



Kuwait ranks 51 out of 163 in Peace Index



6

Russia challenges Airbus and Boeing with new jet MC-21



Euro 2016 match schedule included in this issue



Ramadan Timings	
Emsak:	03:03
Fajer:	03:13
Shrooq:	04:48
Dohr:	11:47
Asr:	15:21
Maghreb:	18:47
Eshaa:	20:18

150 FILS
NO: 16899
40 PAGES

EXPATS, EMPLOYERS WORRIED OVER SAUDI TAX PROPOSAL

REFORM PLAN PROPOSES INCOME TAX ON EXPATS



Min 30°
Max 46°
High Tide 03:27 & 13:55
Low Tide 08:42 & 21:35

Ramadan Kareem

HOW TO RECEIVE THE HOLY MONTH

By Hassan T Bwambale

The auspicious month of Ramadan has arrived. People invest in this occasion in different ways and with different actions and activities. Some people make this an occasion for laziness, idleness, sleep and neglecting acts that would accrue abundant rewards. They may swap the day for the night by sleeping during the day and staying awake at night eating, drinking and watching TV. Others find it as a good opportunity to socialize, shop, relax or travel.

But if you intend to maximize your time in Ramadan in order to amass abundant rewards, I suggest that you plan your Ramadan days and nights meticulously and invest your time wisely in doing whatever will bring you closer to Allah. Avoid squandering your time and opportunities during and after Ramadan. You never know when Almighty God will cause you to die.

On the other hand, some people know very well their purpose of life and invest in every opportunity that comes their way to get closer to Allah Almighty. To them, Ramadan is a golden opportunity on a silver platter. Such people receive this blessed month of Ramadan happily and enthusiastically as they believe that it is an opportunity to attain forgiveness for their sins and make a new start.

Continued on Page 13



JEDDAH: A man works at a construction site in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. — AP

JEDDAH: Expatriates in Saudi Arabia and their Saudi employers alike voiced unease about a proposal the government is studying to impose income tax on foreign workers to make up for falling oil revenues. Around a third of the 30 million inhabitants of the world's top oil exporter are foreigners, many of them drawn, despite ultra-conservative social restrictions, by the absence of tax and the lure of salaries higher than they could secure at home.

A National Transformation Plan of economic reforms, released on Monday, said 150 million riyals (\$40 million) had been set aside for preparing and implementing tax on expats, but Finance Minister Ibrahim Alassaf said no decision had yet been taken. Still, the news that such a proposal was being formally studied by the government was enough to alarm some foreign workers. "If they impose the income tax on expats and do not offer any benefits in return, such as house ownership and the right to own assets under my name, then I would pack up and leave," said Ammr Baghdane, an American manager at a retail group.

No further details have been released on what such a tax might entail for residents-a category that includes all non-Saudi citizens. Among the unanswered questions: whether it would cover all income levels and all professions, or how long it would take to introduce. "I guess it depends on the rate they're talking about. If it's five percent it would annoy me but wouldn't make me leave my career here and resign. If it was 20 percent then I wouldn't stay, that's for sure," said a British banker in Riyadh. Like some of the others who spoke to Reuters, the banker asked not to be identified, as his

Continued on Page 13



ALEPPO: A man sits on the rubble of a destroyed building following reported air strikes by government forces in the rebel-held Shaar neighborhood of the northern city Aleppo yesterday. — AFP

IS LOSING TERRITORIES

ALEPPO: Syrian rebels reopened a vital supply line by capturing two villages yesterday from the Islamic State group as it came under pressure on a range of fronts in Syria and Iraq. IS has controlled large areas of both countries since declaring its self-styled "caliphate" in 2014 but is losing territory in the face of separate assaults.

In Syria, pro-government forces, rebels and a US-backed Arab-Kurdish alliance are all engaged in offensives to squeeze the extremists' supply lines, while Iraqi forces are advancing on the IS-held city of Fallujah. The Damascus regime has also kept up its assaults on opposition areas, particular in second city Aleppo, where at least 15 civilians were killed yesterday in bombing by pro-government forces that struck near a hospital.

North of the city, rebel fighters reopened a key supply route linking their two main bastions in Aleppo province: Marea and Azaz. In late May, IS captured several villages between the two towns, cutting off access to the Turkish border for Marea's opposition forces. But yesterday, rebels backed by Islamist groups launched simultaneous attacks from both Marea and Azaz, squeezing IS jihadists out of the villages of Kafr Kalbin and Kaljibrin and reopening the road, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

Director Rami Abdel Rahman said IS fighters even pulled back from towns and villages east of the supply route, including

Dudyan near the border. Government bombing meanwhile outside the Al-Bayan hospital in Aleppo's Shaar neighborhood killed 10 people, according to Observatory. An AFP photographer saw bodies wrapped in bloodied white bags outside the hospital, while inside, the force of the blast had knocked supplies and parts of drywall onto the floor. Al-Bayan hospital said a staff member was wounded in the strikes and the building had been evacuated.

'Life' back in Marea

According to the Observatory, five other civilians-including two children-were killed in attacks on the Al-Marja and Al-Maadi districts. Rescue workers known as the White Helmets gave a higher toll of 23 dead in rebel-held areas. The Observatory later reported seven rebel fighters killed in bombardment of Aleppo's eastern Al-Sakhr neighborhood. IS forces had long coveted Marea and battered the town for over a year with deadly car bombs and suicide attacks. Its advance last month forced thousands to flee Marea and sparked fears that the rebels would lose one of their last major northern hubs to the jihadists. "Life is gradually returning to Marea," journalist Mamoun Khateeb said from the flashpoint town yesterday.

Khateeb himself was in Azaz when the IS offensive began and was only able to return to his hometown of Marea yesterday.

Continued on Page 13

MPS PASS 'PUBLIC TENDERS LAW'

News in brief

Bomb hoax forces EgyptAir plane to land in Uzbekistan

CAIRO: An EgyptAir flight from Cairo to Beijing made an emergency landing in Uzbekistan yesterday after a bomb threat that turned out to be a hoax, the airline said. Uzbek authorities checked the Airbus A330 and found no explosives on board, EgyptAir Chairman Safwat Musallam said. "The authorities there cleared the plane for departure after they searched the plane and found no threats," he said. Musallam said an anonymous call was received warning there was a bomb on board after flight MS955 had left Cairo, and it landed at the nearest airport. Uzbek authorities confirmed the plane had made an emergency landing at an airport in Urgench in the west of the country.

Ministers to issue the necessary decisions to form such committees and will determine the mechanism of their operations. Other amendments to the law obliges the Central Tenders Committee (CTC), which awards state projects worth tens of billions of dinars, to accept the decision of the petitions committee whose opinions currently are consultative. MPs debated whether the petitions committee, which study challenges by contractors who lose tenders, should be under the Council of Ministers or remain with the CTC.

Continued on Page 13

Former US astronaut charged with murder

BIRMINGHAM: Astronaut James Halsell Jr seemed the very definition of someone with the right stuff. An Air Force Academy graduate and decorated test pilot, he commanded or piloted five space shuttle missions. NASA even turned to him for leadership as it was picking up the pieces after the Columbia disaster in 2003. Now, a decade after his retirement from the space agency, the 59-year-old Halsell's life has taken a shocking turn: He is charged with murder after an early morning car wreck Monday killed two young sisters on a lonely stretch of highway in Alabama. State police said alcohol and speed may have been factors in the crash. The Tuscaloosa News reported that court documents showed troopers said they found an empty package of sleeping pills and an empty wine bottle in a motel room where Halsell had stayed before the crash.



SIDON: Children look at Lebanese 'musaharati' Mohammed Fanas as he wakes up observant Muslims for their overnight 'suhur' meal before the day's fast yesterday, during the holy month of Ramadan in the old city of the southern port of Sidon. — AFP

Smartphone 'terror alert' app launched in France

PARIS: A new smartphone app designed to alert users to possible terror attacks was launched by the French government yesterday, amid growing security concerns over the Euro 2016 football tournament. The application, which will be free to download in both French and English, will send users a warning "in case of a suspected attack," said the Interior Ministry, which has piloted and introduced the service. It will also alert users-who must agree to be geolocated-about "unexpected events" such as the breaching of flood defenses. Alerts will appear on the app less than 15 minutes after the incident has been confirmed by authorities, and will be customized according to user's exact location. App users will also be able monitor alerts for up to eight different geographical zones, allowing them to check on family members or friends. It will also provide advice on how to stay safe, with information tailored to each particular situation, the ministry added.

NIQAB BAN TO TAKE EFFECT JULY IN TICINO SWITZERLAND

GENEVA: Veiled women interested in visiting Switzerland must be forewarned that the Swiss canton of Ticino will enforce a law banning the wearing of the niqab (face veil) as of July 1, the Kuwaiti embassy in Bern said yesterday. The statement added that the canton includes several cities and districts, noting that a niqab wearer could be fined up to \$1,000, or even more if she refuses to remove the niqab. The embassy urged Kuwaitis planning to visit the canton during the summer holidays to be careful to avoid trouble with the Ticino authorities. — KUNA

WALK FOR CHARITY WITH 'THE STEPS' AT AL-HAMRA

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: The Project 5 Miles launched on Tuesday its third annual Ramadan healthy activity 'The Steps' at the Al-Hamra Mall in Kuwait City. The Steps aims to encourage fasters during Ramadan to stay active and do good deeds. The event will continue until June 27 from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm daily (including weekends.)

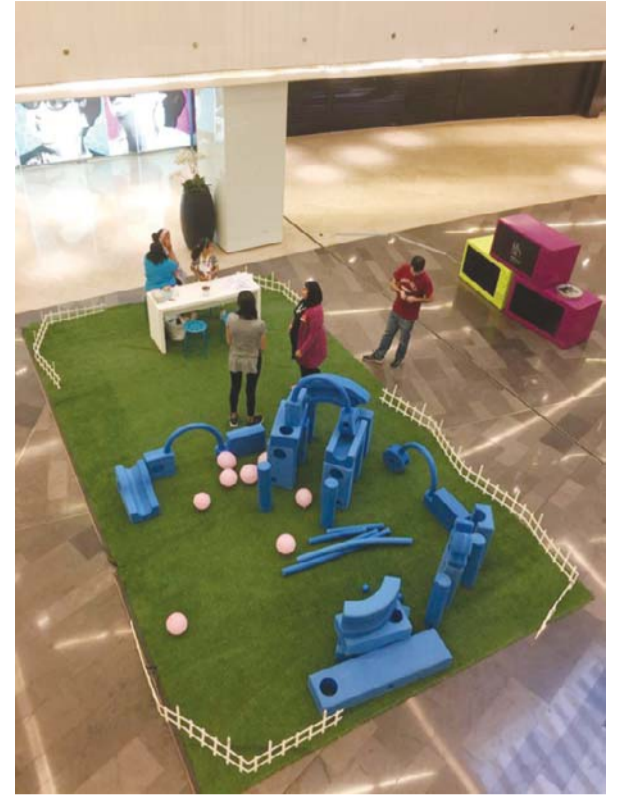
The daily walk for charity ties people's physical activity to charitable donations. For every five laps participants walk, KD 1 is donated by Boubyan Bank to a chosen charity. This year Project 5 Miles has chosen cataract surgery patients in Africa to be the beneficiaries of 'The Steps' charitable drive.

"Participants can do whatever form they like. They can walk, they can run, as they wish," said Reem Al-Hasawi, PR spokeswoman for Project 5 Miles. "They can make use of all the mall floors from basement to the upper levels. Participants will only walk and Boubyan Bank will donate on behalf of you. The more you walk the more money is donated," she said.

The Steps accepts all ages, nationalities and genders. The Steps are also organizing lectures by doctors and a play area for children at the event. "We want to involve kids in this activity, they can also run along with their parents, if not, we created a very nice place for them in the basement level where they can leave their kids while they walk," she said. Project 5 Miles is a voluntary organization conducting several health activities including running, walking and jogging for five miles throughout the year in Kuwait.

"We do it for free, there is no need to register, and you just have to show up with your running shoes. The project we conduct is sponsored by Boubyan Bank, part of their CSR," she said. Project 5 Miles, a 'walk for a cause' calls upon people of Kuwait to participate and register. "Please join and be fit," she added.

Saleh, a Kuwaiti participant said this was his first time to join such activities. "I was not sure about joining, but when I saw that it was for charity, I just decided to come and join the project," he explained.



