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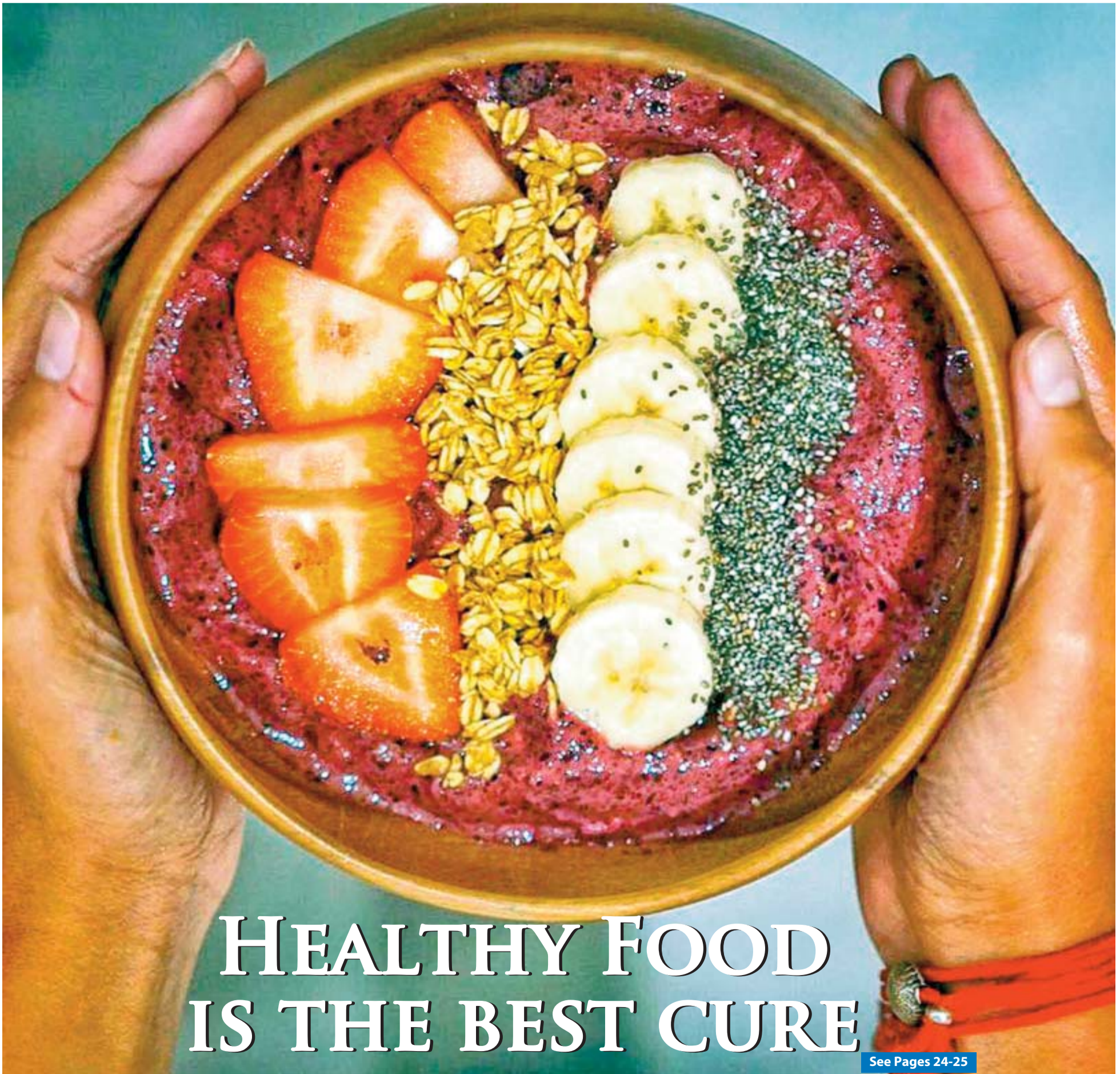
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**HEALTHY FOOD
IS THE BEST CURE**

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Photo of the day



Wooden dhow displays at the Al-Othman museum showcase Kuwait's maritime heritage. — KUNA/ Ahmed Srour

Local Spotlight

TWIN CRIMES



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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It was a disturbing week indeed with two brutal crimes against innocents - an Egyptian expatriate and a baby girl. Both crimes are unconnected, but are indicators of the lack of fear from law enforcement and respect for humanity and human rights. Are we facing a serious problem? Yes, we do. With a clear imbalance in the Kuwaiti population, we are now facing a serious problem related to the society's respect of human rights and the spread of drugs. Moreover, with bedoons being involved in both the crimes, there is something wrong indeed.

The first disgusting crime made headlines when a bedoon man named Ali Abdullah Al-Shemmari appeared in a video on social media beating, insulting and humiliating a naked Egyptian worker named Ashraf Abu Al-Yameen. According to official statements, the incident happened almost 18 months earlier because of a theft from the mobile phone store owned by the bedoon, where the Egyptian works. Another Egyptian man was arrested for filming the abuse and posting it on social media.

As a human rights activist and a journalist, I think we have three concerns here. Firstly, the rate of crimes by bedoons in Kuwait - this issue is not spoken about openly, but it will not resolve by itself. Secondly, the large number of bedoons in Kuwait - without resolving their problems, we are destroying the image of our small country and creating fear for our personal security in the local community. Thirdly, *wasta* or interference by influential people or claims of insanity must not be accepted as excuses.

Another crime against human rights and child abuse occurred this week when a couple, a Kuwaiti man and his bedoon wife, murdered their young daughter and hid her body in a freezer. The interior ministry's security media stated that the body of the three-and-a half-year-old girl was found at her family's residence, and her father confessed to placing her body in the freezer immediately after her death a week ago. That is a horrific crime against a child. As if it was not enough that they killed their own flesh and blood, they kept her in a freezer as if nothing had happened.

Investigations revealed that the suspect wrapped his daughter in a shroud and bought a freezer on the same day she died, and put her body in it. The parents claimed to be under the influence of drugs. But I can't image how could they do all the thinking to cover up a crime for a week without being noticed, and even buy a freezer to keep the body in it! Did they pay by credit or cash? This is too much for someone under the influence. This couple has been arrested and I hope they both rot in jail for life. Local prison is not a picnic, so hopefully they will learn how their baby girl felt. She is in a better place now.

Investigations also found that the parents were neglectful in caring for their four children. This couple had four children! I am now concerned about the status of their three other kids. This is a disturbing crime, and this is why the child protection law must be implemented so that a child can seek help of the law from those who put his childhood and innocence under threat.

Those two crimes are making me feel sick, but this will not solve the problem. We need a serious solution that goes to the roots of the issue, which is the spread of violence, especially child abuse and domestic violence, drugs and crimes by bedoons.

In My View

TWO SIDES OF KUWAIT

By Ramona Crasto

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The happiness of returning to your birthplace is elevated with the start of a new phase in your life - The Job Hunt. As I started looking for a job, I came across two major problems. The first is a lack of experience, which can be overcome by getting trained. But the problem that kills all your hopes is obtaining a work visa. The trouble an individual as well as the company undergoes during this process is exhausting.

"It's tough to find a job in Kuwait and tougher to get a visa," said Jeena Varghese, a young Indian graduate. Knowledge is power, but it becomes powerless in such desperate times. All you can do is have patience, hope and keep the fight going. Rules here change in fractions of seconds, and so does the fate of people living here. There is a basic amount of salary one needs to get and a kind of lifestyle one needs to follow to survive in this country.

The Kuwaiti dinar, being the highest valued currency unit in the world, attracts many individuals to come here

and work. No one looks at Kuwait as a touristic destination. Many people have lost the sight of how beautiful Kuwait is. The change Kuwait has undergone in the last few years is unbelievable. Though it is either very hot or cold, people living here have adapted to the environment. Every country has a good and bad side, but we learn to move forward only if we accept the bad and change it into something good.

It's the same with finding a job - while you are doing so, you can relax and enjoy the beauty that the country holds. Kuwait is a country of hope - its gives some good fortune, while others have to be patient for their chances, but there are no disappointments. It also depends on how hard you try. "To unlock a shining fortune, hard work is the key," said Santosh D'Souza, who is an after-sales executive at Cartier. "Success does come at a price, and the price you have to pay here is being committed and dedicated towards your job. That's what will take you to new heights."



Images show photo exhibits and books from Farah Salem's book launch at CAP Kuwait in Industrial Shuwaikh. — Photos by Athoob Al-Shuaibi

In Between the Skyline of Kuwait City

Story by Athoob Al-Shuaibi

She's one of the few Kuwaiti female artists who has been working as a street photographer the past five years and finally Farah Salem's efforts have paid off. In her first book and solo exhibition, under the name of "In -Between The Skyline of Kuwait City" Salem shares her vision of Kuwait. "I've decided to be a stranger in my own city and roam with my cameras to capture pictures of street life of some areas, such as, Sharq, Mirgab, Mubarakiya, and Jibla," she explained.

The well constructed book offers readers a panoramic view of Kuwait's street life as seen through Farah's eyes.

One of a growing crop of street photographers in Kuwait, Farah breaks new ground by capturing the magical in the mundane of everyday street life with intimate urban portraits and scene shots.

In her book, she describes them as culturally diverse which helped her learn and mature intellectually. The photographer holds a degree in visual communication and works with both old school and digital photography. Recently her work has been among the displayed at the latest exhibition of Abolish 153 campaign.

In -Between The Skyline of Kuwait City exhibition will be going until the 5th of June 2016 at the Contemporary Art Platform, CAP Kuwait.





Mahboula: The mad area

Story and photos by Athoob Al-Shuaibi

As part of our occasional series exploring the various areas of Kuwait, Kuwait Times recently visited Mahboula to discover its main features. A decade ago, this area was largely uninhabited, with a few old buildings and unsafe streets. Today, it is preparing to welcome thousands of new residents. But who will live in an area called Mahboula (mad woman)?!

Mahboula is located between Fintas and Abu Halifa in Al-Ahmadi governorate between the coastal road and Highway 30 (Fahaheel Expressway). In recent years, it has witnessed a huge regeneration in the real estate market. There are now tens of high-rise buildings and residential tower blocks in the final stages of completion, in addition to newly paved streets. Rents range between KD 170 dinars and KD 450, depending on number of rooms and the floor, which are high, considering the average room size is between 3 to 4 sqm, tiny bathrooms and the long distance from Kuwait City.

"We have to understand first why the real estate market has its eye on this area. One of the reasons for the growing number of investment towers in Mahboula is high real estate prices in areas such as Salmiya, Hawally governorate, Shaab Bahri and the surrounding areas," real estate writer and researcher Sulaiman Al-Dulaijan told Kuwait Times. "Prices per square meter rose in those areas from 2010 to 2013 by 50 to 100 percent," he added.

But, who's going to occupy these thousands of new apartments? And what is the secret behind this construction boom?

Continued on Page 6



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"After Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) declared three years ago a plan to inject almost a billion dinars to expand their business, this was expected to be reflected in demand by KOC's contracting companies to invest in nearby residential areas such as Mahboula in order to house their workers and engineers. Adding to this, the clean fuel and the fourth refinery projects announced by the government will create a new need for housing projects," explained Dulaijan.

Driving around the area, Kuwait Times noted that constructions were not free of irregularities. Some of them are serious, like manipulation in the allowable number of floors, while some are minor, like adding

dividers to turn a one-bedroom apartment into a two-bedroom one to increase the rent. Another question is whether builders are following environmentally friendly methods to dispose construction waste...

There also seems to be limited to almost no attention paid to community spaces, sidewalks, parking garages, pathways or other functional spaces needed when a new residential area is constructed. Few of the up and coming buildings seem to have allocated adequate space for parking and one can already envision crowded streets similar to the worst areas of Hawally or Salmiya.



Rents range between KD 170 dinars and KD 450, depending on number of rooms and the floor, which are high, considering the average room size is between 3 to 4 sqm, tiny bathrooms and the long distance from Kuwait City.



A day in the life of a sales lady

By Nawara Fattahova

Keeping a smile on your face for eight hours straight and being nice to all customers is no easy feat. But sales staff get used to it, in order to keep their job. Those who work in direct contact with customers often face difficult situations. They have to be very patient, as sometimes they deal with rude customers and they can't reply back. Ultimately, a job or work that may be hard or annoying for some employees is easy for others.

Salma, a 39-year-old Sri Lankan saleslady working in a luxury clothing store in Salmiya, loves her job. "I've been working in this store for more than 10 years and I'm very satisfied. I came to Kuwait in 2000 after working in Dubai for two years, also as a saleslady. I like Kuwait, and this is why I have stayed here for so many years. When I applied for the job here, I was pregnant, and at the interview they told me to come back after the delivery to join the company, and since then I'm working here," she told Kuwait Times.

The workplace plays a key role in work satisfaction and comfort. "Fortunately, I work in a store selling high-end brands and our customers are from the upper and middle



Salma

classes. They are nice and some are like friends. I have got to know a lot of people of different nationalities. Sometimes some customers invite me to dine with them outside - of course I mean women, as the majority of customers are women. It's rare to see a man here as most of our outfits are for women," said Salma.

Salma works six days a week in split shifts. "I have two children, so I wake up every morning at 5:30am to get them ready for school. Then I go back to sleep, and reawake at about 7:30 or 8:00 am to take a shower, have breakfast and go to work. I work in the mornings from 10:00am to 2:00pm, then I return home, and the children are also back from school. After lunch, one of the kids goes to sleep and the elder one goes for tuitions. A nanny then comes to stay with them, as I head back to work from 5:00pm to 9:00pm," she stated.

"After I leave the store at night, I go home to do the cooking, readying the schoolbags of my children for the next day, washing, ironing and other chores at home. I rarely go to bed before 1:30am. Despite all these responsibilities, I don't forget to pray," stressed Salma.

She doesn't recall having any serious problem with either her colleagues or customers. "Sometimes there is a kind of competition between the salesladies, so some of

"We are constantly in contact with the public, so we have to be patient and learn how to ignore negative comments or rude behaviors".

them fight over a customer to reach the target and get a bonus. Some nationalities have conflicts with other nationalities, but in general, I'm friendly with all the staff," she said.

Other salesladies in other stores are not as satisfied as Salma with their jobs. "A friend who also works as a saleslady at one of the popular high-end stores complained that the employer is forcing the saleswomen to cut their hair short and dye it blonde. Another saleslady complained that she was verbally abused several times by customers who commented on her outfits, although the management is satisfied with her style. In our job, we are constantly in contact with the public, so we have to be patient and learn how to ignore negative comments or rude behaviors," concluded Salma.





Chairman of the Environment Public Authority (EPA) Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Humoud Al-Sabah seen during the tour. —KUNA



RENEWABLE STATION IMPLEMENTS KUWAIT LEADERSHIP'S VISION: EPA

KUWAIT: The construction of the renewable energy station in Shagaya is part of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's vision for the future, said Chairman of the Environment Public Authority (EPA) Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Humoud Al-Sabah yesterday. During his inspection of the facility, Sheikh Abdullah told the press that the project will enable Kuwait to benefit from clean

energy, noting that it would contribute to the nation's vision of increasing this source of energy by 15 percent in 2030. A statement by the EPA said that the station will produce about 6 million megawatts of electricity and will reduce dependency oil as the main source of energy. It will reduce pollution and provide some new job opportunities, said the statement. —KUNA



Photo shows Kuwait coastline along the Gulf Road. —KUNA

KUWAIT WEATHER TO REMAIN STABLE; HEATWAVE EXPECTED

KUWAIT: Weather in the country is expected to remain stable in the coming days, a statement from the General Directorate of Metrology predicted yesterday. In a statement to KUNA, head of the agricultural and hydrological forecast at the metrology department Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi said that all signs point to the weather remaining stable for the foreseeable future, noting that a heatwave is expected during day hours with the weather remaining clear during night. Moreover, he added that extremely hot daytime temperatures are expected during the holy month of Ramadan, with the weather clearing up by nightfall.

Al-Qarawi noted that the weather will be mildly hot on Thursday with 6 to 28 mph winds out of the northwest. Today, temperatures will range between 43 and 45 degrees with 8 to 35 mph winds out of the northwest. Temperatures are expected to be mildly hot at nighttime with light to moderate winds, he added. On Saturday, temperatures during the daytime will be extremely hot with light northwestern winds, while the weather is expected to stabilize during nighttime with temperatures ranging between 26 and 29 degrees. —KUNA

KUWAIT ENVOY COMMENDS OFID FOR ITS CONTRIBUTIONS

VIENNA: Kuwait's Ambassador to Austria and its permanent representative to international organizations Sadiq Marafie commended the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID), for its work to bring social and economic development to all parts of the globe. Marafie made the remarks in statements to KUNA yesterday ahead of the 37th meeting of the OFID ministerial council, which brings together finance ministers of all 13 OFID member nations. "This meeting is significant because it coincides with the 40th anniversary of OFID's inception," the Kuwaiti diplomat noted.

News

in brief

US authorities release detained Kuwait citizen

KUWAIT: US authorities have released a detained Kuwaiti citizen charged with violating the terms of the economic embargo on Iran, said Acting Deputy Foreign Minister Waleed Al-Khubaizi yesterday. In a statement to KUNA, Al-Khubaizi said the Kuwaiti foreign ministry followed this incident from the first day the citizen was arrested in the US, through its contacts with the Kuwait embassy in Washington and the Kuwait consulate in Los Angeles and via communication with the citizen's family in Kuwait until the Kuwaiti citizen was released yesterday.

Use of computer tablets boosts learning process

KUWAIT: The use of computer tablets in classrooms will enhance the learning process for students as well as endear them to it, said Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa yesterday. He spoke to reporters on the sideline of attending an exhibition on computer tablets and classroom interactive whiteboards or smartboards in the Al-Ahmadi educational district. He emphasized that the use of these high-tech devices will enable the students to enjoy what they learn and have fun with it. Moreover, the devices will help the school administration get easily in touch with students' parents for any warranted reason, said the minister. Ahead of equipping the Al-Ahmadi educational district with these devices, the district will first train teachers on their use in the classroom, said district director Waleed Al-Aumi, in statements to reporters. Up to 310 high school teachers in the district are receiving proper training on the use of the tablet and the smartboard, he said, noting that the district is made up of 31 schools. Eventually high school teachers in the district, numbering more than 2,100, will get this training.



Stem cell unit opened in Al-Sabah NBK Hospital

KUWAIT: A new pediatric stem cell unit was opened in Al-Sabah NBK Pediatric Hospital to conduct cell transplant operations for patients with cancer and immune diseases. Head of Sabah Health Zone Dr Abdulaziz Al-Farhood told the press yesterday that the KD 50,000-unit was a donation from "Namaa Zakat", an affiliate of Social Reform charity. The unit is set up with insulation systems in accordance to international standards that provide a safe environment and a disease free-zone for cancer and immune diseases patients, Al-Farhood pointed out. Stem cell transplant operations can be carried out in laboratories within the unit, he added. Special medical staff was trained to work in the unit and in order to offer the best healthcare services to its patients. The unit is designated to receive patients of 16 years old and under, he said. Namaa Zakat official Hassan Al-Hunaidi said that building this unit stems for NGO's and civic communities' social responsibility toward their community.

Crime

Report

MAN STABS COMPATRIOT, FLEES

KUWAIT: An Egyptian man stabbed a compatriot of his to death then left the country one hour after his crime. The man's motive was reportedly for revenge. The suspect allegedly attended meetings in "Saeed", Upper Egypt 20 days ago then returned to Kuwait to carry out the attack. The crime took place in an open yard in Kheitan Wednesday morning. A security source said detectives were able to determine the suspect's identity, went to his residence and arrested his roommates, who said that he went to the airport. When police went to the airport they found out the plane had left at 8:40am, (an hour and 10 minutes after the crime). The suspect was arrested by Egyptian authorities upon arrival.

Man storms ex-wife's home

A citizen confessed to storming into his divorced wife's residence and beating her along with her mother causing them various bruises. The citizen and her Iraqi mother lodged a complaint at the police station. The man justified his action by claiming he was very angry. He was charged with entering a house with the intent to commit a crime and was detained.

Illegal fireworks discovered

Customs officers foiled an attempt to smuggle a shipment of fireworks hidden in a container that arrived from China. Legal action is being taken, following an accounting of all materials included in the shipment.

Drug smuggling foiled

Abdaly customs officers foiled the attempt of a Syrian to smuggle 180,000 illicit tablets in a truck that delivered a load of coal to Iraq and was on its way back. The driver and Captagon tablets were sent to Drugs Control General Department.

Neighbors clash

An Iraqi expat accused her Jordanian neighbor of beating her following a dispute between the two. The Jordanian told police her Iraqi neighbor was the one who started the fight and hit her first. Investigations are ongoing.

CHINESE WORKERS PROTEST OVER THEIR UNPAID WAGES

KUWAIT: Kuwait police broke up a gathering by Chinese workers in front of Chinese Embassy on Wednesday night. A security source said the gathering was due to lack of payment of their salaries. The workers demanded airplane tickets to go home, which the company they work for refused. Al-Qabas reported that Manpower Public Authority has promised to pay the salaries from the company deposits. Meanwhile the workers will be sent to deportation center until procedures are taken to pay them their wages - then actions will be taken against the company. —Al-Qabas

PROSTITUTION RING BUSTED

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Residency detectives put an end to the activities of an alleged Chinese prostitution ring. The department received information that Chinese women were offering sex to men for fees of KD 40 to KD 50. Detectives took the necessary legal action then raided the place where three Chinese women were arrested. While the women were being taken to authorities, a Chinese man named "Hong" offered a policeman KD 1200 to free the women, so the policeman pretended to accept the bribe and then arrested the man.

KUWAIT TO BAN TRADING DURING FRIDAY PRAYERS

ZAKAT HOUSE DONATES KD 300,000 TO FREE CONVICTED WOMEN

By Meshal Alsalama and agencies

KUWAIT: Kuwait government has sent a proposed law to the Fatwa and Legislation Department, in which it banned trading during the time of Friday prayers. The proposal if approved, places a fine of KD 1000 for any violation, and a one-month closure.

In another development, Zakat House has donated a sum of KD 300,000 for the release of a total of 158 women convicted of financial offenses, and those who have been issued arrest warrants. In a press conference yesterday to kick off a campaign put together by the organization, Director General of Zakat House Dr Ibrahim Al-Saleh said that all sums will be paid next week, which would render the court verdicts against those convicted, null and void.

Moreover, Al-Saleh added that Kuwait Zakat House has managed to set free 158 convicted women, with priority given to the elderly, widows and divorcees. This comes with the campaign "Let them spend Ramadan with us". Meanwhile, he also called on all those wishing to donate to the campaign to do so through Zakat House centers interspersed all over the country, or through the organization's website, in addition to text messages. Chairman of Takaful Society for the Welfare of Prisoners Masaad Mandani thanked Kuwait Zakat House for its



Director General of Zakat House Dr Ibrahim Al-Saleh

contributions. Mandani also noted that the society has been able to facilitate the release of 7559 prisoners with a total sum of KD 5,800.



'AFTER THE END'

By Athoob Al-Shuaibi

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti digital TV series will be aired exclusively on Telly app this Ramadan. 'After The End' comes in 12 episodes on June 6th by 6:00 am. Some of the stars include Jassim Al-Nabhan, Abdulemam Abdullah, Hussein Al-Mansour, Zahra Al-Kharji, Laila Abdullah and other well known actors in the

Arab world. Four Kuwaiti writers contributed in the writing of the series. The storyline of this series is grounded on several characters living amid a mysterious situation in Kuwait. The theme of the show aspires to move away from the long-scenes toward a fast pace style of direction that is similar to the American show 24. The app is available to download at Google Play and App Store.

BAIT AL-ARAB HONORS WINNERS OF HORSE PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

KUWAIT: Bait Al-Arab (The Arabian Horse Center) held an award ceremony on Wednesday evening for the winners of the awards of seventh Bait Al Arab International Photography Contest. The ceremony, held under auspices and in the presence of Assistant Undersecretary of the Amiri Diwan and Chairperson of the Arabian Horse Center Sheikh Sara Al-Fahad Al-Sabah, was also attended by chairman of the board of trustees of the center Mohammad Al-Marzouq and members of the board.

The contest brought together 47 competitors who displayed 93 masterpieces of Arabian horse photographs. The photographer Mohammad Murad won the top award valued at KD 3,000 while Mohammad Al-Adwan came second and won KD 2,000, followed by Sultan Al-Otaibi - KD 1,000 and Turki Mubarak - KD 600.

The organizing committee offered a KD 400 worth incentive award for each distinguished work by holders of the fifth to 10th places, namely Mohammad Al-Mo'men, Ismail Hemeid-Allah, Mohammad

Al-Omar, Nawaf Al-Sarhan, Saad Al-Hebeideh and Abdullah Al-Hayyah. Sheikh Sara said the photos showcased at the exhibition offered a splendid portrait of the Arabian horses that was marked with creativity and talent. She noted that the participants at the contest included competitors from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain, India, Egypt, Iraq and Germany. Sheikh Sara thanked the jury for their impartiality, and the time and effort they dedicated to ensure the success of the event. —KUNA

International

FRIDAY, JUNE 3, 2016

Jihadists storm hotel in Somalia killing at least 10



German MPs declare 1915 massacre of Armenians 'genocide'



Bangladesh's Sufis living in fear after machete attacks



SIMBACH AM INN: An aerial view taken shows the flooded city of Simbach Am Inn. — AFP

FLOODS WREAK HAVOC IN GERMANY, FRANCE

SIMBACH AM INN, Germany: At least nine people have been killed in floods that have wreaked havoc in Germany and France, trapping people in their homes and forcing rescuers to row lifeboats down streets turned into muddy rivers. In Paris, officials were putting up emergency flood barriers yesterday along the swollen river Seine after days of torrential rain-including near the Louvre, home to priceless works of art.

The force of the water swept away the entire stock of a sawmill in the German town of Simbach am Inn, leaving huge stacks of splintered wood blocking the streets of the devastated town. On one street, passers-by were greeted by the surreal sight of a car parked vertically against the wall of a house, pushed there by the floodwaters. Many other vehicles lay flipped over in roads blanketed by mud. The dead in Simbach include three women from the same family—a mother, grandmother and daughter—who had been trapped in their house. "The water was so quick that practically no residents had the time to run away," police spokesman Armin Angloher said.

Police said a man's body had also been

found in a house in Simbach, while an 80-year-old woman was found dead in Julbach a few kilometers away. Her house had collapsed under the weight of the floodwaters. The deaths bring the toll from the floods to nine, including four others were killed earlier this week in the southern German region of Baden-Wuerttemberg region. Four others are missing, a police spokesman in Bavaria state said. "We fear the worst," he said, adding that divers have been sent to search for the victims. German Chancellor Angela Merkel told a press conference: "I am crying for the people who have lost their lives in these floods. I am by the side of families who have been plunged into this devastation."

Worst floods in a century

Some towns in central France are suffering their worst floods in more than a century, with more than 5,000 people evacuated since the weekend. Forecaster Meteo France described the situation as "exceptional, worse than the floods of 1910", when even central Paris was flooded. Some 24,400 homes were without power in the Paris region and the Loiret,

provider Enedis said, while the floods forced the shutdown of one of the capital's main commuter train lines.

The torrential rains have also hit the French Open tennis tournament, washing out play earlier in the week, leaving players hoping to reach the finals facing a heavy schedule of matches. In central Paris, riverside tourist paths were flooded, and the water was washing around a replica of the Statue of Liberty. Rescuers in the Paris suburb of Longjumeau were paddling up streets in lifeboats, while in the town of Montargis, only the tops of cars could be seen peaking above the surface. About 200 people had to spend the night in a gymnasium in Nemours south of Paris and Prime Minister Manuel Valls, visiting the flooded town's a crisis control centre, said at least 2,000 more people needed to be evacuated.

"The situation remains tense and difficult in several areas. We still have many concerns," Sylvette Gounaud, a local shopworker, said she had seen nothing like this in 70 years living in the town. "The centre of town is totally under water, all the shops are destroyed," she said. An 86-year-old French woman was reported killed

in the floods after her body was found in her inundated home south of Paris, but it now appears that she died several days ago, police said. In the Loire Valley, floodwaters were lapping at the Chateau of Chambord, causing a watery reflection of the much-visited 16th century castle. Schools and roads have also been flooded in Austria in recent days, though the waters have now receded.

More rains forecast

But forecasters in both Germany and France were warning of more torrential downpours in the next 24 hours. The severe weather began at the weekend with lightning strikes which left several children in Paris and western Germany fighting for their lives. In Simbach, the waters had subsided largely by noon yesterday, leaving only the town's main artery still flooded. Grim-faced residents were examining the damage, trying to shovel mud out of their ruined homes. Many local businesses have been ravaged by the floodwaters and by the trunks of wood that rushed down from the saw-mill, smashing into their store-fronts. — AFP

SOMALIA: WHEN IS AN ELECTION NOT AN ELECTION?

MOGADISHU: A presidential decree issued last month forced through a law to enable an election in Somalia that the government's international backers hope will signal the country's long-awaited return to stability. During 25 years of civil war Somalia has exported insecurity across the region and distributed refugees around the world, and with the August vote hanging in the balance pressure is growing, most recently in the form of a rare high-level UN Security Council visit to the capital Mogadishu in May. A vote is now likely to happen in Somalia, but it probably won't be on time and certainly won't look like elections anywhere else in the world.

Why the election?

When wars putter out and state-building begins, elections are widely seen as the sign of a job well done. But Somalia's last UN-backed vote in 2012 was not the success everyone had hoped for, and this year's vote will not seal Somalia's peace either. It is however a step in the right direction. As Somalia's minister of planning and international cooperation, Abdirahman Aynte, put it during the UN

Security Council visit: "We are now at a critical juncture to move the country from the humanitarian to the development phase."

Will it happen as scheduled?

Probably not. For now, everybody is—publicly at least—committed to the August deadline favored by an international community that likes four-year terms of office and is enshrined in Somalia's 2012 constitution, but political wrangling means that timetable looks impossible to meet. Foreign diplomats from the countries that pay for Somalia's government privately say they will accept a delay up to "the end of the calendar year".

Somali politicians and their backers are already horse-trading and electioneering—if not openly campaigning—even as they dispute the process, suggesting they know a change of power is now inevitable. The election will probably happen before the end of the year, most likely in September or October.

Is it really an election?

The international community ditched the term "election" in favor of "electoral process"

to describe a change of leadership that will look nothing like European-style democracy. Rather than the one-person-one-vote election promised in the constitution there will be a "limited franchise election" meaning ordinary folk won't vote. Instead, clan elders will select parliamentarians while each of Somalia's federal states will choose representatives to a new upper house and together they will vote for a president. The whole thing will likely cost around \$12 million (11 million euros).

So is this progress?

It's not what Somalis were promised but it is an improvement on anything since independence. This vote will be 100 times more inclusive than the last, involving up to 14,000 delegates chosen by clan elders and organized into six US-style "electoral colleges" to choose 275 MPs, 30 percent of whom will be women. By contrast, in 2012 just 135 clan elders did the selecting in a process that saw huge sums of money change hands, and only 14 percent of chosen MPs were women. There will be a new upper house with 54 seats divided between six federal states plus three each for semi-

autonomous Puntland and self-declared independent Somaliland. Clan is still the dominant organizing and governing principle but as the UN's top Somalia official, Michael Keating, said: "To move beyond the clan system Somalia has to work with the clan system." The promise of a one-person-one-vote election is being deferred to 2020.

Where's Shabaab in all this?

The Shabaab, an Al-Qaeda affiliate committed to the overthrow of Somalia's government, will see the coming election as an attractive target. It is strong enough to cause some bloody disruptions by, for example, swarming foreign military bases, deploying suicide bombers or lobbing mortars at electoral college gatherings, assassinating candidates or launching spectacular attacks on civilian targets, all of which serve to undermine the legitimacy of the new government, if not halt its formation. "Shabaab are by no means out of business," said Britain's UN ambassador Matthew Rycroft during the recent Security Council visit when security fears meant the delegation was unable to leave the fortified airport compound.—AFP

10 KILLED AS JIHADISTS STORM SOMALI HOTEL

LEADER OF GARISSA UNIVERSITY ATTACK KILLED

MOGADISHU: An attack on a Mogadishu hotel by jihadist gunmen has ended with at least 10 dead, Somalia's security minister said yesterday. Somali security forces had been battling the Shabaab fighters holed up inside the building since Wednesday evening when the assault began with a car bomb that tore the front off the six-storey Ambassador Hotel. "All the gunmen were killed by the security forces," said security minister Abdirizak Omar Mohamed. "More than 10 people are so far confirmed dead and many others are wounded," he told reporters, adding that rescuers were searching the damaged building for survivors and dead bodies. The bodies of three suspected attackers were displayed in the dirt outside the hotel. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) which protects the government and fights the Shabaab said two parliamentarians were among the dead. The attack began on Wednesday evening with a large car bomb followed by Shabaab fighters storming the upmarket hotel, popular with government officials and wealthy Somalis. Medical and security sources said around 40 people were also injured in the attack that left burning cars and debris scattered across the capital's main Maka Al-Mukarama street. Gunfire continued throughout the night and could still be heard by dawn, more than 13 hours after the attack began.

