Lerman. "My relationship with James goes very deep into the fabric of who I am, in a way. He's responsible for why I'm here right now making movies. The films that he championed and made and distributed - the people he took chances on and the films he's been a part of - are the reason I'm interested in film." — AP



Beyoncé performs during the Formation World Tour at Telia Parken on Sunday in Copenhagen, Denmark. — AP photos

Beyoncé leads MTV Video Music Award nods

Beyoncé on Tuesday led nominations for the MTV Video Music Awards as she basked in acclaim for her intertwined film-album "Lemonade." The pop diva was in the running for 11 awards at MTV's annual extravaganza, which will take place August 28 in New York's Madison Square Garden, a shift from the more common venue in Los Angeles. Adele came in second with eight nominations. All but seven were for the chart-topping English balladeer's "Hello," which with more than 1.6 billion views is the fifth most watched video ever on YouTube.

by Melina Matsoukas, "Formation" at one point shows a row of police officers with their hands in the air and graffiti on a wall that reads, "Stop shooting us."

The video riled some conservative commentators and law enforcement groups who voiced anger when Beyoncé performed the song at the Super Bowl, the most watched television event of the year. Shot in New Orleans, "Formation" marked a shift in sound by Beyoncé to the southern city's bounce hip-hop scene. "Formation" was her first single off her album "Lemonade," which she released in April to accompany

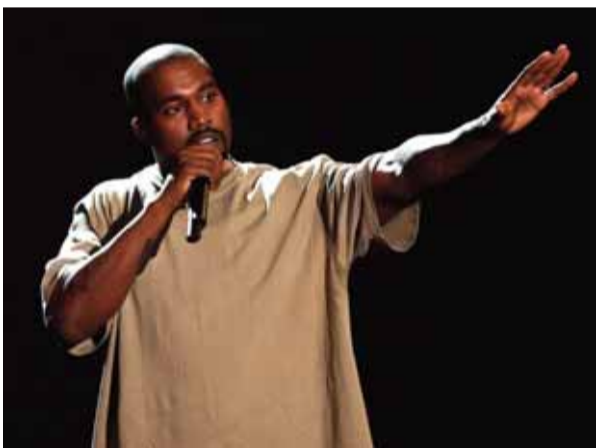
Posthumous nods for Bowie

Other nominees for Video of the Year included Kanye West's controversial "Famous," in which the rapper boasts that pop superstar Taylor Swift may sleep with him and that he made her famous. Despite her protests over the song, the video features a naked woman in bed with West who resembles Swift as well as nude doppelgangers of other celebrities including Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump. Also in the running for the top prize were two videos dominated by dancing rapper Drake's "Hotline Bling" and pop celebrity Justin Bieber's "Sorry." Bieber's "Sorry" is the sixth most watched video ever on YouTube, closely trailing Adele's "Hello," which was released on the same day last year.

The late rock icon David Bowie's video for "Lazarus" took four nominations, although not in the main categories. Bowie, who embraced music videos as an art form when MTV was in its infancy, released "Lazarus" three days before stunning the world with his death from an unannounced battle with cancer. The video, in hindsight, was full of foreshadowing of his death with the singer levitating over a hospital bed and retreating into a closet with outfits from his prolific music career.

'Disappointed' Jonas

The VMAs have often been more closely watched for incidents at the televised gala than for actual winners, who are determined by fan voting. At last year's awards, West vowed to run for president in 2020, although his level of seriousness was unclear. In one small controversy already this year, Nick Jonas said on Twitter he was "disappointed" he was not nominated for "Closer," in which he and Swedish singer Tove Lo grope longingly for each other but struggle to connect physically. But minutes later, the onetime child star tweeted that he would not let himself be bothered by "small stuff." "Actually after thinking about it more, there are so many amazing things happening in my life and career. Nine out of 10 boxes are checked." — AFP



File photo shows Kanye West accepts the video vanguard award at the MTV Video Music Awards at the Microsoft Theater in Los Angeles.



In this file photo shows Adele onstage at the Brit Awards 2016 at the O2 Arena in London.

"Hello," filmed by the Canadian director Xavier Dolan, shows Adele on the phone with a younger version of herself and was the first music video created for the high-resolution IMAX format. "Hello" was in the running for Video of the Year against Beyoncé's "Formation," the most overtly political work of the former Destiny's Child singer's career as she aligned herself with the Black Lives Matter protest movement. Filmed

a film that she made for HBO. The album and film are full of references to infidelity as well as forgiveness, drawing speculation that Beyoncé's husband, rap mogul Jay Z, had been unfaithful. If Beyoncé sweeps the awards, she would make MTV history. Peter Gabriel holds the record for the most VMAs in a single night, taking home 10 in 1987 amid a global following for his animation-driven "Sledgehammer."