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A Wonderful World

KU INCREASES ENROLLMENT MINIMUM LIMIT IN TWO YEARS

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Kuwait University (KU) announced yesterday increasing the minimum acceptance rate for student's enrollment in the academic year 2017/2018, only one day after Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa denied intentions to do so next year. According to the new decision, high school students in the scientific sector must finish with at least a GPA of 75 percent to be eligible for enrollment in two years, while arts sector's students must finish with at least a GPA of 80 percent. The minimum enrollment limit remains the same for the 2016/2017 academic year - 70 percent for the scientific sector and 78 percent for the arts sector.

Blackouts

Municipal Council member and head of Farwaniya committee Nayef Al-Sour condemned what he described as 'massive blackouts' in some areas over the past two days because of the extreme heat during the daytime, despite reassurances by Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) officials who claimed that power supplies are secure this summer. Sour added that people in those areas were not even warned or notified before the outages, that if they happened for regular maintenance. Accordingly, he urged MEW to explain the reasons for these blackouts.

Not found

A police force that had been surrounding Sheikh Athbi Al-Fahd's house to arrest him yesterday left the house perimeter because he was not there. Notably, the force had raided the former state security chief's diwaniya in Abu Al-Hassaniya but did not find him there, so they went to his house and besieged it. A court has sentenced Sheikh Athbi, Sheikh Khalifa Al-Ali and Ahmed Al-Dawoud to five years in prison with labor each in the 'Fintas Group' case.

Statistics

The citizen services department at the Public Authority for Housing Welfare issued a report with statistics about transactions done in May, noting that 20,904 transactions were processed without any petitions made to Housing Minister Yasser Abul.

HAJJ REGISTRATION DEADLINES ANNOUNCED

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs announced that the last date to register non-Kuwaiti pilgrims planning to go for hajj this year would be August 8, while registration of Kuwaiti pilgrims would continue until Aug 29. The ministry announced that the electronic registry system would reject any pilgrim who fails to fill in all the e-forms needed. Meanwhile, the ministry set special conditions prior to approving the prices set by each hajj convoy. The ministry also banned price variations according to nationality and urged all convoys wishing to increase prices to justify the increase, leaving the final decision to it.

Bonds issued

The Central Bank of Kuwait yesterday issued a three-month bond with a total value of KD 240 million in order to regulate liquidity in the banking sector. Meanwhile, the central bank urged local banks to monitor any suspicious charity transactions and reject depositing any sums in bank accounts belonging to bodies or charities that have not been licensed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MSAL).

PAAET separation

Treasurer of applied education colleges' fund at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) Shaaban Al-Rasheedi highly commended the finance ministry's decision on rejecting the separation of the education and the training sectors at PAAET because it was against the government's rationalization and austerity plans. "There are 60,000 students in PAAET and we cannot manipulate their future," he stressed, noting that separation calls would affect the number of diploma graduates and thus the government might have to hire expats instead. Rasheedi called for restructuring PAAET in a way to help make His Highness the Amir's vision about turning Kuwait into a regional financial and commercial hub come true.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives greetings from Ramadan well-wishers.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives greetings from veteran astronomer Dr Saleh Al-Ujairi. —Amiri Diwan photos



Dr Saleh Al-Ujairi greets His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



Former MP Jassem Al-Saqr greets His Highness the Amir.

In my view

THANKS TO MARTYRS

By Abdullah Abbas Bowair



local@kuwaittimes.net

It gives me great pleasure today to talk about my family and the families of martyrs. The happiest moments of my life are when I talk about your and your children's sacrifices, for which all words of appreciation in this world are not enough, for people who willingly sacrificed their lives and blood in defense of this beloved land - Kuwait.

My story is not a modern one. It goes way back to January 1991 when coalition troops attacked the aggressor's troops who were unlawfully in Kuwait. Along with some friends, me and my brother were driving in Jabriya when we came across an Iraqi checkpoint. One of the guards asked for our IDs. We held newly-made fake ones that had been issued for us by someone in the military a short while earlier because some of us were with the military and others were posted in some sensitive government positions.

Handing over the IDs to the Iraqi soldier, he smiled at me and said: "This is a brand new ID... have you just received it? Why didn't you put it in the sun for a while to make it look like an old one? This ID is fake and you will be executed for it," he said, and kept repeating his words about execution. He then took me to Jabriya police station, where screams could be heard from everywhere.

A police officer told me to wait until the officer in-charge arrived. Well, to cut it short, thanks be to Allah, we were later released. What I am trying to say is that I have experienced those days with many others of our children and some of us were released while others were martyred for the love of this land.

RAMADAN WELL-WISHERS CONTINUE CONGRATULATING AMIR, SABAH FAMILY

QATARI AMIR VISITS KUWAIT TODAY

KUWAIT: Well-wishers continued to arrive at Al-Sabah Diwan in Bayan Palace on the second day of the Holy Month of Ramadan to congratulate His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-

Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and Al-Sabah family on the occasion. The reception, attended by citizens and expatriates, reflected the spirit of the

one family and fraternity of Kuwait, Amiri Diwan said in a statement Tuesday, wishing a happy return for such an occasion with blessings on all. Meanwhile, the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-

Thani and his accompanying delegation are set to arrive to Kuwait today on a brotherly visit, during which he will congratulate His Highness the Amir on the Holy month of Ramadan. — KUNA



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives greetings from Archbishop Anba Bishoy Bigol, Patron of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Kuwait.



Director General of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences Dr Adnan Shihab Eldin greets His Highness the Crown Prince.



MP Adnan Abdulsamad greets Sheikh Jaber Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah.



Bader Al-Kharafi greets Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah.



KUWAIT: The Ambassador of Japan to Kuwait Takashi Ashiki visited Kuwait Times and discussed matters of mutual concern with Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan.—Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

IOM KUWAIT HOLDS CAMPAIGN ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

KUWAIT: The International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Kuwait launched its second awareness campaign at shopping malls around the country under the auspices of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Mohammed Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

The campaign, titled 'Together Against Trafficking in Persons' (#TogetherAgainstTraffickingInPersons), aims to familiarize the public with the difficulties experienced by trafficked persons, which include deception by the recruiter, abuse and exploitation by the employer. It also aims to build the public's ability to identify victims of trafficking, and publicize resources from the government of Kuwait that are available to victims of trafficking.

not know the true extent of the negative impact of trafficking in persons and also the definition of the efforts of the State of Kuwait and humanitarian role and leadership position in combating this crime which occurs worldwide," said Iman Ereiqat, IOM Kuwait Chief of Mission.

The current campaign builds on the previous awareness campaign which was conducted by IOM in September 2015 under the auspices of Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs.

This positive cooperation between the International Organization for Migration and the State of Kuwait is a reflection of the interest of important and sensitive issues of vulnerable groups of society and its commitment to social responsibility.

ALGHANIM INDUSTRIES INTRODUCES GENDER DIVERSITY AGENDA IN UAE

KUWAIT/UAE: Alghanim Industries yesterday announced that it is introducing improved policies to promote gender diversity across the GCC. The improved policies are applied and in effect across all Alghanim Industries departments and businesses in Kuwait, and now are being introduced across the company's businesses in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), including Wendy's franchising operation, Kirby Building Systems factory in Ras al-Khaimah, sales offices in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, as well as KIMMCO sales office in Dubai. Alghanim Industries is one of the largest conglomerates in the Middle East, with more than 30 businesses in 40 countries.

These new policies, which reflect Alghanim Industries' ongoing commitment to gender diversity, will provide the following in the company's UAE businesses:

- Up to 90 days paid maternity leave (time can be used before and/or after delivery)
- Option to extend unpaid maternity leave for a total of 4 months
- Guaranteed two-hour nursing break during working hours, until child reaches the age of two
- Policies ensuring Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination in all aspects of employment

These policies are in-line with Alghanim Industries' gender diversity agenda, which aims to increase the number of working women in the private sector. Alghanim Industries CEO Omar Kutayba Alghanim is the driver of this initiative, which he discussed at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, earlier this year; this same topic grounded his opening remarks at the 'Women in the Corporate World' Conference hosted by Alghanim Industries and Gulf Bank last month in Kuwait.

The Middle East gender gap is three times larger than most developed nations, IMF statistics show. These same statistics suggest, further, that if the gap was narrowed by just one-third, regional GDP would grow by 6 percent a year, which translates to a staggering \$1 trillion annually. Alghanim Industries recently established a Diversity and Inclusion Steering Committee to focus on these sorts of issues.

In addition to improved maternity benefits, the company has instituted a number of recruitment and retention policies that support women. The goal, in all cases, is to help make the corporate culture more appealing to women and their families. Commenting on this initiative, George Lambros, Alghanim Industries Chief Human Resources Officer, said: "Increasing our maternity leave benefits is just the first step. We continue to change and improve our policies to encourage the hiring and retaining of more women. Alghanim Industries is at the forefront of this pivotal issue, and we hope to drive positive change in all markets."

Also commenting on the change, Phil Broad, Vice President of Food and Beverage at Alghanim Industries, oversees Wendy's Middle East, said: "We are delighted with this shift in policy, which further highlights Alghanim Industries as a forward-thinking company. Our approach to gender equality sets us apart in the region and gives us a competitive advantage in our ability to draw and employ women - half of the UAE's talent pool. We will continue developing Wendy's Middle East, ensuring that we provide our customers with the quality and value they deserve at the best prices." Alghanim Industries, which acquired the Wendy's master franchise in 2015, currently owns and operates 17 stores in the UAE, and plans to open restaurants across the Middle East and North Africa regions.



KUWAIT: Movenpick Hotel hosted a 'graish' event for media personalities to commemorate the advent of the holy month of Ramadan. — Photos by Joseph Shagra

Ramadan Quiz 2016

Answer & Win Fabulous Prizes

Kuwait Times annual Ramadan Competition returns with one YES or NO question published every day throughout the holy month of Ramadan. All thirty coupons with the correct answers must be sent to the newspaper to be eligible for the raffle draw. All coupons must be received by Friday 8th July 2016 at Kuwait Times Office.

Kuwait Times Ramadan Quiz Answer & Win

4. What is the greatest verse of the Holy Quran?

Aayat al-Kursi.

YES NO

Date: _____
 Name: _____
 Civil ID: _____
 Tel: _____
 Email: _____

Espresso Ramadan Kareem Baby sebamed

Young Voices

'KUWAIT IS MY HOME AND MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS ARE HERE'

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: Nearly a quarter of Kuwait's entire population is under the age of 14 and yet with the exception of school assemblies, we never hear their voices. During Ramadan, Kuwait Times likes to publish a special series that engages with its readership in a more direct, personal way to learn their concerns, issues and viewpoints.

This Ramadan, we will chat with some of our youngest readers about their lives in Kuwait, in an attempt to see the world through their eyes. What do they see for the future of our beautiful country? What would they improve and how would they change it? By listening to their future plans, stories, and experience in Ramadan, we can remind ourselves and hopefully our readers of the ties that bind us all together as a species. These are the voice of Kuwait's future and we invite them to share their thoughts with us here.

Kandace Mae Umandap, a student at The New Kuwait Philippines International School, underwent a traumatic experience in Manila. She was with her mother when her mom's bag was snatched by two men riding on a motorcycle. Kandace was shocked watching her mom cry. At that time, they were supposed to watch a movie at one of the malls nearby in Makati City. "In Kuwait, there is no bag snatching. I don't see motorcycle riders here, so we are safe," the small girl told Kuwait Times of her unforgettable experience.

Kandace was born in the Philippines but was brought to Kuwait months after her birth. "I love Kuwait in many ways - this is my home and my family and friends are here. I don't have many friends in the Philippines, so I love Kuwait," she said.

Kandace wants to become a doctor when she grows up, and vowed to learn karate and kickboxing techniques so she can protect and fight for her mom in the event of an unexpected attack. "This is part of my goal - to be a good karate expert," she laughed. She likes hot chocolate at Crumbs Restaurant and enjoys the zip line on Gulf Road with her parents during days off. "I like to play with my friends by the seaside, but also I love to play with my classmates at school," she said.

At home, she likes playing with her dolls and watching 'Frozen' and 'Cinderella.' "I also liked a small kitten I had before, but my mom gave it away because I got an allergy. The doctor told my mom to remove any pets at home. But I cried - I loved my 'Memeng' (the name of her kitten)," Kandace said.

Kandace is a Christian, but she knows about Ramadan - no food in the day and candies in the night!

If you would like your child to be interviewed for this special series, please email us at local@kuwaittimes.net





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KUWAIT: These photos provided by the Interior Ministry shows some of the beggars arrested yesterday.