The Shabaab, an Al-Qaeda aligned extremist group, was forced out of the capital in 2011 but continues its battle to overthrow the internationally-backed government and launches regular attacks on military, government and civilian targets in Mogadishu and elsewhere. The group claimed responsibility for Wednesday's attack soon after it began. Also on Wednesday, Somali special forces claimed to have killed Mohamed Mohamud Ali also

known as Dulyadin and Kuno, the suspected organizer of an attack on a university in Garissa, Kenya, in April 2015 that killed 148 people, mostly students. The US also said it had killed a senior Shabaab planner, Abdullahi Haji Da'ud, in a drone strike.

In another development, a senior Shabaab commander suspected of organizing the 2015 attack on Kenya's Garissa University has been killed in a Special Forces raid in southern Somalia, a local official said. In the coastal Somali town of Kismayo, a local security official said the suspected architect of the bloodbath in Garissa had been killed in a raid in southwestern Somalia in the night from Tuesday

to Wednesday. "Sixteen armed men, four of them senior commanders including Mohamed Mohamud Ali known as Dulyadin... were killed by the Somali commandos and the special forces of the Jubaland," said Abdirashid Janan, minister of state security for Jubaland, an autonomous region in southern Somalia. Local officials paraded the bodies of the four suspected commanders in the streets of Kismayo.

The April 2, 2015 assault at Garissa University College, 365 kilometers north-east of the Kenyan capital Nairobi, left 148 people dead, 142 of them students. They were slain in their dormitories or rounded

up and executed in a hall of residence. The operation was carried out by four gunmen from the Shabaab, Al-Qaeda's East Africa branch. It was Kenya's bloodiest terror attack since Al-Qaeda bombed the US embassy in Nairobi in 1998, killing 213 people. Last July, the Kenyan government said that Dulyadin—also known by the aliases of Kuno and Gamadhare—had been killed in a US drone strike, but it swiftly backtracked on the claim. There was no immediate confirmation of Dulyadin's death from Kenyan authorities. "It happened in an area which is not under our control," Kenyan military spokesman David Obonyo told AFP late Wednesday.—Agencies



MOGADISHU: A member of security forces guards the scene near an unidentified dead body after a bomb attack on Ambassador Hotel in Mogadishu, Somalia yesterday. — AP

OFFENSIVE IN SYRIA AIMED AT CUTTING OFF IS SUPPLY ROUTE

WASHINGTON: The US-led coalition fighting the Islamic State group in Syria is trying to strangle it by cutting off a key supply route from Turkey. The Syrian Democratic Forces, a Kurdish-led alliance, has just launched an offensive to capture the strategic northern town of Manbij with the help of coalition air strikes, 18 of them in the past 24 hours. Manbij is on the north-south axis between Jarablus, a town on the border with Turkey and controlled by IS fighters, and Raqa, the Islamic State group's self-proclaimed capital in Syria. That axis is the main supply route to Raqa, said Jennifer Cafarella, Syria analyst for the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington think tank. If anti-IS fighters take Manbij and then Jarablus, that would sever this axis and leave the jihadist group with just a few rural areas further to the west as a way to maintain a link with Turkey, Cafarella said.

"Recapturing Manbij and ultimately advancing to Jarablus would disrupt but not eliminate ISIS's ability to resupply," she said. The US-led coalition has long had its eye on the so-called Manbij pocket. But an offensive on this mainly Arab region has run into opposition from Turkey, a key partner in the alliance. Washington sees the Syrian Democratic Forces—which is dominated by the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) — as the most effective ground force against IS in Syria. But Ankara regards the YPG as a branch of the rebel Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK), which has fought a three-decade insurgency against the Turkish state.

Kurdish blood

Turkey does not want to see the YPG, which already controls much of the Turkish-Syrian border, take over the last bit of the frontier that it did not already hold. On Wednesday Pentagon officials stressed that the attack on Manbij was being led by the Arab component of the Syrian Democratic Forces. Kurds represent less than 20 percent of the forces on the ground, a US official said. And they will leave after the battle and cede control to their Arab partners, the official said. But some are skeptical of the Pentagon's assurances. They suspect that despite Washington's touting the role of the Arabs, it is the Kurds who will ultimately retain control. "I doubt that they are in command and they are going to have control over this territory once Kurds will have spent their blood," said Joshua Landis, director of the Center for Middle East Studies at the University of Oklahoma.—AFP

HABRE'S TRIAL BRINGS MOMENTUM FOR AFRICAN JUSTICE ON CONTINENT

DAKAR: The successful prosecution of Chadian dictator Hissene Habre has galvanized the movement for a permanent forum for justice in Africa, but several legal roadblocks stand in the way, according to experts. A special African Union-backed court in Senegal sentenced Habre to life in jail Monday for war crimes, crimes against humanity, rape, and sexual slavery, an unprecedented conviction that comes more than a quarter century after he left office. The case also set a global precedent as the first time a country has prosecuted a former leader of another nation for rights abuses. The verdict was "a vivid demonstration that the AU does not condone impunity and human rights violations," said African Union Commission chief Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma. She said the judgment further "reinforces the AU's principle of African solutions to African problems." Until Senegal's President Macky Sall was elected in 2012 and announced Habre would be tried there, the ex-Chadian leader had lived in an upmarket Dakar suburb with his wife and children for more than 20 years.

The court that delivered the verdict—the African Extraordinary Chambers (CAE in its French acronym) — is to be dissolved after the case wraps up, and African rights groups would like to see a similar body set up with lasting jurisdiction over the continent. "We want a permanent, continent-wide system for justice in Africa," Aboubacry Mbodj, secretary-general of Dakar-based African rights group RADDHO said. "That's why—after the African Chambers close—we will continue to demand from the African Union a permanent mechanism so that heads of state are not above the law." Senegalese Justice Minister Sidiki Kaba told journalists Tuesday that "foreign hands were not behind" the verdict, reinforcing the notion of the Habre trial being an all-African affair. The AU has also "dragged its feet", RADDHO's Mbodj said, citing the adoption of the Malabo protocol in 2014, which envisaged an international criminal law section for the yet to be established African Court of Justice and Human Rights.—AFP



AT SEA: Photo shows a rescue operation of migrants and refugees at sea, off the coast of Sicily.—AP

DANGEROUS MIGRANT SMUGGLING ROUTES FLOURISH IN LAWLESS LIBYA

SMUGGLERS ADAPT BY SWITCHING DEPARTURE POINTS, BOATS

TRIPOLI: After a flurry of boat departures that sent hundreds of migrants to their deaths in the Mediterranean, survivors told police they had been kept for weeks on one meal a day in holding houses near the Libyan shore. Then they boarded the rubber or wooden vessels, but only those co-opted to run or drive the boats were given life-jackets, according to accounts given to Italian police. As calmer summer weather begins, European officials who struck a deal with Turkey to block crossings to Greece have been scrambling for ways to shut down flows on the other major sea route into the EU from Libya.

They hope a UN-sponsored government that arrived in Tripoli in March will bring stability, and the EU last week agreed to help to train Libya's coastguard. But Libyan officials describe themselves as under-resourced and helpless against powerful smugglers who go about their trade with impunity, adapting swiftly to new conditions. At least 880 migrants and refugees died trying to cross the Mediterranean last week, the UN refugee agency said. The route between North Africa and Italy was "dramatically more dangerous" than the one to Greece, it said, with the chances of perishing estimated at one in 23. The new government faces a complex challenge asserting its authority, while efforts to counter people trafficking were thrown into disarray by the conflict that followed Libya's 2011 uprising, and the coastguard feels abandoned.

"The only assistance we have been offered so far is promises," said Colonel Abdulassmad Massoud of the coastguard in Tripoli. Italy says arrivals so far in 2016 are down two percent on last year at about 40,000 landings, mostly from countries like Nigeria, Eritrea, Gambia and Somalia. There is little sign of a return of Syrian migrants, tens of thousands of whom were travelling

through Libya until they switched to the Turkey-Greece crossing in 2015. Instead, smugglers enriched by those Middle Eastern migrants are again working long-established routes across thousands of kilometers of hostile desert between sub-Saharan Africa and western Libya.

Unguarded borders

As migrants pass through Libya, they enter a system marked by abuse, corruption and a near-complete vacuum of state authority. Many African migrants remain in the system for months or years, some settling or returning home and some raising money for an onward journey to Europe. A minority turn to crime or end up fighting in Libya's fitful conflict. "All the smugglers are connected and they pass the migrants on between each other," said Ibrahim Shawish, the mayor of Murzuq, a desert town about 350 km from Libya's southern border.

Traffickers can cross that border freely he said, and convoys of as many as 25 vehicles then head north unhindered. "Sometimes there's a checkpoint at the entrance of a city, but they can always take a different route." There is no policing and little external aid. Germany has pledged 4.5 million euros (\$5 million) to support communities in Sabha and Gatroun, two key southern areas on migrant routes, but Libyan officials complain that international efforts are too focused on blocking crossings at sea. Though the EU has warned of hundreds of thousands of displaced people who could cross the Mediterranean, officials and aid workers in Libya say a lack of data makes an accurate estimate impossible.

The International Organization for Migration has identified 235,000 migrants in Libya, but says the real number is likely to be between 700,000 and one million. Migrants who are arrested

often end up back in the smuggling networks after being released or even deported, officials and aid workers say. "It makes no difference because the flow coming in is much greater than the number being deported, and the ones who are sent back to their countries are returning because there is no security on the borders," said Salem Ashwin, a migration official at Tripoli's international cooperation ministry.

Cheap dinghies

Lawless Libya provides fertile ground for the smugglers, who often work with militias that hold real power on the ground. In an unusual backlash, residents in Zuwara, a long-time stronghold for people smuggling about 50 km from the Tunisian border, demanded action against the traffickers after bodies washed up on the beaches last year. Some smugglers were arrested and some fled, according to Zuwara Mayor Hafed Bensassi. But other departure points have opened up, with at least half a dozen between Zuwara and the port city of Misrata, about 300 km to the east. Most of the recent departures appear to have been from around Sabratha, which was in turmoil earlier this year as local brigades fought Islamic State militants.

"Until we have enough technology to watch the whole coast they'll always find gaps," said Salem, the ministry official. Smugglers offer different prices for different types of boats, which range from seaworthy fishing vessels with radar systems to cheap inflatable dinghies with improvised wooden bases. Even in the Mediterranean, they appear able to skirt round restrictions with relative ease. People trafficking is intertwined with that of drugs and fuel, coastguards say, and new supplies of migrant boats are brought in on smuggling vessels that arrive from Malta and Egypt.—AFP

ARAB ISRAELI SALAFISTS TAKE AIM AT SPORT, CULTURE

TIRAH: When Hanin Radi tried to make her dream come true of staging a marathon in her hometown, the Arab Israeli received death threats from radical Islamists. "I've run marathons everywhere, but in the streets of my town I'm afraid to run," said Radi, who is from the Arab town of Tirah in central Israel. The 36-year-old mother of four is among those who have stirred the wrath of Salafist Islamists increasingly asserting themselves among Israel's Arab population. Citing their strict interpretation of Sunni Islam, Salafists have taken their campaign to cultural institutions and local governments, opposing anything they view as immoral.

In the case of Radi, who has finished third in the Tel Aviv marathon, her running in public in exercise gear violates the Salafists' rigid ideas about women and modesty. She trains three times a week with about 50 other women in Tirah, but they can only run after nightfall in a closed stadium, empty of men. "Last year we had everything organized for a marathon. We had announced a date and distributed posters," Radi, who is herself Muslim said. "But when I went with the girls to run the course we'd laid out, we encountered the bearded (religious) men, who insulted us. Then the religious began to stir up the people against us." That same evening, she said, she received death threats and abuse over the phone.

In the middle of the night, "shots were fired at my house and my car." Israeli police questioned a Muslim cleric suspected of inciting violence against the would-be runners, she said. "But the case was closed without anyone being arrested." Israeli police spokeswoman Luba Samri said comments on social media, including Facebook, are in general "referred to the attorney general, who has the right to study them". She dismissed allegations that police are less stringent in



TIRAH, Israel: Arab-Israeli running champion Hanin Radi (center), 36, from the Arab-Israeli town of Tira, trains with young girls at the town's stadium. — AFP

addressing concerns among the Arab population than those involving Jews. "We investigate (accusations) thoroughly, with each case measured according to its merits and circumstances," she said.

'Nobody will escape punishment'

Arab Israelis, Palestinians who remained after the creation of the Jewish state in 1948 and their descendants, make up about 17.5 percent of Israel's eight million population. The vast majority are Muslim, though there are also significant Christian and Druze populations. There are no official figures on how many consider themselves Salafists, though community leaders estimate they number a few thousand. The Islamic State group's rise in neighboring Syria and online recruitment efforts by radical Islamists have also raised

concern, though only a limited number of Arab Israelis—a few dozen—are thought to have travelled to fight with the group.

The Salafists' campaign at home has at times targeted the Arabic-language films and theatrical performances considered vital to the struggle for Arab-Israeli identity. Arab Israelis work hard to preserve their Palestinian heritage in Israel, where they see themselves as second-class citizens and complain of discrimination, particularly regarding jobs and housing. Recently, radicals in several towns banned performances of a play they found inappropriate and a concert featuring Palestinian singer Haitham Khalailah, a runner-up in the finals in Beirut of the "Arab Idol" television singing contest. Both were deemed as "contravening Islam and morality".

Activists also succeeded in having a high school Arabic teacher in the northern town of Baqa Al-Gharbiya fired for showing the Oscar-nominated Palestinian film "Omar" to his students. The movie tells of Israeli intelligence agents' attempts to recruit young Palestinian informers. It also portrays adolescent courtship, including a quick kiss that most audiences would find innocent but which the ultra-conservatives deemed "pornographic". An Israeli labor tribunal ordered the teacher, Ali Mawasi, reinstated. "Three weeks after I screened the film... Salafists entered the school and assaulted and insulted me in the staff room before threatening me," the teacher said.

Battle over belief

Haifa University professor Nuha Ali said Islamist groups are competing for support among Israel's Arabs with the secular Palestinian nationalist movement. He are seeking to convince people that their hardships are due to moving away from religion, the professor said. "The question of national identity is not their priority," he said. "They seek only to control society's thinking."

They also want to rein in Muslims who have joined the Israeli establishment, such as the southern branch of the country's Islamic Movement, whose representatives serve in parliament. Arab Israelis troubled by the Salafists' actions have called on Israeli authorities to do more to stop them. "On Facebook, people said Ali Mawasi deserved a bullet," said Jafar Farah, head of Israeli Arab rights group Mossawa, referring to the school teacher. "If comments like that were made by an Arab about an (Jewish) Israeli, he would be arrested the same day," Farah said. "But the Israeli police, who claim to uphold the law, prefer it when the Arabs fight among themselves." — AFP

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EGYPTIAN STUDENTS FEAR FOR THEIR FUTURE

SECURITY OPERATIVES TARGET UNIVERSITIES

CAIRO: In June 2014, 23-year-old engineering student Mohammed Badawy was expelled from Cairo University. The university said it ejected him for obstructing the education process, and for rioting and destruction at a protest against President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi's government. Badawy said it was because he protested against the government and supported the Muslim Brotherhood, a political movement that the Egyptian government has banned as a terrorist organization.

His home was raided by security forces multiple times, he said. Fearing for his life and keen to continue studying, Badawy said he paid people-smugglers to spirit him out of the country. His reaction was not unusual. The murder of Italian postgraduate student Giulio Regeni has focused new attention on alleged police brutality in Egypt, but nearly a dozen local students have told Reuters they have been targeted over the past three years and regularly face violence and harassment at the hands of security forces.

Regeni, 28, vanished in Cairo on Jan 25. His body was discovered in a ditch on the outskirts of the Egyptian capital on Feb 3. It showed signs of extensive torture, which human rights groups say suggests Egyptian police or security forces may have been involved. Egyptian intelligence officials and police sources have said that on the day Regeni vanished, he was detained by police and then transferred to a compound run by Homeland Security. The police and Interior Ministry deny they were involved and say they never held Regeni.

Rights groups and students say that under Sisi, Egypt's universities have hounded students as a matter of routine, stationing dozens of security forces on campuses, expelling hundreds of students suspected of Islamist leanings, and abusing or torturing many of those they arrest. Some of those arrested admit they support or even belong to the Muslim Brotherhood and have taken part in protests that sometimes turned violent. But often, they say, they were reacting against abuses by the security forces.

Twenty students have been killed by security officials on campuses either while they were protesting or near a protest, according to the Association for Freedom of Thought and Expression, a non-governmental organization of lawyers and researchers which says it has correspondents in most universities. Reuters was not able to verify these findings. As well, the association said, more than 790 students have been arrested, mainly for protesting against the government. At least 89 of those were referred to military tribunals. Some have been sentenced to death or life in prison.

Officials from Egypt's two biggest universities say that at least 819 students out of some 700,000 have been expelled from the universities since 2013, the year Sisi ousted the Muslim Brotherhood government. They said the students were expelled for violence and law-breaking. Reuters was unable to verify these figures independently. In previous years, judges, university officials and veteran lawyers say, the number of expulsions was so small they didn't tally it. An Interior Ministry official declined to comment about general accusations, saying he could only respond to specific cases. Sisi has described Islamist groups, including the Brotherhood, as existential threats to Egypt, the Arab World and the West.

A senior police official told Reuters that imprisoned students were mostly "accused of joining terrorist organizations and inciting violence." The official also said there has been no torture in Egypt's police stations or any detention facility. "Any torture incident that takes place is an individual act," he said. University heads also say there is no campaign against students. The head of one university said his students are offered a second chance if they apologize for protesting and committing violence.

But Mohamed Nagy, a researcher with the Association for Freedom of Thought and Expression, said there was clearly a concerted effort to go after students. "This era is the worst for students. It never used to happen that hundreds of students used to get expelled from universities. Dealing with students was never that brutal," he said. Nagy himself was arrested on April 25 for taking part in an anti-government protest, his lawyer said. On May 14, a court sentenced him to five years in prison and fined him 100,000 Egyptian pounds (\$11,261). Ten days later the court dropped the jail term.

Badawy, the engineering student, said he decided to flee Egypt for fear of ending up in prison. He travelled for five days in the back of a pickup truck through blinding sandstorms and past gun-toting border guards, he said. A couple of weeks after he arrived in Khartoum, the capital of neighboring Sudan, he flew to Turkey, where he

campaign against Islamists in Egypt's modern history. Security forces killed hundreds of Morsi's supporters at Cairo protest camps. Thousands of others, including liberals, were detained.

University campuses have been among the main targets. In February 2014, the government changed the law to give university heads the power to expel students without warning or investigations. That June, about a month after Sisi won an election to become president, he abolished elections for university posts and gave the government back the power to appoint university presidents and faculty deans. Security forces - a ban on their presence on campuses was enforced shortly after the 2011 uprising that led to Morsi's election - were also allowed back. Cairo University President Gaber Nassar, who helped shape some of the changes, said they were needed to give university leaders the authority "to expel students who take part in violence in a quicker way," and to be able to

expulsions were fair and not part of any government campaign. "All means are given to the students to prove their innocence. The university is not looking to incriminate the students," the spokesman said, adding that some were expelled for violating a law that effectively bans protests.

One 20-year-old who used to study at Al-Azhar said he was kicked out after leading protests against the government. He said he struck a dean who had called him a "son of a bitch" for protesting in support of the Muslim Brotherhood and had tried to stop him from taking his final exam. After torching two police cars, the student said, he ended up at a police station and a state security building. The student did not identify the dean, and Reuters was unable to seek his comment. The student, who described himself as a Muslim Brotherhood sympathiser, said he was subjected to electric shocks, hanged for days by his feet and hands, and sexually assaulted several times with a stick. "I felt that I was breathing my last breath. I was almost dead," he said. "My body was so weak. They used to give me a break from torture for nearly two hours a day."

After 22 days, he said, he was sent to solitary confinement, where he stayed for two months. Reuters was not able to independently verify the details of his account. Once freed, he said he made the 30-hour drive from Cairo to Port Sudan. Passengers sat on the back of pickup trucks and clung to sticks rammed vertically among the luggage for support. His truck raced towards the border. "I was about to fall off," he said by phone from Khartoum. "I was too tired to hold on from the intensity of the heat. 'I am dreaming of the day where I can go back. I think of revenge every day, but I am trying to be patient.'"

The humiliation

Cairo University President Nassar said the system offers second chances. Several times, he has issued an open invitation to students expelled from his university to come and meet him, in the presence of their parents, and apologize. If they promise not to protest again, he said, they are reinstated. Last year, at least 91 students took him up on the offer, he said. "I'm aware that (for) those who genuinely belong to the Muslim Brotherhood, it will be very difficult for them to accept such an initiative." Reuters spoke to three of those who attended such meetings and were reinstated after apologizing. They said they still live in fear of arrest or another expulsion.

Two brothers - Ahmed and Abdel Rahman - said that despite being reinstated they have left the country to finish their education in Malaysia. "He who expels me once for no good reason and without an investigation, can expel me again," said Ahmed, 22, an engineering student. A 21-year-old engineering student said he had been expelled and reinstated twice after he attended meetings with Nassar. The second time he was expelled, in 2014, the university said it was because he had rioted, thrown Molotov cocktails at security forces, terrorized citizens and obstructed the education process. He said he had done none of those things and now lived away from home because he feared arrest.

All three students said the meetings with Nassar were humiliating. They were not allowed to speak, ask questions or sit down during the hour-long session, they said. Nassar said he had long discussions with students. "I sat with them for more than two hours, we talked, we agreed and disagreed. We don't hold them accountable for their affiliation." From Turkey, engineering student Badawy said he would never apologize. "Apologizing means that I am admitting that I have done the things that they have accused me of. But I haven't. Also, criminal charges don't drop when I apologize," he said. "This is severe humiliation that I can't accept." — Reuters



CAIRO: In this file photo, Prominent Egyptian blogger Alaa Abdel-Fattah's mother, Laila Soueif, a university professor who is also an activist (background left) his sister Mona Seif, wearing eyeglasses at center, and his wife, Manal Bahy Eddin Hassan at right, cheer after his release on bail at a courtroom in Cairo. Egyptian activist Sanaa Seif who on May 14, 2016, gave herself up to authorities and is now serving her sentence in a prison just outside Cairo. Seif hails from Egypt's best known family of activists. Her father, Ahmed Seif Al-Islam, who died in 2014, was a renowned human rights lawyer. Seif's older brother, Abdel-Fattah, is an iconic figure in Egypt's pro-democracy movement and in the 2011 uprising. He is serving a five-year prison sentence for taking part in a 2013 demonstration. Mona, her sister, is an outspoken critic of El-Sissi's government. — AP

enrolled in a university in the south. He faces many challenges including financial and language barriers, but he said he and the four other people he fled with feel safer, if unsure of their future.

"The moment we crossed the border and we were safe, we knelt in prayer," he said during a telephone interview. "Of course, we will be facing a lot of difficulties, but it is still better than what we were living in." In recent days judges have ruled that tens of students, including Badawy, must be reinstated. "I am not happy at all," he said from Turkey. Two years after he was expelled, he said, he is angry at the wasted years and his loss of education.

Return to campus

The crackdown on students started not long after Sisi seized power in July 2013. Millions of Egyptian protesters had rallied against the rule of democratically elected President Mohamed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood. The military, with Sisi at its head, forced Morsi out and took control themselves. The new government declared the Brotherhood a terrorist organization, a description the Brotherhood rejects. It also began the fiercest

confront violence "with the sword of law," and "without an investigation."

Expulsions

Being expelled from university is a serious blow in Egypt. A degree is an important badge of status, and once expelled, students have little or no chance of studying elsewhere. In January 2014, the Supreme Council of Universities, a government body, banned private universities from accepting students who had been expelled. Many students who have been expelled say Egypt doesn't let them leave to pursue an education abroad either, because they have criminal records - either in connection with the expulsions or for protesting against the government. Young men are not allowed to leave the country without having done military service or being formally exempted. That forces some, like Badawy, to flee secretly.

Most of the students now in jail were studying at Al-Azhar University and Cairo University, the senior police official said. Al-Azhar alone has expelled 419 students in the past two years, mostly for protesting against the government, according to spokesman Hossam Shaker. He said the

GERMANY FOILS IS PLOT; 3 SYRIANS ARRESTED

BERLIN: Three Syrian men with suspected links to Islamic State have been arrested in Germany on suspicion of planning an attack here, the federal public prosecutor said yesterday. It said in a statement that 27-year-old Hamza C, 25-year-old Mahood B and 31-year-old Abd Arahman AK had been arrested in the states of North Rhine-Westphalia, Brandenburg and Baden-Wuerttemberg. Their homes were being searched. The federal public prosecutor also said that an arrest warrant had been issued for another Syrian man, 25-year-old Saleh A.

Two of the accused - Saleh A and

Hamza C - had joined IS in Syria in the spring of 2014 and received the task from IS leaders to carry out an attack on the old town of Duesseldorf, a city in western Germany, the federal prosecutor said. They later persuaded the other men to take part in the attack, the prosecutor said. Saleh A and Hamza C planned for two men to blow themselves up on the Heinrich-Heine-Allee, a busy road in the city centre, and then other attackers were expected to kill as many pedestrians as many passers-by as possible with guns and explosive devices, the statement said. The prosecutor said there was no evidence that the suspects

had actually started concretely implementing the attack plans.

Sweden - bomb plot

In another development, a 20-year-old Swede was sentenced to five years in prison yesterday for preparing to build a bomb to carry out a suicide attack, a court said. "The man had gathered information on bomb-building from the Internet and downloaded propaganda from IS," the Attunda District Court said. "He is now sentenced to five years in prison for preparing to commit a terrorist crime."

The man, named as Aydin Sevigin, was

found guilty of buying materials such as a pressure cooker and ball bearings to make a bomb, intending to blow himself up in a suicide attack. The Prosecution Authority believe the man had earlier tried to join the jihadist group Islamic State in Syria, but was twice stopped in Turkey and sent back to Sweden. Sweden has not been hit by a large-scale militant attack, but local media reported in April that authorities received intelligence about a possible attack on the capital by Islamic State militants. In 2010 a suicide bomber died when his bomb belt went off prematurely in central Stockholm. — Agencies

WHO ARE THE NIGER DELTA AVENGERS?

LAGOS: Nigeria has been hit by growing unrest in the country's oil-producing south by a new militant group calling itself the Niger Delta Avengers. Here is what is known about them:

What's the story so far?

The Avengers describe themselves as young, well-educated "worthy outlaws" and have since early 2016 been attacking Nigeria's oil and gas infrastructure, helping drag production to 20-year lows. They demand an independent state and want international oil companies out of the region.

Who are they?

"Even the Nigerian security services are not 100 percent sure what they are up against," Dirk Steffen, from the Denmark-based Risk Intelligence firm said. Still, given their ability to execute attacks on critical oil and gas infrastructure, it's likely some members were part of former militant organizations, he added. But the group's level of organization is under debate. "The Avengers may not be a defined group of people, except for a core of maybe 100-150 people or so," said Steffen.

Why now?

In 2009, Nigeria reached a ceasefire with militant groups which previously disrupted oil production and introduced an amnesty program. That gave former rebels a monthly stipend and jobs training in the oil industry as welders, divers and technicians. But after the economy took a nosedive following the crash in global oil prices, Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari has struggled to pay for the amnesty program. He has even hinted at winding it down, making some 30,000 ex-militants on the payroll angry. He has also ended lucrative security contracts with former militants to protect pipelines.

What else?

Buhari, from the majority Muslim north, has charged prominent politicians and ex-militants from the oil-rich mostly Christian south with corruption. That's stoked longstanding animosity between the north and the south-an opposition stronghold-with some criticizing his anti-graft fight as a "political witch-hunt".

What makes them different?

Like previous militant groups, the Avengers want a greater share of oil revenue, amnesty payments, and clean-up and compensation for spills. But they also have a series of political demands that culminate in the creation of an independent Niger Delta state. They demand the release of pro-Biafra leader Nnamdi Kanu, who has been imprisoned on charges of "treasonable felony", and say members of Buhari's All Progressives Congress (APC) should face corruption trials like the opposition People's Democratic Party (PDP).

Who supports them?

"The Avengers and other groups that have popped up in recent months are likely getting some support from former and current PDP members," Philippe de Pontet, Sub-Saharan Africa analyst at risk consultancy firm Eurasia Group, said in a recent report. "It was always expected that there would be backlash to the Buhari administration in the region. If anything, the surprise is that the first 10 months of Buhari's term were as quiet as they were." — AFP



BERLIN: Armenian clergy men and activists react after law makers voted to recognize the Armenian genocide after a debate during the 173rd sitting of the Bundestag, the German lower house of parliament yesterday. — AFP

GERMANY LAWMAKERS DECLARE 1915 MASSACRE OF ARMENIANS 'GENOCIDE'

TURKEY FUMES, TURKEY RECALLS ITS AMBASSADOR

BERLIN: German lawmakers declared the 1915 massacre of Armenians by Ottoman forces a "genocide" in a symbolic resolution yesterday which risks hurting relations with Ankara just as Berlin and European partners need its help in tackling the migrant crisis. Turkey rejects the idea that the killings of Christian Armenians during World War One amounted to a genocide and a spokesman for the ruling AK Party responded swiftly to the vote, saying it had "seriously damaged" relations.

Meanwhile, Turkey yesterday recalled its ambassador to Germany. Speaking during a visit to Kenya, Erdogan said recalling the ambassador for consultations was a "first step" and that the Turkish government would consider further steps to be taken in response to the vote. Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim called the German decision a "historic error." Yildirim said that Turkish people take pride in their past and that "there is no event in our past that would cause us to bow down our heads in embarrassment." Armenia's foreign minister welcomed the vote.

Turkey's prime minister has condemned the motion as "irrational" and said it will test the friendship between the NATO partners. The timing could not be worse for Merkel, who has championed a deal with Turkey under which Ankara has agreed to stem the flow of refugees to

Europe in return for cash, visa-free travel rights and accelerated talks on European Union membership.

Merkel was powerless to stop the symbolic resolution, which was initiated by the opposition Greens and was also backed by lawmakers in her conservative bloc and the Social Democrats. "With one vote against and one abstention, this resolution has been passed by a remarkable majority of the German Bundestag," said Norbert Lammert, the president of the lower house of parliament. In a sign of the sensitivities, neither Merkel, her foreign minister nor her vice chancellor took part in the vote, although she did back it in an internal party straw poll this week. Nearly a dozen other EU countries, including France, have passed similar resolutions.

Berlin has already had a taste of the expected backlash from Ankara. "We wish Germany would not allow such an irrational issue," Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim told ruling party members yesterday, hours before the vote. On Wednesday he described the vote as "ridiculous". "It was an ordinary event that occurred during wartime conditions in 1915," he said at a news conference. The nature and scale of the killings remain highly contentious. Turkey accepts that many Armenians died in partisan fighting beginning in 1915, but denies that up to 1.5 million were killed and

that this constituted an act of genocide, a term used by many Western historians and foreign parliaments.

Migrant deal threat?

German officials hope the vote will not scupper the EU-Turkey migrant deal, which has been under a cloud since Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan pushed out his prime minister last month and began questioning parts of the agreement. They say Erdogan has a strong interest in making the migrants deal work and will not allow this to get in the way. Addressing parliament before the votes, several lawmakers stressed they did not want to point a finger at the current Turkish government but rather wanted to bolster reconciliation efforts between Turkey and Armenia.

"We know from our own experience how difficult and painful it is to work through the past ... but only in this way can human trust and strength grow," said Social Democrat Rolf Muetzenich. Armenia welcomed the resolution. The foreign ministry said Turkish authorities "are continuing to obstinately reject the undeniable fact of genocide". The resolution could also raise tensions with Germany's roughly 3.5 million-strong Turkish community. Over a thousand Turks demonstrated against the resolution on Saturday in front of the Reichstag building in Berlin. — Agencies

ISRAEL TARGETS HOMEGROWN IS

PRESIDENT WARNS OF 'RADICALIZATION' IN ARAB MINORITY

JERUSALEM: Israel's crackdown on Arab citizens trying to join Islamic State in Syria or Iraq or to set up cells at home have prevented the threat reaching the scale seen in the West, an adviser to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a magazine interview. About 18 percent of Israel's population are Muslim Arabs, many of whom identify with the Palestinian struggle, although they seldom take up arms against the majority Jewish country.

However, a rash of defections to Islamic State-held areas of Syria and Iraq and trials of Israeli citizens for identifying with the militant group prompted President Reuven Rivlin to warn in January that "considerable radicalization" was taking root among Israel's Arab minority. Eitan Ben-David, head of the Counter-Terrorism Bureau in Netanyahu's office, told the bi-monthly journal 'Israel Defense' that "more than a few dozen, but not more than 100" Israeli Arabs had joined Islamic State's ranks - and some might return.

"These foreign fighters can certainly pose a grave danger internally, so the Shin Bet (security service) and all the state system is doing very good work in foiling this threat, which could be a kind of spreading cancer," Ben-David said. "To our satisfaction, the situation is reasonable. It is not like any European country, nor even America, or places like China or Russia which have had a great number of homegrown ISIS fighters," he said, using an

acronym for Islamic State. Israel formally outlawed Islamic State in 2014 and negotiated the repatriation for trial of several Arab citizens who had joined or tried to join the insurgents via Turkey or Jordan.

But government policy hardened last year after one Israeli Arab used a paraglider to fly into an Islamic State-controlled part of southern Syria and after another who had served as a volunteer in Israel's army defected to the insurgents. Further raising alarm, two video clips surfaced in October in which Islamic State gunmen vowed in Arabic-accented Hebrew to strike Israel. The group's leader, Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, echoed the threat in an audiotape released in December. But Ben-David sounded circumspect about that prospect, citing potentially more pressing dangers from Lebanon's Hezbollah guerrillas or Palestinian militants.