Family keeps hit songwriter Lori McKenna grounded, inspired

Singer-songwriter Lori McKenna now has a Grammy trophy sitting on her piano at her home in Massachusetts, thanks to Little Big Town's hit song "Girl Crush," but her five kids still don't think that makes her cool. "They are impossible to impress," the 47-year-old McKenna said during a recent interview in Nashville, Tennessee, with a laugh. "But thank God for them, because I would get too much into it and take myself too seriously. If someone wasn't asking me when dinner was, I think I would be in trouble."

and Hillary Lindsey. "When you get a Grammy, you're supposed to drink champagne out of it," McKenna said. "We were kidding at my house, like we should really eat mac n' cheese out of this." On Friday, she will release her tenth album, "The Bird & the Rifle," which includes her version of "Humble & Kind," a No. 1 hit for country star Tim McGraw that has spawned a music video collaboration with Oprah Winfrey and even a book that was released this year. "I just wrote it one day when the kids were at school, and I literally was thinking about, 'Have we told them everything we want to tell them?'" she said.

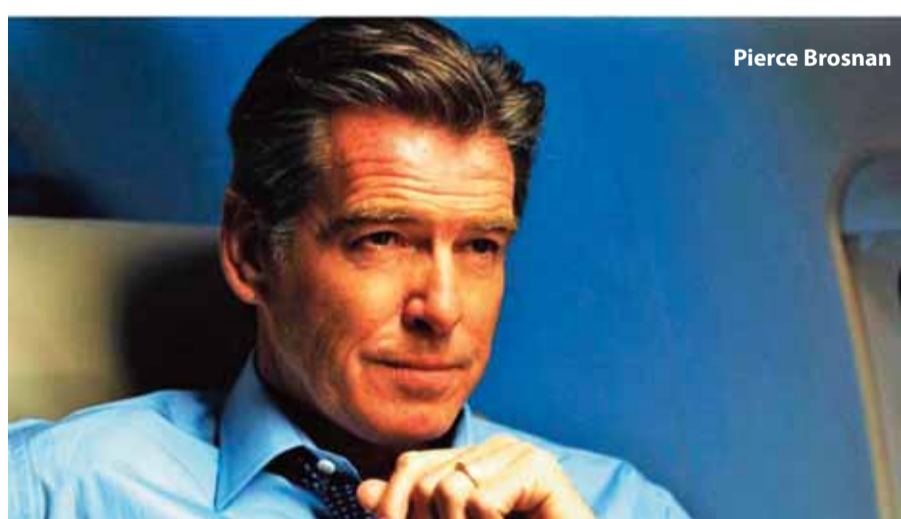
Her kids are really proud of that song because it's all about them, she said. And she manages to impart advice to her children, such as don't lie, don't cheat and don't steal, without sounding preachy. "The Bird & the Rifle" was produced by Dave Cobb, who helped country singer Chris Stapleton and Americana artist Jason Isbell also pick up Grammys this year, and together they achieve a nostalgic collection of folk-country songs filled with vivid imagery and honest, authentic lyrics.

"You always feel like you've written a good song if it feels like an old song," McKenna said. McKenna's skill as a songwriter is finding inspiration in the most mundane places, such as on the title track, "The Bird & the Rifle." She was folding laundry and listening to a rerun of the ABC sitcom "Modern Family" when one of the characters makes a joke about a mother and daughter getting matching tattoos of "a bird and a rifle." The songwriter turned that punch line into an extended metaphor about the tortured relationship between a woman who wants to spread her wings and the man who wants to keep her close. "I think it makes it cooler in a way that it comes from a joke 'cause it sounds really dark,'" McKenna said. "And maybe it is, but she does fly away." — AP



In this file photo, Lori McKenna appears at the 58th annual Grammy Awards at the Staples Center in Los Angeles. — AP

Over her career, which spans back into the late '90s, she's written songs for Faith Hill, Alison Krauss, Reba, Keith Urban and Hunter Hayes in her basement just outside of Boston, between loads of laundry and cooking. But recently she's been on a successful streak, winning a Grammy this year for best country song for co-writing "Girl Crush" with Liz Rose



Pierce Brosnan

Brosnan joins Dave Bautista in soccer drama 'Final Score'

Pierce Brosnan has come on board Scott Mann's soccer thriller "Final Score" opposite Dave Bautista, Alexandra Dinu and Julian Cheung. Signature Entertainment's Marc Goldberg is producing alongside The Fyzz Facility's Robert Jones, James Harris, Mark Lane, and Wayne Marc Godfrey. Babak Eftekhari will co-produce, with Elizabeth Williams executive producing. Highland Film Group's Arianne Fraser and Delphine Perrier will handle global sales and serve as executive producers alongside Mark Canton, Courtney Solomon, Zac Adler and David Sullivan. The Gersh Agency is co-representing US rights.