TWENTY BEGGARS ARRESTED SO FAR

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Security forces arrested 20 female and male beggars in various areas around Kuwait, the Ministry of Interior's (MoI) security media and relations department announced yesterday. The department announced that the beggars included:

- Ghazi Ali (56), Indian sponsored by Khalaf Hamed Al-Shemmari
- Warda Nabil Shawqi (32), Jordanian sponsored by husband Hamza Ali
- Zainah Hamza Ali (6), Jordanian sponsored by father Hamza Ali
- Mohammed Hamzah Ali (5), Jordanian sponsored by father Hamza Ali
- Lakshoma Banjala (30), housemaid arrested near mosque and sponsored by citizen Tafla Hezam
- Abeer Jum'a Mohsen Zulaikhat, Jordanian sponsored by Rami Sultan Mohsen Zulaikhat (Article 22)
- Farida Khalil Tawfiq Al-Jonaidat, Jordanian sponsored by Hamed Zaki Hilal Nada (Article 22)
- Do'aa Mohsen Al-Sayyed Mustafa, Egyptian sponsored by Omran Kamel Khalil Al-Gada' (Article 22)
- Rowayda Salitti Al-Saleh, Jordanian sponsored by Majid Mohsen Ahmed Obaid (Article 22)
- Badriya Fazza' Sha'ban Al-Zabeel, sponsored by Turki Mohasen Ahmed Zulaikhat (Article 22)
- Ali Khayyami Mohammed Mansour, Egyptian sponsored by Al-Sahel Al-Janounbi fish restaurant (Article 18)
- Amal Hussein Juda Jaber (Non-Kuwaiti)
- Mustafa Mohammed Darweesh, Jordanian on tourist visa sponsored by Palzio Hotel
- Warna Poraji, Sri Lankan sponsored by Wael Ismael Al-Ballam (Article 20)
- Ahmed Ali Ali Moghtan, Yemeni infiltrator.
- Najima Mohammed Sahidu, Sri Lankan sponsored by Bashayer Al-Hana Livestock Establishment (Article 18)
- Fijaya Judissi, Indian reported absconding (Article 20)
- Mufida Fuad Saeed Fares, Jordanian sponsored by Rabe' Badee' Saeed Fares, Jordanian (Article 22)
- Yousef Jassir Mohammed Awwad, Jordanian sponsored by Farhan Mefleh



Al-Azmi's farm (Article 18)
 • Mubarak Mohammed Sahrif, Indian sponsored by Mohammed Sahrif Meraci (Article 22)

The department explained that the suspects were arrested while wandering and begging in crowded places and outside mosques, and that various sums of money they had collected was found with them. The department added that legal measures are currently being taken against both the beggars and their sponsors, noting that some had been already deported and banned from returning to Kuwait and that others were referred to juvenile police pending further measures. Moreover, the department underlined that all sponsors were summoned so that proper measures could be taken against them, including blacklisting and rejecting any future sponsorship applications they file.

Injuries

A 22-year-old Iranian male yesterday sustained a hand injury when his vehicle collided into another in Salmiya, said security sources. Meanwhile, a 20-year-old Kuwaiti man broke his collarbone when he fell while playing football in the courts outside Aqua Park, said security sources. Also, a 37-year-old Indian sustained a head injury when his vehicle collided into another along King Faisal Expressway.

KUWAIT RANKS 51 OUT OF 163 IN GLOBAL PEACE INDEX 2016

2 OUT OF 20 MENA COUNTRIES

- Violence impacted Kuwait's economy by \$18.47 billion over the last year, 9 percent of Kuwait's GDP, or \$4921 per person.
- The economic impact of violence on the global economy totaled \$13.6 trillion or 13.3 percent of gross world product, equivalent to 11 times the size of global foreign direct investment.
- The economic impact of violence was \$137 trillion over the last decade - greater than global GDP in 2015.
- The world became less peaceful in 2016, reinforcing an underlying decade-long deterioration in world peacefulness driven primarily by increased terrorism and higher levels of political instability.
- Refugees and displaced persons have risen dramatically over the last decade, doubling to approximately 60 million people between 2007 and 2016, nearly 1 percent of the world's population.

LONDON: Kuwait is ranked as the 51st most peaceful country in the Global Peace Index (GPI) 2016 released today, a deterioration of 15 from last year's rank, and is ranked second out of the 20 countries in the Middle East and North Africa region.

The tenth edition of the GPI highlights a stark and growing inequality in global levels of peacefulness as the gap between the most and least peaceful countries continues to widen. The study, by international think-tank the Institute for Economics and Peace, finds that, while 81 countries improved, the deterioration in another 79 outweighed these gains, meaning that peace declined at a faster rate than in the previous year. Despite this some of the most peaceful countries are now recording historically high levels of peace.

In the last decade Kuwait has deteriorated in peace by six percent largely due to deteriorations in the indicator measuring political instability. The score for the Middle East and Africa (MENA), the least peaceful region in the world in last year's report, dropped further as regional conflicts intensified, dragging down global peacefulness. So intense is the current concentration of violence and conflict in MENA that, when considered separately, the rest of the world's average peace levels improved. Three of the five biggest declines in peace occurred in the region including Yemen, Libya and Bahrain.

Steve Killelea, Founder and Executive Chairman of the IEP observed, "As internal conflicts in MENA become more entrenched, external parties are increasingly becoming more involved and the potential for indirect or 'war by proxy' between nation states is rising. This was already evident in Syria with the conflict between the Assad regime and multiple non-state actors, and is now spilling into countries such as Yemen."

The global deterioration in peace in 2015 was driven by increased terrorism and higher levels of political instability. While the majority of terrorist activity is highly concentrated in five countries - Syria, Iraq, Nigeria, Afghanistan and Pakistan - the breadth of terrorism is spreading, with only 23 percent of countries in the Index

not experiencing a terrorist incident. Europe, which was once again the most peaceful region in the world, saw its average score deteriorate in this year's report in the wake of terrorism incidents in Paris and Brussels, with deaths from terrorism in Europe having more than doubled over the last five years.

Refugees

The number of refugees and displaced persons has risen dramatically over the last decade, doubling to approximately 60 million people between 2007 and 2016, nearly 1 percent of the world's population. There are now nine countries with more than 10 percent of their population displaced in some form; 20 percent of Somalia and South Sudan's population respectively, and over 60 percent of Syria's.

While the global economic impact of violence dropped by 2 percent when compared to last

Violence expenditure

"In 2015, violence containment expenditure in Kuwait totaled \$18.5 billion PPP, a decrease of two percent from 2008. At nine percent of GDP this was ranked 61st in the world. Addressing the global disparity in peace and achieving an overall 10 percent decrease in the economic impact of violence would produce a peace dividend of \$1.36 trillion. This is approximately equivalent to the size of world food exports."

Europe was once again ranked the most peaceful region in the world. The largest improvement since last year occurred in Central America and the Caribbean, while South America also made progress in its levels of peacefulness. MENA had the largest decline, followed by Sub-Saharan Africa, Europe and Asia Pacific respectively. MENA, which was already ranked the lowest in the 2015 GPI, had the biggest deterioration in peace this year, as the civil wars in Syria and Yemen deepened and led to increased external intervention. Yemen, whose long-standing political crisis exploded into outright civil war in early 2015, witnessed a large slump, driven by the rising casualty rate, a large increase in the number of refugees and internally displaced people, and higher levels of terrorist attacks by both al-Qaeda and IS.

Goal 16

The report also provides an audit of the available data to measure Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals - the UN member states formal recognition of the critical nature of peacefulness in advancing global development. It finds that, while there is some existing data to track progress and therefore hold member states accountable to meeting their targets, serious investment will need to be made to measure the goals.

The report concludes with new research into resilience and what the IEP identifies as 'Positive Peace'; the attitudes, institutions and structures which sustain peace. It finds that, over the course of the decade, 13 times more lives were lost in natural disasters in low Positive Peace countries than in countries which are high in Positive Peace.



year's report, it was still a staggering \$13.6 trillion in 2015, equivalent to 11 times the size of global foreign direct investment. This represents 13.3 percent of world GDP, or \$1,876 per person. In the last ten years the economic impact of violence was \$137 trillion; greater than global GDP in 2015.

Steve Killelea remarked, "The increasing internationalization of internal conflicts has coincided with UN peacekeeping funding reaching record highs in 2016: it was the largest improved indicator in this year's report with more deployed peacekeepers and more countries being up-to-date with their UN peacekeeping dues. However, peacebuilding and peacekeeping spending remains proportionately small compared to the economic impact of violence, representing just two percent of global losses from armed conflict.



ZAIN CELEBRATES OUTSTANDING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

'YOU ARE OUR WONDERFUL WORLD'

KUWAIT: Under the theme 'You are our Wonderful World,' Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, hosted a special ceremony to honor the outstanding achievements of top high school graduates among all high schools in Kuwait. The ceremony was held at Zain's main headquarters in Shuwaikh, and witnessed the presence of the company's Chief Executive Officer Eaman Al-Roudhan and The Assistant Director of Student Activities at the Ministry of Education, Faisal Maqseed.

Every year, Zain strives to play a leading role in recognizing the achievements of top-performing students who excelled in their educational journey, and this year the company was determined to gather outstanding students and their families together to recognize their efforts and accomplishments.

During her speech, Roudhan said, "today we celebrate a new generation of Kuwait's top-performing students, a generation that worked hard and exerted great efforts in reaching their academic goals. I take this opportunity to congratulate you and your families



for your achievement today". Roudhan continued: "we all understand the feeling of happiness and pride you're experiencing following all the effort you exerted to achieve your dreams. Zain shares in your joy, and together with your families, we are exceptionally proud of you. You are an example to your peers, and are well on your way to building a strong founda-

tion for your future lives." Roudhan went on to stress that, as a leading national company, Zain firmly believes in the importance of contributing to the progress of the education sector, and looks to empower and prepare the youth for the important roles they will play in the further progress of the country. Zain is fully committed to sup-

porting young people in their development through a wide variety of community activities and events, including graduation ceremonies, award programs, and educational and career development initiatives. The company's solid CSR strategy is what drives Zain to continue being committed to support all sectors of society in a positive manner.

WORKER DIED OF NATURAL CAUSES AT HOME, NOT WORKPLACE: KOC

KUWAIT: Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) has denied recent reports posted on social media networks regarding the death of one of the company's workers at his workplace. The deceased, who worked for a contractor affiliated with Burgan

Drilling Company, passed away from natural causes at the workers' residence not a workplace, KOC's Spokesman, Deputy CEO for Administrative and Financial Affairs Saad Al-Azmi stated in a press statement. —KUNA



KFH PR and Voluntary team preparing the Breakfast meals

KFH LAUNCHES 'FEED A FASTING PERSON' CAMPAIGN

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) launched; Feed a Fasting Person; campaign as part of its Ramadan activities. This step comes as part of KFH's charity activities that underline its Islamic identity, while reinforce its firm commitment towards its social and humanitarian responsibility.

KFH public relations team along with a number of volunteers at the bank distributed breakfast meals at Bayan Palace that is teeming with fasting people waiting for Maghreb Azan. KFH's efforts in Ramadan reinforce bank's role in the field of social responsibility, and contributes in easing the suffering of low-income segments of society.

It is worth noting that KFH has up its sleeves an eventful Ramadan program as it will distribute breakfast meals and organize breakfast feasts in recognition of the efforts exerted by workers and those who are on duties during iftar time. The bank will distribute confection (Gergean), visit hospitals, distribute Ramadan gifts to patients, reinforce the voluntary activities and so forth.

KFH is keen on reinforcing the humanitarian values among society individuals, spread love and brotherhood and strengthen the traditions which Kuwait society has honored and cherished for generations during the holy month of Ramadan.

International

Three killed in Turkey attacks

Page 8



THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 2016

CLINTON, TRUMP KICK OFF THEIR WHITE HOUSE WAR

WASHINGTON: The protagonists are set: Hillary Clinton versus Donald Trump. The battleground? Fifty states. Voters will now be treated to a historic, bruising spectacle as two of America's most polarizing figures wage war for the White House. On the Democratic side is a candidate rich with political experience, a pioneering if controversial stateswoman embracing her chance to become the nation's first female commander-in-chief.

The Republican standing in her way is the brash billionaire businessman and political neophyte who rewrote the campaign playbook as he vanquished his many rivals for the nomination with a mudslinging unparalleled in modern American politics. The ferocity of the primaries-Americans and many around the world had never seen a modern US presidential race play out with such insulting and denigrating attacks-promises to be just a preview of what is in store for the general election.