In an incident on Thursday, a Palestinian woman tried to stab an Israeli soldier in the occupied West Bank and was shot dead, the military said. In the last half year, Palestinian attacks have killed 28 Israelis and two visiting US citizens. Israeli forces have shot dead at least 196 Palestinians, 134 of whom Israel has said were assailants. Others were killed in clashes and protests. "When it comes to Islamic State, we worry about terrorist attacks against Israeli or Jewish targets, including abroad, but we are not a main target right now," he said. — Reuters

UKRAINE ADOPTS WESTERN-BACKED REFORMS; TACKLES CORRUPT JUDGES

KIEV: Ukraine yesterday overhauled its long-criticized legal system by adopting Western standards that limit the immunity of judges and establish an anti-corruption court. The raft of measures is aimed at bringing the former Soviet republic closer to its ambition of applying for EU membership by 2020. It is also seen as vital to kick-starting an international support program that could keep Ukraine's floundering economy afloat. The war-scarred country has been criticized for having a corruption-riddled justice system that has put up roadblocks to foreign investment and benefited engrained political interests tied to a handful of powerful tycoons. "We are restoring Ukrainians' right for the truth, the right for justice," President Petro Poroshenko told lawmakers shortly before they approved the measures almost unanimously.

"We are doing this for investors whom we need to come to Ukraine, create jobs, pay taxes and ensure our economic development." One of the more important changes involves the establishment of an independent anti-graft and intellectual property body within the next 12 months. Another strips court appointees of their full immunity from prosecution and makes them liable for crimes committed outside the courtroom. The new system also sets

up an independent panel for selecting judges based on their professional merits instead of their political or business ties.

Poroshenko said more than 40 percent of Ukraine's current court members would not qualify under the new ethics system. The Western-backed leader has lost public approval over his perceived failure to erase a legacy of graft he inherited from a Russian-backed administration that was toppled during a February 2014 pro-EU revolt. Earlier this year senior members of Ukraine's government submitted their resignations over alleged backroom deals struck with the help of oligarchs that determined important appointments and the passage of legislation.

The political storm culminated in the resignation of Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk and his replacement with parliament's pro-Western speaker Volodymyr Groysman in April. The Poroshenko protégé has vowed to pursue economic and political restructuring measures pushed by Ukraine's foreign allies and lenders such as the International Monetary Fund. Deputy presidential administration chief Oleksiy Filatov said the new legal system-now enshrined in the constitution—"will depoliticize and ensure the independence of the judiciary." — AFP

WILL TRUMP HIT A WALL WITH SURGING HISPANIC VOTE?

LOS ANGELES: Donald Trump is fond of saying Hispanics love him, but his Republicans face an all-but-impossible task in winning over the fast-growing, Democratic-leaning group that the billionaire has alienated time and again. In California, whose Republican White House primary takes place June 7, the Grand Old Party is facing a massive challenge in the most populous US state where whites no longer are a majority. Hispanics are the largest US minority group and a majority of Hispanic Americans are Mexican American; Trump has enraged many by referring to Mexicans as rapists and drug dealers, and pledging to build a wall on the US-Mexico border.

Ronald Reagan's once-Republican-leaning California has become increasingly diverse, Hispanic and Democratic at the ballot box. And no Republican has won presidential polls in the state in over two decades. "This is the worst nightmare for the national Republican party," said Raul Hinojosa, Associate Professor at the UCLA Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies. "What has happened to the Republican Party in California is that they have become irrelevant electorally," he said. "They have no expectation of winning a senate or governor's seat for the foreseeable future." According to a recent Gallup study 77 percent of Latinos have a negative view of Trump, the presumptive Republican nominee.

Changing times, changing state

In California, Hispanics now make up the largest single racial or cultural group and account for 20 percent of the state's four million registered voters. "The Latino vote more than doubled in the last 20 years," said Hinojosa. And according to Diana Colin, of the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles, registered Republicans make up just 16.5 percent of the state's Hispanic voters. To glance around crowds at Trump speeches in California these days, the billionaire businessman and reality TV star appears to have had success courting whites, Asian, men, women,



CALIFORNIA: Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump speaks during a rally at the Sacramento International Jet Center in California. — AFP

young people and old... but very few Latinos. Among the anti-Trump protesters who regularly picket his rallies, there are a great deal of Hispanics toting signs denouncing the billionaire as "xenophobic" or "racist."

Sprint to voter registration

Trump has threatened to deport the country's estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants-which experts say has fueled a surge in voter registration among Hispanics. According to Political Data, a group that tracks electoral data, two million new voters have registered in California since January 1 - a 200-percent jump compared to 2012. Half are Democrat, and a quarter are Hispanic. "There has been a huge Latino turnout," said Colin. Of course these are not all Democrats, but

Republicans are a small minority, Hinojosa noted. And the hard demographic fact is that Mexican Americans make up more than 60 percent of Hispanics in the United States.

Many of them benefited from a massive amnesty under the Ronald Reagan administration in 1986. "The vast majority of (the Latino) population is related to an undocumented person-that share is very high, and the sympathy is very in favor of immigrant rights," Colin stressed. But there are other voices, too, among America's Latino voters. In the past, Cuban Americans tended to vote Republican; some immigrants from South American countries have warmed to Trump's tough stance on illegal migration, Hinojosa said. "This notion that you're the good guys, you're the legal immigrants," explained.

Hiding in plain sight?

Delores Chavez, of the California Republican National Hispanic Assembly, suspects the true number of Latino Trump supporters may be higher-and that they are simply afraid to go public with their support. "There's a lot of Trump voters in the closet who are afraid of being chastised if they say they support him," she said. But there is no denying that Hispanics have become a demographic time bomb for the Republicans. Aside from their clout in California, Latinos are forecast to make up one third of the US population by 2060, official data shows. That would mean 30 to 40 million Latino voters in the next 15 years, Hinojosa said. Many states, thanks in part to that trend, are shifting demographically towards voting Democratic-such as Texas and Florida, Hinojosa said. — AFP



DHAKA: Bangladeshi Muslim devotees visit a Sufi shrine in Dhaka yesterday. — AFP

BANGLADESH'S SUFIS LIVING IN FEAR AFTER MACHETE ATTACKS

DHAKA: Each time he hears of the latest deadly machete attack, Ashraful Islam can't help but think of his father's gruesome murder and fear his fellow Sufi Muslims will never be safe again in Bangladesh. "The killings are not declining, they're getting worse. And every one reminds me what happened to my father," said the 30-year-old medical student. "I've no idea why they are doing this but if they aren't stopped then our future is doomed, it'll become another Pakistan."

Islamists have claimed responsibility for around 40 killings in the last three years of foreigners, secular bloggers, gay activists, Hindus and Christians. Many have been slaughtered with machetes. But no group has suffered as much as Sufis, an offshoot of mainstream Islam whose followers are often denounced as "infidels" for their mystical traditions, including worshipping at shrines. Fourteen have died since December 2014 in religiously motivated attacks, including Islam's father Khizir Khan. More than 100,000 Sufis are expected in Dhaka Friday to attend an annual congregation, which this year is both a celebration and an act of defiance.

It comes less than a month after local Sufi leader Mohammad Shahidullah was found hacked to death under a mango tree in the northwestern Rajshahi district. The deep wounds in his neck echoed Khan's murder last October when he was killed by suspected members of banned Islamist militant group Jamayetul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB). Khan had around 2,000 followers, many of whom would turn up at weekly prayers at the family home in Dhaka. On the night of his killing, he had arranged to meet prospective tenants for a vacant apartment underneath the family's own flat. But he went downstairs to an ambush by a gang who cornered him in a bathroom and then hacked at his neck until he bled to death. The killers then burst into the upstairs living-room, tying up Khan's family, who later managed to escape.

Slaughtered in bathroom

"It was my mother who discovered the body in the bathroom. The head was partially severed. "It was such a shocking thing. Every now and then my mother still breaks down." Police soon arrested five suspects who allegedly told investigators it was their "religious duty" to kill Khan. No-one has yet to be convicted for the killing and there have been few arrests in the other murders. Most have been claimed by the likes of JMB or international jihadists such as the Islamic State organization or Al-Qaeda's South Asia wing.

While more than 90 percent of Bangladesh's 160 million population are Muslims, it is an avowedly secular state. For most of the first four decades after winning the 1971 independence war with Pakistan, Bangladesh had a reputation for religious tolerance and Sufi Muslim services drew tens of millions of worshippers. But Islamist groups, discredited by their war-time allegiance to Pakistan, grew in strength over the decades.

The largest Islamist party, Jamaat-e-Islami, became a key ally of the mainstream opposition before being banned by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in a move critics say pushed its followers towards extremism. Mubashar Hasan, an expert on political Islam, said Bangladesh's fate was familiar to other Muslim-majority countries where extremists have tried to impose a very narrow form of religion. "Pakistan, Egypt and Iraq are facing similar problems," said Hasan from Dhaka's University of Liberal Arts. He urged Hasina's government to co-opt Islamic scholars to join a campaign "to delegitimize religious justification of violence and terrorism carried out by these extremists". — AFP

IN CRIMEA, MOSCOW LABELS SOME OPPONENTS DANGEROUS ISLAMISTS RUSSIAN POLICE INTENSIFY SCRUTINY OF CRIMEAN TARTARS

BAKHCHISARAY: Russian riot police in two trucks rolled down a dirt track on the outskirts of the Crimean town of Bakhchisaray, past a woman standing outside her house in a floral-print dressing gown, before climbing out and forming a line across the road. The officers, all wearing balaclava masks and some carrying truncheons and automatic weapons, stood in silence as a crowd of about 20 local residents came out of their houses and asked them to explain what they were doing there. "We haven't done anything wrong and we're being treated like criminals," one man in a black Adidas track suit can be heard saying in amateur video footage of the standoff on the morning of May 12.

Two years after Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine, police are intensifying their scrutiny of the Crimean Tatars, a mainly Muslim community that makes up about 15 percent of the peninsula's population. Searches of properties, raids, and arrests have become commonplace, say local people. The Tatars, who were deported from the region by Stalin during World War Two and only allowed back four decades later, have largely opposed Russian rule.

The authorities say the police have a good reason for their activities. They say they have evidence that some Crimean Tatars belong to Islamist groups they deem extremist, and are acting to prevent them carrying out acts of terrorism. They have not disclosed evidence of any violence or planning for acts of violence. But many Crimean Tatars - and some independent human rights activists - say the community is being targeted by police because of its opposition to Moscow. The people being targeted by police "are ideological opponents of the authorities, and the Russian Federation sees them as a threat", said Emil Kurbedinov, a lawyer representing four Crimean Tatars awaiting trial on terrorism-related charges.

Banned group

Russia has been in de facto control of Crimea since March 2014 when it sent in troops to drive out Ukrainian forces after a popular uprising overthrew Kiev's pro-Moscow president and replaced him with a Western-backed administration. Moscow later oversaw a referendum in which a majority of the region's voters chose to become part of Russia. The tensions between the Crimean Tatars and their new rulers in Moscow have been well-documented. Brussels and Washington have condemned Russia's decision to suspend the Mejlis, the Crimean Tatars' semi-official legislature. The Eurovision song contest was won by a Crimean Tatar singing about her people's history of oppression by Moscow.

The police campaign targeting Crimean Tatars has drawn little comment from foreign governments, however, perhaps because it is difficult to separate officials' legitimate concerns about Islamist extremism from other possible motives. Some of the people who have been arrested in the police sweep are adherents of Hizb ut Tahrir, a group which seeks the establishment of an Islamic caliphate. The organization - which says it is non-violent - is banned in countries including Russia and Germany but is legal in Britain and the United States, as well as in Ukraine. Ruslan Balbek, deputy prime minister in the Moscow-backed Crimean government, told Reuters the security services had to act to root out dangerous forms of Islamism.

"Neither Hizb ut Tahrir, nor Wahabbism, nor any forms of political Islam are characteristic to the Crimean Tatar people," Balbek, himself a Crimean Tatar, told Reuters in an interview. "There is often a confusion of concepts: people interpret a crackdown on religious sects which are banned in Russia ... as a persecution of the Crimean Tatars," he said. The Moscow-

backed prosecutor's office in Crimea said it had opened 28 criminal prosecutions into "extremist and terrorist manifestations" since the start of 2015. However, rights campaigners and community activists say the Islamist problem is being over-stated. They say that, while there are some hardliners, the vast majority of Crimean Tatar Muslims are moderate.

Fazyl Amzayev, Hizb ut Tahrir's chief spokesman in Ukraine, who is based in Crimea, said there were no confirmed cases of the group's supporters being involved in terrorism. He declined to say how many adherents the group has, citing the risk of reprisals from the authorities. Crimean Tatar leaders also say that many of those arrested may have no link to Hizb ut Tahrir and that police tactics - including showing up in large numbers in Crimean Tatar communities - are designed to intimidate, not fight crime. "In the Russian Federation, every citizen is supposed to be loyal to the existing authorities. They did not get that loyalty from the Crimean Tatar people," said Ilmi Umerov, deputy head of the Mejlis, now suspended by Moscow.

Police methods

The police tactics are also causing concern among Kremlin advisers. The presidential Human Rights Council, a body that advises President Vladimir Putin, will discuss the treatment of Crimean Tatars when it meets in June, said Nikolai Svanidze, a council member. He told Reuters there were some examples of possible oppression of Crimean Tatars. "We're keeping this question in our sights," he said. The riot police who drove into the outskirts of Bakhchisaray last month arrived shortly after security service officers in plain clothes searched a home there, according to local residents. The details of the search were unclear. — Reuters

REFUGEES KEPT BEHIND FENCES AMID JORDAN SECURITY FEARS

AZRAQ REFUGEE CAMP, Jordan: A barbed wire-topped fence encircles a section of this bleak UN-run camp, isolating thousands of recent arrivals - whom Jordan considers a potential security risk - from other Syrian refugees. This camp-within-a-camp, called "Village 5," was set up in late March as part of an uneasy trade-off between Jordan and international aid agencies trying to speed up admissions of tens of thousands of refugees stranded in remote desert areas on the kingdom's border.

Under the deal, Jordan agreed to let in about 300 Syrians a day, or five times more than before, on condition that newcomers are isolated in Azraq for more security checks. Jordan says strict vetting is crucial to prevent Islamic State extremists, who control large areas of Syria, from infiltrating the kingdom. In turn, aid agencies agreed to put traumatized war survivors behind barbed wire, if only temporarily. Yet neither side expects the new admissions deal to empty out two rapidly growing encampments on the Syrian-Jordanian border.

Instead, the population there - currently

at 64,000, half of them children - is expected to reach 100,000 by the end of the year if fighting in Syria continues. The two encampments sit between low earthen mounds, or berms, that run in parallel lines, about two kilometers apart in an area where the border isn't clearly marked. Refugees live in tents or shelters made of tarp, wood scraps and even women's scarves, exposed to the desert's extreme cold, heat and sand storms. Lack of latrines and trash collection has led to the spread of diarrhea and infections.

Extreme conditions

Delivering aid to the berm has become one of the UN refugee agency's most challenging and costly operations in the Middle East, said spokeswoman Ariane Rummery, citing "remoteness of locations, extreme weather conditions, lack of access roads, and risk of escalating insecurity." Other aid officials worry that ramping up support will inadvertently transform the jumble of shelters into de facto refugee camps in unsafe areas. Yet saving lives trumps any misgivings at a time when Syrians are increasingly

trapped in their homeland, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to reporters about the conditions at the berm. Neighboring Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan, which have absorbed the bulk of close to 5 million Syrian refugees since 2011, have severely restricted admissions, while doors to Europe are slamming shut.

Jordan has taken in about 650,000 refugees and says it has already done more than its share. Those now waiting at the border are the responsibility of the international community, said Jordanian government spokesman Mohammed Momani. In allowing some asylum seekers to enter, "Jordan is doing its best to balance its security needs with humanitarian concerns," he said. Jordan argues that all those at the border are still on Syrian soil, a claim disputed by the international group Human Rights Watch. The border is believed to run between the two berms and most tents are pitched closer to the southern, Jordanian-controlled berm, said researcher Adam Coogle. — AP

GOOD MORNING, N KOREA! DEFECTOR PREACHES DANGERS OF CULT WORSHIP

SEOUL: For an hour each day, Kim Chung-seong, a defector from North Korea and a Christian missionary, takes to the microphone in a small Seoul studio. At 1 am, his show, "Hello from Seoul, the Republic of Korea," sends a mix of gospel music and news into North Korea, defying the isolated state's efforts to keep its people in the dark about the world, religion and the truth about its leaders. "Brothers and sisters in the North, I hope this time can be a moment of prayer for a miracle that every party member of North Korea at the party congress can meet God, not take a further step into the cult of personality," Kim said.

He was referring to the meeting of the North's ruling Workers' Party this month, where young leader Kim Jong Un was unanimously elevated to party chairman. "I am desperately praying that North Korea's Kim Jong Un and all administrators under him kneel down in front of God and repent for their sins, leave the path of torment-

ing their people," Kim, who came to the South in 2004, said in his studio at the Far East Broadcasting Company. North Korea strictly bans access to outside information, but a growing number of North Koreans consume illicit media, including South Korean TV dramas that show the prosperity of life across the heavily fortified border, via contraband USB sticks and DVDs smuggled from China.

The impoverished North is still technically at war with rich, democratic South Korea because their 1950-53 conflict ended in a truce, not a treaty. It has also been slapped with UN and other sanctions for its nuclear and missile programs. Robert King, US special envoy for North Korean human rights issues, told a Senate panel in October that up to 29 percent of North Koreans had listened to foreign radio and said the medium, including the U.S. government's Voice of America, remained the most important way to get information into the country.

Under the blanket

Kim Myung-jun, professor at Sogang University's school of mass communications in Seoul, said smuggled USB sticks and DVDs were more about entertainment, whereas radio carried news. "Once you listen in, you tend to keep listening under the blanket. It gets you addicted," he said. "AM radio stations like Far East Broadcasting Company have pretty good signals and can be listened to clearly in much of North Korea." Kim, the broadcaster, said he tried to delegitimize the three-generation Kim family dictatorship and preach Christian gospel on his show, often with fellow defectors as guests.

"I am not saying everything is bad in North Korea," said Kim, 39, who has hosted the show for six years. "But, for example, if the party congress is meant to worship one particular person and make 20 million people that person's slaves, that is meaningless. —Reuters

BONES OF 18TH-CENTURY PRIEST SHED NEW LIGHT ON JAPAN CHRISTIAN PAST

TOKYO: Disguised as a samurai in kimono and topknot, Italian missionary Giovanni Battista Sidotti stole ashore on a small Japanese island in 1708, daring to enter a land hostile to his Christian creed. He was quickly captured by authorities, who saw the alien faith as a threat to national identity, and thrown in a prison for Christians, where torture was routine. Now, more than 300 years later, researchers using DNA analysis have confirmed that remains unearthed from a Tokyo construction site almost certainly belong to Sidotti and say they back up historical accounts of his treatment.

Sidotti helped shape Japan's view of the Western world with his knowledge after he won over the nation's leading scholar of the day, historians say. But he fell from grace after refusing to give up his faith and his final days and death have been shrouded in mystery. Christian missionaries made aggressive inroads in Japan in the 16th and 17th centuries, gaining adherents among commoners and even powerful warlords. But fears they were an advance guard for European colonialism spurred a brutal crackdown long before Sidotti arrived.

Human jigsaw puzzles

Three sets of bones were unearthed in July 2014 from land that now forms the parking lot of an upscale condominium but was once the site of the prison the Kirishitan Yashiki, or Christian Mansion. Its only reminder today is a stone marker commemorating the spot. National Museum of Nature and Science researchers near Tokyo carefully cleaned the skeletal fragments before piecing them together like human jigsaw puzzles in a painstaking process that took more than six months. Kenichi Shinoda, the museum's chief of anthropology, analyzed DNA from a tooth and concluded that one of them had the same genetic type as present day Italians.

Japan's historical records show that only two missionaries from Italy had been held at the site, Sidotti and Giuseppe Chiara. The latter was the model for the main character of a Portuguese priest in late Japanese author Shusaku Endo's novel "Silence," which director Martin Scorsese is turning into an upcoming film. As records show that Chiara was cremated after his death at 84, the unearthed remains are almost certain to be of Sidotti, who was 47 when he died in 1714, researchers said. While detained at the prison, Japanese Christians and foreign missionaries were tormented with demands they renounce the banned religion—many did so under duress.

'Changed Japan'

While they feared foreign religion, Japanese officials also craved Western knowledge and scientific insights harder to obtain under the official policy of national seclusion from 1639. As part of his interrogations, Sidotti was questioned by Japan's top Confucian scholar, who developed a deep respect for the Roman Catholic priest for his knowledge of geography, languages and global affairs, experts in this case explained. —AFP

HOW TO SPOT A MILITANT: PAKISTANI ARMY REMOVES ROOFS IN WAZIRISTAN

SECURITY FORCES HUNT DOWN MILITANTS

SHAKAI: House after house flicks by hundreds of feet beneath a military helicopter, many distinguished by one arresting feature: their roofs have been removed by the army to allow an "aerial view" of militants who may take refuge there. South Waziristan was once a stronghold of the Pakistani Taliban, where the extremists operated with impunity, but the military says the region in the country's mountainous northwest has been cleared of its last militant stronghold. Now the district, part of Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) on the border with Afghanistan, is welcoming thousands of displaced families back to their homes, many of which no longer offer shelter.

Some were damaged by weather, said a military official who flew with media on the army-controlled helicopter trip earlier this month over the towns of Makeen, Ladha and Kanigurm. But not all. "(The) military has removed the roofs of the houses to have a better aerial view and stop militants taking refuge in these abundant, fort-like mud houses," the official told reporters. From the helicopter journalists could see scores of homes with no roofs but appearing otherwise intact, their interiors exposed to the elements, though it was unclear how many had been removed by the military and how many had been damaged by the weather and fighting.

The Rah-e-Nijat operation was launched by the military against the Tehreek-e-Taleban Pakistan (TTP) and its then-leader Baitullah Mehsud in 2009, displacing more than 72,000 families, according to the military. Seven years later, some 42,000 families have been sent back, head of development Colonel Muhammad Imran told journalists during a briefing earlier this month in Shakai town, with another 30,000 expected by the end of 2016.

Under 'complete control'

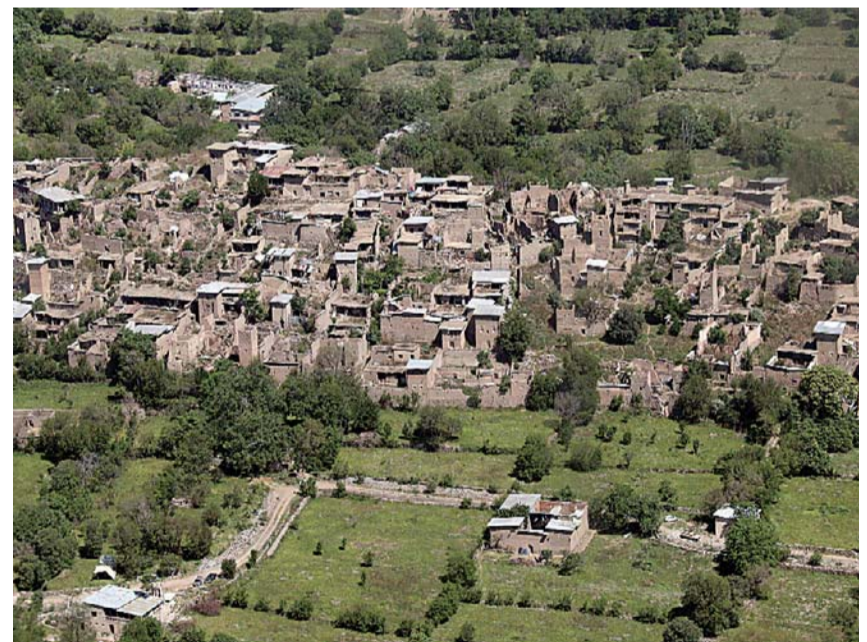
Pakistani authorities have rebuilt roads, constructed health facilities and schools and reinforced the water supply in villages in the area. "We are trying

to make all the facilities available for IDPs (internally displaced people) before their return," Imran said. But the lack of shelter, residents warn, will be a serious issue. Traditionally roofs in South Waziristan are built of wood and iron sheets to hold off heavy winter snows, but from the helicopter hundreds could be seen with their wooden skeletons bared and interiors exposed.

The government says it is providing up to 400,000 rupees (\$4,000) to fami-

ed to tackle reconstruction in FATA, but the government has so far released only \$48 million, with \$12.5 million of that distributed to displaced families.

Muhammad Aslam, from Kanigurm, said the security situation was "peaceful" and "under complete control of the military". But only two rooms in his three-story house are still standing, he said—adding that he and the 20 members of his extended family are "lucky" to have that much. The 32-year-old



WANA South Waziristan, Pakistan: In this photograph taken from a Pakistani army helicopter, empty houses whose roofs have been removed by the army during an operation are seen in the South Waziristan tribal district on Pakistan's border with Afghanistan. —AFP

lies for the rebuilding of their homes. "400,000 rupees is not a sufficient amount even to build one room," said Haji Muhammad, 55, a tribal elder from Makeen. "My family, especially women, are anxiously waiting to go back but it may not be possible," he said. When asked if the funds allocated were enough to rebuild a house, development head Imran said: "I can't answer to the question." A senior military official told AFP some \$285 million is need-

told AFP \$15,000 in compensation would be enough for the average home. In neighboring North Waziristan, resident Malik Muhammad Ghulam said "the majority of the houses" in the region's administrative headquarters Miranshah had been demolished. "Authorities implement curfew from 7:00 pm to 7:00 am... we cannot even go to the market. (They) tell us not to leave the compound of our house." —AFP

Lifestyle

Tokyo museum exhibits Issey Miyake's constant innovations

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Selena Gomez performs in concert at Barclays Center on June 1, 2016 in New York City.—AFP



A mixtape of music parody, 'Popstar' cranks it to 11

A quick survey of the pop music landscape: Kanye West, in the midst of rolling out an album that frequently changed titles and engaging in a Twitter feud with a rapper named Wiz, claimed he was

\$53 million in debt but could still "buy furs and houses for my family." A scandal known as "DoughnutGate" ensnared Ariana Grande; her apology began "I am EXTREMELY proud to be an American." Fans of Justin Bieber continue to go by the name "Beliebers."

In such a state, where reality seems to be engaged in an arms race of absurdity, the bar for parody is higher than a Mariah Carey vocal exercise. "Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping," the Lonely Island's mockumentary styled after self-aggrandizing docs like Bieber's "Never Say Never," doesn't often reach the kind of pitch that will shatter glass. It comes closest when its "Behind the Music" format dissolves and, before you know it, there's (the film's producer) Judd Apatow's penis (definitely not in a box) smeared against a limousine window or Will Arnett's recurring, cackling, beverage-wielding impression of TMZ's Harvey Levin.

Cruel move

Yet on display in "Popstar" - which actually boasts only a handful of Bieber jabs - is the full panoply of pop music's glorious, ego-warped idiocy, from the demented bubble of an entourage to pseudo poses of humility by the famous. It's done with the familiar skewering wit

(and respectable knack for a tune) of Lonely Island trio Andy Samberg, Akiva Schaffer and Jorma Taccone, the makers of the beloved "Saturday Night Live" Digital Shorts. In "Popstar," which the trio wrote and Schaffer and Taccone directed, they play a boy-band kind of Beastie Boys, the Style Boyz, whose '90s success launches the solo career of Conner Friel (Samberg), AKA Conner4Real. He has jettisoned lyricist Lawrence (Schaffer), who now disgruntledly lives on a Colorado farm, and relegated beats specialist Owen (Taccone) to the DJ booth. In a particularly cruel move, he outfits Owen in a Daft Punk-like helmet.

After the success of his solo debut, "Thriller, Also," Conner's head has swelled to Kanye-sized proportions. His stage show features Adam Levine holograms ("So expensive!" he brags), his tour expenditures include a "scarf caddy" and two "umbrella wranglers" and his follow-up album has been made with 100 producers. His manager (Tim Meadows) and publicist (Sarah Silverman) attempt to shield him from the disaster of his second album, which scores a -4.0 from Pitchfork. Silverman's publicist nevertheless wants Connor to be everywhere "like oxygen or clinical depression."

You can imagine where this goes: Conner's empire collapses and he's left to rebuild the bond between him and his old, jilted friends. (The Lonely Island trio have in real life have stayed loyal since first meeting in junior high.) "Popstar" is a worthy heir to "This is Spinal Tap." Some of its



This image released by Universal Pictures shows Andy Samberg in a scene from "Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping." — AP

mockumentary gags are laced with a distinctly Christopher Guest-ian irony: Conner announcing a surprise album release a week in advance; the confused collision of three documentary camera crews when their stars meet; Bill Hader as a roadie who gets off by "flatlining," or stopping his heart.

Pop music

The easy knock on movies from comedy troupes is that they would have been better as just a sketch. But at worst, this is a few dozen Digital Shorts strung together, complete with the same number of cameos. (Questlove, Nas, Pink and others make appearances, though Ringo Starr upstages them all.) Lost in the parade, possibly, is any central character to build comedy around besides Conner. But there's room for the kind of surreal spirals Samberg and

company specialize in. Their first film together, "Hot Rod," had hints of it, but they didn't originate that script and it showed. Here, it comes through in willfully ridiculous sideways veers, like one scene that miraculously combines wolves and Seal, the R&B singer, or later, when a crestfallen Conner takes an interest in dressage. For Lonely Island, the world of pop music, in all its majestic farce, is a playground of wonders, from Wu-Tang Clan to Michael Bolton. "Popstar" is like shooting Macklemores in a barrel. "Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping," a Universal Pictures release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America for "some graphic nudity, language throughout, sexual content and drug use." Running time: 86 minutes. Three stars out of four. — AP



This file photo of Irish singer Sinead O'Connor performs during the Italian State RAI TV program "Che Tempo che Fa", in Milan, Italy. — AP

Records: Doctor's call prompted search for Sinead O'Connor

A search last month in suburban Chicago for Sinead O'Connor was launched after a doctor concerned about her welfare contacted authorities, according to police documents obtained Wednesday. The May 15 call prompted a search of hotels by 10 police departments, according to the documents from the Wilmette Police Department that The Associated Press obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request. The name of the doctor who called police is blacked out, but the report says the doctor was calling about a patient.

The search for the Irish singer-songwriter began within an hour of the doctor's call, the documents show. O'Connor was found later that day at an unidentified hotel. The police report doesn't indicate her condition at the time. A rambling message posted that evening on O'Connor's official Facebook page referred to emotional trauma she had been through over the years. O'Connor scored an international hit in 1990 with her rendition of Prince's ballad "Nothing Compares 2 U." But her blunt-spoken manner often drew criticism, notably in 1992 after she ripped up a picture of Pope John Paul II on "Saturday Night Live." O'Connor said she was diagnosed with bipolar disorder more than a decade ago and has spoken publicly of her mental health problems. — AP

'Begin Again' director apologizes for slamming Knightley

"Begin Again" director John Carney has apologized for slamming actress Keira Knightley in a recent interview in which he negatively compared her to "a supermodel." Carney is the Irish filmmaker of the Oscar-winning "Once." He posted a statement Wednesday on Twitter from "a director who feels like a complete idiot." He calls his comments on Knightley "mean and hurtful." He says in trying to pick holes in his work he "ended up blaming someone else." He says that's "shoddy behavior."

Carney said in an interview about his recent "Sing Street" posted Saturday by the Independent he was relieved to make a movie without "Keira Knightleys" and said she wasn't believable as a singer-songwriter in their 2013 film.

A representative for Knightley hasn't commented on Carney's apology. — AP



This file photo shows Keira Knightley and director John Carney at the premiere of "Begin Again" at the Tribeca Film Festival in New York. — AP



File photo shows John Legend performs during the South by Southwest Music Festival in Austin, Texas. — AP

Legend to perform anthem at Game 1 of NBA Finals

Grammy-winning singer John Legend will perform the national anthem for Game 1 of the NBA Finals between the Golden State Warriors and the Cleveland Cavaliers. The NBA says Legend will kick off the finals that will air live on ABC from the Oracle Arena in Oakland, California.

The 37-year-old singer-songwriter is also an accomplished film and TV producer, philanthropist and activist. He recently won an Oscar and a Golden Globe for his song "Glory," that he wrote and performed with Common for the film "Selma." — AP

FILM REVIEW: 'TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: OUT OF THE SHADOWS'

The heroes in a half shell return for more halfhearted fun in "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Out of the Shadows." Every bit as noisy, brain-numbing and lowbrow as its predecessor, the Michael Bay production never strays from basic blockbuster formula. It's fast food entertainment destined for a short run atop the box office charts and an even shorter lifespan in the pop culture zeitgeist. Although the franchise has remained active in animation and video games through the years, the heroic quartet named after famed Renaissance painters—Leonardo, Raphael, Donatello and Michelangelo—went dormant in live action films for two decades, until 2014's "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" resurrected the phenomenon.