Highland Film Group introduced the project in February at the Berlin Film Festival. Shooting will begin on Aug 8 in London at West Ham United's iconic Upton Park Stadium, which has been the home of Premier League soccer club for over 100 years. West Ham United will be relocating to Olympic Stadium in East London next season and the venue will be handed over to a British property developer following production.

Mann is directing from a script by The Brothers Lynch and Jonathan Frank, in which the stadium is seized during a sporting event by a group of heavily armed criminals demanding ransom. An ex-soldier

must use all his military skills to save the 35,000 capacity crowd, one of which is the daughter of his fallen comrade. "Final Score may be set in London but truly it's a story that's relatable the world over," said Jones. "Scott Mann's vision has scale, white knuckle tension, humor and heart." Brosnan recently completed production on Martin Campbell's "The Foreigner," co-starring Jackie Chan and produced by The Fyzz Facility's Wayne Marc Godfrey. He will star in "Across the River and into the Trees," based on Ernest Hemingway's novel of the same name, which will also be directed by Campbell.

Brosnan is currently filming AMC's new drama series "The Son," based on the Philipp Meyer novel about the rise and fall of a Texas oil family. Brosnan also stars in the soon-to-be released thriller "I.T.," produced by his production company Irish DreamTime, alongside Voltage Pictures and Friendly Films. Bautista was previously seen in Marvel Studios' "Guardians of the Galaxy" and Sony-MGM's "Spectre," starring Daniel Craig, and most recently wrapped production on Matthias Hoene's "Warrior's Gate" for EuropaCorp. Brosnan is represented by CAA. — Reuters

Stars come out to sign anti-Trump petition

About a hundred Hollywood actors and music stars, from Lena Dunham to Moby, have signed a petition against what they say is the "hateful ideology" of Republican White House hopeful Donald Trump. "We are a coalition of artists who, today, are joining millions of Americans in our commitment to defeat the presumptive Republican nominee for president, Donald Trump," the online pledge reads. "We believe it is our responsibility to use our platforms to bring attention to the dangers of a Trump presidency, and to the real and present threats of his candidacy." Among others on board: actors Kerry Washington, Julianne Moore, Patricia Arquette, Jane Fonda and Woody Harrelson, and music stars Russell Simmons, Michael Stipe and DJ Spooky.

Keen to throw a spotlight on potential threats posed by Trump, they warned that the billionaire real estate mogul "wants to take our country back to a time when fear excused violence, when greed fueled discrimination, and when the state wrote prejudice against marginalized communities into law." US voters, the group said, should "use the power of our voice and the power of our vote to defeat Donald Trump and the hateful ideology he represents." Americans will vote for president on November 8. — AFP



This file photo shows Keith Weglin, 29, of Sacramento, California, taken at the Douglas County Jail in Minden, Nev. — AP

Celebrity golf fan arrested after touching Justin Timberlake

A California man was arrested for disorderly conduct after Justin Timberlake said he got too physical with him last weekend during the American Century Celebrity Golf Championship at Lake Tahoe, sheriff's officials said Tuesday. Keith Weglin, 29, of Sacramento, California, was booked into the county jail for the misdemeanor Saturday afternoon, posted \$640 bail and was released late that night, Douglas County Undersheriff Paul Howell said. TMZ first reported on a video showing someone's hand slapping or touching Timberlake on the back of his neck as the singer walked through the gallery between holes during second-round play at Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course in Stateline about 60 miles south of Reno.

Timberlake could be heard saying, "Bro, why would you do that?" Howell told The Associated Press Weglin was arrested for his conduct as deputies were escorting him from the course "after the touching of Timberlake." "It is not related to the contact he made with him," he said in an email to AP. Timberlake's representatives did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Tuesday. Weglin did not immediately respond to a telephone call seeking comment. It was not immediately clear if he had a lawyer. Howell said later Tuesday that he considered it "a very minor event" but that he was issuing a news release "due to an undue amount of inquiries." Weglin allegedly was intoxicated when he "inappropriately touched" Timberlake's face, Howell said in the statement. — AP