Clinton, the former secretary of state, euphorically seized the Democratic Party mantle Tuesday, seizing the nomination in dramatic fashion with primary wins in four of six states including the grand prize, California. On perhaps the biggest night of her political career, as she declared a historic milestone for women, she assailed Trump for his divisiveness and his trademark slogan, "Make America Great Again." "That's code for let's take America backward," she said, "back to a time when opportunity and dignity were reserved for some, not all." "Don't let anyone tell you that great things can't happen in America," she said.

Trump was pledging a tough fight, choosing to lay into Clinton in his own presumptive victory speech and accusing her and her former president husband Bill of enriching themselves by "selling access, selling favors, selling government contracts." And he signaled there would be no honeymoon, announcing a "major speech" for early next week in which he will address "all of the things that have taken place with the Clintons."

'No out-Trumping Trump'

The trajectory of the race is unlikely to soar into loftier issues. Norman Ornstein, a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, feared the race will be less a battle over substance like the economy or foreign policy than a clash of two outsized personalities. "Clinton has deep knowledge and detailed platforms, but because Trump doesn't have any, nobody focuses on the differences," Ornstein told AFP in an interview. "And because we have two candidates who are more distrusted than trusted, more disliked than liked, this becomes a race to the bottom."

Clinton will be looking to exploit the various controversies ensnaring Trump-most recently his criticism of a Mexican-American federal judge, which sparked uproar within his own party-as a way to enhance her own resume. "There's no out-Trumping Trump, he is an extremely talented unique character," said Tim Miller, a former communications adviser to Republican Jeb Bush, one of the many candidates defeated by Trump in the primaries. "Getting down in a mud-wrestling fight with him is going to be a loser. She has to focus on the issues that drive her base" of minorities and women and inspire young voters, Miller said.

'Temperamentally unfit'

But she will also need to make a compelling case for supporters of her Democratic rival, Bernie Sanders, to embrace her campaign to defeat Trump in November. Trump, beating Clinton to the punch Tuesday, extended an olive branch to Sanders' supporters, saying: "We welcome you with open arms."

Sanders refused to capitulate Tuesday, vowing to "continue the fight" to the final Democratic primary in the capital Washington next week, and then on to the Democratic convention in July. But the Vermont senator meets on Thursday with President Barack Obama-perhaps a sign that Obama will play a significant role in uniting a deeply divided Democratic party to battle the 69-year-old real estate mogul.



NEW YORK: US Republican Presidential candidate Donald Trump speaks following primary elections in Briarcliff Manor, New York. Trump spoke to the media at Trump National Golf Club. — AFP

Obama is soon expected to offer a formal endorsement of the 68-year-old Clinton, perhaps serving to coax headline "Bernie or bust" fans back into the party tent.

Clinton has appeared completely dialed in to combating Trump, especially since last week in San Diego when she

earned plaudits from Democrats for her blistering critique of Trump as "temperamentally unfit" to be president, a line of attack she repeated Tuesday night.

Howard Dean, the former Vermont governor who ran for president in 2004, said he was impressed with Clinton's historic

achievement. "Any time a glass ceiling is shattered, it's important," he said. But he was quick to note that Clinton is capable of turning tough in an instant. "If Hillary Clinton continues to campaign the way she did last week in San Diego, I think Trump is toast," he said. — AFP

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SAUDI TO SHOWCASE ARTS IN REFORM DRIVE

JEDDAH: Saudi Arabia said it plans to showcase the arts and grow its media industry to counter negative stereo-

types of the kingdom, whose rights record is regularly criticized abroad. The initiatives are part of the wide-

-ranging National Transformation Program (NTP) which sets targets for diversifying the oil-dependent economy. "The intention also is to transform the society", Culture and Information Minister Adel Al-Turaifi told reporters on the sidelines of a briefing about the NTP, which was endorsed by cabinet late Monday.

Saudi Arabia, an absolute Islamic monarchy, has no public cinemas or theatres, though private showings do take place. But under the NTP a Royal Arts Complex would be developed, as well as a Media City. Although small art exhibitions have occurred, the Wahhabi Islamic thought on which the kingdom is founded forbids paintings of the human form. Turaifi told a press conference that although some Saudi artists and performers have exhibited and gained popularity abroad, they "did not find the platform and space to support them" at home.

That will change with the Arts Complex which "would help convey a picture of Saudi Arabia to the world," he said in the press conference with other ministers. Similarly, the Media City will develop the production skills of young Saudis and create local content which so far is "very limited", Turaifi said. "What we're aiming to do

is actually to provide institutions that can display their work, that can support them, that can provide them with grants, scholarships, to pursue their dreams of creating art," he said. The NTP targets 16,100 media and related jobs by 2020, up from 10,000 now. Underlying the project is a goal of improving the kingdom's image and promoting its culture, the minister said. "During the last few decades accusations and stereotyping was instilled about Saudi Arabia," he said.

Reform drive

Asked whether the level of freedom of speech in the kingdom allows arts and media to flourish, he said Saudi newspapers "every day" carry criticisms of government programs. Feedback is also important for the NTP's success, he said. In an unusual display of public accessibility, government ministers every night this week are answering questions from local and foreign reporters on national television.

The NTP is part of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 reform drive led by Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, 30, to wean the world's largest oil exporter off its traditional source of revenue. Saudi Arabia ranks 165 out of

180 countries on the Reporters Without Borders World Press Freedom Index. The case of blogger Raif Badawi, who promoted free speech, generated worldwide concern. Arrested in 2012, he is serving 10 years in jail and has received 50 lashes of a 1,000 lash sentence. At the same press conference, Minister of Transport Suleiman Al-Hamdan said he wants to lower the kingdom's "painful" road death toll under the NTP.

World Health Organization data show that Saudi Arabia, whose oil wealth led to a proliferation of cars and highways, has a road death rate comparable to that of impoverished African countries. "The percentage of car accidents is very high and the percentage of deaths is very high," Hamdan said. "This is catastrophic." Reckless driving and minor crashes are an every day sight on the kingdom's streets. Hamdan said intensified education along with better policing and ambulance services are among the measures to reduce the toll. More broadly, the NTP aims to link all of the kingdom's transport networks to exploit its geographic position between Europe, Asia and Africa, becoming a "first class" logistics hub, he said. —AFP



JEDDAH: In this file photo, Saudis chant traditional songs during a barbeque party at the outskirts of Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia has unveiled the details of the first phase of its ambitious overhaul for the economy, part of a plan to wean the country off its reliance on oil exports and prepare the kingdom for the millions of young people who will be seeking jobs and affordable housing in the coming years. —AP

3 DIE IN TURKEY BOMBING

PRIME MINISTER BLAMES ATTACK ON 'KILLER PKK'

ANKARA: Three people were killed and dozens injured in a car bombing yesterday at a police station in southeast Turkey, a day after 11 people were killed in an attack on police in Istanbul. Prime Minister Binali Yildirim blamed the attack on the "killer PKK", referring to the outlawed rebel Kurdistan Workers' Party. "We will fight them both in urban centers and rural areas with determination," he vowed. Turkey remains on high alert after multiple attacks on its

soil that have killed well over 200 people in the past year and have been blamed on, or claimed by, Kurdish militants and Islamic State (IS) jihadists. Images carried by Turkish media showed a massive plume of black smoke rising from the rubble of the severely damaged police station in the town of Midyat near the Syrian border.

The windows of houses in the neighborhood were shattered by the force of the blast. Yildirim said one police officer and two civilians

have been confirmed dead so far while 30 people were injured. The police station blast comes a day after a bombing in the heart of Istanbul killed 11 people, including several police, the latest in a spate of attacks in Turkey's largest city. The government yesterday put the toll at six officers and five civilians. There was no claim of responsibility for the Istanbul bombing but President Recep Tayyip Erdogan too suggested that Kurdish militants were behind it.

Protest at funeral

Yildirim yesterday attended the funeral at an Istanbul mosque of police officers killed Tuesday. He was alongside former president Abdullah Gul and opposition leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu. Coffins of fallen officers were draped with red and white Turkish flags as mourners shouted: "Damn terror" and "Martyrs never die and the homeland will never be divided." A group of mourners protested Kilicdaroglu, who heads the secular Republican People's Party (CHP), tearing a wreath he had laid for the victims. "You are a killer!" mourners shouted at Kilicdaroglu, according to Turkish television. Kilicdaroglu has been accused in some quarters of failing to give enough support to the government's Kurdish policy. The Turkish premier later visited the blast scene in Istanbul's Beyazit district and spoke with shopkeepers.

Some damaged buildings in the area were covered with white tarps and Turkish flags were hanging over some apartments, an AFP video journalist reported. Turkey has been on edge for months after a string of deadly attacks. A radical splinter group of the PKK, the Kurdistan Freedom Falcons (TAK), claimed responsibility for two bombings in Ankara earlier this year that killed dozens of people. Violence flared last year between Kurdish rebels and government forces, shattering a 2013 ceasefire reached after secret talks between PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan and the Turkish state.

Turkey has been waging an intense offensive against the PKK, deploying tanks in several towns in the southeast in recent months to "cleanse" them of rebel elements. Activists have accused the security forces of causing huge destruction and killing civilians. But the government says the operations are essential for public safety, blaming the PKK-listed as a terror group by Ankara and its Western allies for the damage. Erdogan late Tuesday signed into law a reform lifting immunity for lawmakers, in a move critics believe is aimed at evicting pro-Kurdish MPs from parliament.

Erdogan's government sees the Peoples' Democracy Party (HDP) as a political front for the PKK. Over 40,000 people have been killed since the PKK took up arms in 1984 demanding an independent state for Kurds. Since then the group has narrowed its demands to greater autonomy and cultural rights. NATO-member Turkey is also a member of the US-led coalition fighting the IS group, which controls large swaths of territory in neighboring Syria and Iraq. Ankara blames the jihadists for two suicide blasts in Istanbul this year, in which a total of 15 tourists were killed. —AFP



ISTANBUL: Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan visits a woman injured by a bomb blast in the Vezneciler district of Istanbul at the Haseki Training and Research Hospital in Istanbul. —AFP

TURKISH LEADER APPROVES LIFTING OF MPs' IMMUNITY

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has signed into law a reform lifting immunity for lawmakers, his office said, in a move critics believe is aimed at evicting pro-Kurdish MPs from parliament. Erdogan's approval came late Tuesday, less than a month after parliament adopted the highly controversial reform, which lifted the immunity of 138 deputies from all parties who face potential prosecution. The pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) says the measure, drafted and backed by Erdogan's Justice and Development Party (AKP), is squarely aimed at expelling its members from parliament.

Erdogan's government sees the HDP as a political front for the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), considered a terrorist group by Ankara and its Western allies. The reform could see dozens of HDP deputies facing criminal prosecution and losing parliamentary seats on accusations of supporting the PKK, which has waged a three-decade

insurgency in the southeast. Should a number of HDP deputies leave parliament, it would ease the way for Erdogan to realize his aim of changing the constitution to create a presidential system and further beef up his powers.

The HDP, the third largest party group in parliament, has said the bill, passed by parliament on May 20, could lead to the prosecution of 50 of its deputies out of its total contingent of 59. Earlier this month, the HDP's charismatic co-leader Selahattin Demirtas said he was "not afraid of being put on trial". He said however that the accusations he and other party MPs faced stemmed from a search for "political revenge". German Chancellor Angela Merkel last month told Erdogan of her "deep concern" over the law. Following the collapse of a two-year ceasefire in mid-2015, Turkey has been waging an intense offensive against PKK militants and the renewed conflict has claimed hundreds of lives. —AFP

'NEW LIFE' FOR SYRIANS RETURNING TO ISLAMIC STATE-FREE VILLAGES

KHIRDEH: For the first time in more than two years, Awash Al-Aboud looked out at her village in northern Syria wearing a fearless grin instead of the black veil imposed by the Islamic State group. The elderly woman was among hundreds of residents who returned this week to villages captured by the Syrian Democratic Forces, a Kurdish-Arab alliance advancing on the jihadist stronghold of Manbij. "For the past two and a half years, I felt like I was living among the dead because of the terror that IS imposed on us," she said. Wearing an indigo-colored robe, Aboud said that she fled her village of Khirdeh, located between Manbij and the Euphrates river, along with other residents as SDF fighters approached last week.