At the time, some longtime fans took issue with reinventing the turtles as motion capture-animated heroes, especially in the context of a sleek, soulless, steel-crushing action extravaganza à la Bay's "Transformers" productions. But worldwide audiences didn't seem to mind one bit, and the film brought in just under half a billion in global grosses. Even with that success, a few (arguably) notable changes were made for the follow-up. Director Dave Green (a relative newcomer whose only feature credit is the family sci-fi pic "Earth to Echo") assumes helming duties from Jonathan Liebesman, the roles of villain Shredder and his henchwoman Karai have been recast (with Brian Tee and Brittany Ishibashi, respectively) and Johnny Knoxville no longer voices Leonardo (the duties are assumed by his mo-cap portrayer Pete Ploszek, with Noel Fisher, Jeremy Howard and Alan Ritchson back as Michelangelo, Donatello and Raphael).

Generic placeholders

Not that any of it matters much when visual spectacle still takes precedence over coherent plotting, and the human characters retain all the gravitas of generic placeholders who accidentally made it into the shooting script. The basics of the plot—a term that can only be used very loosely—go something like this: Shredder enlists the help of nerdy mad scientist Baxter Stockman (Tyler Perry, trying to have fun and getting nowhere) to open up a portal to another dimension, where the nefarious mutant blob Krang (voiced by Brad Garrett) plots to escape and take over Earth. But enterpris-

ing journalist April O'Neil (Megan Fox, seemingly even more disinterested than before) catches on and alerts our turtle heroes to fight back. Unfortunately, even after they saved the city in the last film, the turtles are resigned to living a secret life in the sewers, and April's wisecracking cameraman Vern (Will Arnett, the most dignified human here) becomes the public face of their actions. Still, they're visible enough that they catch the eye of aspiring detective Casey Jones (Stephen Amell, nothing but sarcasm) and eventually police chief Rebecca Vincent (Laura Linney, who must have lost one hell of a bet). — Reuters



This image released by Paramount Pictures shows, from left, Donatello, Michelangelo, Leonardo and Raphael in a scene from "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Out of the Shadows." — AP

Brie Larson the frontrunner to play Captain Marvel



After winning the best actress Oscar for "Room," Brie Larson has her sights on another marvelous role. Sources tell Variety Larson is in early talks to play Captain Marvel, one of Marvel's most popular female superheroes, in an upcoming standalone film. It's unknown where negotiations stand, but sources have told Variety that Larson is their first choice, and that she's leaning toward playing the part. Marvel had no comment on the story. No

director is currently on board. Marvel, however, had always planned to have an actress lined up early, with the idea of possibly introducing her in one of its upcoming films before its "Captain Marvel" movie bows. Related 'Captain Marvel' Movie Eyes 'Guardians of the Galaxy,' 'Inside Out' Writers "Inside Out" scribe Meg LeFauve and Nicole Perlman are currently writing the script, which follows

Carol Danvers, an air force pilot whose DNA is fused with that of an alien during an accident. The resulting alteration imbues her with the super powers of strength, energy project and flight. Kevin Feige is producing the pic. Larson has been choosing both big-budget spectacles, like the upcoming "Kong: Skull Island," and prestige films, such as "Room" and "The Glass Castle," which she is currently filming. She can be seen next in Ben Wheatley's "Free Fire" opposite Armie Hammer. She is repped by WME and Authentic Talent and Literary Management. — Reuters

Gyllenhaal to star in Ubisoft's 'The Division' Movie

Following record-breaking sales, Ubisoft is already developing a movie based on its video game "Tom Clancy's the Division," and now looks to have an A-list star to lead the film. Sources tell Variety that Jake Gyllenhaal is attached to star in the pic based on the hit video game that has already become Ubisoft's fastest-selling product. Gyllenhaal is also attached as a producer, and the studio is currently looking for a writer to pen the adaptation. Ubisoft could not be reached for comment. Related Jake Gyllenhaal's 'Nocturnal Animals' Lands Awards Season Release Date

Developed and published by Ubisoft, with assistance from Red Storm Entertainment, for Microsoft Windows, PlayStation 4 and Xbox One, the third-person shooter is set in a dystopian New York City in the aftermath of a smallpox pandemic. The player, who is an agent of the Strategic Homeland Division, commonly referred to as simply "The Division," is tasked with helping to rebuild the Division's operations in Manhattan, investigating the nature of the outbreak and combating criminal activity in its wake. — Reuters



Jake Gyllenhaal

Review: 'Me Before You' evokes tears, but lacks depth



This image released by Warner Bros Entertainment shows Sam Claflin, left, and Emilia Clarke in a scene from "Me Before You." — AP

Well, I cried anyway. I cried even though halfway through "Me Before You," I swore to myself I wouldn't, because the movie felt overly broad, overly simplistic, lacking depth both in characterization and in treatment of the serious issues it raises. At the end, I still thought all those things ... but the tears came anyway. It seems that some movies - particularly those featuring young, passionate, suffering people - are destined to get the waterworks going no matter how well (or not) they tell their story.

That story is already known, of course, to fans of the novel by Jojo Moyes, who adapted her book here. Like the (better) 2014 tearjerker "The Fault in Our Stars," this film version, directed by Thea Sharrock, probably is a slam dunk for the book's fans, who will likely be crying from the first scene. For the rest of us, it's a bit of a harder sell. Certainly, the couple at the center of the heartbreak is appealing; both Emilia Clarke ("Game of Thrones") and Sam Claflin ("The Hunger Games") have beautiful smiles. But especially in the case of Clarke, that smile - a very wide one - is relied upon way

too much, with the camera often lingering for long seconds during which we could actually have been, say, learning something more about her character.

Few skills

Clarke plays Louisa, an amiable cafe waitress in an English town. We meet her on the day she loses her job, throwing her struggling extended family into turmoil. Louisa - or Lou, as she's called - has few skills but manages to get an interview at the grand Traynor estate. It turns out the job entails caring for the son of the family, Will. We've met Will in the prologue; he was a dashing, supremely handsome London banker with a taste for extreme sports when one day, he left home (and his sexy blonde girlfriend) and was hit by a motorcycle, paralyzing him from the neck down.

After a brief interview with Will's mother (the excellent Janet McTeer), Lou gets the job. Her task will be to provide cheer, since Will's medical needs are already tended to by a nurse (though the movie shows hardly any of this). But Will is bitter and mostly silent. — AP



Pieces of designer Issey Miyake's collection are displayed at the National Art Center in Tokyo, Japan. — AP photos



Tokyo museum exhibits Issey Miyake's constant innovations

Although he's behind one of the biggest fashion brands to come out of Japan, Issey Miyake detests being called a fashion designer. Maybe a designer, even a sculptor, but not that frivolous, trend-watching, conspicuous consumption known as fashion. What he has pursued since he started in the 1970s is more timeless. His down-to-earth clothing is meant to celebrate the human body. And it's anyone's or everyone's body - any race, build, size or age.

"The work of Miyake Issey," at the National Art Center in Tokyo, is a moving journey through his creative mind. The show includes his signature pleats that transform usually crass polyester into chic. In another corner, mannequins are connected by a roll of fabric to highlight his A-POC, or "a piece of cloth," series that began in 1998. A-POC uses computer technology in weaving to create apparel at the same time fabric is being produced. Again and again, the exhibit drives home Miyake's basic concept of a single piece of cloth, be it draped, folded, cut or wrapped, but he does not see the exhibit as a "retrospective," says Midori Kitamura, president of Miyake Design Studio and the exhibit's producer.

Perforated lines

"He is always forward-looking," Kitamura said, wearing a black Miyake sweater top that can be cut at the collar and sleeves along perforated lines, and a miniskirt that ruffles like a flower at her hip. "Trying to catch up with him is the story of my career." One stark piece aptly called "colombe," or "dove," is rectangular, white monofilament fiber resembling soft plastic. It doesn't use a single stitch but snaps on in a brushstroke of a swirl.

Miyake has taken inspiration from a variety of cultures and societal motifs, as well as everyday items - plastic, rattan, "washi" paper, jute, horsehair, foil, yarn, batik, indigo dyes, wiring. The exhibit starts with a row of figures donning his early but already powerful works. A jersey body-wear evokes tattooing with images of Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin, who died in 1970, the year it was created. His collaboration with Japanese painter Tadanori Yokoo depicts monkeys and foliage in vibrant psychedelic hues on a flowing robe.

Another poignant part of the exhibit highlights the pleated Olympic uniforms for various countries designed by Miyake. In 1992, he was commissioned to design the official uniform for Lithuania, which had just gained independence from the Soviet Union. Miyake got Japanese material maker Toray to provide the fabric, Japanese sporting goods company Mizuno to handle the production and Polytex of Thailand to do the pleating. Ten more uniforms were created by Miyake in the 1990s, and another 10 for the current exhibit.

"Issey Miyake's garments of his entire career have been displayed in the grand setting of the National Art Center, Tokyo, as innovative works of art, as they deserve to be," said John Carpenter, curator of Japanese art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, who saw the exhibit during a recent visit to Tokyo. "The imaginative exhibition design and abstract sculptured mannequins by Tokujin Yoshioka add another brilliant artistic dimension," Carpenter added, referring to the figures wearing the clothes at the exhibit that are artworks in themselves. Over the years, Miyake has shown a knack for collaborating with people outside his genre, such as designer Yoshioka, furniture and interior designer Shiro Kuramata, photographer Irving Penn, choreographer and

director Maurice Bejart, pottery maker Lucie Rie, Ballet Frankfurt and the gymnastics team of Aomori University in northern Japan.

High-tech and handmade primordial

Born in Hiroshima in 1938, Miyake was a star as soon as he hit the European runways. His brown top, which combined the Japanese sewn fabric called "sashiko" with raw silk knit, was splashed on the cover of the September 1973 issue of Elle magazine. Miyake was also a pioneer in gender roles, asking feminist Fusae Ichikawa in the 1970s, when she was in her 80s, to be his model, sending the message that garments must be comfortable and express the natural beauty of real people. "Designing is like a living organism in that it pursues what matters for its well-being and continuity," Miyake writes in the book published for the exhibit. "My work's touchstone phrases are: Making Think, Making Things and Making Reality."



Miyake's approach so brings the spiritual to the mundane question of what to wear, one even wonders if it might free one's soul, bringing to mind the elements, like water, fire, air and the earth, at once futuristic high-tech and handmade primordial. But Miyake avoids the trap of getting pretentious. One great look he approves of is the T-shirt and jeans. The exhibit includes his version of the gorgeously faded pair of jeans. Benjamin Lee, a Tokyo-based photographer who has taken Miyake's portrait as well as those of writer Haruki Murakami and visual artist Yayoi Kusama, believes Miyake is a true innovator, creating art works with clothes. Yet he exuded warmth in person and they laughed together, Lee recalled. "I was left with the impression of meeting someone special, who understood people very well, and how fashion can make everyday living more interesting and comfortable," he said. "The work of Miyake Issey" runs through June 13. His office says overseas exhibitions have not been decided. — AP



Visitors enjoy the HTC Vive visual reality (VR) headset during the annual Computex computer show in Taipei. — AFP photos

Believe the hype? How virtual reality could change your life

Reducing errors made during surgery, bringing school books to life, enabling us to browse shops from the comfort of home—virtual reality is not just about gaming, it will change our lives, according to some tech leaders. “VR” is the buzz industry at Asia’s largest tech fair, Computex, being held in Taiwan’s capital Taipei this week. The island is hoping to become a development hub for virtual reality technology. But while VR is currently aimed at gamers, its evangelists forecast it will eventually be about much more than entertainment.

“We know that gaming will be the first wave of revenue and gamers the first wave of consumers, but our vision is larger than gaming,” said Raymond Pao, Vice President of VR New Technology at Taiwanese smartphone maker HTC, which recently released its first VR headset: Vive. Pao says any industry that could use 3D may well end up exploiting the technology. HTC is among major tech firms including Facebook and Samsung that have latched onto the immersive experience platform-forecast to become a huge market.

With the Vive device strapped to their heads, users at Computex “flew” over New York or threw grenades at enemies on a cobbled road of a deserted town. But HTC has already branched out into the medical sector too. The firm last year invested in a US start-up that uses virtual reality to

help surgeons plan complicated brain operations. Retail and education are also predicted to be the next frontier for VR and its cousin, augmented reality. While virtual reality devices put users in fantasy worlds, augmented reality overlays holograms on an actual view.

“What we learn from textbooks or labs can be really dull, but VR and AR will greatly enhance learning abilities,” Zhu Bo, founder of InnoValley, a Chinese start-up investor based in Shenzhen, told AFP. “It can also be used in e-commerce. In the future, you will step into a real scene, you can see the products on the shelves, touch and feel them. So our shopping experience will totally change,” said Zhu, who has invested in the field but did not give details.

‘No passing fad’

The global market size of virtual reality products may reach \$5.1 billion this year and is projected to more than double to \$10.9 billion in 2017, according to Taipei-based market intelligence provider TrendForce. Sony is launching its PlayStation VR headgear later this year, while Google is coming up with a new VR platform called Daydream. British firm ARM also announced this week that its new processors will enable mobile phones to run virtual and augmented reality features by 2017, and US tech

giant Microsoft says its software will be compatible with “mixed reality devices”. However, despite the enthusiasm, there is still an air of uncertainty over whether the technology is ripe to take off. Some say companies must flesh out the “ecosystem” by creating more VR-related hardware and software for consumers. “To experience VR, you need a powerful engine. Without content, you can’t experience anything,” said L.Z. Wang, managing director of Taiwan for California-based chipmaker AMD. The current VR products on the market only allow users to immerse in a movie or a game on their own, which could also limit the technology from catching on with consumers, experts say. “A lot of times with the demos, they are single user experiences. You just kind of go, ‘Oh, that was fun,’ and walk away,” said Justin Hendrix, executive director of NYC Media Lab, an academic research group funded by tech companies.

Other inhibitors include cost—HTC Vive headgear is about \$800 — and dizziness for some who strap on the headsets. But believers say it is a matter of time for those issues to be resolved. “VR and AR is not hype, it’s an era,” said Zhu from InnoValley. “In another three to five years, it will affect everyone’s life.” — AFP





Welcome to HOLISTIC CURE

By Aisha Al Zabin

Let me start by introducing myself. My name is Aisha Al-Zabin. I am a stay-at-home mom of three wonderful kids. I first started this journey of healthy eating about a year ago. I suffered from many ailments including anemia, hypoglycemia, malnutrition as well as anxiety and depression.

Being the housewife I was trying to take care of everybody, but I wasn't really taking care of myself. I was on many medications. My diet consisted of chips, chocolate and soda. I was not drinking any water. My body was shutting down. I remember lying in bed one night, and my heart was beating out of my chest. I literally thought I was going to die.

The next morning I decided to do something about it. So I woke up and threw out all processed food and junk food. I went out and bought fresh fruit and vegetables, and proceeded to start detoxing my body. The first three days were hell. Like a drug addict going through withdrawal symptoms. I quit coffee, salt, sugar and fried food. I had a killer migraine from not having my caffeine, I was cranky and jittery, but I pushed through.

After those three days something miraculous happened. I literally jumped out of bed bursting with energy. My skin was glowing, my eyes were clearer and for the first time I felt so happy. Within a week I lost all cravings for junk food, I started craving fresh fruit and salads, I was drinking plenty of water. I didn't need my medications anymore.

Holistic Cure

After a few months of doing this I decided to open an Instagram account called @holistic.curekw where I would educate the people in my community about the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle. I had to get the word out there and show people how easy it is to prepare healthy, delicious, simple meals.

Let me give you a quick example: Imagine a plant or a goldfish. What would you give it to grow? Water, right? Nutritious food. What would happen to it if you poured soda over it, or gave the goldfish a cheeseburger? It would die! So let me ask you this: Why are we poisoning our bodies with soda and junk food and not giving them the proper nutrition they deserve?

Trust me I know how hectic life can be and I know there's not enough time in the day to be preparing and cooking three square meals a day, but you will find that it's just a matter of developing a new habit that will be part of your normal routine. Instead of reaching for convenience food like microwavable meals or take-out or frying up some chicken nuggets and fries for your kids, make a wholewheat veggie filled quesadilla, or a cauliflower mac and cheese. Both of which will not take more than 15 minutes of your time. Think about it.

I am thrilled to be given this opportunity to share my recipes with Kuwait Times readers. This is a new platform for me to spread the word on holistic nutrition and I hope to gain your approval and support.



Acai berry bowl

This is one of my favorite things to make because it's so easy. It's cool and refreshing for breakfast on a hot summer day, a nice change from my usual hot cereal. Acai is a berry that is grown in Brazil. It's full of antioxidants which fight cancer causing free radicals in the body. It also has anti-aging properties! Who doesn't want younger glowing skin? You can find pure acai in powdered form everywhere these days. Health food stores and large chain supermarkets usually carry them. All you need is some frozen fruit and whichever toppings you like. Treat it as you would frozen yogurt! Just be sure to freeze your berries ahead of time in ziplock bags.

Ingredients

1 1/2 cups frozen blueberries
1 1/2 cups frozen raspberries
4 tbsp honey
1 tsp vanilla extract
1/2 cup whole milk

Suggested Toppings

Banana slices
Strawberry slices
Chia seeds
Granola

- In a food processor, add you frozen blueberries, frozen raspberries, milk, honey and vanilla.
- Pulse a few times to break up the fruit.
- Once the fruit is broken up into small pieces, blend the mixture until smooth.
- Spoon your mixture into a bowl and top it with the fruit, seeds and granola.



Photo By
Aisha Al Zabin



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Friday Times

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Kids



Color me!



Big Ben

Big Ben is the nickname for the Great Bell of the clock at the north end of the Palace of Westminster in London, and often extended to refer to the clock and the clock tower. The tower is officially known as Elizabeth Tower, renamed to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Elizabeth II in 2012; previously it was known simply as the Clock Tower. The tower holds the second largest four-faced chiming clock in the world. The tower was completed in 1859 and had its 150th anniversary on 31 May 2009, during which celebratory events took place. The tower has become one of the most prominent symbols of the United Kingdom and is often in the establishing shot of films set in London.

Tower

The Elizabeth Tower, previously called the Clock Tower or St. Stephen's Tower, more popularly known as Big Ben, was raised as a part of Charles Barry's design for a new palace, after the old Palace of Westminster was largely destroyed by fire on the night of 16 October 1834. The new parliament was built in a neo-gothic style. Although Barry was the chief architect of the palace, he turned to Augustus Pugin for the design of the clock tower, which resembles earlier Pugin designs, including one for Scarisbrick Hall. The design for the tower was Pugin's last design before his final descent into madness and death. The tower is designed in Pugin's celebrated Gothic Revival style, and is 315 feet high. The bottom 200 feet of the tower's structure consists of brick work with sand colored Anston limestone cladding. The remainder of the tower's height is a framed spire of cast iron. The tower is founded on a 50 feet square raft, made of 10 feet thick concrete, at a depth of 13 feet (4.0 m) below ground level. The four clock dials are 180 feet above ground. The interior volume of the tower is 164,200 cubic feet. Despite being one of the world's most famous tourist attractions, the interior of the tower is not open to overseas visitors, though United Kingdom residents

are able to arrange tours (well in advance) through their Member of Parliament. However, the tower currently has no lift, though one is planned, so those escorted must climb the 334 limestone stairs to the top. Due to changes in ground conditions since construction, the tower leans slightly to the north-west, by roughly 230 millimeters over 55 m height, giving an inclination of approximately 1/240. This includes a planned maximum of 22 mm increased tilt due to tunneling for the Jubilee line extension. Due to thermal effects it oscillates annually by a few millimeters east and west.

Clock

The clock and dials were designed by Augustus Pugin. The clock dials are set in an iron frame 23 feet (7.0 m) in diameter, supporting 312 pieces of opal glass, rather like a stained-glass window. Some of the glass pieces may be removed for inspection of the hands. The surround of the dials is gilded. At the base of each clock dial in gilt letters is the Latin inscription:

DOMINE SALVAM FAC REGINAM NOSTRAM VICTORIAM PRIMAM

Which means O Lord, keep safe our Queen Victoria the First.

Bells

The main bell, officially known as the Great Bell but better known as Big Ben, is the largest bell in the tower and part of the Great Clock of Westminster.

The original bell was a 16 ton hour bell, cast on 6 August 1856 in Stockton-on-Tees by John Warner & Sons.[1] The bell was possibly named in honor of Sir Benjamin Hall, and his name is inscribed on it.[34] However, another theory for the origin of the name is that the bell may have been named after a contemporary heavyweight boxer Benjamin Caunt. It is thought that the bell was originally to be called Victoria or Royal Victoria in honor of Queen Victoria, but that an MP suggested the nickname during a Parliamentary debate; the comment is not recorded in Hansard.

SUDOKU

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

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

SOLUTION





WORD SEARCH

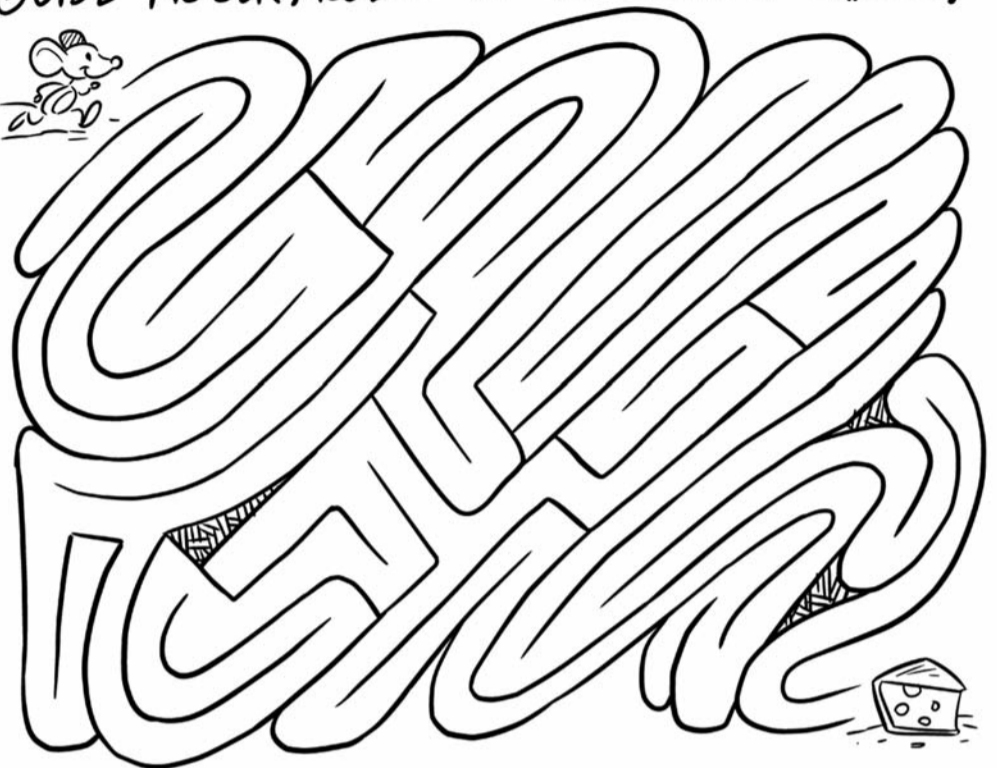
Birds

Find and circle all of the birds that are hidden in the grid. The words may be hidden in any direction.

R O B N N C F R N C L C D
 E R W L C Y L A R A D K A
 D O V E A N A A L N W E L
 E W R W R C N J E C I S S
 I L A O D E K R E P O E L
 W I R R I R W B G U A N K
 L O R R N O N A I G L W W
 C K L A A B M N U R L B A
 N R O P L I L L W E D K H
 L L O S I N L G E L G A E
 C C N W O O D P E C K E R
 K E C A P I G E O N L O O
 N A C I L E P C W A K A E

- | | | |
|-----------|---------|------------|
| BLACKBIRD | FALCON | ROBIN |
| BLUE JAY | HAWK | SEAGULL |
| CARDINAL | MAGPIE | SPARROW |
| CRANE | OWL | SWAN |
| CROW | PELICAN | WOODPECKER |
| DOVE | PIGEON | WREN |
| EAGLE | | |

GUIDE ROGER RODENT TO THE CHUNK OF CHEESE!



Paperflakes

What You Need

- o White paper
- o Colored paper
- o Glue
- o Scissors

Instructions

1. Cut your white piece of paper into a square. You can use a ruler to get the shape perfect.

2. Fold the white square into quarters.

3. Cut small holes, lines, and other shapes into the folded edges.

4. Unfold the paper and glue it onto a piece of colored paper.

5. You now have a beautiful snowflake decoration!

Friction

What You Need

- o A bowl of water
- o Smooth rubber ball
- o Tennis ball

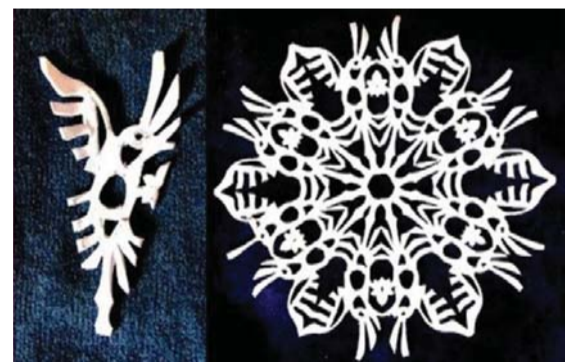
Instructions

1. Try spinning the rubber ball in

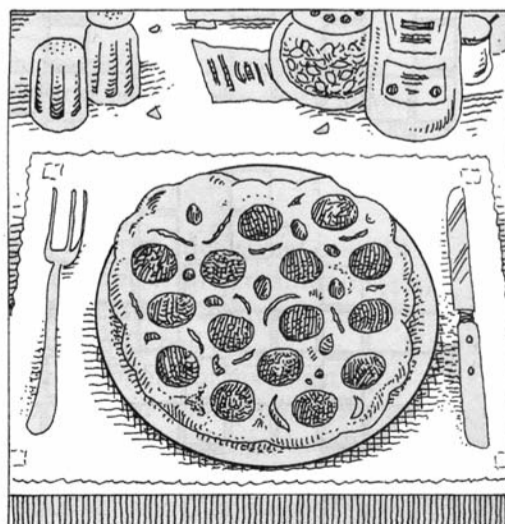
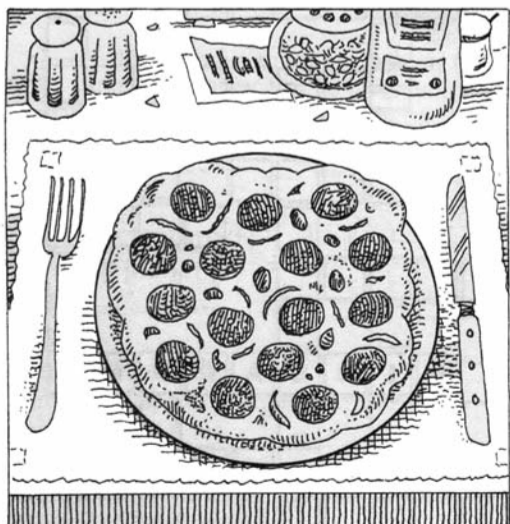
- the water.
2. Now try spinning the tennis ball in the water.
3. Which one is easier to spin?

Why?

It is easier to spin the smoother ball, because the smooth surface causes less friction with the water.



See if you can find the eight differences.



JOKES!

Q: What do you call a parade of rabbits hopping backwards?
 A: a receding hare-line.

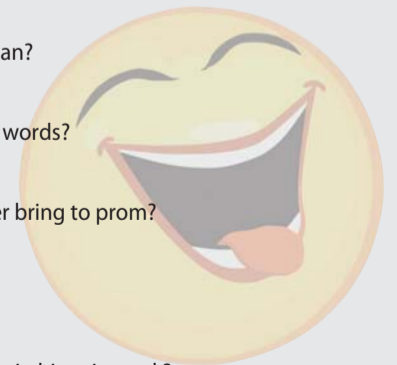
Q: What do you call an old snowman?
 A: Water!

Q: Which dinosaur knew the most words?
 A: The thesaurus.

Q: Who did Frankenstein's monster bring to prom?
 A: His ghoulfriend.

Q: What does a nosey pepper do?
 A: Gets jalapeno business!

Q: What does Charles Dickens keep in his spice rack?
 A: The best of thymes, the worst of thymes.



Friday Times

E n t e r t a i n m e n t



Overwatch has arrived:

Blizzard makes its mark on the fabled multiplayer shooter

By Aakash Bakaya

From the moment you boot up 'Overwatch' and a Gorilla wearing spectacles and a space suit fills your main menu screen - you can't help but smile. Blizzard Entertainment's newest franchise 'Overwatch' (their first new IP in over 17 years) may take its cues and inspirations from a variety of shooters that has released over the last decade but making the player smile almost effortlessly is something multiplayer shooters have been unable to do for a very long time.



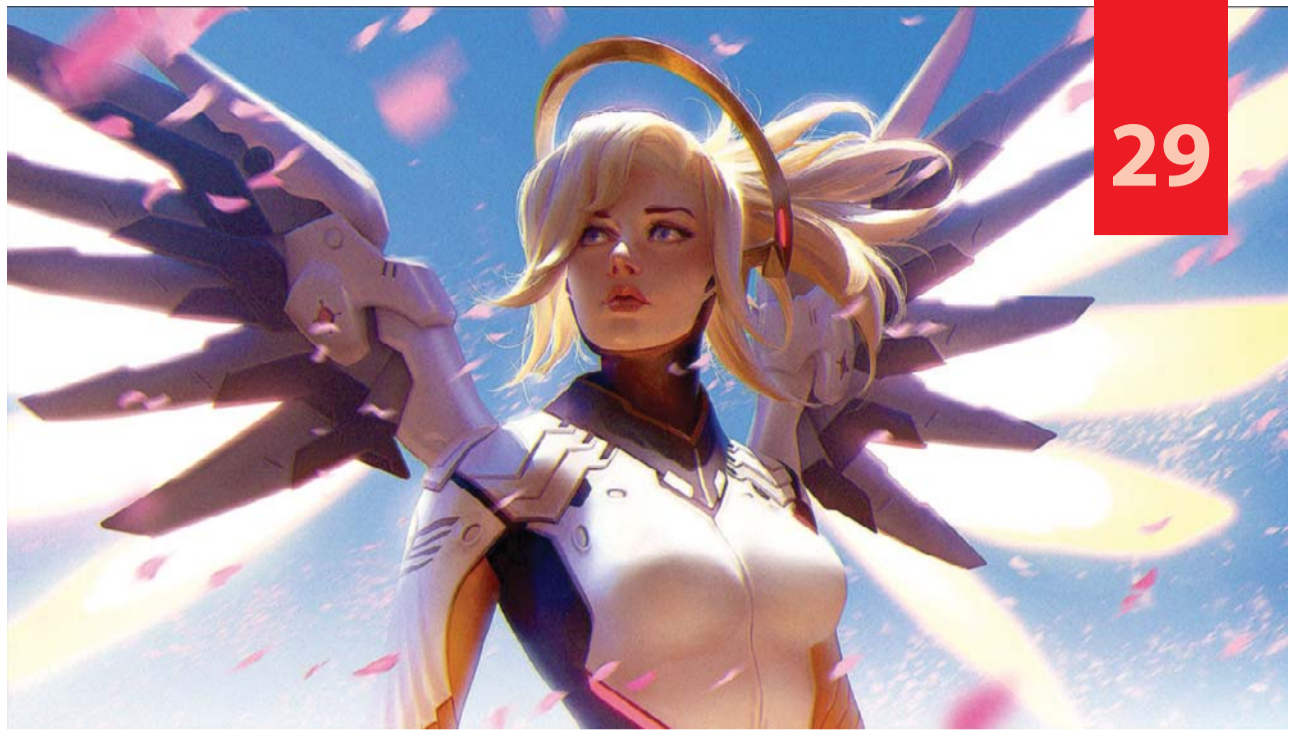
Blizzard's first foray into the FPS genre has been a strenuous affair from the very start of its development. Created from the remnants of the cancellation to their follow-up to 'World of Warcraft', artists and creators throughout the ages will tell you that there is nothing harder to do than attempting to top your most popular work. 'Titan' was that attempt and subsequently, their failure to materialize the massive MMORPG project led to the creation of something simpler, direct and most importantly just plain old-fashioned fun. 'Overwatch' was the phoenix that rose from ashes of 'Titan' and it is an achievement that will be fondly remembered in videogame history.

The cavalry's here

Set in a bright, vibrant yet uneasy future, 'Overwatch' tries to make every player and every character feel and play like a hero in their own personal game. From raining fiery rockets from the skies with 'Pharah' to shielding your team and charging your enemies with the massive Reinhardt - each of the game's 21 charac-

ters feel unique and diverse enough to warrant their very own franchises. Divided into four classes, their guns and play-styles may feel familiar to veterans of the FPS genre, but the result of mixing in together these varieties of influences creates a chaotic but surprisingly balanced battlefield. My personal favorite throw-back is the cowboy M.Cree's (yes you can play as a Gun slinging cowboy) hand gun. It looks and feels almost exactly to the magnum pistol in 'Half-life' and that was easily my favorite piece of weaponry in that game. Whether you like healing your allies with the angelic Mercy or like piloting your very own anime mech with D.Va, 'Overwatch' is sure to please even the most inexperienced of shooters.

These 21 characters fill out 'Overwatch's 12 colorful maps that are set all over the world. For as much as Blizzard used iconic FPS shooters as influences - the key inspiration behind the game is our planet itself. Not only do our characters come from all the seven continents but so do the maps. Nepal, Greece's Ilios and the Hanamura map set in Japan are vivid, stunning arenas set apart more for their simplicity in style than their overbearing and serious nature that plague so many maps in other shooters. Even though they are small and tightly enclosed at points - you can tell how much love and care the artists put in to designing these real world places.