HBO didn't renew 'Project Greenlight,' Damon says

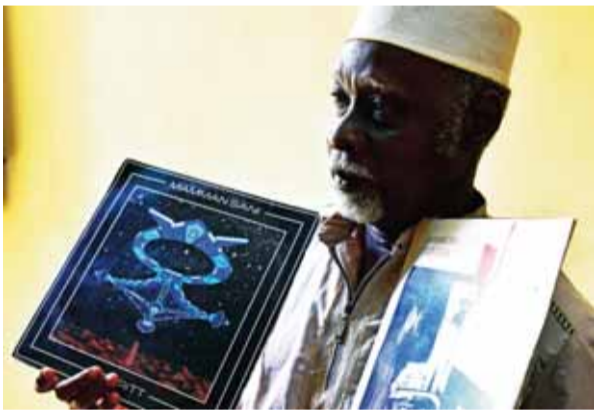
"Project Greenlight" won't be getting a fifth season on HBO. Matt Damon told The Associated Press on Tuesday that he was shocked that HBO didn't pick up his and Ben Affleck's show, which chronicles the production of an independent film. "I really liked it and thought that the show went great," Damon said while promoting the latest "Jason Bourne" film. "I'm not one to question (their programming). They do such a great job. But we have to take it out again." Damon said that they'll start shopping the show around, and he thinks that a streaming service like Amazon or Netflix might be a good fit.

"There are places where I think we could do really well," he said. "Project Greenlight" aired on HBO for its first two seasons from 2001 to 2003, before moving to Bravo for season three in 2005. The show came back to HBO for a fourth season last year to much buzz and some controversy starting with Damon's comments regarding diversity, for which he later apologized. The show this past season, which was centered on the production of director Jason Mann's dark parlor comedy "The Leisure Class," became a cultural touchpoint.

Even in production, it already seemed like a relic of a different era, with its white male director focusing on wealthy, mainly white characters at a time when diversity and representation in film were in the spotlight more than ever. Producer Effie Brown became a breakout star of the season, providing fascinating insight and commentary week to week on those issues while also overseeing the production of the film. A representative from HBO said in a statement that it was initially imagined as a one-season revival and that they decided in early 2016 that another season "did not make sense for us." "We are proud of the show and were pleased with its run throughout the years," HBO said. — AP



Faithfuls in traditional outfits wait for the arrival of Pope Francis at the John Paul II International airport in Krakow-Balice yesterday. Pope Francis heads to Poland for an international Catholic youth festival with a mission to encourage openness to migrants. — AFP



This file photo shows Niger's self-taught legendary musician Mamman Sani posing with his first and second albums. — AFP photos



Niger's self-taught legendary musician Mamman Sani poses in Niamey.

Mamman Sani's electric sound finally travels beyond Niger

Now in his 60s with a greying goatee, electric organ maestro Mamman Sani long ago turned local legend, but it took decades for his dreamy hypnotic sounds to travel beyond dusty Niger. Until very recently the self-taught musician's only commercial recording was a cassette tape dating back to 1981. But nowadays he spends his time between his house in Niamey and a recording studio in Ghana, where he aims to produce dozens of albums.

At home, where he made a living as a teacher then worked for the UN's cultural agency UNESCO, Sani's music has long featured on national radio and television, most often as interlude music between programs. In a quirk of fate, however, it was the original decades-old cassette that brought international renown, when in 2013 young US musician-cum-ethnomusicologist Christopher Kirkley stumbled on it in Niger's national museum while exploring West African sounds. "The space was overflowing with dusty CDs, cassettes, and reels, and hunkering down from the insufferable heat outside, I prepared to spend a long week in research," he said.

"Mamman's cassette was the first I pulled from the shelf, and I almost passed over it. But I was captured by the photograph—a black and white picture of a young man with a goatee and a knit cap, hands on what appeared to be an organ."

'Pixelized sand'

"The music proved equally intriguing. The instrumental compositions were simple but dreamy, repetitive but hypnotic. It was esoteric and bizarre, unlike anything I had ever heard—the imaginary audio track to an arcade game of desert caravans trekking through a pastoral landscape of pixelized sand." In the same way that Ry Cooder propelled Mali's Ali Farka Toure to world fame, along with the musicians of Cuba's Buena Vista Social Club, Kirkley set out to launch Sani in France and Europe with three vinyls, including "Taarit", and a 2013-2015 tour. "Mamman is one of the first people to create this hybridization of folk music with modern synth," Kirkley said.

"I think that Mamman's music would have been very interesting to a lot of electronic musicians at the time he was recording, but the barriers of connectivity kept Niger rather isolated." "Either way, Mamman's music remains avant-garde and very personal, uncompromising even," Kirkley added. "I'm just happy that we've had a chance for his music to finally be heard."