Standing amid a gaggle of young children, she said that when IS controlled her village she had been forced to wear the black, full-face veil prescribed by its ultra-conservative form of Islamic law. "Today, a new life has started for us. We're so glad to be done with Daesh," she said, using an Arabic acronym for IS. An AFP journalist travelled to several villages where the SDF, backed by US-led coalition air strikes, has expelled IS. Arab fighters from the Kurdish-Arab alliance chatted with residents and strolled between buildings, some damaged by US-led coalition strikes or IS's infamous car bombs.

'Being safe is enough'

Abu Mohammad, 35, from the farming town of Abu Qulqul, said life under IS rule was so expensive that some residents were tempted to join the jihadists. "They used to tell us that whoever wants to live well must join our ranks, but I refused. I preferred to starve than to join them and oppress my brothers," he said. His wife, wearing a bright headscarf and carrying a toddler on her back, held up her arm and began to ululate—a sign of celebration and joy. "Just being safe is enough," she said.

On the outskirts of the village, a sunbanned man in a long robe and green vest took his flock of sheep out to the nearby plains. Architect Khalaf Al-Moussa, from nearby Qana Al-Tahtani, said IS had imposed a system of fines and punishments during its rule over his hometown, also east of Manbij. "We couldn't roll up our trouser legs while we were farming our land—every time we did, they would fine us 1,000 Syrian pounds (\$2)," he said, standing in front of a modest fruit orchard. "If someone tried to criticize their behavior, they would sew his mouth shut for a while, or they would cut his head off and hang him up for everyone to see," Moussa added. —AFP



MIDYAT: People stand near the Midyat police station as smoke rises from it after an explosion yesterday in southeast Turkey. Three people were killed and dozens injured in a car bombing yesterday at a police station in southeast Turkey, a day before 11 people were killed in an attack on police in Istanbul. —AFP



ISTANBUL: A woman reacts in Istanbul during the funeral ceremony of police officers Gokhan Topcu and Kadir Cihan Karagozlu, killed the day before in a bomb explosion targeting a police bus in Beyazit district. —AFP

ERASING GANG GRAFFITI IN EL SALVADOR TOWN

SAN SALVADOR: Police and soldiers on Tuesday painted over gang graffiti in a town in El Salvador as part of a vigorous new campaign against criminal outfits that for decades have terrorized the Central American country. "We are going to erase these tags as many times as is needed," police deputy commissioner Oscar Nuila vowed as the operation was conducted in Quezaltepeque, just north of the capital San Salvador. Armed security officials,

their faces covered to hide their identities, wielded brushes and paint cans to cover over letters and symbols graffitied on walls by the Mara Salvatrucha gang, a feared organization also known as MS-13.

One security team was seen obscuring an expanse of wall on which the words "Mara Salvatrucha" had been painted in black letters. One soldier wrote the word "Paz" ("Peace" in Spanish) over it. The activity, aimed at rolling

back the gang's visible presence in the town, added to a raft of government measures taken in recent weeks to hem in MS-13 and Calle 18, the two main rival gangs, and various smaller organizations. El Salvador is the country with the highest murder rate in the world, outside of a war zone—around 20 homicides a day. Most of the violence is attributed to the gangs, which engage in killings and extortion. —AFP

LANGUAGE BARRIERS, FEAR HEIGHTEN WOES IN FLINT WATER CRISIS

FLINT: Margarita Solis regularly drives to Flint distribution centers to load up on bottled water, as thousands of residents have done in the city coping with a lead-contaminated water crisis. One stop is a little farther afield but feels like home: She goes to Our Lady of Guadalupe Church north of the city, where the conversation with volunteers may be in Spanish. It's nice for the 21-year-old Solis - a church member and lifelong Flint resident who speaks English and Spanish - but necessary for her parents and others with Hispanic or Latino roots who speak little or no English.

"They always depend on me or my siblings, who do know how to speak English well," Solis said of her parents, who moved to Flint shortly before she was born and now are U.S. citizens. "So, sometimes, like for my mom, she kind of has to wait around until we have free time, because we go to school and work and everything."

The city of nearly 100,000 has been dealing with the lead contamination since switching from the Detroit system, which draws from Lake Huron, to the Flint River in April 2014 as a short-term measure to save money while another pipeline to the lake was under construction. Last September, state officials acknowledged a failure to add chemicals to limit corrosion had enabled the river water to scrape lead from aging pipes, exposing people in some homes and schools to the potent neurotoxin.

The struggles have been acute for members of some Spanish-speaking households, who say it took several months to learn about the water problems and the need for filters. State officials said there are no Spanish language print media or radio outlets in Flint devoted to news. What's more, some people

in the country illegally have been afraid to provide information to anyone in exchange for water or other basic help lest they be deported or questioned by law enforcement officials. Officials with Our Lady of Guadalupe recognized the language and cultural barriers in January, when they started distributing supplies as well as information in English and Spanish developed with the help of government officials. After concerns were raised, government officials also stopped checking identification at official distribution sites.

Advocates note improvements, with more documents and phone assistance being made available in Spanish and other languages. Still, it's difficult to reach everyone after concerns spread in the community.

"I think it's hard to convince people that there are safe places for them to come to - even at this point," said Victoria Arteaga, a local immigration attorney who attends and works at Our Lady of Guadalupe, where her husband, Omar Odette, is the administrator. "We still see people who are hesitant to go to these sites and ask for help. ... There's always that fear that if I got in my car and get pulled over, something will happen." She said it's also likely some children aren't having their blood tested for lead because of those fears. And some might not see the right doctors to deal with lead contamination because people must be US citizens or non-citizens meeting certain criteria to get Medicaid. Those without documents have to rely on limited emergency services, she said. Arteaga says there are an estimated 1,000 people living illegally in the Flint area. Flint's Latino community represents at least 5 percent of the overall population, according to the federal Census, though she says it's likely higher.—AP



PERU: Peru's President Ollanta Humala waves during a Flag Day ceremony on Tuesday, two days after the presidential run-off election.—AP

PRESIDENTIAL VOTE COUNT DRAGS ON, LEAVING PERUVIANS ON EDGE

NAIL-BITER RACE REMAINS TIGHT

LIMA: Economist Pedro Pablo Kuczynski clung to a thin lead over the daughter of a jailed former president early yesterday as the count from Peru's presidential election dragged on, straining nerves in a nation divided after a polarizing campaign. With tallies from more than 98 percent of polling stations counted, Kuczynski had 50.1 percent of the votes compared with 49.9 percent for Keiko Fujimori, daughter of former strongman Alberto Fujimori. The total number of votes separating them hovered just above 50,000.

While two quick counts showed Kuczynski prevailing in Sunday's election, still being counted are the ballots cast by 885,000 Peruvians eligible to vote abroad, the last of which are expected to arrive in Peru on Wednesday. Peruvians living abroad, the majority in the United States, turned out massively for Fujimori in the 2011 election but are expected to be

more split this time around. About 1,200 handwritten tallies representing up to 360,000 votes were being disputed and were sent to a special electoral board for review, Mariano Cucho, the head of Peru's electoral authority, told RPP Radio on Tuesday. Both candidates have remained largely silent while awaiting final results of Peru's tightest presidential race since 1962, a contest that ended in a military coup. "Tranquility and serenity," Kuczynski urged on Tuesday, amid strained nerves among his supporters. "We have to wait for the final verdict. We're almost there."

Regardless of who wins, half of voters are bound to be disappointed, making it harder for the next president to govern. Aides in both campaigns are jockeying for positions in an eventual alliance in congress, where Fujimori's Popular Force won a solid majority of 73 of 130 seats. Kuczynski's fledgling movement will have just

18, fewer than the country's main leftist alliance. If Kuczynski holds onto his lead, it would be a stunning turnaround. Fujimori won April's first round of voting by more than 20 points in a field of 10 candidates and consistently led Kuczynski in polls before Sunday's runoff.

Kuczynski, 77, managed to climb back in the race by attacking his younger rival as a risk to Peru's young democracy. Playing on memories of Alberto Fujimori's well-known ties to corruption, organized crime and death squads, for which he's serving a 25-year prison sentence, he seized on string of scandals that hobbled Fujimori in the final stretch.

PPK, as Kuczynski is almost universally known in Peru, also benefited from a last-minute endorsement by the third-place finisher in the first round of voting, leftist congresswoman Veronika Mendoza.—AP



FLINT: Margarita Solis, carries wipes as Rick Vasquez carries bottled water at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church on May 25, 2016.—AP

TRUMP PROMISES NOT TO LET GOP DOWN AS LEADERS GROW WORRIED

TAMPING DOWN HIS CAUSTIC ATTACKS

BRIARCLIFF MANOR, NEW YORK: Donald Trump labored to convince fellow Republicans that he can broaden his appeal and move beyond controversy, tamping down his caustic attacks and divisive remarks in a noticeably muted speech after his final presidential primary wins.

"I understand the responsibility of carrying the mantle" of the Republican Party, Trump said Tuesday night, reading from a teleprompter to supporters gathered at one of his golf courses. "I will never, ever let you down." He added: "I will make you proud of our party and our movement." Trump's pitch came on one of the toughest days of his unpredictable campaign, as top Republican leaders and donors denounced as racist and troubling his comments about a federal judge's ethnicity.

And it came as Democrat Hillary Clinton, at a rally in Brooklyn, claimed her place as the country's first major party female presidential nominee by quickly invoking Trump as a contrast. "This election is about who we are as a nation. It's about millions of Americans coming together to say, 'We are better than this.'" While Trump sought to portray himself as a unifier during his evening speech - drawing plaudits from Republican Party Chairman Reince Priebus for taking "exactly the right approach" - hours earlier he continued to be strikingly defiant.

"Get over it"

In an interview on Fox News, Trump



BRIARCLIFF MANOR, NEW YORK: Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump is joined by his daughter Ivanka, left, and wife Melania as he speaks during a news conference at the Trump National Golf Club Westchester on Tuesday.—AP

said Republicans angry at him should "get over it." In his statement on the matter earlier, he said he'd been "misconstrued" and that he was "justified in questioning" treatment by the judge.

The controversy erupted because Trump had repeatedly said US District Judge Gonzalo Curiel could not preside fairly over a case involving Trump University because of his Mexican heritage. Many Republicans didn't see it that way, and the desire of his party to unify behind him looked at risk of unraveling. House Speaker Paul Ryan described what Trump said as the "textbook definition of a racist comment." Soon after, a GOP senator who had previously indicated support for Trump withdrew his backing. "I have concluded that Donald Trump has not demonstrated the temperament necessary to assume the greatest office in the world," Sen. Mark Kirk of Illinois, who is in a competitive re-election race, said in a statement. Trump's comments about the judge's ethnicity, "in context with past attacks on Hispanics, women and the disabled like me," prompted Kirk to withdraw his support for his party's nominee, he said, though he also added he does not support Clinton.

Kirk suffered a stroke in 2012 and often uses a wheelchair. His disavowal in the wake of Trump's comments about the judge - the first of any leading Republican - followed the debut of a hard-hitting, multimillion-dollar television ad from Clinton allies. It reminded voters in battleground states that Trump

had mocked a disabled reporter.

Ron Weiser, one of the recently named top fundraisers for Trump and the Republican Party, said the nominee's attacks on Curiel are "obviously making it more difficult" to raise money for Trump, whose opponent could have \$1 billion at her disposal.

Stanley Hubbard, a Minnesota broadcast company billionaire who recently gave \$100,000 to a pro-Trump group, put it this way: "It's ridiculous. He's out of line. You don't attack a federal judge, and you certainly don't attack him on the heritage of his parents. It's totally off the wall, and I don't even have words to explain it."

Supreme Court

Only his fear of Clinton picking Supreme Court justices is enough to keep him giving money to Trump, Hubbard said. The desire to win in the fall served as a way for even those denouncing Trump to explain their continued backing of him.

Sen. Tim Scott, R-S.C., the only black Republican senator, called Trump's comments on the judge "racially toxic" yet said, "He needs to get on to the general election and we need to win." Ryan, too, said he would still support Trump.

Democrats questioned how Republicans could condemn Trump's comments while seeking to put him in the White House. "If Republicans believe that a man who believes in religious and ethnic tests for federal judges is fit to be president of the United States, they must explain why this is an acceptable position," said Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada.

Clinton, in her Tuesday speech, called Trump "temperamentally unfit to be president and commander in chief." Later, she said, "He wants to win by stoking fear and rubbing salt in wounds and reminding us daily just how great he is."