However, the maps are not designed to be sandbox play areas. Each of the 12 maps has set objectives placed onto them. These objectives are divided into the 4 modes that set the pace and tone of 'Overwatch's fast and frantic play sessions. In London's 'Kings Row', the attacking team will be pushing a payload (think a slow moving cart) that first must be captured on a point and then slowly nudged towards the finishing line while the defending team tries to hold them off until the timer winds down.

This attack/defense mechanic gives 'Overwatch' its distinct feel. Not only are the win conditions completely objective-based but the ability to switch heroes' on-the-fly gives these 10-15 minute matches a truly epic and memorable feel. For example, if you're placed on defense on the 'Gibraltar' map, you might want to take Pharah to pummel and harass your opponents from afar with her rocket launcher because of the wide-open nature of the starting area. But as the payload moves towards the middle indoor section, Pharah can get easily sniped if the attackers have a Widowmaker or a Hanzo (the two sniper characters). So you might want to switch to a Reaper or Tracer to flank the attackers in more short-burst attacks and nullify treats in close quarters combat.

The array of strategies rewards the player for thinking on the fly and adapting their play style to both the map and the compo-

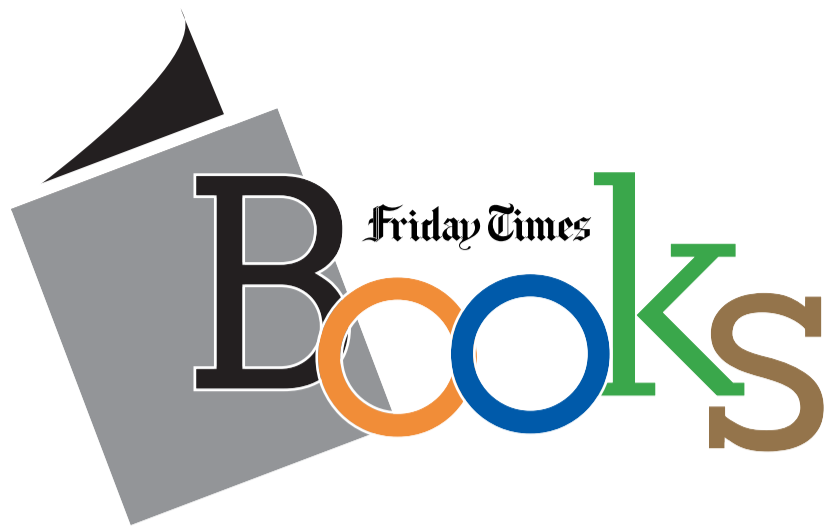
sition of the enemy team. After almost a decade of brainlessly running and gunning your way through the 'Call of Duty' and 'Battlefield' clones that have dampened the FPS genre this last generation - 'Overwatch' is a fantastic breath of fresh air.

Looking ahead

Even though the current package is of exceptional quality, Blizzard can still do much to further improve it. The 'Loot Box' progression system has some great cosmetics but can feel a tad slow to unlock at times while the lack of any story mode may put off a few single player fans. There is a deep lore to the characters and the world but Blizzard is currently hiding them in cinematics, comics and their website. In the future, I would love to see them have a resource to access this material within the game itself because those gorgeous cinematics deserve to be seen.

As it currently stands, 'Overwatch' is a fabulous, fun and insanely addicting multiplayer shooter that harks back to the classics of the genre's past and strips away the grime that has been infesting the genre's present. At 40\$ on PC it is well worth the asking price regardless if you have experience in FPS games as many of the characters don't require twitch based shooting skills. With more heroes, more modes and more maps planned for the future, 'Overwatch' has the potential to grow even further. At their very




 Friday Times
Books

Must-read memoirs from the industry's top female comics

By Sreelekshmi Prithviraj

Comedy and books are two things a lot of people enjoy and when they come together it's great. But when the authors are comedians, you're left with a happy feeling in your happy zone. So here is a list of books that will have you rolling on the floor laughing and probably change the way you look at yourself.

Bossypants by Tina Fey

'Bossypants' was honestly one of the funniest books I've ever read. The way she jots down her journey was impeccably hilarious. She not only mentions her success but also mentions every single way she has screwed up over the years.

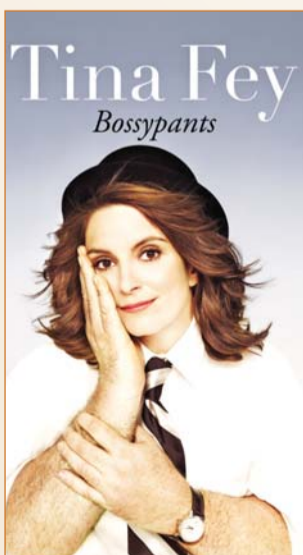
The memoir includes everything from her childhood growing up in Pennsylvania and how she even passed out at her first gynecologist appointment. Which is pretty realistic scenario considering how every teen girl dreads their first lady doctor appointment. There's even a chapter dedicated to her father called 'That's Don Fey'. She talks about marriage, her honeymoon, children, her body changing and almost everything a girl would worry about.

She talks about what turning 40 meant to her and how she battled her brain and heart about going after a career or focus more on her family. There are chapters based on eating disorders, anxiety, career struggles; these are things many people aren't open about and Fey definitely did not hold back. The book just makes women realize that they are all one and the same, going through the same struggles and conflicting thoughts. The element of comedy was consistent throughout the book and is definitely going to make your tummy hurt. The book was a tribute to all her haters and she was inspired to write it after being called a troll on the internet.

“

Either way, everything will be fine. But if you have an opinion, please feel free to offer it to me through the gap in the door of a public restroom.

”



“

How come when you wipe up the dust it's called dusting but when you wipe up a spill it's called spilling? There's something to think about.

”

Seriously... I'm Kidding by Ellen DeGeneres

Ellen DeGeneres is honestly by far the nicest person on American television. Her upbeat attitude and hilarious aura just bring this book to life and also shows us exactly how her thought process works. Those who watch her award winning daytime television show will clearly be able to hear her voice in your head. Every chapter will have you laughing because of the beautiful person she is or maybe because they are simply relatable. The star of the upcoming 'Finding Dory' definitely has a way with comedy around her fans and has never let them down.

The book is not only strictly focusing on comedy but also has some light hearted advice. Of course, this advice wrapped under here unique brand of comedy. Even during the more serious chapters, her comedy shines through without it feeling like a lecture. The book is truly empowering and you can't help but fall in love with yourself. The book is definitely a feel good read unless of course, you are a serial killer.

Is Everyone Hanging Out Without Me? (And Other Concerns) by Mindy Kaling

While reading this book all I could think about was how close Mindy and I were when in reality she doesn't even know of my existence. Kaling not only makes you relate to the book but also makes you feel like you are speaking to a close friend. She literally takes you on a journey through the ups and downs of her life and career.

She writes about her childhood, her college life and even her writing career and how she too struggled in the industry. If you do watch 'The Mindy Project' you will realize how true she is to the character she plays on her show. Reading the book is like a first date with her that goes absolutely perfect. You'll know her likes and dislikes, her preferences when it comes to men and even the way you should plan her funeral. She does not hide anything from the reader and discusses various issues like ethnicity issues, weight gain, bullying and puberty with humor and grace. There is definitely no advice on how to be fit and trim because honestly sometimes you just want to read a book that mentions only the clumsy side of life. She makes you believe that she is just like you with the same old thoughts and dreams. She never tries to change her readers but asks them to accept themselves as the way they are.

“

There is no sunrise so beautiful that it is worth waking me up to see it.

”





Aries (March 21-April 19)

You seem turned on and tuned in to other people's emotions. Not super-sensitive, but intuitive. You can demonstrate a great deal of understanding and sensitivity to the needs of others and are in a good position to promote healings. You are very original when it comes to home and surroundings-the environment you build around you. This could also manifest in unusual ways of supporting yourself. You may enjoy working with the flow of water . . . As in waterfalls and water sprinkler systems and the layout of the land. Breakthroughs available today may come through your immediate surroundings, home and environment. This could be new ideas in how you could receive monetary rewards for your creative work.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

It may be difficult to stay focused today as there are plenty of interruptions. If you cannot put a "keep away" sign on your door, you will need to keep ongoing notes. It is amazing how you continue to successfully navigate through your day-even through the interruptions. Patience seems to be with you at this time-learning what or why people do the things they do gives you an understanding about your own humanness. You love people and enjoy having plenty of people around you. There is plenty of food in the house today and after the noon meal you might suggest a brisk walk to burn off a few of the calories or just in hopes of a little fresh air. There are lots of things you want to learn and the teacher is available this year. Travel completes the education.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Today you could be entertaining others without even realizing it. You have a way of saving the day when others are at a loss as to what to do next. This could mean you take control of a difficult situation by finding interesting things to keep young people quietly and safely occupied so that others can hear a lecture or conduct business. Relationships are very important to you and have a very decided influence on your future plans. You enjoy being around lots of people and those that are around most often tend to discover little talents that are continuously surprising. Make a promise to yourself for this year, to seek out self-enlightening activities. Learn more about who you are and what talents you have to offer the world.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You find unusual ways to be creative. When a co-worker comes to you to ask what you think about a tangled problem, you will find ways to move backward through the multi-woven difficulty. Someone has had some breakthrough thinking; however, the action taken on that breakthrough discovery may not have had the correct protocol. Without a humble attitude or without the rules of protocol, some toes will be stepped on and attitudes will intervene. You can correct this mistake easily enough without revealing who, what or when. From now on . . . The guilty will learn who comes first. You are not a lion or a lioness but you will know how to roar properly you set things, and people, right. Tonight is fun with a ball..



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Interaction with others is the focus of this day. However . . . You may have more energy than the day calls for when you need to be patient. Take a deep breath and keep focused on what you need to accomplish in order to reach the end result of your work project. You soon are able to understand what you need to do in order to move forward. You will have new experiences, and new ideas. By the time you get home this evening, you may feel that you have learned something very important, particularly in the area of being able to manage a situation with assurance. Your timing should be perfect for whatever you want to accomplish this evening. Young people may need your help in deciding about a camping or outing occurrence that is being planned.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You enjoy and value the simple life. You may have tomatoes to vines, grapevines or a yard to tend. Whatever the case, you seem to enjoy quiet time alone in the garden this morning. Your appreciation for hard work and discipline is natural and lifelong. You actually love responsibility and may pile on the chores. Serving your family is very rewarding. Owning a roadside vegetable shop tends to get the whole family involved and you may love the chance to work with each age group in the family. Tonight you could enjoy sharing the cooking for a neighborhood get-together. Put time and energy into achieving a feeling of togetherness. Something may need celebrating tonight but then again . . . Any excuse is perfect when the dessert is offered.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

It will soon be quite easy to bring about the changes you want in the workplace. You must realize that there will be steps to take that will get you where you want to see work progress. What you describe to supervisors is the smart choice. You gain respect by those in command that read and study your proposal. You should be able to use your ideas, not only to benefit the company for which you work, but to benefit yourself and others in the workplace. Careful . . . You may need to continue to speak to others about your ideas before the complete project can be accepted. Your ideas are good but you must also have a plan. Some may want to give your ideas a trial run so that facts will be clear. Tonight is a good time to relax with friends away from work.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

A major life event marks the end of a formative period and the beginning of more independence. Wow, you may think this all sounds very mysterious. This time may just mean you have finally decided to leave home and get an apartment. Independence will mean you will rely on yourself, and it is a good time to test your ability to balance your affairs and to say no when the temptation to play too much enters your thinking. You are on your own and this marks the start of increased responsibility and accountability. This is a time for deep thought, review of self and a new chance. Emotional challenge, probably offered from someone close to you, may mark this time. Self-control is in order. Circumstances should work together to help make your dreams real.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You are very fortunate in being able to grow and progress throughout your life without major difficulties. Your mood is cheerful and contagious to all you encounter. You can always find the resources you require plus the necessary instruction in how to use them. Little items need a place and this may have been a bee in your bonnet for some time. One person could make the labels and over time another person could bring containers to label. You could bring the tools and the list of the items and where they might be placed. The end result will be pleasing. Later today a friend wants to help you with a different creative project and a few phone calls are in order to set out what is needed. The two of you can come up with some great ideas.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

This is a time when you can expect a little boost, some extra support or recognition from those around you. You may feel that you are in touch and in harmony with others. The support you need for whatever you are planning is available. Spring-cleaning may have come late for you but you are in the mood to do the nitty-gritty stuff today. You aim to have a place for everything and everything in its place-and anything that gets in the way gets on your nerves. Health and work goals take on greater importance for you now. Team sports, swimming or walking every day with a friend can boost your energy and increase your stamina. What better way to enjoy your friends than with an activity that can improve your health as well as your friendship.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You could find that you are appreciated and valued for your feelings as well as your ability to act and get things done. You will still have time for your inspired moods today but there are plenty of interactions with others. People find you especially witty today. You are an instant umbrella of warmth and friendship. You may have insights or breakthroughs concerning your work progress or other life circumstances. You also somehow manage to find an inventive environment or the creative in any environment. Interested in serving others, you worry about their welfare. You like to take care of everything and are always redeeming, salvaging and restoring. You believe in conservation. You may find yourself teaching and preaching to others.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You perform well in the workplace. You take your work seriously. A lot of energy goes into getting things scheduled and organized before the end of the week. You believe that the nail that sticks up gets hammered down. You have a profession that gives you the responsibility of taking care of many people and you make sure that when it is not your turn to work, someone else carries the load proficiently. You could be ferrying passengers and cargo through waters that are very busy. Many people depend on the transportation to and from the work locations around the coast. When you are off work, you may be off for several days. You could enjoy extra duty as you enjoy learning about many different people. You also like to be depended upon by others.

COUNTRY CODES

Afghanistan	0093	Kuwait	00965
Albania	00355	Kyrgyzstan	00996
Algeria	00213	Laos	00856
Andorra	00376	Latvia	00371
Angola	00244	Lebanon	00961
Anguilla	001264	Liberia	00231
Antiga	001268	Libya	00218
Argentina	0054	Lithuania	00370
Armenia	00374	Luxembourg	00352
Australia	0061	Macau	00853
Austria	0043	Macedonia	00389
Bahamas	001242	Madagascar	00261
Bahrain	00973	Majorca	0034
Bangladesh	00880	Malawi	00265
Barbados	001246	Malaysia	0060
Belarus	00375	Maldives	00960
Belgium	0032	Mali	00223
Belize	00501	Malta	00356
Benin	00229	Marshall Islands	00692
Bermuda	001441	Martinique	00596
Bhutan	00975	Mauritania	00222
Bolivia	00591	Mauritius	00230
Bosnia	00387	Mayotte	00269
Botswana	00267	Mexico	0052
Brazil	0055	Micronesia	00691
Brunei	00673	Moldova	00373
Bulgaria	00359	Monaco	00377
Burkina	00226	Mongolia	00976
Burundi	00257	Montserrat	001664
Cambodia	00855	Morocco	00212
Cameroon	00237	Mozambique	00258
Canada	001	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Cape Verde	00238	Namibia	00264
Cayman Islands	001345	Nepal	00977
Central African Republic	00236	Netherlands (Holland)	0031
Chad	00235	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Chile	0056	New Caledonia	00687
China	0086	New Zealand	0064
Colombia	0057	Nicaragua	00505
Comoros	00269	Niger	00227
Congo	00242	Nigeria	00234
Cook Islands	00682	Niue	00683
Costa Rica	00506	Norfolk Island	00672
Croatia	00385	Northern Ireland (UK)	0044
Cuba	0053	North Korea	00850
Cyprus	00357	Norway	0047
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Oman	00968
Czech Republic	00420	Pakistan	0092
Denmark	0045	Palau	00680
Diego Garcia	00246	Panama	00507
Djibouti	00253	Papua New Guinea	00675
Dominica	001767	Paraguay	00595
Dominican Republic	001809	Peru	0051
Ecuador	00593	Philippines	0063
Egypt	0020	Poland	0048
El Salvador	00503	Portugal	00351
England (UK)	0044	Puerto Rico	001787
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Qatar	00974
Eritrea	00291	Romania	0040
Estonia	00372	Russian Federation	007
Ethiopia	00251	Rwanda	00250
Falkland Islands	00500	Saint Helena	00290
Faroe Islands	00298	Saint Kitts	001869
Fiji	00679	Saint Lucia	001758
Finland	00358	Saint Pierre	00508
France	0033	Saint Vincent	001784
French Guiana	00594	Samoa US	00684
French Polynesia	00689	Samoa West	00685
Gabon	00241	San Marino	00378
Gambia	00220	Sao Tome	00239
Georgia	00995	Saudi Arabia	00966
Germany	0049	Scotland (UK)	0044
Ghana	00233	Senegal	00221
Gibraltar	00350	Seychelles	00284
Greece	0030	Sierra Leone	00232
Greenland	00299	Singapore	0065
Grenada	001473	Slovakia	00421
Guadeloupe	00590	Slovenia	00386
Guam	001671	Solomon Islands	00677
Guatemala	00502	Somalia	00252
Guinea	00224	South Africa	0027
Guyana	00592	South Korea	0082
Haiti	00509	Spain	0034
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Sri Lanka	0094
Honduras	00504	Sudan	00249
Hong Kong	00852	Suriname	00597
Hungary	0036	Swaziland	00268
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Sweden	0046
Iceland	00354	Switzerland	0041
India	0091	Syria	00963
Indian Ocean	00873	Taiwan	00886
Indonesia	0062	Tanzania	00255
Iran	0098	Thailand	0066
Iraq	00964	Toga	00228
Ireland	00353	Tonga	00676
Italy	0039	Tokelau	00690
Ivory Coast	00225	Trinidad	001868
Jamaica	001876	Tunisia	00216
Japan	0081	Turkey	0090
Jordan	00962	Tuvalu	00688
Kazakhstan	007	Uganda	00256
Kenya	00254	Ukraine	00380
Kiribati	00686	United Arab Emirates	00976



03:10 Dr. Goldfoot And The Bikini Machine
 04:40 The Secret Of Santa Vittoria
 06:55 The Adventures Of Gerard
 08:25 Crimes And Misdemeanors
 10:10 The Bridge In The Jungle
 11:35 Saved!
 13:05 Troll (Epic)
 14:30 The People That Time Forgot
 16:00 The Bed Sitting Room
 17:30 Cannon For Cordoba
 19:15 Duplex
 20:45 Big Screen
 21:00 Bio-Dome
 22:35 A Small Town In Texas
 00:10 The Blair Witch Project
 01:30 Savage Harvest
 02:55 The Heavenly Kid



03:25 Animal Cops South Africa
 04:15 Gator Boys
 05:02 Treehouse Masters
 05:49 Austin Stevens: Snakemaster
 06:36 Call Of The Wildman
 07:00 Call Of The Wildman
 07:25 Bad Dog
 08:15 Austin Stevens: Snakemaster
 09:10 Treehouse Masters
 10:05 Tanked
 11:00 Bad Dog
 11:55 Bondi Vet
 12:50 Austin Stevens: Snakemaster
 13:45 Gator Boys
 14:40 Treehouse Masters
 15:35 Tanked
 16:30 Animal Cops South Africa
 17:25 River Monsters (Best Of Series 1-5)
 18:20 River Monsters (Best Of Series 1-5)
 19:15 Tanked
 20:10 Lion Man: One World African Safari
 20:40 Lion Man: One World African Safari
 21:05 Treehouse Masters
 22:00 River Monsters (Best Of Series 1-5)
 22:55 Gator Boys
 23:50 River Monsters (Best Of Series 1-5)
 00:45 I'm Alive
 01:40 River Monsters (Best Of Series 1-5)
 02:35 Tanked



03:40 Dukes Of Hazzard
 04:05 Storage Wars Canada
 04:30 Property Wars
 05:00 How Do They Do It?
 05:30 How Do They Do It?
 06:00 You Have Been Warned
 06:50 The Pop Illusionist
 07:40 What Happened Next?
 08:05 What Happened Next?
 08:30 Running Wild With Bear Grylls
 09:20 Deadliest Job Interview
 10:10 Dive Wars Australia
 11:00 Free Ride
 11:50 For The Love Of Cars
 12:40 Engine Addict With Jimmy De Ville
 13:30 Driving Wild
 14:20 Diesel Brothers
 15:10 Street Outlaws: New Orleans
 16:00 For The Love Of Cars
 16:50 For The Love Of Cars
 17:40 For The Love Of Cars
 18:30 For The Love Of Cars
 19:20 For The Love Of Cars
 20:10 For The Love Of Cars
 21:00 Driving Wild
 21:50 Diesel Brothers
 22:40 Street Outlaws: New Orleans
 23:30 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
 00:20 Inside The Gangsters' Code
 01:10 Driving Wild
 02:00 Diesel Brothers
 02:50 Street Outlaws: New Orleans



03:00 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
 03:50 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
 04:40 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
 05:30 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol

06:20 Key And Peele
 06:50 Key And Peele
 07:15 Key And Peele
 07:40 Key And Peele
 08:05 Key And Peele
 08:30 Key And Peele
 08:55 Key And Peele
 09:20 Key And Peele
 09:45 Key And Peele
 10:10 Key And Peele
 10:35 Nathan For You
 11:00 Nathan For You
 11:25 Nathan For You
 11:50 Nathan For You
 12:15 Nathan For You
 12:40 Nathan For You
 13:05 Nathan For You
 13:30 Nathan For You
 13:55 Nathan For You
 14:20 Nathan For You
 14:45 Tosh.0
 15:10 Tosh.0
 15:35 Tosh.0
 16:00 Tosh.0
 16:30 Tosh.0
 16:55 Tosh.0
 17:25 Tosh.0
 17:50 Tosh.0
 18:15 Tosh.0
 18:39 Tosh.0
 19:03 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
 19:27 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
 19:50 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
 20:13 Lip Sync Battle
 20:37 Lip Sync Battle
 21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
 21:30 Inside Amy Schumer
 22:00 South Park
 22:30 Tattoo Disasters
 23:00 Tattoo Disasters
 23:30 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
 00:00 Joe Rogan: Rocky Mountain High
 00:50 Inside Amy Schumer
 01:15 South Park
 01:40 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah



03:00 The Jail: 60 Days In
 04:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
 05:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
 06:00 The FBI Files
 07:00 Beyond Scared Straight
 08:00 The FBI Files
 09:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
 10:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
 11:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
 12:00 Private Crimes
 12:30 Private Crimes
 13:00 Homicide Hunter
 14:00 The First 48
 15:00 Beyond Scared Straight
 16:00 The FBI Files
 17:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
 18:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
 19:00 Homicide Hunter
 20:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
 21:00 The First 48
 22:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
 23:00 Hatton Garden Heist: One Last Job
 00:00 The Haunting Of...
 01:00 My Crazy Ex
 02:00 The First 48
 Discovery Channel HD
 03:40 Game Of Pawns
 04:05 Storage Wars Canada
 04:30 Property Wars
 05:00 How Do They Do It?
 05:30 South Beach Classics
 06:00 You Have Been Warned
 06:50 The Pop Illusionist
 07:40 Superhuman Science
 08:05 Superhuman Science
 08:30 Running Wild With Bear Grylls
 09:20 Bear Grylls: Mission Survive

10:10 Dive Wars Australia
 11:00 Free Ride
 11:50 For The Love Of Cars
 12:40 Engine Addict With Jimmy De Ville
 13:30 Misfit Garage
 14:20 Diesel Brothers
 15:10 Street Outlaws: New Orleans
 16:00 Edge Of Alaska
 16:50 Edge Of Alaska
 17:40 Edge Of Alaska
 18:30 Edge Of Alaska
 19:20 Edge Of Alaska
 20:10 Edge Of Alaska
 21:00 Misfit Garage
 21:50 Diesel Brothers
 22:40 Street Outlaws: New Orleans
 23:30 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
 00:20 Kidnap And Rescue
 01:10 Misfit Garage
 02:00 Diesel Brothers
 02:50 Street Outlaws: New Orleans



03:00 Untamed & Uncut
 03:50 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
 04:40 How It's Made
 05:05 How It's Made
 05:30 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
 06:20 Mythbusters
 07:00 Kids vs Film
 07:25 Doki
 07:50 Bad Dog
 08:40 You Have Been Warned
 09:30 How It's Made
 09:55 How It's Made
 10:20 Mythbusters
 11:10 Bondi Vet

12:00 Bad Dog
 12:50 How It's Made
 13:15 How It's Made
 13:40 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
 14:30 Dirty Jobs
 15:20 Mythbusters
 16:10 Kids vs Film
 16:35 Doki
 17:00 Troy
 17:50 Superhuman Showdown
 18:40 You Have Been Warned
 19:30 Mythbusters
 20:20 How It's Made
 20:45 How It's Made
 21:10 Troy
 22:00 Superhuman Showdown
 22:50 Untamed & Uncut
 23:40 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
 00:30 Mythbusters
 01:20 Troy
 02:10 Superhuman Showdown



03:00 Discovery ID
 09:00 Discovery ID
 15:00 Discovery ID
 21:00 Discovery ID
 Discovery ID Xtra
 03:00 Murder Among Friends
 03:48 Surviving Evil
 04:36 Blood Relatives
 05:24 California Investigator
 05:49 California Investigator
 06:12 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
 06:37 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
 07:00 Blood Relatives
 07:50 I Almost Got Away With It
 08:40 California Investigator
 09:05 California Investigator
 09:30 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
 10:20 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
 10:45 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
 11:10 Southern Fried Homicide
 12:00 Blood Relatives
 12:50 I Almost Got Away With It
 13:40 California Investigator
 14:05 California Investigator
 14:30 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
 15:20 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
 15:45 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
 16:10 Murder Comes To Town
 17:00 Blood Relatives
 17:50 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
 18:40 California Investigator
 19:05 California Investigator
 19:30 I Almost Got Away With It
 20:20 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
 20:45 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
 21:10 Swamp Murders
 22:00 Obsession: Dark Desires
 22:50 Forbidden: Dying For Love
 23:40 Evil Stepmothers
 00:30 Surviving Evil
 01:20 Obsession: Dark Desires



03:05 How It's Made
 03:29 Mythbusters
 04:16 Uncovering Aliens
 05:03 Man v The Universe
 05:50 Prototype This
 06:37 How Do They Do It?
 07:00 How Do They Do It?
 07:23 Mythbusters
 08:08 How It's Made
 08:30 How It's Made
 08:53 Prototype This
 09:38 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
 10:23 Invent It Rich
 11:08 Alien Encounters
 11:53 Prototype This
 12:38 Mythbusters
 13:23 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
 14:10 How It's Made
 14:33 How It's Made
 14:57 Invent It Rich
 15:44 Alien Encounters
 16:31 Prototype This
 17:18 How It's Made
 17:41 How It's Made
 18:05 Mythbusters
 18:50 How It's Made
 19:15 How It's Made
 19:40 Alien Encounters
 20:25 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
 21:15 How It's Made
 21:37 How It's Made
 22:00 How It's Made
 22:25 How It's Made
 22:50 Alien Encounters

03:35 Mythbusters
 00:20 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
 01:08 How It's Made
 01:31 How It's Made
 01:55 Alien Encounters
 02:42 How It's Made



03:00 Discovery World
 04:10 Hank Zipzer
 04:35 Binny And The Ghost
 05:00 Violetta
 05:45 The Hive
 05:50 Mouk
 06:00 Lolirock
 06:25 Sofia The First
 06:50 Gravity Falls
 07:15 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
 07:40 Hank Zipzer
 08:05 Shake It Up
 08:30 Shake It Up
 08:55 Hannah Montana
 09:20 Hannah Montana
 09:45 H2O: Just Add Water
 10:10 H2O: Just Add Water
 10:35 I Didn't Do It
 11:00 I Didn't Do It
 11:25 Jessie
 11:50 Jessie
 12:15 Disney Mickey Mouse
 12:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
 12:45 Hank Zipzer
 13:10 Austin & Ally
 13:35 Austin & Ally
 14:00 Liv And Maddie
 14:25 Disney Mickey Mouse
 14:30 Liv And Maddie
 14:55 Dog With A Blog
 15:20 Dog With A Blog
 15:45 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
 16:10 Violetta
 17:00 Backstage
 17:25 Toy Story
 18:50 Disney Mickey Mouse
 18:55 The 7D
 19:05 Evermoor Chronicles
 19:30 Liv And Maddie
 19:55 Liv And Maddie
 20:20 Backstage
 20:45 Cadet Kelly
 22:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
 22:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
 23:10 Hank Zipzer
 23:35 Binny And The Ghost
 00:00 Violetta
 00:45 The Hive
 00:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
 01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
 01:40 Hank Zipzer
 02:05 Binny And The Ghost
 02:30 Violetta

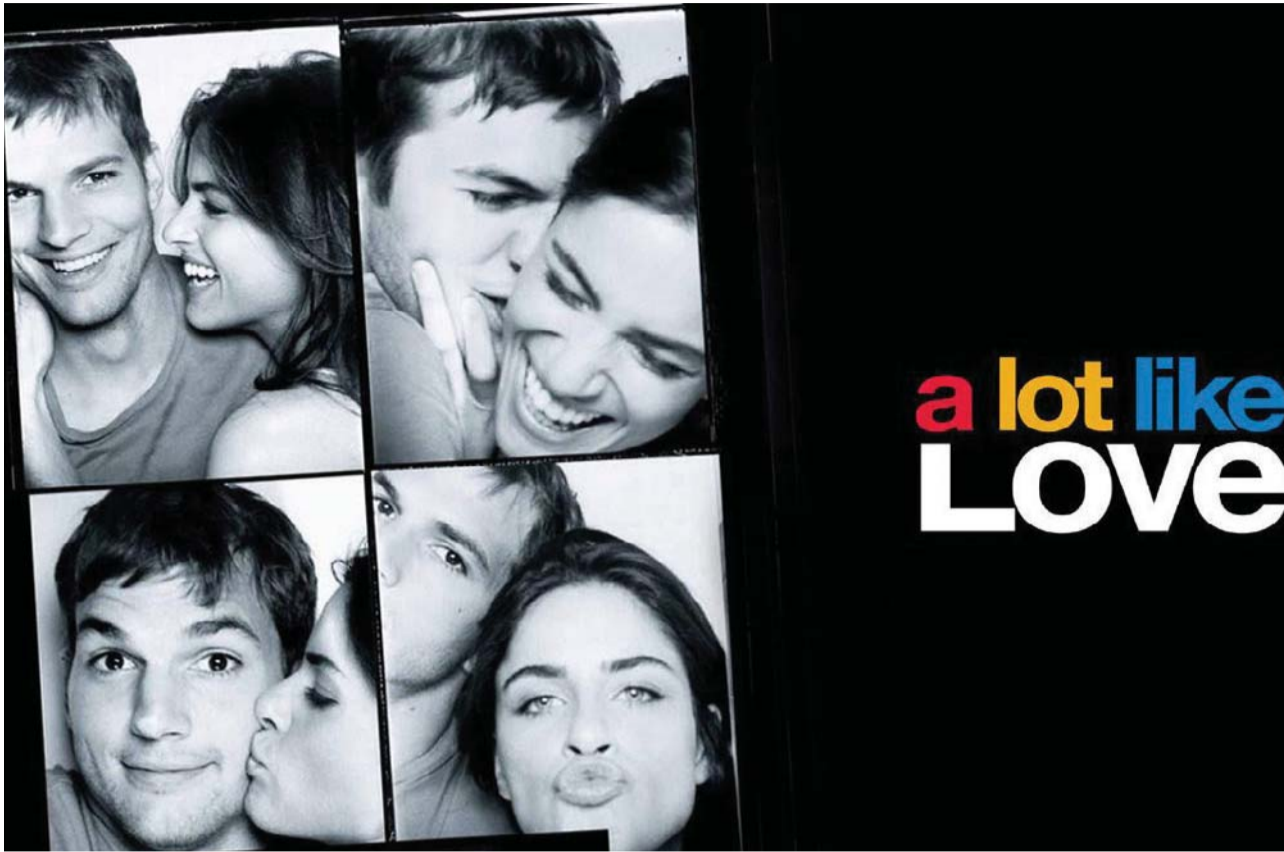


Disney Jr
 03:10 Henry Hugglemonster
 03:20 Calimero
 03:35 Zou
 03:45 Loopedidoo
 04:00 Art Attack
 04:25 Henry Hugglemonster
 04:35 Calimero
 04:50 Zou
 05:00 Loopedidoo
 05:15 Art Attack
 05:35 Henry Hugglemonster
 05:50 Calimero
 06:00 Zou
 06:20 Loopedidoo
 06:35 Art Attack
 07:00 The Hive
 07:10 Zou
 07:25 Loopedidoo
 07:40 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
 08:05 Sofia The First
 08:30 Miles From Tomorrow
 08:45 PJ Masks
 09:10 The Lion Guard
 09:35 Doc McStuffins
 10:00 Sofia The First
 10:25 Minnie's Bow-Toons
 10:30 Goldie & Bear
 11:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
 11:25 The Lion Guard
 11:50 Doc McStuffins