'Love at first sight'

Born in 1952 in Ghana's capital Accra to a Nigerian father and Ghanaian mother, Sani moved to Niger in the late 1950s but began playing music only in his late teens while studying to be a teacher. "A builder used to lend me his harmonica at weekends and I'd play French hit tunes on Saturday nights," he said. He refused to study biology, taking English instead because he was afraid of algorithms "though musical improvisation often is algorithms!" he joked. After the harmonica he learnt to play guitar, using bicycle brake cables for some of the strings.

He listened to black American stars Otis Redding, James Brown and Percy Sledge, composing his first tunes and playing at night in public. It was only in the 1970s that he came upon his first organ thanks to a musician from Burundi who was then on tour. "It was love at first sight," he says. In 1979 he saw an ad for a second-hand Orla electric organ going for 400 euros. Strapped for cash, he sold his motorbike to buy it. After teaching himself the keyboard he quickly became prolific and was soon to start composing theme music and interludes for national television while working for UNESCO. But three decades later, despite becoming a household name he still finds it hard to make ends meet and this year had to sell one of his two prized organs. — AFP

Museum sketches bright future for art in Indonesia

From Jakarta to Bali and Yogyakarta, the Indonesian art world is flourishing. Buoyed by a growing, affluent middle class at home as well as interest from international buyers, numerous boutique galleries and artists' communities have sprung up, while events such as the Jakarta Biennale, the annual ArtJog fair, and Bazaar Art Jakarta have fuelled interest. But critics warn a lack of government funding and high-quality art museums means many Indonesians are missing out.

Businessman Haryanto Adikoesoemo is determined to change that: next year he will open the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Nusantara (Museum MACAN). "The Indonesian art (scene) now is one of the biggest and the best in Southeast Asia but we are lacking institutions to support this," he told AFP. He added that while the country was home to a "vibrant" arts industry, it was "lacking very nice museums that are open to the public". Thomas Berghuis, the former curator of Chinese art at New York's Guggenheim Museum, has been appointed director at MACAN, and the first exhibition is set to include works from Adikoesoemo's collection of about 800 pieces by Indonesian, Asian and Western artists.

It has been a decade since he first had the idea to use his personal collection to help create a world-class art museum open to the public, but feels now is the best time to open such a space in Indonesia. When it comes to art, he believes "more and more people around the world are looking at Southeast Asia." The 4,000 square meter (43,000 square foot) venue will have an indoor sculpture garden and a special education zone. It is part of a bigger development in Jakarta, still under construction, that will include restaurants, cafes, offices and residences. Adikoesoemo's collection, built up over a quarter of a century, includes works by S Sudjojono, considered the father of Indonesian modernism and the expressionist painter Affandi, as well as pieces by well-known Western artists such as Andy Warhol, Frank Stella, Jeff Koons, and Gerhard Richter.

Art lovers

Adikoesoemo, who is funding the venture, also wants it to be a space for emerging artists to showcase their work. There are hopes too of collaborations with galleries abroad. "We want to create a platform for cultural exchanges—for Indonesian art to be brought to the world, and for world art to be brought to Indonesia," said Adikoesoemo, who is head of logistics company AKR Corporindo. The opening of MACAN is hotly anticipated in a country where many private collections are shut away from the public, existing museums are fairly basic, and government-run institutions are mostly of a low standard.

ArtJog organiser Heri Pemad said the museum was "the answer that many contemporary art lovers have been waiting for". "Currently the museum scene in Indonesia is beyond sad. Public taste in art is developing faster than the museums, where time seems to just stand still." Berghuis also hopes MACAN will encourage young professionals keen on a career in the arts by offering opportunities in areas such as exhibition management, art curation and conservation, and legal affairs. "The vision is about us being part of and helping to foster a healthy art ecology for Indonesia," he said.

The launch comes at a time when the Southeast Asian art scene is rapidly developing. Singapore, which launched an annual art week in 2013, last year opened a \$376-million National Gallery that boasts the world's biggest public collection of Southeast Asian modern art. It houses more than 8,000 works from the 19th and 20th centuries. The city-state's popular fair, Art Stage, will next week open its inaugural event in Jakarta showing contemporary works from more than 50 galleries. Adikoesoemo hopes MACAN can boost the region's position as an art hub, and bring something fresh to Indonesia's cultural landscape. He added: "I believe that by appreciating and understanding art we can improve our quality of life." — AFP



This undated artistic photo illustration released by the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Nusantara (Museum MACAN) shows the exterior design for a major museum billed as Indonesia's first dedicated to international modern and contemporary art. — AFP