Mica Mosbacher, a Texas and New York fundraiser who backed Trump as soon as her preferred candidate Ted Cruz left the race, said her email has been "blowing up over the past few days" with notes from Republicans concerned about Trump's comments. "It's giving some of the donors heartburn, for sure," she said.

She said she has been pushing back, arguing that while she - and many others - "would personally not bring up a person's origin, that's just Trump's style. He's his own hatchet man. What you see is what you get. His way is to throw bombs and spark a discussion."—AP

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DANISH COURT CONVICTS TWO OF KURDISH REBEL FUNDING

COPENHAGEN: A Danish appeals court yesterday convicted two men of "terror funding" for raising millions of Euros for Kurdish rebels between 2009 and 2012. The court found the defendants guilty of channeling 33.5 million kroner (4.5 million Euros, \$5.1 million) through Denmark-based Kurdish television channel Roj TV to the militant Kurdistan

Workers' Party (PKK).

Their sentences will be announced next week. The Eastern High Court said in a statement that it "among other things had to consider whether the PKK is a terrorist organization" in deciding whether to overturn the men's earlier acquittals.

A majority of judges and jurors had found that to be the case, it added. The

two men said by the local Ritzau news agency to be Kurdish-raised 4.5 million kroner and 29 million kroner, respectively, for the PKK, which is listed by Turkey and its Western allies, including the European Union, as a terror group.

The prosecution had charged 10 men with raising a total of 140 million kroner for the Kurdish rebels, but eight of the

men had their acquittals by a district court upheld since it could not be proven that they knew Roj TV would send the money to the PKK.

In 2013, the station had its license revoked for "glorifying terrorism". Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim yesterday blamed the PKK for a car bomb that targeted a police station in the country's

mainly Kurdish southeast, leaving three people dead and injuring dozens.

Turkey has in recent months been waging an intense offensive in the region against the group. While the government says the operations are essential for public safety, activists have accused the security forces of causing huge destruction and killing civilians. —AFP



VIENNA: Norbert Hofer presidential candidate for Austria's right-wing Freedom Party, FPÖ, and Heinz-Christian Strache, head of the FPÖ, attend a news conference on May 24, 2016. —AP

AUSTRIAN RIGHT PARTY CHALLENGES PRESIDENTIAL VOTE RESULTS DUE TO A HOST OF IRREGULARITIES

VIENNA: Austria's right-wing party yesterday announced that it is legally challenging the result of last month's presidential election due to what it said were a host of irregularities that potentially led to its candidate's narrow loss.

Freedom Party leader Heinz-Christian Strache spoke of a "massive number of irregularities and mistakes" that needed to be investigated. "We are not poor losers," he told reporters, declaring that the challenge was launched to secure "the pillars of democracy."

Freedom Party candidate Norbert Hofer was leading after

polls closed May 22. But final results after a count of absentee ballots put former Green party politician Alexander Van der Bellen ahead by only a little more than 30,000 votes.

The final count showed Van der Bellen with 50.3 percent, compared to 49.7 percent for Hofer. Strache said that the law was contravened in one way or the other in 97 of a total of 117 electoral districts, including the sorting of absentee ballots before the arrival of electoral commission officials. He said that of the more than 700,000 such ballots, more than 570,000 were affected.

"Hofer could have become president without these irregularities and mistakes," he said. "You don't have to be a conspiracy theorist to get an exceptionally bad gut feeling in the face of such mishaps or strange developments."

Hofer spoke of an "exorbitantly high" chance that his party's initiative would be successful, describing the alleged irregularities as a "blatant violation of the law."

The challenge could result in at least a partial recount if Austria's Constitutional Court rules in favor of the party. Freedom Party officials said the court was looking at three

requests to probe the alleged irregularities - one from Strache, another from the party and a third from an unnamed "voter and citizen."

The outcome of the challenge has relevance beyond Austria's borders, with elections viewed Europe-wide as a proxy fight pitting the continent's political center against its growing populist and Euroskeptic movements.

Van der Bellen's win was cheered by the continent's established parties, while Europe's right hailed Hofer's strong showing as a major political surge by one of its own. —AP

'HI DONALD, WE'RE MUSLIMS!' SCOTTISH OFFER TO TEACH TRUMP IN VISIT

EDINBURGH: Scottish Muslims have invited Donald Trump to visit a mosque and learn about their faith during his visit to Scotland this month in the hope of changing his views. The presumptive Republican US presidential candidate, whose mother was Scottish, last year proposed a temporary ban on Muslims entering the United States as a response to Islamist attacks in Paris and California, causing a furor in Europe.

Accepting a visit to learn about the Muslim community might help show that he is not so extreme, Edinburgh Central Mosque Imam Yajha Barry told Reuters. "I would say: 'Hi Donald, we're Muslims, welcome to our mosque! Do you still see Muslims as a threat to Western civilizations?'" he said.

Trump's views prompted widespread opposition in Britain, where he owns two golf courses on the west and east Scottish coasts. His comments about stopping Mexican migrants entering the United States also caused offence, leading to the withdrawal of Scottish business and academic accolades.

Prime Minister David Cameron said the remarks by the potential leader of Britain's closest international ally were "divisive, stupid and wrong". Neither Cameron nor Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon plan to meet him on his visit, which coincides with the result of Britain's referendum on EU membership on June 24.

Spiritual leaders in the Islamic community invited Trump to "learn more about the Muslims that he offends." "We would welcome the opportunity to show him the work that we are doing in the community in Edinburgh when he comes to Scotland," said Hafiz Ghafoor of Annandale Mosque and Munawar Hussain, secretary of Roxburgh St Mosque and Islamic Centre, in a joint statement.

Trump's relationship with Scotland has been rocky since he contested a decision to build an offshore wind farm opposite his golf course in Aberdeenshire. His trip will include a visit there as well as to his courses at Turnberry, in southwestern Scotland, and Doonbeg, in Ireland.

Protests at Trump's "misogynist, racist and xenophobic" views are planned by Aberdeen University students during his visit, the president of the Students' Association said.

A spokesperson for the Trump Organization did not respond to a request to comment. Scottish Liberal Democrat leader Willie Rennie said Trump should witness firsthand the work being done by local Muslims to reach across faiths and help those in need.

"Muslims are our friends, colleagues, family and neighbors. When he insults them in such a grotesque manner he insults us all." About 77,000 Scots are Muslims, or 1.4 percent of the population, according to the latest official census in 2011. —Reuters

OSCE SAYS STAFF MEMBER MISSING IN REBEL-HELD UKRAINE

KIEV: Foreign monitors observing Ukraine's separatist conflict said yesterday that one of their local staff has gone missing in the pro-Russian east.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) said a member of its Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) did not return from a planned vacation on Tuesday and was reportedly being held in the insurgents' de facto capital of Donetsk.

"We are in contact with the relevant actors to resolve this matter," the SMM said in a statement. "We have demanded his immediate and unconditional release." A source told AFP on condition of anonymity that the missing Ukrainian was a driver who lived in the neighboring separatist region of Lugansk.

There was no immediate response to the report from the insurgents in either of the breakaway regions. The incident is the latest in a string of cases of OSCE and other foreign monitors going missing in the war-torn industrial region.

The pro-Russians usually release their captives after protracted negotiations that can take weeks or even months. Ukraine's 26-month war has claimed the lives of nearly 9,400 people and recently seen violence return to levels not witnessed since the signing of a December 2015 truce.

Kiev and its Western allies accuse Russia of plotting and directly supporting the rebellion in retaliation for Ukraine's February 2014 ouster of its Moscow-backed leadership.

Russia denies the charges but backs the insurgents' demands at international venues including the UN. The deputy head of the OSCE's monitoring mission warned on Wednesday that the situation in the war

zone "is worsening." "We rightly concentrate on the failure of the sides to withdraw weapons from the security zone, the continued use of those weapons and the failure to separate the sides, and in some cases positioning even closer to one another," Alexander Hug told reporters.

Hug added that most of the ceasefire violations were being reported around the ruins of an airport just north of Donetsk that the militias captured in January 2015 at a heavy cost to both sides.

'Shattered illusions'

A repeatedly-broken truce deal brokered by Germany and France in February 2015 required both sides to withdraw their weapons from a 30-kilometre-wide (19-mile) buffer zone splitting rebel-run regions from the rest of Ukraine.

The conflict has tattered Moscow's relations with Washington and seen Russia respond to Western economic sanctions by banning the import of most Western food.

The US State Department's chief envoy to Europe told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Tuesday that the Kremlin was refusing to abide by international law and had forced Washington to re-evaluate its position toward Moscow.

"Russia's invasion of sovereign Ukrainian territory... shattered any remaining illusions about this Kremlin's willingness to abide by international law or live by the rules of the institutions that Russia joined at the end of the Cold War," Victoria Nuland said.

Russia accuses the US of inciting three months of protests that led to the Moscow-backed administration's downfall and the former Soviet republic's subsequent turn toward the West. —AFP



KIEV: Ukrainian former pilot Nadiya Savchenko, who was freed from a Russian jail, speaks to the media during her news conference yesterday. —AP

MIGRANT SMUGGLING 'GENERAL' EXTRADITED TO ITALY

ROME: An Eritrean dubbed "the general", suspected of controlling a migrant trafficking network responsible for shipping thousands of people to Europe, has been extradited from Sudan to Italy.

Medhanie Yehdego Mered, 35, who had been on a wanted list since 2015 for international people smuggling, was arrested in Khartoum at the end of May and flown to Italy late Monday, Italy police said in a statement.

"Mered is considered one of the biggest migrant traffickers operating on the Libyan-Sub-Saharan route," it said. Referred to in wiretapped conversations between his subordinate traffickers as "the general" for his control over a large area and number of "troops", Mered is accused of organizing the smuggling of up to 8,000 people a year on migrant boats.

His arrest is "a key turning point in the fight against people trafficking," prosecutor Francesco Lo Voi told a press conference. It is the first time a suspected top smuggler has been arrested in Africa and brought to face justice in Italy, which has been overwhelmed by the arrival of hundreds of thousands of people since the migrant crisis began in 2008.

Mered allegedly directed operations in Africa but also kept fellow operators in Italy up to date on the arrival of boats, so migrants could be picked up and squeezed for more money to continue to their final destinations in Europe.

Between 2012 and his capture, he also played a key role in helping migrants escape from Libyan jails and detention centers, bribing guards to let them out and then holding them to extort money from their relatives back home, police said.

'Cynical and unscrupulous'

Mered was tracked down by the Sudanese intelligence services, with support from Italy's organized crime police and Britain's National Crime Agency.

A top Sudanese police officer told AFP on condition of anonymity that Mered was "accused of smuggling youngsters from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan across the Mediterranean through Sudan or Libya or Egypt".

Wiretaps of Mered's conversations revealed he was in contact with traffickers in northern Europe, particularly in the Netherlands and Scandinavia, and held a "senior position in a criminal network operating in several continents", Italian police said.

He was a contact point for people worried their loved ones may have disappeared during the perilous Mediterranean crossing but showed "disregard for the lives of the migrants, appearing cynical and unscrupulous".

There have been numerous reports from survivors of people being forced to board boats and dinghies on Libyan beaches at gunpoint, as well as reports of people being shot dead if they refuse or try to escape.

According to the UN's refugee agency (UNHCR), over 48,500 people have arrived in Italy by boat so far this year. More than 10,000 people have died crossing the Mediterranean to Europe since 2014.

On Wednesday, rescuers were hard at work off Libya. Doctors Without Borders' boats Dignity 1 and Argos picked up a total of 226 people, quoting on Twitter a survivor who said "we're happy to be alive but our brothers are still in Libya." "Last night they were beating us with iron sticks". —AFP

ERITREAN LEADERS GUILTY OF CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

GENEVA: Eritrea's government is guilty of committing crimes against humanity since independence a quarter-century ago with up to 400,000 people "enslaved", and should face international justice, the UN said yesterday.

The United Nations Commission of Inquiry (COI) on human rights said the government of President Isaias Afwerki, in power since 1991, was guilty of systematic enslavement, forcible conscription and other abuses. "We probably think that there are three to four hundred thousand people who have been enslaved," chief investigator Mike Smith told journalists in Geneva.

According to the United Nations, around 5,000 Eritreans risk their lives each month to flee the nation where forcible army conscription can last decades. "Very few Eritreans are ever released from their military service obligations," Smith said.

Refugees from the repressive Red Sea state have in recent years made up one of the largest contingents of people risking the dangerous journey to seek a new life in Europe. "What we are asking for is the Security Council to contemplate targeted responses" against individuals responsible for rights abuse, he said, without naming those involved.