Transcendence on OSN Movies at 3 PM

- 12:15 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 12:45 The Hive
- 12:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons
- 13:00 Sofia The First
- 13:25 Miles From Tomorrow
- 13:50 Jake And The Neverland Pirates
- 14:15 The Lion Guard
- 14:40 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 15:10 Doc McStuffins
- 15:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 16:00 Sofia The First
- 16:25 Jungle Cubs
- 16:50 Aladdin
- 17:15 The Lion Guard
- 17:40 Goldie & Bear
- 18:05 Miles From Tomorrow
- 18:30 Sofia The First
- 19:00 PJ Masks
- 19:30 The Lion Guard
- 20:00 Goldie & Bear
- 20:30 Sofia The First
- 21:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 21:25 PJ Masks
- 21:50 Jungle Cubs
- 22:20 Aladdin
- 22:45 Minnie's Bow-Toons
- 22:50 Zou
- 23:05 Henry Hugglemonster
- 23:20 Calimero
- 23:35 Zou
- 23:50 Loopdidoo
- 00:05 Art Attack
- 00:30 Henry Hugglemonster
- 00:45 Calimero
- 01:00 Zou
- 01:15 Loopdidoo
- 01:30 Art Attack
- 02:05 Calimero
- 02:20 Zou
- 02:30 Loopdidoo
- 02:45 Art Attack



A Lot Like Love on Star Movies at 5 pm

- 06:00 Boyster
- 06:10 Super Matrak
- 06:35 Super Matrak
- 07:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 07:25 K.C. Undercover
- 07:50 Supa Strikas
- 08:15 Supa Strikas
- 08:40 Lab Rats
- 09:10 Kirby Buckets
- 09:35 Pokemon Series Xy: Kalos Quest
- 10:00 Rocket Monkeys
- 10:25 Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister
- 10:50 Marvel Avengers Assemble
- 11:20 Guardians Of The Galaxy
- 11:45 Pair Of Kings
- 12:10 Pair Of Kings
- 12:35 Lab Rats
- 13:00 Lab Rats
- 13:30 Phineas And Ferb
- 13:55 Phineas And Ferb
- 14:20 Kickin' It
- 14:45 Kickin' It
- 15:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 15:15 Supa Strikas
- 15:40 Supa Strikas
- 16:05 Mighty Med
- 16:30 Kirby Buckets
- 16:55 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
- 17:25 K.C. Undercover
- 17:50 Supa Strikas
- 18:15 Lab Rats
- 18:40 K.C. Undercover
- 19:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 19:10 Annedroids
- 19:35 Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister
- 20:00 Mighty Med
- 20:25 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
- 20:55 K.C. Undercover
- 21:20 Pickle And Peanut
- 21:45 Lab Rats
- 22:10 Mighty Med
- 22:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA



- 03:40 Serial Killer Earth
- 04:30 The Universe
- 05:20 Ancient Aliens
- 06:10 Decoding The Past
- 07:00 Dogfights
- 08:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 09:00 How The States Got Their Shape
- 10:00 Serial Killer Earth
- 11:00 The Universe

- 12:00 Ancient Aliens
- 13:00 Dogfights
- 14:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 15:00 How The States Got Their Shape
- 16:00 Serial Killer Earth
- 17:00 The Universe
- 18:00 Ancient Aliens
- 19:00 Dogfights
- 20:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 21:00 How The States Got Their Shape
- 22:00 Decoding The Past
- 23:00 Brad Meitler's Lost History
- 00:00 Ancient Aliens
- 01:00 Dogfights
- 02:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 02:50 How The States Got Their Shape
- History Channel HD
- 03:40 American Restoration
- 04:05 American Restoration
- 04:30 Pawn Stars
- 05:00 Grave Trade
- 06:00 The Curse Of Oak Island



- 03:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 03:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 04:00 Man Fire Food
- 04:30 Man Fire Food
- 05:00 Chopped
- 06:00 Guy's Grocery Games
- 07:00 Man Fire Food
- 07:30 Man Fire Food
- 08:00 Chopped
- 09:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
- 09:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
- 10:00 The Kitchen
- 11:00 Anna Olson: Fresh
- 11:30 Anna Olson: Fresh
- 12:00 Chopped
- 13:00 Grandma's Secret Cookbook
- 13:30 Grandma's Secret Cookbook
- 14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 15:00 Man Fire Food
- 15:30 Man Fire Food
- 16:00 Chopped
- 17:00 The Kitchen
- 18:00 Anna Olson: Fresh
- 18:30 Anna Olson: Fresh
- 19:00 Chopped
- 20:00 Iron Chef America
- 21:00 Cutthroat Kitchen
- 22:00 Chopped South Africa
- 23:00 Kitchen Casino
- 00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 01:00 Cutthroat Kitchen
- 02:00 Chopped South Africa



- 03:25 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
- 04:20 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
- 05:15 Pick Me!
- 06:10 Coach Trip
- 06:35 Catchphrase
- 07:05 James Nesbitt's Ireland
- 07:30 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
- 08:25 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
- 09:20 The Jonathan Ross Show
- 10:10 Pick Me!
- 11:05 Coach Trip
- 11:35 Catchphrase
- 12:05 James Nesbitt's Ireland
- 12:30 Peter Andre's 60 Minute Makeover
- 13:25 Emmerdale
- 13:50 Coach Trip
- 14:20 Coronation Street
- 14:45 The Jonathan Ross Show
- 15:35 Catchphrase
- 16:05 James Nesbitt's Ireland
- 16:30 Endeavour
- 18:20 Emmerdale
- 18:45 Coach Trip
- 19:10 Coronation Street
- 19:35 Catchphrase
- 20:05 James Nesbitt's Ireland
- 20:30 Endeavour
- 22:20 Coronation Street
- 22:50 Emmerdale
- 23:15 Catchphrase
- 23:45 Peter Andre's 60 Minute Makeover
- 00:40 James Nesbitt's Ireland
- 01:05 Coach Trip
- 01:30 Coach Trip
- 02:00 Coach Trip
- 02:30 Emmerdale
- 02:55 Emmerdale
- Nat Geo People HD
- 03:05 Lucky Chow
- 03:30 Places We Go
- 03:55 Grandma's Boy
- 04:20 My Dubai
- 04:45 My Dubai
- 05:10 World's Best Chefs
- 05:35 World's Best Chefs
- 06:00 This Is Brazil
- 06:50 Cesar To The Rescue
- 07:40 Chefs Run Wild
- 08:05 John Torode's Malaysian Adventure
- 08:30 John Torode's Malaysian Adventure
- 08:55 Lucky Chow
- 09:20 Places We Go
- 09:45 Grandma's Boy
- 10:10 My Dubai
- 10:35 My Dubai
- 11:00 World's Best Chefs
- 11:25 World's Best Chefs
- 11:50 This Is Brazil
- 12:40 Cesar To The Rescue
- 13:35 Chefs Run Wild
- 14:00 John Torode's Malaysian Adventure



- 04:25 The Wilby Conspiracy
- 06:10 Duplex
- 07:40 Of Mice And Men
- 09:30 The People That Time Forgot
- 11:00 The Bed Sitting Room
- 12:30 Cannon For Cordoba
- 14:15 Captain Jack
- 15:55 Charge Of The Light Brigade
- 18:00 Clifford
- 19:30 Empire Of The Ants
- 21:00 Who Is Cleitus Tout?
- 22:30 Breaking Bad
- 23:30 Joseph Andrews
- 01:10 Everybody's Fine
- 02:50 Stand By Me
- Animal Planet HD
- 03:25 Lion Man: One World African Safari
- 03:50 Lion Man: One World African Safari
- 04:15 Gator Boys
- 05:02 Treehouse Masters
- 05:49 River Monsters (Best Of Series 1-5)
- 06:36 Call Of The Wildman
- 07:00 Call Of The Wildman
- 07:25 Treehouse Masters
- 08:15 Treehouse Masters
- 09:10 Treehouse Masters
- 10:05 Treehouse Masters
- 11:00 Dog TV
- 11:55 Snake Crusader With Bruce George
- 12:20 Snake Crusader With Bruce George
- 12:50 Gangland Killers
- 13:45 Natural World
- 14:40 Natural World
- 15:35 Animal Cops South Africa
- 16:30 Lion Man: One World African Safari
- 17:00 Lion Man: One World African Safari
- 17:25 Gangland Killers
- 18:20 Rugged Justice
- 19:15 Giant Pandas Go Wild
- 20:10 Village Vets



- 03:45 Urban Jungle
- 04:40 Man And The Wild
- 05:35 Game Of Lions
- 06:30 Animals Gone Wild
- 07:25 Urban Jungle
- 08:20 Man And The Wild
- 09:15 Kingdom Of The Oceans
- 10:10 Incredible Insects
- 11:05 I, Predator
- 12:00 Megafish
- 12:55 Amazonia's Giant Jaws
- 13:50 Animals Gone Wild
- 14:45 Urban Jungle
- 15:40 Man And The Wild
- 16:35 Kingdom Of The Oceans
- 17:30 Strangest Bird Alive
- 18:25 Deadly Game
- 19:20 Urban Jungle
- 20:10 Man And The Wild
- 21:00 Kingdom Of The Oceans

- 21:50 Strangest Bird Alive
- 22:40 Deadly Game
- 23:30 Megafish
- 00:20 Amazonia's Giant Jaws
- 01:10 Animals Gone Wild
- 02:00 Nordic Wild
- 02:50 Zambezi



- 03:30 World's Worst Mum
- 04:20 Little People, Big World: Amy's 50th
- 05:10 Cake Boss
- 05:35 Something Borrowed, Something New
- 06:00 Our Little Family
- 06:49 Cake Boss
- 07:12 Cake Boss
- 07:35 Cake Boss
- 07:59 Cake Boss
- 08:22 The Undateables
- 09:10 The Undateables
- 09:57 Cake Boss
- 10:20 Cake Boss
- 10:45 The Boy Who Wants His Leg Cut Off
- 11:35 Say Yes To The Dress
- 12:00 Say Yes To The Dress
- 12:25 Say Yes To The Dress
- 12:48 Say Yes To The Dress
- 13:12 Say Yes To The Dress
- 13:35 Oprah: Where Are They Now?
- 14:25 Belief
- 15:15 Little People, Big World
- 15:40 Little People, Big World: Big Changes
- 16:30 Little People Big World: Holiday Surprise
- 17:17 Love At First Swipe
- 17:42 Love At First Swipe
- 18:05 Cake Boss
- 18:30 Cake Boss
- 18:55 Cake Boss
- 19:20 Our Little Family



- 03:00 Odyssey
- 04:00 Good Morning America
- 06:00 The Fosters
- 07:00 Chicago Fire
- 08:00 Prison Break
- 09:00 Royal Pains
- 10:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 11:00 Chicago Fire
- 12:00 Prison Break
- 13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 14:00 Live Good Morning America
- 16:00 The Night Shift
- 17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 18:00 Prison Break

- 19:00 Royal Pains
- 20:00 Shark Tank
- 21:00 The Night Shift
- 22:00 Downton Abbey
- 23:15 Sleepy Hollow
- 00:05 Defiance
- 01:00 The Night Shift
- 02:00 Downton Abbey



ACTION

- 00:00 Turkey Shoot
- 02:00 The Prince
- 04:00 Northmen: A Viking Saga
- 06:00 I, Robot
- 08:00 Destruction: Las Vegas
- 09:30 47 Ronin
- 11:45 Stranded
- 13:30 X-Men: Days Of Future Past
- 15:45 I, Robot
- 17:45 47 Ronin
- 20:00 Non-Stop
- 22:00 The Terminator



COMEDY

- 04:00 Father Hood
- 06:00 Pitch Perfect
- 08:00 Sweet Home Alabama
- 10:00 Father Hood
- 12:00 Pitch Perfect
- 14:00 Krippendorf's Tribe
- 16:00 Sweet Home Alabama
- 18:00 Cas & Dylan
- 20:00 What We Do In The Shadows
- 22:00 Kick-Ass 2
- 00:00 Sweet Home Alabama
- 02:00 What We Do In The Shadows



- 03:00 Transcendence
- 05:00 The Boxtrolls
- 07:00 Step Up All In
- 09:00 Transcendence
- 11:00 The Judge
- 13:30 McFarland, USA
- 15:45 The Last 5 Years
- 17:30 Cuban Fury
- 19:15 Night At The Museum: Secret Of The Tomb
- 21:00 Hotel Transylvania 2
- 23:00 Ouija
- 01:00 3 Days To Kill



- 03:15 Dedication
- 05:00 A Lot Like Love
- 07:00 The Black Dahlia
- 09:00 The Eagle
- 11:00 Meskada
- 12:30 Chicago
- 14:30 The Duchess
- 16:30 All Good Things
- 18:15 Finding Neverland
- 20:00 The Hours
- 22:00 The Nines
- 23:45 Ironclad
- 02:00 The Recruit



- 03:00 Private Practice
- 04:00 Da Vinci's Demons
- 05:00 Happy Endings
- 05:30 Happy Endings
- 06:00 The Simpsons
- 06:30 The Simpsons
- 07:00 Switched At Birth
- 08:00 Lost
- 09:00 Lost
- 10:00 Private Practice
- 11:00 Private Practice
- 12:00 Da Vinci's Demons
- 13:00 Happy Endings
- 13:30 Happy Endings
- 14:00 The Simpsons
- 14:30 The Simpsons
- 15:00 Switched At Birth
- 16:00 Lost
- 17:00 Melissa & Joey
- 17:30 Cougar Town
- 18:00 The Listener
- 19:00 The Listener
- 20:00 Fit For Fashion
- 21:00 Melissa & Joey
- 21:30 Cougar Town
- 22:00 Lost
- 23:00 Lost
- 00:00 Private Practice
- 01:00 Da Vinci's Demons

Word Search Puzzles

Beatles Songs 3 - Word Search

Find the words hidden in the grid of letters.

U A L L M Y L O V I N G Z S D E F
R Y W B G S O M E T H I N G L G I
E L E A Y Y H W E M K S A O C E Y
H C T R I M C Y I Y R N H M I Y R
E B N D B T I M A U O A I F T B C
Y L B E G L E C L W G G E X H D Y
B A J H D M U L H N Y E R S E O B
U C U X I U E E I E L A E O E O A
L K N N S F R X S F L I J O N G B
L B E A I E I P I W G L E E D O Y
D I Q F M F M N R G E H E W U L R
O R I A M X E C I A L R I G R L C
G D N S Z P A P K B E C A U S E B
G N O S E O G T A H W D I G D H F

ALL MY LOVING	GIRL	PIGGIES
ASK ME WHY	HELLO GOODBYE	SOMETHING
BECAUSE	HEY BULLDOG	TAXMAN
BLACKBIRD	I FEEL FINE	THE END
BLUE JAY WAY	I ME MINE	WAIT
CRY BABY CRY	IF I FELL	WHAT GOES ON
DEAR PRUDENCE	MICHELLE	YER BLUES
FIXING A HOLE	NOWHERE MAN	

Yesterday's Solution

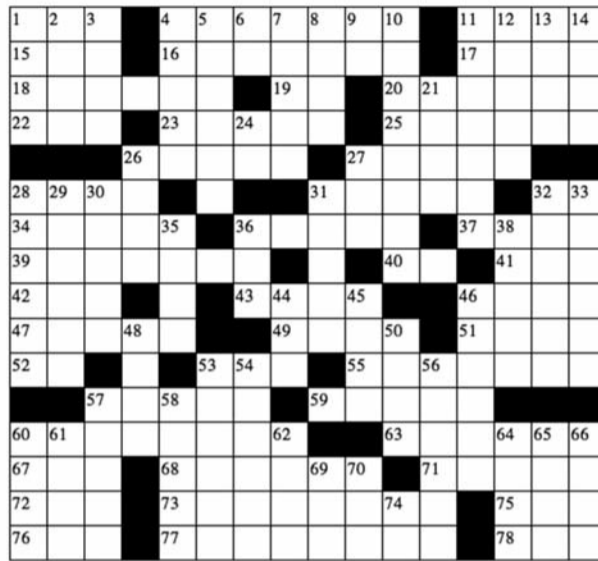
Large Print Word Search Puzzles

Beatles Songs 2 - Solution

O P Y H W E M L L E T C R W R T
S O E U L B U O Y R O F A E I I P
H R C L O V E M E D O C W M G O E
E E B T I T E L G N Y A S I L W N
L H A I O U N F I M O O D Y C O A
O T G M M R V O E N T O T N I Q L
V E O A E V R V I I E H N T P N Y
E G O L E I I O R N E E U R O E N
S O D O I R G E B N O L D R O A N
Y T N S D C D G E E O S E Y T F E
O E I E H E L P A V R P S G O U P
U M G R T W A Y E M L T L A I U M
Z O H P M M S R N Y J A K F L R W
M C T M L H E R M A J E S T Y G L

COME TOGETHER	GOOD NIGHT	MAGGIE MAE
DIG IT	HELP	NO REPLY
DOCTOR ROBERT	HER MAJESTY	PENNY LANE
DRIVE MY CAR	I NEED YOU	POLYTHENE PAM
FOR NO ONE	IM A LOSER	REVOLUTION
FOR YOU BLUE	IM SO TIRED	SHE LOVES YOU
GIRL	LET IT BE	TELL ME WHY
GLASS ONION	LOVE ME DO	

CROSSWORD 1273



ACROSS

- An adult male person (as opposed to a woman).
- The father of your father or mother.
- A native or inhabitant of Scotland.
- A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
- Small circular or square cases of dough with savory fillings.
- An insect in the inactive stage of development (when it is not feeding) intermediate between larva and adult.
- Disparaging terms for the common people.
- The compass point midway between north and west.
- A viewer who gazes fixedly (often with hostility).
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
- Realistic Norwegian author who wrote plays on social and political themes (1828-1906).
- Used especially in treating bruises.
- The largest continent with 60% of the earth's population.
- Used of hair.
- Type genus of the family Unionidae.
- The great hall in ancient Persian palaces.
- A doctor's degree in religion.
- A hospital unit staffed and equipped to provide intensive care.
- An independent agency of the United States government responsible for collecting and coordinating intelligence and counterintelligence activities abroad in the national interest.
- (informal) Exceptionally good.
- The brother of your father or mother.
- According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
- A public area set aside as a pedestrian walk.
- A toxic nonmetallic element related to sulfur and tellurium.
- Large family of important mostly marine food fishes.
- A clique that seeks power usually through intrigue.
- A genus of Sciaenidae.
- (electronics) Of a circuit or device having an output that is proportional to the input.
- Leaf or strip from a leaf of the talipot palm used in India for writing paper.

DOWN

- God of death.
- An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
- Kamarupan languages spoken in northeastern India and western Burma.
- (legend) Chalice used by Christ at the last supper.
- A motley assortment of things.
- The eleventh month of the civil year.
- The cardinal number that is the sum of eight and one.
- Being or moving lower in position or less in some value.
- A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
- Incapacitated by injury or illness.
- A German machine gun.
- French chemist (born in Poland) who won two Nobel Prizes.
- An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
- A village in eastern Ireland (northwest of Dublin).
- A journey for some purpose (usually including the return).
- A complete metric system of units of measurement for scientists.
- King of Saudi Arabia since 1982 (born in 1922).
- An associate degree in applied science.
- Lying face upward.
- (Old Testament) The second patriarch.
- A region of Malaysia in northeastern Borneo.
- Stout-bodied insect with large membranous wings.
- Having more than one decidedly dissimilar aspects or qualities.
- A university in Connecticut.
- A compartment in front of a motor vehicle where driver sits.
- A rechargeable battery with a nickel cathode and a cadmium anode.
- A unit of absorbed ionizing radiation equal to 100 ergs per gram of irradiated material.
- Mentally or physically infirm with age.
- Sometimes placed in Smilacaceae.
- Being three more than fifty.
- A small cake leavened with yeast.
- Common house and field crickets.
- Sorghums of dry regions of Asia and North Africa.
- Fairly small terrestrial ferns of tropical America.
- Any of several short-billed Old World rails.
- A painful and involuntary muscular contraction.
- A feeling of strong eagerness (usually in favor of a person or cause).
- Rock that form the continuous lower layer of the earth's crust.
- A speech defect that involves pronouncing s like voiceless th and z like voiced th.
- Evergreen trees and shrubs having oily one-seeded fruits.
- Wild or seedling sweet cherry used as stock for grafting.
- The month following March and preceding May.
- A unit of length of thread or yarn.
- A person who announces and plays popular recorded music.

Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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

Yesterday's Solution

T	E	F	F		A	C	A	D	I	A	N		C	I	S	
R	A	I	L		N	A	N	O	M	I	A		H	M	O	
A	G	R	A		A	M	A	T	I		P	H	I	A	L	
P	R	E	M	I	S	E	S		T	A		A	M	M	O	
A	E	D	E	S		R	A	M	A	L	I	N	A			
					N	M		O		O	T	C	D	E	A	D
T	R	H			D	U	O			E	A	G	E	R	L	Y
W	E	E	K	L	O	N	G				A	D	A	P	A	
I	N	D	E	E	D			L	U	M	P	Y			I	D
R	A	G	B	A	G			E	L	L	I		H	A	N	I
P	L	E	A	D	E	R		N		Q	U	E	B	E	C	
					B			E		A	N	U	R	I	A	
A	R	A			M	A	L	A	R	I	A		S	S	P	E
D	I	P	L	O	M	A	T			H	N		T	H	E	A
A	G	A			L	I	C	O	R	I	C	E		E	E	C
M	A	R			T	R	E	M	B	L	E	R		D	P	H

INSURANCE RATES GOING UP: NEW CONCERNS FOR OBAMACARE

WASHINGTON : Fresh problems for 'Obamacare': The largest health insurer in Texas wants to raise its rates on individual policies by an average of nearly 60 percent, a new sign that President Barack Obama's overhaul hasn't solved the problem of price spikes. Texas isn't alone. Citing financial losses under the health care law, many insurers around the country are requesting bigger premium increases for 2017.

That's to account for lower-than-hoped enrollment, sicker-than-expected customers and problems with the government's financial backstop for insurance markets. The national picture will take weeks to fill in. With data available for about half the states, premium increases appear to be sharper, but there are also huge differences between states and among insurers. Health insurance is priced locally. Earlier this week, North Carolina's largest insurer said it will seek an average increase of 18.8 percent. A recent analysis of nine states by the consulting firm Avalere Health found that average premium increases for the most popular kind of plan ranged from 5 percent in Washington state to 44 percent in Vermont. Millions of customers will be shielded from price hikes by government subsidies, which typically cover more than 70 percent of the premiums. People who don't have access to a workplace plan can buy a policy directly on the health law's marketplaces. But many consumers aren't eligible for the income-based subsidies and get no such protection. That demographic includes small business owners, self-employed people and early retirees. Under the law, most Americans are required to have health insurance or risk being fined. Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas has about 603,000 individual policyholders and, unlike other insurers in the state, offers coverage in every county.

'Big disrupter'

In a recent filing with federal regulators, a summary of which is available on HealthCare.gov, the company said it is seeking increases averaging from 57.3 percent to 59.4 percent across its individual market plans. In a statement, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas said its request is based on strong financial principles, science and data.

'It's also important to understand the magnitude of the losses...experienced in the individual retail market over the past two years,' the statement said. The company says it lost \$592 million last year and \$416 million in 2014. Texas is the health care law's third-largest market, after Florida and California. Texas state regulators said the insurer's request is confidential and they can't comment on it. However, Insurance Department spokesman Ben Gonzalez said the state can withdraw approval if the request doesn't meet requirements and standards in Texas law. Wichita Falls insurance broker Kelly Fristoe said the burden of premium increases will fall hardest on rural communities where Blue Cross Blue Shield is in many cases the only option.

Metropolitan areas like Houston, Dallas, and Austin attract more insurers. 'This is going to be a very big disrupter of the market,' said Fristoe. Some relatively healthy people 'would probably be willing to roll the dice and take their chances' by dropping coverage, even if it means they might be fined.

'Substantial rate increase'

The insurer cautioned that the average premiums filed with regulators don't represent the true bottom line for individual consumers. Some people may find that even with a higher premium, the coverage remains a good value. Regulators can request more



TEXAS: Affordable Care Act navigators hold an enrollment event at the Fort Worth Public Library in Fort Worth, Texas. —AP

information from the company, but the federal government can't order Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas to roll back the increases, said Larry Levitt, an expert on the health care law at the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation.

'Given how much money (the company) lost, it's likely that a substantial rate increase is merited,' Levitt said. The Obama administration said concerns about 2017 premiums are premature and overblown. In a statement, the Health and Human Services Department said the Texas rate request is just the beginning of a process. Consumers in Texas and other states will have lower-premium options when sign-up season begins Nov 1. If they don't like what their current insurer is charging for 2017, they can switch, according to

officials. 'Consumers will have the final word when they vote with their feet during open enrollment,' said the statement. Big premium hikes from a single insurance company have had an impact on the health care debate before. Back in early 2010, when Obama's health care legislation appeared stalled in Congress, WellPoint's planned 39 percent increase for some California customers galvanized the White House and its supporters to action. Obama signed the landmark legislation a few weeks later. WellPoint is now Anthem, the nation's second-largest insurer. In its home state of Indiana, it is currently seeking premium hikes from nearly 20 percent to 41 percent for coverage under the health care law.—AP

CLINIC
PAGE



Kuwait Times
THE LEADING INDEPENDENT DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

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Friday Times BUSINESS

FRIDAY, JUNE 3, 2016

POWER BLACKOUT AS FRENCH WORKERS STRIKE OVER LABOR BILL

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UK opposition leader says he would veto US-EU trade deal

Page 38



BRASILIA, BRAZIL: Demonstrators confront the police during protest of the Homeless Workers Movement on Wednesday.—AP

OPEC PONDERES OIL CLOUT AT VIENNA MEET

OPEC RETURNS AS A MAJOR SUPPLIES AND PRICES MAKER

VIENNA: With higher crude prices bringing some relief, OPEC officials meeting yesterday focused on trying to find common ground on how much to produce in an attempt to re-impose the image of the organization as a major player in determining supplies and prices. For decades, the 13-nation cartel was able to regulate prices by throttling or increasing production. But with some members not sticking to the limits and outside players increasing their market share, recent meetings have failed to re-impose unity.

Saudi oil minister Khalid A. Al Falih suggested that the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries nonetheless remained a strong market force. "We will come up with a consensus," he told reporters ahead of the meeting in Vienna. "OPEC has always managed to come up with a consensus." In fact, though, attempts to impose production ceilings have foundered over recent years, with countries ignoring them and producing as much they wanted or could.

The final statement at the last meeting, in December, didn't even mention an output target, signaling the cartel's eroding ability to influence supply, demand - and prices.

Way out

One way out would be abandoning attempts to set a firm production target.

Ministers at Thursday's meeting could instead agree on a sliding ceiling that could shift between two benchmarks, both above 30 million barrels a day. That would be a first, and the fact that the ministerial meeting dragged into mid-afternoon reflected that not all



VIENNA, AUSTRIA: Suhail Mohamed Al Mazrouei, Minister of Energy of the United Arab Emirates, UAE, arrives prior to the start of a meeting of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, OPEC, at their headquarters yesterday.—AP

agreed on such a move.

"The group is under a lot of pressure to reassert itself as a viable entity," said Jason Schenker of Prestige Economics. "To achieve

that, they are likely to achieve a production target of sorts." A flexible ceiling also could address Iranian resistance to curbing its output. Since the lifting of nuclear-related sanctions this year, Iranian production has roared back to nearly four million barrels a day, around the same level as before the imposition of the sanctions. Reflecting its stance, Iran did not even show up at a meeting in April between OPEC members and outside producers attempting to agree on a joint output freeze to push prices higher. The Saudis then said they would not cap output if Iran didn't do the same, dooming the gathering to failure. Suggesting the organization's credibility was on the line in Vienna after that abortive meeting, Schenker declared: "This is a make or break moment for OPEC."

The ministerial gathering comes amid a recovery in the price of oil. Since touching a 13-year low early this year, it has rallied almost 90 percent to around \$50 a barrel. On Thursday, the international benchmark, Brent, was up 22 cents on the day at \$49.93.

While that's still only half of what crude fetched as late as two years ago, the increase is easing some of the pain for poorer members such as Algeria, Venezuela and Nigeria that depend on crude as their main income. And there are promises of further increases.

US shale production is in decline as it

needs higher prices to be economical. At the same time, the world economy is showing signs of some improvement, meaning that the appetite for petroleum may increase.

Ironically, part of the credit for OPEC's improving fortunes is due to its inability to act in unity in recent years. Instead, many individual members produced what they could, driving down prices to the point where shale producers are increasingly unable to compete. Some have gone out of business, reducing the glut of global supply.

At the height of its power decades ago, OPEC essentially was able to set world prices and supplies. Although it is still responsible for more than a third of world production, that clout has eroded since the 1980s, as outside output increased and members looking to maximize income increasingly ignored OPEC production ceilings.

But it took top OPEC producer Saudi Arabia to turn overproduction into market strategy. Since deciding in 2014 to squeeze out outside competition by flooding the market to drive down prices, it has pumped close to or above 10 million barrels a day - close to a third of the organization's total production. That, plus resurgent output from Iraq and post-sanctions Iran, helped push down prices, with the desired effect of making shale production increasingly uneconomical.—AP



PHOENIX: Arizona Governor Doug Ducey giving his state speech in Tucson Convention Center on January 12, 2016.—AFP

GOV DOUG DUCEY MEETS WITH AIRBNB HOSTS, BUSINESS LEADERS

PHOENIX: Gov Doug Ducey met with local Airbnb hosts and corporate executives Wednesday to celebrate a new law that will make it easier for the state to gather home-sharing rental taxes while blocking cities from banning short-term rentals on lodging websites.

As cities like Chicago seek to clamp down on the rentals, Ducey said the new law will improve Arizona's reputation and serve as a model for other states. "I really believe this is a win for Arizona to maintain our competitive edge over the sharing economy," he said during the event held at a historic home in Phoenix. Ducey signed the measure last month and it goes into effect in August.

Vacation rental website executives from Airbnb and HomeAway met with the governor, local hosts and lawmakers to hail the law as a historic moment that will bolster state tourism and put more money in the pockets of homeowners.

Airbnb host and homeowner Ed Newhall said the bill supports his business and helps him to carry on the legacy of his parents who first ran a bed and breakfast out of his 87-year old home.

The proposal undermines ordinances in tourism-driven locales like Scottsdale, Sedona and Jerome that prevent residents from using online booking companies to rent out their properties to visitors for a few days at a time.

It also allows Airbnb and similar websites to collect taxes on behalf of renters and turn them over to the state to be divided up for municipalities. The proposal was one of several bills pushed through during Arizona's recent legislative session designed to usurp municipal authority to regulate things like employee benefits, plastic shopping bags, pet stores and drones.

Patrice Kraus, who lobbies for the League of Arizona Cities and Towns, said the bill was a compromise that still allows cities to pass ordinances related to noise and nuisance issues. "The reality is this business is here to stay," she said.—AP

UK OPPOSITION LEADER SAYS HE WOULD VETO US-EU TRADE DEAL BELIEVES IT THREATENS EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

LONDON: British opposition leader Jeremy Corbyn urged voters yesterday to remain in the European Union - but slammed the bloc's planned trade deal with the United States, saying it threatens employment rights and hands power to "giant corporations."

Corbyn said his Labor Party would veto the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership if it forms a government. But he backed EU membership for Britain, saying it had raised standards for workers, protected the environment, bolstered human rights and even reduced mobile-phone roaming charges.

Some "remain" campaigners have criticized Corbyn for not making a louder case for EU membership ahead of the June 23 referendum. The socialist Corbyn opposed Britain joining the bloc in a 1975 referendum.

In a speech in London, Corbyn said that "Europe needs to change ... but those changes can only be achieved by working with our allies." With three weeks until voting day, the referendum campaign is growing increasingly heated as widely varying polls suggest an unpredictable result.

"In" campaigners are trying to keep the focus on the economic uncertainty that UK exit - known as "Brexit" - would wreak, while the "out" side is stressing the pressure uncontrolled immigration from other EU countries has had on



LONDON: Jeremy Corbyn, Leader of Britain's Labour Party speaks at the launch of 'Labour In for Britain', ahead of June's EU referendum on May 10, 2016.—AP

Britain's economy and public services.

Prime Minister David Cameron is likely to face questions on immigration from a studio audience during his first major TV event of the campaign later yesterday. Other members of the 28-nation bloc are also weighing in, with a mix of entreaties to stay and warnings of the risk of Brexit. German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Thursday that Britain would get better results from the EU "when you sit at the bargaining

table," rather than if it were lobbying from outside.

Dozens of leading European cultural and sports figures signed a "love letter" to UK voters, intended to show "how wide and deep is the affection felt for Britain across our shared continent." Signatories include Bjorn Ulvaeus of ABBA, Oscar-winning filmmaker Susanne Bier, actress-director Julie Delpy and Arsenal soccer team manager Arsene Wenger.—AP



HAWTHORNE, CALIFORNIA: Elon Musk, CEO and CTO of SpaceX, introduces the SpaceX Dragon V2 spaceship at the SpaceX headquarters on May 29, 2014.—AP

SPACEX CHIEF ELON MUSK PREDICTS PEOPLE ON MARS IN 9 YEARS

RANCHOS PALOS VERDES, CALIFORNIA: SpaceX CEO Elon Musk says if things go according to plan people will be on Mars just nine years from now.

During an interview Wednesday at the Code Conference in southern California, Musk said that "we should be able to launch people in 2024, with arrival in 2025."

Musk also says he plans to go to space himself in about

four to five years, but only into orbit around Earth. Musk also runs Tesla Motors, which has been at the forefront of self-driving car technology. He says he sees Apple as more of a competitor than Google in the autonomous vehicle market, but suggests they may be too late to compete with Tesla.