The UN report also called for the perpetrators to be brought before the International Criminal Court in The Hague to ensure accountability. Since it was established in June 2014, the COI has interviewed more than 800 Eritrean exiles and received more than 45,000 written submissions, some defending Eritrea's record.

'Widespread abuses'

"Crimes against humanity have been committed in a widespread and systematic manner in Eritrean detention facilities, military training camps and other locations across the country over the past 25 years," the UN commission said.

"Particular individuals, including officials at the highest levels of state, the ruling party - the People's Front for Democracy and Justice - and commanding officers bear responsibility for crimes against humanity," it said.

The 1991 split between Ethiopia and Eritrea followed a three-decade independence war, which saw Eritrean rebels battling far better-equipped Ethiopian troops backed first by Washington and then by the Soviet Union.

The country ranks below North Korea as the worst in the world for press freedom, according to Reporters Without Borders. Smith said Isaias presided over a state with no functioning democratic institutions.

"This has created a governance and rule of law vacuum, resulting in a climate of impunity for crimes against humanity," he said. He said there was no chance that Eritrea's judicial system could bring the perpetrators to justice through a legitimate trial. Eritrea has repeatedly denied UN investigators access to the country. Refugees from the repressive Red Sea state have in recent years made up one of the largest contingents of people risking the dangerous journey to seek a new life in Europe.

With an annual per capita gross national income of \$480, Eritrea is one of the world's poorest nations, according to the World Bank. —AFP

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INDIAN POLICE ARREST KIDNEY RACKET 'LEADER'

NEW DELHI: Indian police said yesterday they have arrested the suspected leader of an illegal organ donation racket run out of one of the country's top hospitals. T Rajkumar Rao was arrested in the eastern city of Kolkata late Tuesday on suspicion of leading a criminal gang that lured poor people to sell their kidneys, which were sold on for huge profits.

The commercial trade of organs is

illegal in India and the gang forged documents to pretend the donors were relatives of transplant patients in order to undergo the operations at the Apollo hospital. "He (Rao) was arrested from Kolkata," police investigator Nidhin Walsol told AFP in New Delhi. An officer in Kolkata said Rao was wanted in a number of such cases across several South Asian countries.

On Tuesday police arrested three

donors including a couple who sold their kidneys for a combined 700,000 rupees (US \$10,500) to pay off a loan they took out to cover the cost of their son's medical treatment.

Five staff at the Apollo hospital have also been arrested. Apollo has denied any role in the scam, saying it has been a "victim of a well-orchestrated operation to cheat patients and the hospital". On Tuesday it said it had set up an inde-

pendent inquiry committee to advise on safeguards.

Millions of Indians suffer from kidney disease, mostly because of high rates of diabetes. But a chronic shortage of organs available for transplant has fuelled a black market. The Organ Receiving and Giving Awareness Network (ORGAN), a pressure group, says more needs to be done to boost donation in India where just 3,000

organs are donated annually against a demand for more than 500,000.

In 2008 Indian police arrested two doctors after they uncovered a kidney donation racket run from a hospital in Gurgaon, on the outskirts of the capital. Police said the doctors and a large number of agents had transplanted more than 500 kidneys, mostly harvested from poor laborers across several states and were sold to rich patients. —AFP



WASHINGTON: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is welcomed on Capitol Hill yesterday. —AP

US, INDIA BOOST SECURITY TIES

'NATURAL THAT THE LARGEST DEMOCRACIES SHOULD COOPERATE'

WASHINGTON: Barack Obama and Narendra Modi vowed to transform skeletal US-India security ties into an "anchor of stability," at the White House on Tuesday.

Obama offered his guest a warm embrace, arguing it was "natural" that two of the world's largest democracies should cooperate. The visit was another symbolic marker on India-and Modi's-long walk in from the cold. Obama notably put his shoulder behind Modi's bid for access to missile technology and nuclear commerce.

The two leaders also finalized agreements on military logistics and sharing "terrorist screening information." "The US-India defense relationship can be an anchor of stability," a joint statement declared. There was also a step toward better cybersecurity cooperation, which experts say is

crucial to protect outsourced US information technology.

For decades, US-India relations had been beset by lingering Cold War enmity and India's covert development of a nuclear bomb. In 2005, president George W. Bush began the thaw by lifting a three-decade long moratorium on nuclear cooperation with India.

Obama went one step further, urging nuclear powers to readmit India to a group of countries permitted to trade sensitive nuclear materials. "We discussed the progress that we have made around civil nuclear energy and I indicated our support for India becoming part of the nuclear suppliers group," Obama said.

That public display of support is likely to be noted in Beijing, which has been skeptical about India's readmission. Beijing sees India as a

potential regional rival and closer India-US relations as a potential check on its power.

Obama also hailed an agreement for US firm Westinghouse to build six nuclear reactors in India.

Strange bedfellows

When Obama entered the White House in 2009 Modi was effectively banned from visiting the United States for his role in anti-Muslim riots that killed hundreds. Obama's leaves office with Modi transformed from persona non grata to celebrated guest.

But turning warm words into concrete agreement has proven difficult. "There is always a lot of happy talk," said Michael Kugelmann of the Wilson Center. "The happy talk sometimes detracts from the fact that things do move along quite slowly." A

proposed bilateral investment treaty has languished for years, as New Delhi has taken a tough negotiating line.

Modi, who faces reelection in 2019, has pegged his political future on a reform agenda and boosting the economy. He has also made nuclear energy a priority, in part to offset horrendous levels of air pollution. Coal-fired power plants are a dominant power source. But Modi has also been a reluctant backer of measures to tackle climate change.

India fears carbon reduction could entail a price tag that harms growth. Obama said the two men had "discussed how we can as quickly as possible bring the Paris (climate) agreement into force." But there appeared to be no firm agreement on when that would happen. —AFP

FOURTH ISLAMIST MILITANT SHOT DEAD IN BANGLADESH

DHAKA: Bangladesh police shot dead an Islamist militant yesterday, the fourth killed since a crackdown was launched against suspected jihadists blamed for a wave of gruesome killings, an officer said.

The 25-year-old militant was killed during a gun battle with police in northern Bogra district, where he was suspected of bombing a minority Shiite shrine last year, the officer said. Kawser, known by one name, was the fourth member of the local Jamayetul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) killed, with three "high-ranking" members of the Islamist militant group shot dead Tuesday during raids in Dhaka and a northwestern district.

The banned group is blamed for dozens of murders of religious minorities and secular and liberal activists. "Kawser was shot during a gunfight between police and JMB militants under a bridge at Shibganj in Bogra," Bogra district police spokesman Gaziur Rahman told AFP. "He died on the way to hospital."

"He directly took part in the bomb attack on a Shiite mosque in Bogra last October and we believe he also took part in other killing missions," Rahman said. Separately, police on Wednesday arrested a former stu-

dent member of Islamist party Jamaat-e-Islami over Sunday's murder of Mahmuda Begum, the wife of an anti-terrorism police officer.

Abu Nasar Bunnun, 40, was "being questioned by police" after he was detained on the outskirts of the southeastern city of Chittagong, police commissioner Iqbal Bahar told AFP. Bangladeshi authorities have come under mounting international pressure to end the string of attacks, which have left nearly 50 people dead in the last three years.

In addition to the murder of the police officer's wife, in the past four days an elderly Hindu priest and a Christian grocer have been killed. Officially secular, but with a majority Sunni Muslim population, Bangladesh has witnessed a surge of similar murders in recent weeks, including those of two gay rights activists.

Authorities have blamed homegrown Islamists for the attacks, rejecting claims of responsibility from the Islamic State (IS) group and a South Asian branch of Al-Qaeda. Experts say a ban on Bangladesh's largest Islamist party Jamaat-e-Islami following a protracted political crisis has pushed many towards extremism. —AFP

PAKISTANI WOMAN BURNS DAUGHTER ALIVE FOR ELOPING

LAHORE: A woman in Pakistan burned her 17-year-old daughter alive yesterday to punish her for marrying against the family's wishes, the latest in a series of so-called "honor killings" that claim the lives of nearly 1,000 women every year in the conservative Muslim country.

Police say Zeenat Rafiq's mother, Parveen, tied her to a cot and drenched her with kerosene before lighting her on fire. Neighbors in the congested, working-class neighborhood in the eastern city of Lahore came running when they heard the screams, but family members kept them from entering the house, said Nighat Bibi, who lives nearby.

The police eventually arrived and found the charred body near a staircase. They arrested the mother soon thereafter. The victim's husband, Hassan Khan, told reporters the two had been "in love since our school days" but the family had rejected several marriage proposals, forcing them to elope last month. He showed an affidavit of consent signed by his wife before a magistrate. He also showed cellphone photos of a smiling Zeenat wearing a red dress.

Sheikh Hammad, a local police official, said Parveen confessed to killing her daughter with the help of her son Ahmar.

He quoted the woman as saying "I don't have any regrets." Another police officer, Ibadat Nisar, said the body showed signs of beating and strangulation.

Hundreds of women are killed every year in Pakistan—often by their own family members—for violating the country's conservative norms regarding love and marriage. Sex outside of marriage is seen by conservative Pakistanis as a stain on the honor of the woman's entire family, one that can only be removed by killing her.

Last week a schoolteacher, Maria Bibi, was set on fire for refusing to marry a man twice her age. The prime suspect in the case - the father of the man she refused to marry - and the other four are in custody.

A month earlier, police arrested 13 members of a local tribal council who allegedly strangled a girl and set her on fire for helping a friend elope. The charred body of 17-year-old Ambreen Riasat was found in a burned van.

Khan, the husband of the woman killed in Lahore, said her mother and uncle had visited her three days ago to try to persuade her to return home and have a marriage ceremony with the family, so that she wouldn't be branded as someone who had eloped. He recalled his wife telling him: "Don't let me go, they will kill me." —AP

AFGHAN SECURITY FORCES DEPLOY TO PREVENT ILLEGAL MINING

KABUL: Afghan authorities are deploying security forces to ensure that insurgents fighting to overthrow the government do not benefit from illegal mining, an official said yesterday.

The pledge follows recent reports that the TALEBAN earn tens of millions of dollars each year from illegal extraction and export of minerals, which the government has failed to keep safe. Interior Ministry spokesman Sediq Sediqqi said Afghan forces would do more to secure mineral deposits and prevent illegal mining across the country.

"The TALEBAN not only are benefiting from opium and drug smuggling, unfortunately they have also targeted the country's mines - mines that are national asset of the country and the people," Sediqqi said.

London-based advocacy Global Witness said Monday that mineral smuggling is now the TALEBAN's second biggest source of funding, after drugs produced in the southern Afghan provinces. Helmand province, a TALEBAN heartland, is the source of opium from which most of the world's heroin is produced. The annual opium output is valued at around \$3 billion.

In recent years, police had secured several mines in eastern Logar and Khost provinces, where illegal extraction and smuggling of chromite ore had been going on, Sediqqi said. Last year, police impounded 65 trucks carrying illegally mined lapis lazuli, a rare blue stone almost unique to northern Afghanistan. The lapis lazuli was being transported from the mines in Badakhshan province when the trucks were caught in

Parwan province, close to Kabul, Sediqqi said.

Global Witness and the Kabul independent think tank Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit say the TALEBAN make up to \$20 million a year in protection money from strongmen and officials who have taken control of the lapis lazuli mines in Badakhshan.

Much of the stone is smuggled through the Panjshir Valley, then to neighboring Pakistan where it is purchased by Chinese merchants who have made it into jewelry and ornaments for sale in China, where demand is high.

Global Witness accused China of colluding in a trade that funds the ongoing war in Afghanistan. The TALEBAN have been fighting to overthrow the Kabul government for 15 years.

Sediqqi conceded that not enough was being done to secure mines across the country, which are said to hold a wide range of minerals - copper, iron ore, gold, coal, lithium, marble, gems and much more - that could, if developed securely and transparently, generate substantial revenue for war-torn Afghanistan's development.

The Afghan government banned lapis lazuli mining in early 2015 because the mines could not be secured. But the mining continued with impunity, with local police and politicians reportedly benefiting from the illegal extraction and export of the stone. The Global Witness report identifies warlords, police chiefs and politicians who it says benefit from the trade. —AP

JUDGE SENTENCES CALIFORNIA MAN TO 12 YEARS IN TERRORISM CASE

SACRAMENTO: A federal judge in Sacramento sentenced a man on Tuesday to 12 years in prison for attempting to join Islamic extremists in Syria. US District Court Judge John Mendez said that terrorism had become a zero-tolerance crime, as he issued the sentence against 22-year-old Nicholas Teasant, which also includes 25 years of supervision after his release.