He believes Apple will go into volume production of the cars no sooner than 2020.—AP



PARIS: Commuters wait for a bus to Orly Airport during a railway strike yesterday.—AP

DUTCH PROSECUTORS CONDUCT RAIDS IN GLOBAL MAIL FRAUD RING

AMSTERDAM: Dutch prosecutors have raided a string of locations and seized cash and hundreds of thousands of fraudulent letters in an investigation into worldwide mail scams that US law enforcement authorities say defrauded "elderly and vulnerable" Americans out of millions of dollars.

Dutch authorities said yesterday they had made no arrests but that investigations were ongoing. The American Justice Department announced that a civil complaint has been filed in the US District Court for the Eastern District of New York against a Dutchman, Erik Dekker, and two companies he runs, that were among the locations raided by the Dutch on Wednesday.

According to details of the American complaint, Dekker's companies received and processed payments from the fraud schemes. Dekker could not immediately be reached for comment yesterday.—AP

POWER BLACKOUT AS FRENCH WORKERS STRIKE OVER LABOR BILL TAPPING INTO MONTHS OF WIDESPREAD ANGER

PARIS: Striking workers created blackouts by cutting power to a big electricity line in western France and occupied train tracks at a Paris railway hub yesterday as unions at nuclear plants and the national rail service protested the proposed abolition of some French labor protections.

Workers have sector-specific demands, but are also tapping into months of widespread anger at a government bill extending the 35-hour workweek and making it easier to hire and fire workers.

Members of the CGT union at 16 of France's 19 nuclear plants, which

provide the majority of the country's electricity, voted for a one-day strike yesterday.

Nuclear plants are required to maintain a minimal level of production even during strikes for security reasons. But workers in Brittany cut the electricity supply from a power station in Saint-Malo-de-Guersac, prompting blackouts in at least 120,000 homes, according to the RTE electricity network.

Service was restored to most homes by early afternoon, said an RTE official who was not authorized to be publicly named according to compa-

ny policy. He said no other incidents were reported linked to the strikes.

Protesters also briefly walked onto train tracks at the Gare de Lyon station in eastern Paris, according to LCI television. A union march through Paris was scheduled for yesterday afternoon.

Service on high-speed TGV trains and commuter trains was disrupted yesterday for a second day because of strikes by some union members. Some Paris public transport workers also joined the strike, although disruptions on subways and buses were minimal.—AP

PANAMA'S WIDER CANAL READY FOR BUSINESS

PANAMA CITY: Panama's newly widened canal is ready to take bigger cargo ships and will start during an inaugurating ceremony on June 26, the consortium behind the project said Wednesday. Testing of new locks following the nine-year construction work is complete and "the project is ready to receive the first ships, proving that it works to perfection," the chief executive

of the Grupo Unidos por el Canal (GUPEC) consortium, Giuseppe Quarta, said in a statement. Work to broaden the century-old canal—originally started by the French and then built by the United States—began in 2007. Initially set to have been completed two years ago, the project was plagued by cost overruns, labor disputes and lawsuits.

The original budget of \$5.25 billion is

believed to have been exceeded by \$3.4 billion. Fissures were also found in one of the widened locks last year, requiring GUPEC's testing.

Panamanian President Juan Carlos Varela is set to lead the ceremony declaring the expanded canal officially open. Seventy heads of state and government have been invited. A Chinese freighter will be the first to navigate the wider

locks. With the inauguration, the 80-kilometer canal will accommodate a much bigger class of cargo ship known as Neopanamax, or New Panamax, which carries nearly three times as many containers as the Panamax ships currently sent through the passage.

That will mean the canal's annual income from shipping fees will also triple from the current \$1 billion.—AFP



SAN FRANCISCO: The headquarters of Uber. —AP

UBER RAISES \$3.5B FROM SAUDI INVESTMENT FUND

SAN FRANCISCO: Uber said Wednesday it is getting a massive cash infusion from Saudi Arabia. The oil-rich nation's sovereign investment fund is putting \$3.5 billion into the global transportation company, and will get a seat on Uber's board of directors.

Funding for new tech companies has been slowing down in recent months amid concerns that many startups have been over-valued. But San Francisco-based Uber has been able to raise billions of dollars as it pursues ambitious plans to expand around the world.

Uber says its internet-based ride-hailing service now operates in nine countries of the Middle East, one of its fastest-growing markets. Eighty percent of its passengers in Saudi Arabia are women. The country doesn't allow women to drive.

The Saudi money is part of a larger round of funding by several investors, which valued Uber at \$62.5 billion. The company, which has raised well over \$14 billion since its founding in 2009, says it now has more than \$11 billion in cash and available credit to fund its expansion.

Uber's regional rivals have also reported big investments this year, as on-demand ride services have grown in popularity. Apple recently invested \$1 billion in China's Didi Chuxing, while General Motors has put \$500 million into US-based Lyft. —AP

EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK SEES STIMULUS SLOWLY HELPING ECONOMY

MORE TIME NEEDED BEFORE NEW MONETARY JOLTS ARE ADDED

VIENNA: The European Central Bank says its stimulus measures are helping the economy of the 19 countries that use the euro - and need time to work before any new monetary jolts are added.

After the bank left its key interest rates unchanged at its meeting yesterday, President Mario Draghi repeated his calls for national governments to act to boost growth and not rely on the central bank so much. He has called for governments to cut red tape that hinders hiring and

March. We have to focus on implementation," he said.

Percentages

The ECB nudged up its inflation outlook for 2016 to 0.2 percent from 0.1 percent previously. It also raised its economic growth prediction, to 1.6 percent from 1.4 percent. The inflation remains far below the ECB's target of just under 2 percent, suggesting the economy is still far from healthy.

commercial banks leave with it. That measure is aimed at pushing banks to take the risks of lending the money rather than hoard it.

On top of rate cuts, the bank is buying 80 billion euros (\$89 billion) in bonds each month with newly-printed money in an effort to raise inflation, which at minus 0.1 percent annually is a sign of weak demand and far below the bank's goal of just under 2 percent.

The monthly purchases, to be conducted at least through March 2017, will pump 1.74 trillion Euros (\$1.94 trillion) that didn't exist before into the banking system in hopes that all that money finds productive use as credit to businesses and consumers.

The bank doesn't use a printing press to create money, but simply credits the commercial banks' reserve accounts at the ECB with new euros - something it is entitled to do as the legal issuer of the euro currency.

The ECB this year decided to expand the bond-buying program, which has so far purchased mainly government debt, to also include corporate bonds. On Thursday it decided on a start date of June 8 for the purchases of non-bank corporate bonds.

Central bank policies have wide-ranging impact on people's lives, determining everything from what people earn on their savings - not much these days - to what they pay each month in interest on their mortgages.

The eurozone economy grew by a decent quarterly rate of 0.5 percent in the first quarter, but unemployment remains high at 10.2 percent and is coming down only slowly.

To see a more significant improvement in the economy, Draghi called on governments to take action. "The focus should be on actions to raise productivity and improve the business environment," he said.—AP



FRANKFURT: The president of European Central Bank Mario Draghi speaks during a news conference on Sept 3, 2015.—AP

starting a business, and to spend more on investments.

Draghi told a news conference following yesterday's meeting of its 25-member governing council in Vienna that existing stimulus measures will continue to feed through to the economy, helping it. "We have to see the full impact of the measures we decided in

At yesterday's meeting, the ECB refrained from announcing more measures and decided to leave at zero its refinancing rate. That rate determines what the central bank charges for loans to commercial banks and influences other short-term market interest rates.

It also left at minus 0.4 percent the rate it charges on overnight deposits that com-

FEDERAL REGULATORS PROPOSE RESTRICTIONS ON PAYDAY LENDERS

NEW YORK: Federal regulators are proposing a significant clampdown on payday lenders and other providers of high-interest loans, saying borrowers need to be protected from practices that wind up turning into "debt traps" for many.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's proposed regulations, announced yesterday, seek to tackle two common complaints about the payday lending industry.

The CFPB is proposing that lenders must conduct what's known as a "full-payment test." Because most payday loans are required to be paid in full when they come due, usually two weeks after the money is borrowed, the CFPB wants lenders to prove that borrowers are able to repay that money without having to renew the loan repeatedly.

Secondly, the CFPB would require that lenders give additional warnings before they attempt to debit a borrower's bank account, and also restrict the number of times they can attempt to debit the account. The aim is to lower the frequency of overdraft fees that are common with people who take out payday loans. "Too many borrowers seeking a short-term cash fix are saddled with loans they cannot afford and sink into long-term debt," CFPB Director Richard Cordray said in a prepared statement. Cordray compared the situation to getting into a taxi for a cross-town ride and finding oneself stuck on a "ruinously expensive" trip across the country. He said the proposal would aim to "prevent lenders from succeeding by setting up borrowers to fail."

New regulations

Payday lenders would have to give borrowers at least three days' notice before debiting their account. Also, if the payday lender attempts to collect the money for the loan twice unsuccessfully, the lender will have to get written authorization from the borrower to attempt to debit their account again.

In a study published last year, the CFPB found that payday borrowers were charged on average \$185 in overdraft fees and bank penalties caused by payday lenders attempting to debit the borrower's account.

The CFPB is also proposing that auto titles no longer be used as collateral, which would effectively end the auto-title lending industry. A separate study found that one out of every five borrowers of auto title loans were having their cars seized after failing to repay the loan, which often had a secondary negative effect of taking away the means for the borrower to get to his or her job.—AP

US STOCKS EKE SMALL GAINS AFTER LISTLESS DAY OF TRADING

TELECOMMUNICATIONS STOCKS LAGGED REST OF THE MARKET

NEW YORK: US stocks perked up after a downbeat start to eke out a small gain Wednesday. Consumer companies were among the big gainers on a day when investors sized up a mixed bag of new data on the US manufacturing, housing and automobile industries. Telecommunications stocks lagged the rest of the market. Investors have been looking for clues in the latest economic figures to gauge the likelihood that the Federal Reserve will raise its key interest rate at the central bank's next meeting of policymakers later this month.

"The market is in a holding pattern," said Quincy Krosby, market strategist at Prudential Financial. "Everything now is being viewed via the eye of the Fed in order to ascertain whether and if we get a rate hike this summer." The Dow Jones industrial average rose 2.47 points, or 0.01 percent, to 17,789.67. The Standard & Poor's 500 index added 2.37 points, or 0.1 percent, to 2,099.33. The index remains within 2 percent of its all-time high set in May 2015. The Nasdaq composite index gained 4.20 points, or 0.1 percent, to 4,952.25. The latest gains helped nudge the Dow and S&P 500 higher for the year. The Dow is up 2.1 percent, while the S&P 500 is up 2.7 percent. The Nasdaq is off 1.1 percent. The major stock indexes opened lower on Wednesday, echoing a slide in markets in Europe and Asia as traders considered new reports on China's manufacturing sector, including one suggesting a weaker outlook for the nation's factories.

Investors also got an early look a mix of new US data. The Commerce Department said construction spending fell in April by the biggest amount in five years, dragged down by declines in housing, commercial construction and spending on government projects. Separately, car shopping site Kelly Blue Book projected that US auto sales slumped 7 percent in May, usually one of the strongest months of the year for the US auto industry. The drop is the biggest monthly sales decline since August 2010.

Lower sales

Most major automakers reported lower sales in May compared to the same month a year ago, including General Motors and Ford Motors. Shares in GM lost \$1.06, or 3.4 percent, to \$30.22, while Ford slid 38 cents, or 2.8 percent, to \$13.11.

Auto dealership chain CarMax also took a hit, dropping \$1.57, or about 3 percent, to \$52.09. Meanwhile, the Institute of Supply Management said that US factories expanded for the straight month in May, helped by a weaker US dollar. "It's another data point in the direction of things being OK," said Jason Pride, director of investment strategy at Glenmede. Investors' outlook perked up by late afternoon around the time when the Federal Reserve released its latest Beige Book, a snapshot of the US economy that the central bank's policymakers use to inform their actions.

Another key factor: the government's next monthly update on nonfarm hiring, due out today. "It's been a mixed picture, but with enough elements in the picture to keep the Fed in play to raise rates," Krosby said. Beyond economic data, investors kept an eye on companies reporting quarterly results or outlooks. Michael Kors led all



NEW YORK: A Wall Street sign adjacent to the New York Stock Exchange.—AP

companies in the S&P 500 index, climbing 6.6 percent after it reported that strong online sales and new store locations helped boost its fiscal fourth-quarter revenue. The retailer's results topped Wall Street's expectations. The stock gained \$2.83 to \$45.55.

Cracker Barrel vaulted 8.4 percent after the restaurant chain reported strong earnings growth for its fiscal third quarter. The stock added \$12.74 to \$164.22.

Other companies didn't fare as well. Under Armour slumped 3.9 percent after the sports apparel maker slashed its full-year revenue guidance, saying that the clo-

sure of Sports Authority stores will hurt its sales. A bankruptcy court recently decided to approve the liquidation of privately held Sports Authority, which sold Under Armour goods, rather than a restructuring or sale. Under Armour shed \$1.48 to \$36.25.

Markets in Europe closed lower. Germany's DAX fell 0.6 percent, while France's CAC 40 slid 0.7 percent. Britain's FTSE 100 lost 0.6 percent. The downbeat data on China's factories weighed on markets in the world's second-largest economy and elsewhere in Asia. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index fell 0.3 percent. Japan's

Nikkei 225 finished 1.6 percent lower, while South Korea's Kospi slipped less than 0.1 percent. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 slumped 1 percent.

Benchmark US crude oil slipped 9 cents to close at \$49.01 a barrel in New York. Brent crude, which is used to price international oils, slid 17 cents to close at \$49.72 a barrel in London. In other energy futures trading, natural gas rose 9 cents, or 4.1 percent, to close at \$2.38 per 1,000 cubic feet. Wholesale gasoline was little changed at \$1.62 a gallon and heating oil was also flat at \$1.50 a gallon.—AP

GM SAYS ITS TAKATA INFLATORS ARE SAFE; GOVERNMENT DISAGREES

DETROIT: General Motors announced its largest recall of Takata air bag inflators yet, but the nation's biggest automaker says the parts are unique to its trucks and SUVs and don't pose a safety risk.

The government's highway safety agency disagrees. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says GM must proceed with two recalls adding up to 1.9 million trucks from the 2007 through 2011 model years. The recalls were unveiled yesterday along with those from six other automakers totaling 4.4 million vehicles. They are part of the first round of a massive Takata recall expansion announced in May. A total of 17 automakers are adding 35 million-to-40 million inflators to what already was the largest auto recall in US history.

Takata inflators can malfunction and spew shrapnel into drivers and passengers when exposed to humidity and repeated hot-and-cold cycles. GM said that it would

begin the recall process in cooperation with the NHTSA even though it doesn't believe inflators in its trucks are unsafe.

The company said that no inflators in its trucks have ruptured during an estimated 44,000 crashes, or in testing of returned inflators. It also says the inflators were uniquely made for GM trucks and SUVs with greater venting and machined steel end caps. "We don't have any evidence at this point that these inflators aren't working as designed," spokesman Tom Wilkinson said. He wouldn't say if GM is trying to avoid recalls, which could be expensive for the company. But NHTSA spokesman Bryan Thomas said GM has filed paperwork declaring the inflators defective and they will be recalled. "The science clearly shows that these inflators become unsafe over time," he said. The GM resistance, although good-mannered, is surprising given the fact that the company was fined and is still being

monitored by NHTSA for covering up faulty small-car ignition switches two years ago.

Documents detailing the latest round of recalls were posted Thursday by NHTSA. They include recalls from Volkswagen, Ford, Daimler Vans, BMW, Jaguar-Land Rover and Mercedes-Benz. Recalls from eight other companies were posted last Friday.

The documents cover passenger air bags mainly in older models in states with high temperatures or humidity.

Recalls related to Takata in this round now total 16.4 million vehicles. The recalls are being phased in during the next three years. Takata uses ammonium nitrate to create a small explosion that inflates air bags in a crash. But the chemical can deteriorate over time when exposed to high heat and humidity and can blow apart a metal canister, spewing hot shrapnel. The inflators are responsible for at least 11 deaths and more than 100 injuries worldwide.—AP

ALBERS' 1ST HIT SINCE 2007 LEADS CHISOX OVER METS

NEW YORK: Relief pitcher Matt Albers doubled leading off the 13th inning for his first hit since 2007 and scored the tiebreaking run, his first in the majors, to help the Chicago White Sox beat the New York Mets 2-1 on Wednesday. Todd Frazier tied the score in the seventh with his major league-leading 17th homer for the White Sox, who overcame 13 walks by their pitching staff. Albers (2-4) relieved closer David Robertson to start the 12th and led off the 13th in his first at-bat since 2009. With the outfield playing shallow, he drove a 1-2 pitch from Logan Verrett (3-3) to left-center, and the ball rolled to the fence on two hops. Unaccustomed to baserunning, Albers didn't slide at second and steadied himself against second baseman Neil Walker to avoid coming off the base.

A 33-year-old right-hander who has spent most of his career in the American League, Albers had been 2 for 34 (.059) at the plate in the majors and had not even batted since 2009. He chugged to third on a wild pitch that went to the backstop and scored standing up on Jose Abreu's sacrifice fly.

ATHLETICS 5, TWINS 1

Danny Valencia had three hits, including a pair of doubles; Billy Butler added two hits and an RBI and Oakland beat Minnesota to win its fifth straight game. Jake Smolinski homered, Jed Lowrie singled twice and scored two runs and Sean Manaea (2-3) pitched six innings for his second career win. Pat Dean (1-2) took the loss and allowed four runs and nine hits over five innings in his third career start.

BREWERS 3, CARDINALS 1

Zach Davies had a career-high nine strikeouts over eight shutout innings and Milwaukee averted a three-game sweep with a win over St. Louis. Davies (3-3) allowed three hits and retired 13 in a row to finish the longest outing of his young career before yielding to Jeremy Jeffress. The closer gave up a pinch-hit solo homer to Brandon Moss before retiring the final three batters for his 13th save. The Brewers scratched out two runs in the first off Jaime Garcia (4-5) and added insurance with Martin Maldonado's solo homer in the sixth.

CUBS 2, DODGERS 1

Jon Lester pitched a four-hitter for his first complete game of the season, helping Chicago edge Los Angeles despite another lackluster night at the plate. The Cubs finished with just three hits against Mike Bolsinger (1-2) and two relievers after they managed only one in Tuesday night's 5-0 loss to Los Angeles. But one of Chicago's hits was a long, two-run homer to center field by Kris Bryant in the third inning, and Lester (6-3) took over from there. The left-hander struck out 10 and walked none in his second straight win, settling down quite nicely after Kike Hernandez's leadoff homer on his second pitch. He retired his last 15 batters and threw 113 pitches in his 13th career complete game and first since a 2-1 win at Pittsburgh on Sept. 15. The major league-leading Cubs (36-15) won for the seventh time in eight games.

ORIOLES 13, RED SOX 9

A wild, back-and-forth slugfest turned on a rare error by Boston second baseman Dustin Pedroia, and Baltimore overcame five Red Sox home runs to win. Matt Wieters had three RBIs for the Orioles, who reached a season high in runs without benefit of a homer. Hyun Soo Kim and Pedro Alvarez each had three hits, and Chris Davis drew four walks to help Baltimore secure its third win in 10 games. Xander Bogaerts extended his hitting streak to 25 games - second-longest in the majors this season - and Mookie Betts added two homers to go with the three he clocked on Tuesday night. After connecting in the first and second innings of this game, Boston's leadoff hitter had five home runs in seven at-bats. Chris Young also homered twice for the Red Sox, and David Ortiz had a solo shot to move into a tie with Jim Rice for third place on the team's RBI list with 1,451. Brad Brach (5-0) was the winner, and Zach Britton got four outs for his 15th save. Clay Buchholz (3-6) took the loss.

INDIANS 5, RANGERS 4

Yan Gomes' single scored Lonnie Chisenhall with the winning run in the 11th inning, and Cleveland defeated Texas. Alex Claudio (1-1) gave up Chisenhall's double to start the inning. Gomes, who came into the game batting .171, fouled off a bunt attempt on the first pitch before bouncing his hit up the middle for Cleveland's first walk-off win of the season. Tom Gorzelanny (1-0), called up from the minors before the game, got one out and the Indians avoided a three-game sweep against the AL West leaders. Juan Uribe's two-out single in the eighth broke a 3-all tie, but Texas rallied in the ninth off closer Cody Allen, who blew his first save in 12 chances this season. Mike Napoli hit a two-run homer for the Indians.



NEW YORK: A fan interferes as Chicago White Sox's Melky Cabrera attempts to catch a foul ball hit by New York Mets' James Loney during the sixth inning of a baseball game. —AP

TIGERS 3, ANGELS 0

Michael Fulmer took a no-hitter into the seventh inning and completed 7 2/3 dominant innings to lift Detroit over Los Angeles. The rookie right-hander shut down the Angels a day after they scored 11 runs on 17 hits. Fulmer (5-1) did not allow a hit until C.J. Cron's broken-bat single on a 98 mph fastball with two outs in the seventh. Fulmer allowed two hits, struck out eight and walked two. He has won his last four decisions and has a 3.24 ERA. Francisco Rodriguez got four outs for his 15th save. The Tigers had 11 hits, including three from third baseman Nick Castellanos. Matt Shoemaker (3-6) allowed two runs in seven innings while striking out eight for Los Angeles. The Angels had won nine consecutive home games against the Tigers.

BLUE JAYS 7, YANKEES 0

Aaron Sanchez (5-1) pitched 6-2/3 innings to win his fourth straight decision, Edwin Encarnacion had two RBIs and Toronto beat New York to complete a three-game sweep. Darwin Barney reached base four times and Michael Saunders had two doubles as Toronto won its season-high fifth straight and improved to 7-2 against the Yankees this season. The Blue Jays have won 10 of 13 following a season-worst five-game losing streak. Masahiro Tanaka (3-1) allowed two runs, one earned, in six innings but lost for the first time in 11 starts. New York has dropped three straight and six of eight. The Yankees have scored five runs in their past four games.

NATIONALS 7, PHILLIES 2

Max Scherzer had 11 strikeouts in eight sharp innings, Wilson Ramos hit a three-run homer and Washington finished a three-game sweep of Philadelphia. Ramos had three hits and four RBIs and Danny Espinosa also went deep for the Nationals, who have won four straight. NL MVP Bryce Harper missed his second straight game after bruising his right knee when hit by a pitch Monday. Scherzer (6-4) bounced back from a rough start against the Cardinals. He gave up two runs and five hits to earn his sixth win in seven decisions against Philadelphia. Tyler Goeddel hit a two-run homer for the Phillies, who have lost six straight and 10 of 12. Adam Morgan (1-4) allowed six runs and nine hits in six innings.

MARLINS 3, PIRATES 2

Adeiny Hechavarria hit a tiebreaking double in the eighth inning to lift Miami over Pittsburgh. Marlins starter Adam Conley took a no-hitter into the sixth and tied a career high with nine strikeouts in six shutout innings. David Phelps (4-3) pitched 1 2/3 scoreless innings in relief for the win and AJ Ramos got three outs for his 17th save. Ramos has converted 26 consecutive saves dating to last season Giancarlo Stanton, back in the Marlins' lineup after missing seven games with soreness in his right side, went 0 for 3 with a walk and two strikeouts. Matt Joyce tied the score for

the Pirates with a two-run single in the seventh. Tony Watson (11) took the loss.

BRAVES 5, GIANTS 4

Freddie Freeman homered leading off the 11th inning to give Atlanta a victory over San Francisco. Freeman's ninth homer, off Derek Law (1-1), came after Giants closer Santiago Casilla couldn't hold a 4-3 lead in the ninth. Chris Withrow (1-1) pitched a perfect inning for the win. The Giants lost right fielder Hunter Pence to a right hamstring strain in the fourth inning. Brandon Belt hit a two-run homer for San Francisco.

ROYALS 6, RAYS 3

Danny Duffy pitched six effective innings and rookie Whit Merrifield had two hits and scored a run as Kansas City beat Tampa Bay to complete a 6-0 homestand. The last time the Royals had a homestand of 6-0 or better was June 2-8, 1988, when they went 7-0. Duffy (1-0) yielded three runs and seven hits while walking none and striking out six in his longest outing since moving into the rotation on May 15. Royals relievers Joakim Soria, Kelvin Herrera and Wade Davis held the Rays scoreless over the final three innings. Davis picked up his 16th save in 17 chances. Merrifield has hit in his first 11 career starts, a Royals record. He has scored a run in nine consecutive games, which matches a club rookie record set by Mike Aviles in 2008. Lorenzo Cain was 3 for 4 with an RBI and two runs. Chris Archer (3-7) gave up five runs, four earned, over six innings. Curt Casali homered for the Rays.

REDS 7, ROCKIES 2

John Lamb overcame a liner off his left leg to throw a career-high seven innings and help Cincinnati beat Colorado. Lamb (1-3) allowed one run and kept the Rockies in the park a night after they tied a franchise record with seven homers. Billy Hamilton hustled out two doubles, including one that brought in two runs, and Jay Bruce added a solo homer to power the Reds. Tyler Chatwood (6-4) gave up five runs, four earned, in 5 2/3 innings.

ASTROS 5, DIAMONDBACKS 4

George Springer homered with two outs in the 11th inning to lift Houston over Arizona for the Astros' fifth straight win, and third in a row against the Diamondbacks. Springer hit the first pitch he saw from Tyler Clippard (2-2) off the facade in left-center for his 13th home run of the season and first career walk-off shot. Michael Feliz (4-1) pitched two innings for the win. Michael Bourn hit an RBI double to cut Houston's lead to 4-2 in the ninth before Jake Lamb hit a two-run homer off Luke Gregerson to tie it. Carlos Correa had a two-out RBI single and Evan Gattis followed with his homer to give the Astros a 3-1 lead in the fifth. Houston won for the eighth time in nine games. Mike Fiers allowed one run in six innings. — AP

VAN NIEKERK FOCUSES ON 400M AFTER TRACK FIRST

ROME: Wayde Van Niekerk made sprint history by becoming the first athlete to dip under benchmark times in the 100, 200 and 400m, but the South African insists his focus this season is wholly on the one-lap race. Having already clocked 19.94 seconds and 43.48sec in the 200 and 400m, Van Niekerk timed 9.98sec in the 100m in March to set an athletics first.

"That's crazy, great things could be ahead," American track great and 400m world record holder Michael Johnson said after Van Niekerk's feat. Reputed athletics statistician Jon Mulkeen, using IAAF scoring tables, ranked Van Niekerk as fifth after a survey of top sprinters over the three distances.

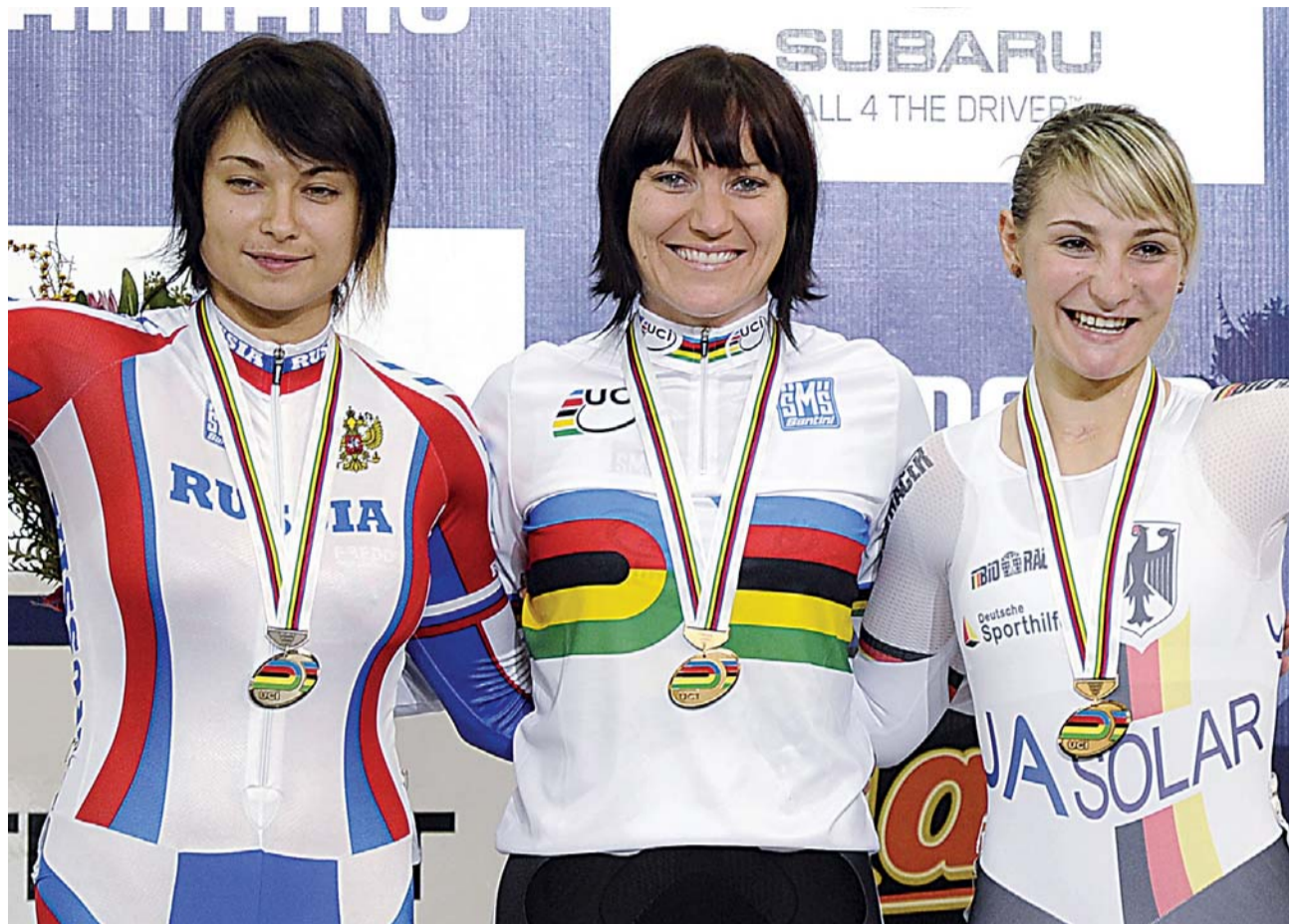
Usain Bolt sits in first position, his world records in the 100 and 200m making up for a modest personal best of 45.28sec in the 400m. Johnson is ranked second, ahead of American Tyson Gay and Jamaican Yohan Blake, followed by Van Niekerk. The Cape Town-born track star is relatively little-known on a global level despite scorching to world gold in the 400m in Beijing last year. But that promises to change, with news that the 23-year-old has inked in a training program later this month with Usain Bolt's coach Glen Mills in Jamaica ahead of the Rio Olympics. "We have some good relationship with coach Mills, I've got to know him on the circuit over the last few months and years," Van Niekerk said.

"I'm really excited to learn and pick up some good tips for myself as an athlete and hopefully it'll benefit me in the future," Van Niekerk added. "I've tried to improve my 100m times, and from there it's all about building some good momentum. I'm doing some agility work and now practicing the 400m. It's time to get kicked off in the European season and soak it up and build up some good momentum until we get to the Olympics."

But the South African was in no doubt about where his goal lay this season. "I'm really a big lover of the 100 and 200m, but I fell in love with the 400m and that's why I do what I do today," he said. "I've been going through a four-year process with the 400m. I've been struggling with a lot of injuries with the 100 and 200, so they've been neglected a bit more than the 400m. "At this very moment, I'm totally focused on the 400m and doing a bit of 200m during the European season. "Maybe in the future I'll start considering the 100 and 200m but for now I'm completely focused on the 400m." —AFP



Van Niekerk



MELBOURNE: In this Saturday, April 7, 2012 file photo, Australia's Anna Meares, center, Germany's Kristina Vogel, right, and Russia's Yekaterina Gnidenko celebrate with their medals won in the women's Keirin at the Track Cycling World Championships. —AFP

IOC TARGETS OLYMPIC MEDALISTS IN RETESTS

LAUSANNE: Olympic medalists from the Beijing and London Games will be targeted as a priority as the reanalysis of old samples is reinforced, the International Olympic Committee said on Wednesday. The IOC also said its budget for anti-doping tests is being doubled to \$500,000 (447,000 Euros) between now and August's Olympics in Rio. "The re-analysis program for the Olympic Games Beijing 2008 and London 2012 will be further extended," the IOC executive board said in a statement. "Together with WADA, we will target medalists from both Olympic Games for possible re-analysis."

The Board, which said "the fight against doping is a top priority", is holding a series of meetings in Lausanne until Friday. It said it had

established a "zero-tolerance" policy in order to "protect clean athletes" in Rio.

More than 50 new doping cases have come to light so far from the reanalysis of samples from the Beijing and London Olympics. The Board said it would "not hesitate to punish anyone" within its reach involved in doping or providing doping products and methods. "The budget for the pre-Olympic testing program is now doubled," said the IOC statement.

"The program comes on top of the extensive program already being carried out by International Federations and National Anti-Doping Organizations. "Special focus will be put on countries where the testing program is non-compliant—Kenya, Russia and Mexico. A special focus will also be put on those sports which WADA has

declared most affected." A meeting will be held in Lausanne on June 21 in order to "coordinate and harmonize the approach" of international federations towards the "eligibility of athletes" at future Games, the IOC said. The meeting will be attended by the IOC, international federations and national Olympic committees. There will also be a post-Olympics summit in October to review the doping program from the Rio Games. "The IOC will continue to push for all testing independent from sports organizations and to harmonize national and international testing under the leadership of a new entity," said the statement. "The IOC will lead by example and establish such an independent process, working with WADA, to be in place for the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018."

MCILROY PLAYS DOWN ZIKA IMPACT ON RIO DECISION

LONDON: Rory McIlroy has played down concerns that the Zika virus outbreak could threaten his participation at the 2016 Rio Olympics in golf's return to the Games after a 112-year absence. The Northern Irishman, who is at number three in the world rankings, had said last month that he would be monitoring the situation in Brazil and suggested

the dangers of contracting Zika could affect his decision to play.

Zika, which is carried by mosquitoes, is spreading rapidly in the Americas, according to the World Health Organization, but McIlroy said the advice he received had eased his fears. "I feel like the advice I've sought out over the past 10 days has put my mind at ease," the golfer told

British media. "It makes me more comfortable going down there knowing that, even if I do contract Zika, it's not the end of the world. It takes six months to pass through your system and you're fine."

Former world number ones Adam Scott and Vijay Singh, and fellow major winners Louis Oosthuizen and Charl Schwartzel, are among those

who have already announced that they will skip this summer's global sports showpiece in Rio de Janeiro. The Zika threat and scheduling conflicts could see other players follow suit, with US Masters champion Danny Willett among those saying he would keep an eye on the situation. The Rio Olympics take place from Aug. 5-21. —Reuters

DJOKOVIC ESCAPES DISQUALIFICATION, FACES DOMINIC THIEM FOR FINALS

PARIS: Novak Djokovic reached his 30th Grand Slam semi-final yesterday but his quest for a first French Open title was almost scuppered by disqualification. The world number one, a three-time runner-up and seeking a maiden Roland Garros crown to complete the career Grand Slam, defeated Czech seventh seed Tomas Berdych 6-3, 7-5, 6-3, claiming a place in an eighth French Open semi-final and sixth in succession.

But the 29-year-old Serb, who will face Dominic Thiem of Austria today for a spot in the final, admitted he was lucky to escape being kicked out of the tournament in the second game of the third set. Frustrated at missing a break point, Djokovic went to smash his racquet into the ground but it slipped out of his grasp before it flew into the backwall on Philippe Chatrier Court.

Had it hit the nearby line judge, who was forced to take evasive action, Djokovic would have been disqualified. Not surprisingly, he offered a speedy apology to chair umpire Eva Asderaki Moore and escaped with a warning for racquet abuse. "I was lucky there," admitted Djokovic. "I apologized to the people that have been in this particular situation with me and that could have been hurt by my racquet. "But, you know, it was never the intention. It was just some unfortunate bounce, but fortunate ending of that scenario. That's all I can say."

Yesterday's quarter-final was played out in a damp chill where temperatures nosedived to 12 degrees. But it didn't stop the Serb from claiming a 24th win in 26 meetings against Berdych and his 11th in a row. Djokovic raced through the first set with breaks in the seventh and ninth games before stretching out to a 4-2 lead in the second.

Wet conditions

Berdych broke for the first time to get to 3-4 but Djokovic restored his advantage in the 12th game for a two sets lead. The two men exchanged breaks in the first two games of the third before Berdych became angry over the deteriorating wet conditions. "It's a circus, just one big circus," he fumed at tournament referee Wayne McKewen who took the players off for a brief stoppage to allow the rain to pass.



PARIS: Serbia's Novak Djokovic celebrates next to a ball boy after winning his men's quarter-final match against Czech Republic's Tomas Berdych at the Roland Garros 2016 French Tennis Open. — AFP

On the resumption, Djokovic broke for 5-3 and took victory when Berdych dumped a service return into the net. Djokovic was playing for the third day in succession after a washout on Monday and just two hours of action on Tuesday. If he is to win an elusive French Open title, the top seed, who is also the Wimbledon, US and Australian Open champion, will have to play five days in six although he will start against Thiem as the favourite having won both their previous matches.

The 22-year-old Thiem defeated Belgium's David Goffin 4-6, 7-6 (9/7), 6-4, 6-1 to make the semi-finals of a Grand Slam for the first time. "The first two sets were really good tennis. For both of us it was not easy with the conditions, but I am really happy right now," said Thiem.

In front of a couple of hundred spectators huddled into a damp and chilly Court Suzanne Lenglen, the Austrian took an early 3-1 lead with a break, but Goffin then took control winning five out of the next six games to take the first set

6-4. Thiem, who had won more matches on clay than any other player this year (24), edged the second set tie-break.

The Austrian, who once beefed up his physique by lifting tree trunks, claimed the third set while back-to-back breaks at the start of the fourth meant the way was clear for Thiem to record one of the biggest wins of his career. Today's other semi-final will see second seed Andy Murray take on Swiss third seed and defending champion Stan Wawrinka. — AP

CTE RESEARCH MOVES ON, WITHOUT THE NFL'S MONEY

BOSTON: Researchers are moving ahead with efforts to develop a diagnostic test for chronic traumatic encephalopathy - even without the NFL's help. Some of the nation's top brain scientists gathered Wednesday at the Boston University School of Medicine for the start of a seven-year, \$16 million research project designed to find a test for CTE and identify its risk factors. For now, the disease increasingly found in former football players can only be diagnosed during an autopsy.

"This is a recipe for being able to define what CTE is in living human beings," said Jeffrey Cummings, director of the Cleveland Clinic's center for brain health and one of the principal researchers. "That's so important, because if you can diagnose something, then you can begin dealing with it." The DIAGNOSE CTE project had originally been set to receive money that the NFL earmarked for concussion research. But the league's complaints about Boston University researchers led the National Institutes of Health to pay for it with other funds.

Doctors at the meeting on Wednesday said they were looking ahead, to the research, and not dwelling on the political maneuvering that delayed its start. "I don't look back," said Robert Stern, the Clinical Core Director of BU's Alzheimer's Disease and CTE Center and another of the principal investigators. "The science is moving forward, and I'm so thrilled that we have the funding to do

the science right now." In describing the project for several dozen researchers, Stern's only reference to the funding dispute was in a timeline of the grant process. The project was approved in May 2015, with a planned start date of June; objections from the NFL reportedly delayed the official notification of the grant to Dec. 15 while the NIH arranged alternative funding.

Martha Shenton, a professor of psychiatry and radiology at Harvard Medical School, also declined to discuss the funding fight. "I'm really happy to be doing the science," said Shenton, another principal investigator. "I'm always surprised when politics get involved in something that's science." Researchers have linked CTE to repeated blows to the head - even those not forceful enough to cause concussions. Those who develop the condition can experience memory loss, confusion, mood swings, depression and suicidal urges.

Among those who have been diagnosed with CTE posthumously are Pro Football Hall of Famers Ken Stabler, Junior Seau, Frank Gifford and Mike Webster. Some, like Seau and former Chicago Bears defensive back Dave Duerson, descended into depression and killed themselves. The project hopes to look at men aged 45-74, including 120 former NFL players and 60 who played in college. (Another 60 who have never participated in contact sports or served in the military or show any symptoms of traumatic brain injury will serve as a control group.) — AP

SHEARY'S OT WINNER GIVES PENS 2-0 SERIES LEAD

WASHINGTON: Rookie forward Conor Sheary scored in overtime to lift the Pittsburgh Penguins to a 2-1 victory over the San Jose Sharks in game two of the Stanley Cup finals on Wednesday. Sheary's goal gave the Penguins a 2-0 lead in the best-of-seven series against the Sharks, who managed to score a late equalizer in the third period to send the contest into overtime. Sidney Crosby started the play on the decisive goal by winning a draw in the Sharks' zone back to defense man Kris Letang.

The puck ended up in the possession of Sheary, who beat San Jose goalie Martin Jones with a quick wrist shot through traffic. "It just worked out perfectly," Sheary said of the game winner. "I am just trying to play in the moment and the best I can. It is pretty surreal." The series shifts to California for game three on Saturday where the Sharks are hoping have better success at home after dropping both games in Pittsburgh. Jones has been the Sharks' best player in the first two games of the series, which is expected to be a close one and could go the distance as both games were decided by late goals.

But the Sharks' defense has also looked nervous at times. This is the first time in their 25 year franchise history they have reached the NHL championship. "We got to find a way to score some five-on-five goals. We got to

find a way to battle through. There is not a lot of room out there," said Sharks coach Peter DeBoer. "You got two teams playing tight hockey and one mistake costs you the game."

Pittsburgh has had the edge in speed so far and their top players-Crosby, Evgeni Malkin and Phil Kessel-have outplayed the top players for San Jose. Crosby scored 36 goals and had 85 points during the regular season, and he has 16 points in the playoffs. Sheary played the first half of the season in the minors. The first year left winger now has four key playoff goals for the Penguins, including a goal in their 3-2 win in game one.

Phil Kessel also scored for the Penguins, who are 4-2 in overtime in the playoffs. "We wanted to hit them with our best game," said Pittsburgh defense man Ben Lovejoy. "In the first half of the year it was tough. We had to learn how to win. We had to band together from the third defensive pairing to the top line centre. 'When we do that we become a very difficult team to play against.' Pittsburgh was controlling the play Wednesday only to have San Jose defense man Justin Braun tie it 1-1 with just over four minutes left in the third in front of a crowd of 18,600 at the CONSOL Energy Center arena. The victory came 24 years to the day the Penguins won their second Stanley Cup in as many years in 1992 by sweeping the Chicago Blackhawks.—AFP

INJURY ENDS KAKA'S COPA AMERICA DREAM

LOS ANGELES: Brazil's Copa America injury crisis deepened on Wednesday after veteran striker Kaka withdrew from the squad with a hamstring injury three days before the team's tournament opener against Ecuador. The 34-year-old Orlando City attacking midfielder had been looking forward to competing in his first Copa America but saw his dream dashed after suffering an injury at Brazil's

Los Angeles training base. "Kaka has had discomfort in training and safety will be auditioned MRI, which showed a small problem. Doctors indicate between 15 and 20 days of recovery," said Brazilian Football Confederation official Gilmar Rinaldi.

The former FIFA World Player of the Year will be replaced by Sao Paulo's Paulo Henrique Ganso. Brazilian officials have already spoken to Sao Paulo to secure

Ganso's participation and are awaiting formal clearance from CONMEBOL.

Kaka's injury ends his hopes of participating in the Copa America for the first time. This year's special edition of the tournament kicks off on Friday in Santa Clara when hosts the United States face Colombia. Kaka's withdrawal brings to five the number of Brazilian players who have withdrawn from the squad through injury.

Kaka himself had been an injury replacement for Bayern Munich's Douglas Costa. Other players ruled out through injury include Ricardo Oliveira Santos, replaced by Jonas, goalkeeper Ederson and Barcelona midfielder Rafinha. Brazil open their Copa America Centenario campaign against Ecuador at the Pasadena Rose Bowl on Saturday.—AFP

WINDIES FACE S AFRICA IN TRI-NATION OPENER

PROVIDENCE, GUYANA: Hosts West Indies and South Africa get a tri-nation One-Day International series under way today in Guyana with both teams in rebuilding mode following last year's World Cup. Australia, who lifted the global 50-over title for the fifth time with a comprehensive victory over New Zealand in the final in Melbourne 14 months ago, enter the fray on Sunday when they face the Caribbean side before tackling the Proteas two days later.

This competition, which follows a three-month period when international cricket has been almost completely dominated by the T20 format, will be played on a triple round-robin basis with three matches each in Guyana, St Kitts and Barbados before the one-off final in Bridgetown on June 26. Despite a historic double triumph of the men's and women's teams at the World T20 in India, West Indies go into the competition as underdogs based on a track record of inconsistency in this version of the sport, both in terms of performance and selection.

Jason Holder leads a side that sees the return of all-rounder Kieron Pollard and spinner Sunil Narine. Pollard's return to the ODI team for the first time since the controversial abandonment of the India tour in October 2014 has sparked considerable debate given that he did not play in a regional 50-over competition in January—supposedly a requirement for selection.

Narine will be in West Indies colors for the first time in more than six months following another period of rehabilitation after his bowling action was deemed illegal during the limited-over leg of the Sri Lankan campaign near the end of 2015. There is no place in the squad for Chris Gayle, Andre Russell, Dwayne Bravo and Darren Sammy, all key members of the World T20 title-winning side but who have apparently been ignored for failing to represent their respective territories at the start of the year, when they were all involved in the Big Bash in Australia.

De Villiers key

Since losing a pulsating World Cup semi-final to New Zealand and then suffering a shock series defeat in Bangladesh, South Africa have restored their ODI fortunes with close series wins over the New Zealanders, India and England. Notwithstanding their all-round strength, they will rely heavily on outstanding batsman and captain AB de Villiers for runs and inspiration. He missed their lone warm-up fixture, against a West Indies Board President's XI in Port of Spain on Sunday, the same day that de Villiers and his Royal Challengers Bangalore side fell nine runs short of a run chase in the Indian Premier League final. In his absence, former captain Hashim Amla's polished 92 at the top of the order anchored South Africa's total of 280 for nine.

The tourists' bowlers did not have things their own way however with the home side getting to 127 for three off 24.1 overs when rain ended the day/night match, the fixture being ruled a tie on the Duckworth/Lewis scoring system. West Indies, without Holder and a couple of other key players who were returning from IPL duty, lost two warm-up matches against a Barbados Select XI, heightening local fears about their competitiveness, especially given the lack of recent ODI match experience. That amounts to only a three-match series in Sri Lanka—which they lost 3-0 — since being thrashed by New Zealand at the quarter-final stage of the World Cup. —AFP



Pakistan fast bowler Mohammad Amir

ICC CHIEF BACKS PACER AMIR TO TOUR ENGLAND

LONDON: International Cricket Council chief executive David Richardson expects Pakistan quick bowler Mohammad Amir to tour England next month, saying the former spot-fixer's return is a "good thing" for the sport. Amir, 24, featured in two one-day internationals against New Zealand in January and the Pakistan Cricket Board have approached their English counterparts for help in securing a visa for the talented left-armer.

He was given a six-month prison sentence, of which he served half in a UK young offenders' institute, on charges of conspiracy to accept corrupt payments and conspiracy to cheat at gambling after bowling deliberate no-balls during the Lord's Test in August 2010. The same spot-fixing scandal also saw fellow pacer Mohammad Asif and then Pakistan Test captain Salman Butt given jail sentences by an English court and bans by the ICC.

Although now cleared to play again by the ICC, Amir's criminal conviction could see him denied an entry visa to Britain for Pakistan's tour of England, where they will play four Tests—the first at Lord's — five one-day internationals and a Twenty20 between July and September.

"I always think you get handed out your punishment, you serve it and then who are we to say 'never again?'," Richardson told AFP in an interview at The Oval in south London on Wednesday following the launch of the 2017 ICC Champions Trophy one-day tournament. "He (Amir) has certainly shown a willingness to make sure he sets an example now by asking younger players to learn from his mistakes. "Certainly, I think it's a good thing that he's back playing," the 56-year-old added. "I'd be surprised if he (Amir) doesn't end up coming (to England)."

'Traditional' Cook

If Amir does make the tour, he could be bowling to England captain Alastair Cook. This week saw the 31-year-old Cook become the youngest player to score 10,000 Test runs when he reached the landmark in a series-clinching win over Sri Lanka at the Riverside. Cook's method of patient accumulation is at odds with the modern-day trend for big-hitting exemplified by the likes of West Indies' Chris Gayle, Australia's David Warner and recently-retired former New Zealand captain Brendon McCullum. But Richardson said left-handed opener Cook's approach was none the worse for that.

"I like the fact he's not in the Gayle, Warner or McCullum mould," explained Richardson. "He's a more traditional opening batsman, as we've known them to be." The former South Africa wicket-keeper added: "It's a good example to young cricketers that you don't have to hit every second ball out of the park to be successful."

But while Test cricket remains well-regarded in England and Australia, it is struggling to maintain interest elsewhere in the world, with some players opting to take part in lucrative domestic Twenty20 events instead. The ICC cricket committee, who are meeting at Lord's this week, are looking at introducing two divisions into Test cricket as a way of reviving interest.

More day/night Tests, following the success of the Australia-New Zealand clash at the Adelaide Oval in November, are also on the agenda. However, any changes will have to be approved by the full ICC board. Richardson cited a renewed understanding by Test nations to provide fixtures with "context" if the "primacy of international cricket is going to be sustained well into the future". —AFP

ENGLISH CLUBS SURPASS £4 BILLION MARK: STUDY

LONDON: English football's financial might was demonstrated anew on Thursday as business analysts Deloitte revealed that England's 92 professional clubs generated record £4 billion (\$5.8 billion, 5.2 billion Euros) revenues in 2014-15. Fired by the all-powerful Premier League, which saw revenues climb three percent to £3.3 billion, England's professional clubs breached the £4 billion threshold for the first time. Premier League clubs generated £1.5 billion more than their nearest rivals in Germany's Bundesliga and with a new £5.14 billion television rights deal due to kick in this year, their dominance is set to continue.

"The pace of football's financial growth in two and a half decades is staggering," said Dan Jones from Deloitte's Sports Business Group. "By half-time of the

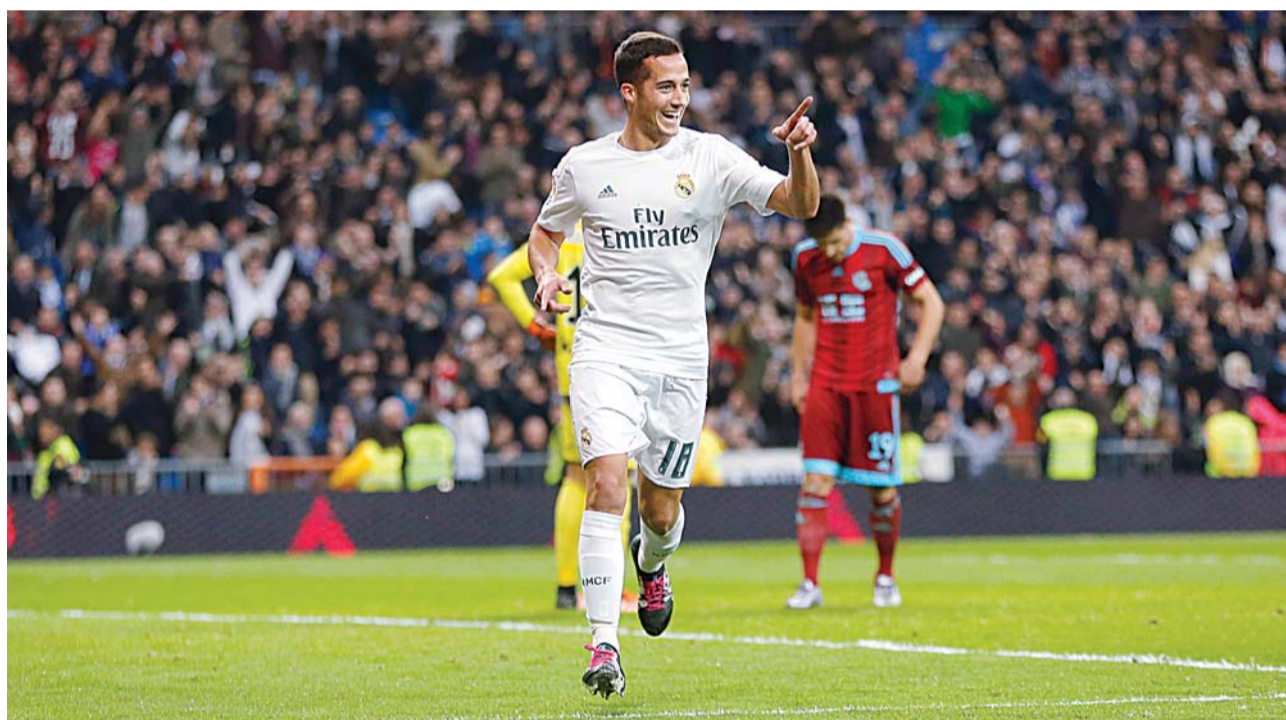
second televised Premier League game next year (season), more broadcast revenue will have been generated than during the whole of the First Division season 25 years ago. "For the first time, the Premier League leads the football world in all three key revenue categories-commercial, match-day and broadcast-and this is driving sustainable profitability. "When the enhanced new broadcast deals commence in the 2016-17 season, operating profits could rise as high as £1 billion."

Deloitte's 25th Annual Review of Football Finance revealed that Premier League clubs recorded a second consecutive year of pre-tax profits in the 2014-15 financial year (£121 million), which last happened in 1999. While the revenue increase was a modest three

percent, operating profitability (£546 million) was the second highest it has ever been. Combined gross expenditure on new players reached a record high of £1.1 billion and wage costs rose seven percent to exceed £2 billion for the first time.

Losses in Italy, France

Accordingly, the league's wage/revenue ratio rose from 58 percent to 61 percent, but Jones said: "This represents the second lowest level since 2004-05 and is 10 percentage points lower than in 2012-13. "In fact, in the last two years, only 30 percent of revenue increases have been consumed by wage growth, whereas in the five years to 2012-13 this figure was 99 percent." —AFP



MADRID: In this Wednesday, Dec 30, 2015 filer, Real Madrid's Lucas Vazquez celebrates after scoring a goal during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Real Madrid and Real Sociedad at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium. —AP

YOUNG PLAYERS GET A CHANCE IN THE SPOTLIGHT AT EURO 16

MADRID: Many nations are betting on youth at the European Championship, giving promising youngsters a chance to shine in France. Some of the top nations have included up-and-coming players in their squads for this month's tournament, with some giving up experience to make way for young talent.

Spain coach Vicente Del Bosque left out of his squad veteran forwards such as Fernando Torres and Diego Costa to open up space for the uncapped Lucas Vazquez. Germany coach Joachim Loew named a few young midfielders as well as exciting attacking playmaker Leroy Sane. England and Portugal are betting on a couple of 18-year-old teenagers - Manchester United striker Marcus Rashford and newly signed Bayern Munich midfielder Renato Sanches.

Some of the youngsters will be making the trip to France mainly to gain experience, but many will end up getting a chance to show off their talent and help their teams succeed. Here are some of the promising stars to watch for at the European championship:

LEROY SANE (GERMANY)

The 20-year-old attacking midfielder returns to the national team after making his debut last year. The agile player had a breakthrough season with Schalke, impressing with his dribbling, as well as his ability to work as a playmaker. Sane attracted headlines when he debuted in the Champions League by scoring a goal against Real Madrid last year. The youngster is the son of former Senegal star Souleyman Sane, who had a distinguished career in Germany, and Olympic rhythmic gymnastics medalist Regina Weber.

MARCUS RASHFORD (ENGLAND)

After a tremendously fast rise through Manchester United's youth squads, the 18-year-old established himself as the team's No. 1 striker, scoring eight goals in 17 appearances. He scored for the club in his debut both in the Premier League and in the Europa League, as well as in his England debut. He made the England squad despite coach Roy Hodgson having plenty of options to choose from in attack, being named the team's fifth forward for the tournament in France.

RENATO SANCHES (PORTUGAL)

The 18-year-old midfielder became Portugal's youngest ever player to be called up for a major tournament with the senior squad, surpassing the mark previously held by Cristiano Ronaldo. A product of Benfica's youth teams, he made it to the top squad this season and earned a transfer to Bayern Munich for 35 million Euros (\$40 million). Bayern chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge said the club had been following Sanches for a long time, calling him a "dynamic and technically skilled midfielder who'll add even more strength to our team."

LUCAS VAZQUEZ (SPAIN)

The uncapped Lucas Vazquez was the surprise addition to Spain's squad, making it to the team instead of veterans Diego Costa and Fernando Torres. The 24-year-old forward impressed with Real Madrid while replacing regular starters when they had to deal with injuries late in the season. The speedy forward showed his cool when he scored one of the penalties in the shootout that gave Real Madrid the Champions League title against Atletico Madrid. —AP

ROONEY EMBRACES ENGLAND DUTIES

WATFORD: England captain Wayne Rooney called Euro 2016 his "biggest test" as an international player on Wednesday and revealed that he has spoken to newly appointed Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho.

Rooney's immediate focus is on leading England out against Portugal at Wembley on Thursday in their final warm-up game before Roy Hodgson's men head to France. But with Mourinho having visited United's training centre for the first time this week, there was another Portuguese on the minds of the journalists who attended the pre-match press conference at England's team hotel in Watford, north of London.

"Obviously I've spoken to him. It's exciting times for Manchester United, and for myself and the other players," Rooney said when asked about the new man in the Old Trafford hotseat. "He's one of the best managers in the world and very successful, so I'm looking forward to it." Mourinho, who tried to sign Rooney during his second spell as Chelsea manager, signed a three-year contract with United last week as a replacement for the sacked Louis van Gaal.

Rooney will not play under Mourinho until United's pre-season tour of China in July at the earliest and in the meantime, he has a sixth major tournament with England to attend to. The call-up awarded to Marcus Rashford, Rooney's precocious United team-mate, has stirred memories of the former Everton striker's own stunning emergence as an 18-year-old at Euro 2004 in Portugal. Now 30, with 110 caps and a record 52 goals to his name, he is the senior figure in the England set-up and is relishing the challenge presented by his first tournament as captain.

'Injury-free'

"I feel it's gone well. We were unbeaten in the qualifying campaign and I've scored a lot of goals since I've been captain," Rooney said. "But now is the big test. I think this is the biggest test now, going into a tournament. We're away a long time as a group of players and I need to be a good example to those players and hopefully help us be successful. "I don't think I have to look after them, but if I can set the right example around the hotel or on the training pitch, then they will see that. "There's a lot of players going to their first tournament who won't know what to expect. It is different to turning up every couple of months and playing one or two games. So if I can try and give them a bit of insight into that, then of course I will do that." When England last played Portugal, in the quarter-finals of the 2006 World Cup in Germany, Rooney was sent off after planting his foot into the nether regions of Ricardo Carvalho. —AFP



SUNDERLAND: In this Friday, May 27, 2016 file photo, England's captain Wayne Rooney applauds to his teammates during the international friendly soccer match between England and Australia at the Stadium of Light. — AP

MESSI: I SIGNED DOCUMENTS UNDER FATHER'S INSTRUCTIONS

BARCELONA: Lionel Messi denied having knowledge of the tax issues that led to fraud charges against him, saying yesterday he signed documents without reading them because he trusted his father and the advisers responsible for managing his finances. "I didn't know anything," Messi said while testifying in his tax fraud trial. "I only worried about playing football."

Wearing a dark suit and tie, Messi sat alongside his father in front of the judge and listened to other testimony for nearly four hours before being called to testify in the third day of the trial. The Barcelona player looked impatient in court at times, looking down and trying to stretch his legs. The left foot that helps him thrive on the soccer fields kept bouncing impatiently underneath the chair.

Three counts of fraud

Speaking for less than 15 minutes, he said he never suspected of any wrongdoing when his father would ask him to sign contracts or documents. "I signed what he told me to sign because I trusted my father," Messi said. "I trusted my father, and the lawyers said that I could (sign the documents)." He said he didn't know that part of his income was going through companies created in countries such as Uruguay, Switzerland and Belize, which authorities alleged was done to lower the player's tax burden in Spain. "The only thing I knew is that we signed deals with different sponsors and they paid for me to do advertisements, photos and things like that," Messi said. "But I didn't know how this money arrived or where it was going."

Messi's father, Jorge Horacio Messi, had reiterated in his testimony that his son didn't know the details of his contracts or the structures created in other countries to handle his income from image rights. "I didn't think it was necessary to inform him of everything," Messi's father said.

Messi and his father are facing three counts of tax fraud and could be sentenced to nearly two years in prison if found guilty of defrauding Spain's tax authority of 4.1 million euros (\$4.5 million) from 2007-09. They are not likely to face any jail time but could be fined and made to forfeit possible future tax benefits. Both deny wrongdoing, and the money owed was already paid back.

The trial is expected to end Friday, and the verdict and sentencing are expected next week. Hundreds of journalists and a few onlookers were in front of the Barcelona court house when Messi and his father arrived. Authorities had prepared a special operation to control the crowd and protect the player. Some people showed their support to Argentina star, while a few yelled words against him, including asking him to "give the money back" and telling him to "go play in Panama."

Offshore accounts

Messi was also being investigated by Spanish tax authorities after his name was among those released in the probe of international offshore accounts, known as the Panama Papers, although he was not charged for those allegations. When the player left the court house, many fans applauded. Because of the trial, the Barcelona player has missed part of Argentina's preparations for the Copa America, which starts Friday in the United States.

The trial is centered on alleged unlawful activities of Messi's father, but authorities said the player knew enough to also be named in the case. Officials said that although Messi was mostly unfamiliar with tax issues, there was sufficient evidence to believe he could have known and consented to the creation of a fictitious corporate structure to avoid paying some of his taxes in Spain.

On Wednesday, Messi's lawyers tried to show the court that the Barcelona forward was not familiar with the tax issues. Witnesses called to testify said Messi had little knowledge of the alleged corporate structures. Tax inspectors earlier yesterday testified that they found evidence that the structures were used by Messi's father to avoid paying the taxes that the player supposedly owed in Spain. A witness on Wednesday said Messi's father knew they would avoid taxes by using companies in other countries, but contended that it was a legal practice. —AP



BARCELONA: Barcelona's Lionel Messi, right, and his father Jorge Horacio Messi sit in court. — AP



SALZBURG: Spain's Hector Bellerin, left, challenge for the ball with South Korea's Yun Suk-young during a friendly soccer match between Spain and South Korea. —AP

EURO HOLDERS SPAIN THUMP SOUTH KOREA IN FRIENDLY

PARIS: Alvaro Morata and Nolito both hit a brace as Spain warmed up for the defense of their European Championships crown by thrashing South Korea 6-1 in a friendly on Wednesday. The Spaniards were slightly under-strength as coach Vicente Del Bosque rested players from Real Madrid and their city rivals Atletico following their exertions in the Champions League final on Saturday.

But it hardly mattered as a dominant Spain scored three times before the break Salzburg, Austria, through David Silva's sublime free-kick, Cesc Fabregas and Nolito. Morata netted a second-half double and Nolito grabbed his second as Spain recorded a morale-boosting thrashing of the Koreans, whose consolation seven minutes from time came from Ju Se-Jong.

Nolito had struck his first two international goals in a 3-1 friendly win over Bosnia and Herzegovina in Saint Gallen, Switzerland, on Sunday. Wednesday's friendly in Salzburg saw former Real stopper Iker Casillas preferred to Manchester United's David De Gea in goal.

Arsenal full-back Hector Bellerin, who made the squad of 23 following Real defender Dani Carvajal's injury in the Champions League final, made an appearance in a side that again included a strong Barcelona presence in the form of Gerard Pique, Jordi Alba, Andres Iniesta and Sergio Busquets. However, having played in Real's extra-time win on penalties over Atletico, Real's Sergio Ramos and Lucas Vazquez, and Atletico's Juanfran and Koke were missing and will be the last

to join up with the Spanish squad on June 4.

In other friendlies on Wednesday night, world number two ranked Belgium needed an equaliser a minute from time from Everton's Romelu Lukaku to save their blushes in Brussels against Finland. Kasper Hamalainen gave the 61st ranked Finland, who came into the match on the back of four straight defeats, a 53rd minute lead.

Despite fielding the likes of Chelsea's Eden Hazard, Belgium lacked creativity and struggled to break down disciplined and defensive opponents in a half-empty stadium. In a match between two qualified sides, Czech Republic got the better of Russia 2-1 in Innsbruck, Austria. Aleksandr Kokorin gave Russia a sixth-minute lead but Tomas Rosicky equalised from a volley with the outside of his foot on 49 minutes.

Russia hit the post four minutes from time as Czech goalkeeper Petr Cech, their record cap-holder, let an Igor Denisov shot slip through his hands. But in the last minute, Tomas Necid bagged the winner. Last Friday, the Czechs had romped to a 6-0 win over Malta. The Netherlands may not be going to the Euros after a disastrous qualifying campaign but they beat qualified Poland 2-1 in Gdansk.

Vincent Janssen gave the Dutch a 33rd minute lead but Artur Jedrzejczyk equalized on the hour mark. Newcastle United midfielder Georginio Wijnaldum scored the winner on 76 minutes for the Dutch, who held another Euros qualifier in Ireland to a 1-1 draw last Friday. —AFP

GUNDOGAN SIGNS FOR MAN CITY

MANCHESTER: Manchester City has signed midfielder Ilkay Gundogan from Borussia Dortmund, the first addition to the squad since Pep Guardiola took charge. The 25-year-old Germany international, who signed a four-year contract, has been ruled out of the European Championship with a knee injury.

Gundogan says after five years at Dortmund "the opportunity to work with a coach like Pep Guardiola is

something I am really looking forward to and I am flattered to be the first signing the club has made this summer." City director of football Txiki Begiristain says he hopes fans enjoy the "work ethic and technical ability" of Gundogan, who he describes as "intelligent and versatile." City won the League Cup last season and has to contest a playoff to reach the group stage of the Champions League.

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Sports

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PARIS: Serbia's Novak Djokovic throws his racket away after missing a return in the fourth round match of the French Open tennis tournament against Tomas Berdych of the Czech Republic at the Roland Garros stadium. — AP

Djokovic faces Thiem for final