"There is no margin for error. It is the court's responsibility to fashion a sentence to reduce any risk you might pose in the future," Mendez said. Mendez announced the sentence following an apology from Teasant, the Sacramento Bee reported. "I want to say I'm very sorry," Teasant said as he read his hand-written remarks from a yellow slip of paper. "I wanted to be part of something."

"I didn't think my life was worth anything," Teasant pleaded guilty in December to one count of attempting to provide material support or resources to a foreign terrorist organization.

He was arrested in March 2014 in Washington state. Authorities said he planned to travel to Canada and then on to Syria to join the Islamic State group and discussed his plans with a friend who was actually an FBI informant.

"Mr. Teasant was fixated on violence as documented by his social media posts, his pre-arrest statements, and the nature of the group he attempted to join," said acting US Attorney Phillip Talbert. —AP



LAHORE: Hassan Khan, husband of Zeenat Rafiq, who was burned alive, allegedly by her mother, shows his marriage certificate to media at his home yesterday. —AP

TALEBAN KILL 12 CAPTIVES TAKEN IN SOUTHEAST

KABUL: An Afghan official says the Taleban have killed 12 people they captured in recent ambushes in the increasingly restive southeastern Ghazni province.

Gulam Mohammad Tahiri, an Afghan army intelligence officer, said on Wednesday the 12 killed included seven policemen, three soldiers and two officials with the national spy agency. He says the killings took place on Tuesday in Andar district

and that the Taleban forced local residents to watch the killings.

Tahiri says all 12 had been abducted at different times. He says insurgents would stop cars on the road between Paktika province and the capital, Kabul, and snatch passengers. Taleban gunmen are increasingly staging ambushes on provincial highways as they step up their war - now in its 15th year - against the Kabul government. —AP



BAGHDAD: Displaced children receive free food for their families distributed for Iftar (the evening meal breaking the Ramadan fast) at the Abdul Khader Al-Kilani mosque in Baghdad, Iraq yesterday. — AP

MPS PASS 'PUBLIC TENDERS LAW'

Continued from Page 1

MP Jamal Al-Omar said the committee should be kept away from the Council of Ministers because the committee's decisions are technical whereas the decisions of the Cabinet are political. Priority in awarding state projects is given to companies listed on the Kuwait Stock Exchange. Under the law, no new projects will be awarded to companies that are having problems completing other projects underway until they solve the problem and complete the project.

The Tenders law is one of the most important legislations that govern billions of dinars in state projects every year. During the debate, MP Saadoun Hammad said the law

must tackle a number of sensitive issues like agreements that contractors bidding for the same project reach to raise the cost. He also called for dealing with a number of shortcomings in the previous law, especially with regards to oil projects related to rigs. He claimed that all the rigs projects go to a handful of influential people even without a bid.

MP Omar however said that oil projects are sensitive and time factor is important. He said that oil projects are regulated and governed by the Supreme Petroleum Council which is more important than CTC. Head of the financial and economic affairs committee MP Faisal Al-Shaye said that oil projects below K 5 million are awarded directly by the oil companies but they are subjected to Audit Bureau supervision.

EXPATS, EMPLOYERS WORRIED OVER SAUDI TAX...

Continued from Page 1

employer might frown on speaking to the media in a country where public debate over policy is politically sensitive. The collapse in oil prices after mid-2014 has pushed Saudi Arabia to contemplate a radical overhaul of all parts of its economy, including new taxes, privatizations, a changed investment strategy and sharp cuts in government spending. "If you want to increase your non-oil revenues by a significant amount, they have to come from a combination of fees and indirect taxes. They cannot be met without some taxation for foreigners at some point," said John Sfakianakis, a former adviser to the government and economist with the Jeddah-based Gulf Research Centre.

Jobs

However, the new Saudi reform plans depend partly on strong private sector growth, already fragile thanks to lower state expenditure and cuts to energy subsidies, and which could be further weakened if labor costs were to rise. "We will have to match the net income they would be making without the tax, so the burden of the tax will be on the company, not the expat worker," said Ahmed bin Afif, the Saudi owner of a food and commodities trading company who employs 500 staff, half of whom are foreigners.

That sentiment was echoed by some other employers. "This will create costs and push inflation in the country as workers will demand higher wages and salaries if the tax is imposed," said Ghaith Amaout, the Saudi owner of an engineering services company that employs around 145 foreign workers. "We will have to hire locals to do their jobs, but this means wasting time and money on training - so it will hurt businesses," he added. The government wants to get more Saudi nationals into private sector jobs instead of working in well-paid but marginally productive roles for the government, something

that labor reforms since 2011 have already tried to achieve. Increasing the cost of foreign workers through the imposition of an income tax - which the government has promised will not be levied on Saudi citizens - will help make locals, who typically command higher wages, more competitive hires. Labor Minister Mufrej Al-Haqbani said on Tuesday that Saudi Arabia had no desire to reduce the number of expatriates in the kingdom, who now number about 9 million, saying their presence was "very important". Still, the government has in recent years added new fees for companies that employ expatriates and reserved entire sectors for Saudi employees only-measures that show how much more seriously it takes the issue than in the past.

Like telling us 'go home'

Opposition from Saudi businesses scotched a previous plan to tax expatriates in the 1990s, but with a much bigger push for economic reforms this time, it is possible the government will be more willing to take them on. However, other recent proposals, such as a "green card" scheme for foreign workers announced by Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in April, have not been further fleshed out, leaving some uncertainty over what the government intends.

Many expatriates, particularly at the middle or lower income levels, are already feeling the impact of Saudi Arabia's slowing economy and moves to shift nationals into jobs. "With the rise in prices, petrol, electricity and housing already the salary isn't enough. If they start with taxes, it's like telling us 'go home'," said Ali, a Palestinian working for a hotel chain, who also asked not to be identified. But not all foreigners in the kingdom feel that way. "I didn't come here for the money so it's not my only consideration. Still, I wonder whether salaries would be adjusted if it happened. At the end of the day you pay for a number of services. What are you giving me in return?" said a European scientist. — Reuters

IS LOSING TERRITORIES

Continued from Page 1

"After the road was re-opened, some people have come back and we've even seen trucks selling vegetables enter the town," he said. He said many residents that had fled to nearby villages were too afraid to return to Marea because of the notorious landmines left behind by IS as it withdrew. The jihadist group is infamous for planting landmines and other explosive devices in towns or cities it loses.

IS's supply line leads from Jarabulus on the Turkish-Syrian border south through the town of Manbij and winds southeast along the Euphrates through the town of Tabqa and on to Raqa city. The Arab-Kurdish Syrian Democratic Forces, which receives air support by a US-led coalition, reached the northern edges of Manbij overnight, said the Observatory. And Syrian regime fighters with

Russian air cover are slowly edging towards Tabqa, where IS has sent fighters and weapons ahead of a potential battle. In Iraq, government forces backed by paramilitary groups and air support from the US-led coalition are advancing within IS-held Fallujah.

Yesterday, the Iraqi fighters seized a southern neighborhood in Fallujah city, said Sabah Al-Nuaman, the spokesman for the elite counter-terrorism service (CTS) fighting in the city. "Counter-terrorism forces liberated Hay Al-Shuhada Al-Thaniya entirely from (IS) control and raised the Iraqi flag over buildings in the district," he said. Lieutenant General Abdelwahab Al-Saadi, who is commanding the operation, said IS fighters "were hiding in fortified tunnels and scattered houses in the district." Held by IS since January 2014, Fallujah is one of the most important bases of the jihadist organization and the second-largest city in Iraq still under its control. — AFP

HOW TO RECEIVE THE HOLY MONTH

Continued from Page 1

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) used to give Muslims glad tidings on the arrival of Ramadan saying, "there has come to you Ramadan, a blessed month in which Allah has enjoined you to fast, during which the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of Hell are closed, and the devils are shackled. In it there is a night which is better than a thousand months - whoever is deprived of its goodness is indeed deprived." (Saheeh - Authentic according to Al-Imam Albaani). If you intend to fast for the sake of God Almighty and reap a lot of rewards, do the following:

Supplication and gratitude

Pray that you live to experience Ramadan, and when Ramadan has begun, be grateful to God for keeping you alive to invest in that meritorious month of Ramadan. If you are grateful to God, He will grant you more favors and blessings.

Repentance

Since Ramadan is the month of repentance, you should rush to repent before and during Ramadan and pledge that you will do your best not to commit sins again. If you have wronged someone, try to reconcile and make amends. God says what can be translated as, "And turn to Allah in repentance, all of you, O believers, that you might succeed." (24:31)

Patience

Patience increases in Ramadan by abstaining from food, drink, sexual intimacy, bad behavior, quarrelling, fighting and anything else that would make fasting pointless. Commensurate with the fact that patience is one of the most important virtues for the soul, it is said to represent half of faith. Those who patiently persevere will be given an immense reward as confirmed by God in what can be translated as, "Indeed, those who patiently persevere will be given their reward without measure." (39: 10)

Devotion to Almighty God

Allah says what can be translated as, "So whoever hopes to meet with his Lord - let him do righteous work and associate none in the worship of his Lord" (18: 110). In Ramadan, it's easy for someone eat and drink unnoticed while claiming that he is

fasting. But the sincere fasters know that Allah is watching them. To do acts of worship solely for the sake of pleasing God is to our benefit. You may be a generous, kind, modest, altruistic person, serving others without any ulterior motives.

The problem is that - in most cases - people do not appreciate; but rather they might seek to undermine you. So if your aim to serve them was to expect them to appreciate and reciprocate, you will definitely be the loser if they don't appreciate. However, whatever you do for Allah (SWT), He will reward you in one way or the other.

Apologize

Inasmuch as you ask Allah to forgive you in Ramadan, be quick to apologize to those whom you have wronged and forgive those who have wronged you - try your level best to reconcile with them. Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) asked God some questions, among them, "Who among Your servants is the most honored and most beloved to You?" Allah replied, "The one who forgives when he is capable of revenge..." (As-Silsilah - As-Saheeha, 3,350).

Adhere strictly to Sunnah

Acts are accepted by Allah when they meet two conditions - sincere intention, which is that one should do it only for the sake of Allah Almighty, and that it is in accordance with the guidance of the Prophet (PBUH). Update your knowledge about meritorious acts that will accrue a lot of benefits. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "Whoever innovates any act of worship in our religion, will have it rejected." (Collected by Imam Muslim 1,718). Finally, try to replace negative feelings and emotions with positive ones and make sure you start the month of Ramadan with a clean heart, believing certainly that God will forgive you and accept of you all your good deeds.

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

BATTLEFRONTS AGAINST IS IN NORTHERN SYRIA

The Islamic State jihadist group is battling on several fronts in a swathe of territory in northern Syria. Much of the fighting is centered around a main supply line snaking down from the Syrian-Turkish border to IS's de facto capital Raqa city. The jihadists are facing twin offensives—from a Kurdish-Arab alliance known as the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and from regime troops—on either side of the town of Tabqa, a key transit town near Raqa. To the northwest, IS is also nearly surrounded by an SDF offensive on the town of Manbij, another major hub along the route. While any push on Raqa itself seems long term, the jihadists have stalled in an advance on two rebel bastions further west.

Tabqa

Under IS control since 2014, Tabqa lies in Raqa province near Syria's largest dam on the Euphrates river, a military airport and oil fields. Tabqa was home to around 80,000 residents before Syria's war broke out in 2011. The US-backed SDF announced their offensive on the town on May 24, advancing from positions near the Turkish border to within 60 kilometers (40 miles) northeast of Tabqa. But pro-regime fighters backed by Russian air strikes have pushed in much closer from the southwest—to around 25 kilometers from the town's airport. The government advance is the first time President Bashar Al-Assad's fighters have entered Raqa province in two years. Longtime regime ally Russia supported the construction of the Tabqa dam under Assad's father Hafez. Analysts say the SDF have ceased to advance on Tabqa as they focus on retaking Manbij.

Manbij

Late last month, the SDF announced a new front towards Manbij, another vital hub on the supply route. The town—also held by IS since 2014—lies in Aleppo province on the same supply route along the Euphrates from the IS-held border town of Jarabulus to Raqa city. Manbij had a pre-war population of about 120,000—mostly Arabs, but about a quarter Syrian Kurds. Since May 30, the alliance has swept west towards Manbij, seizing at least 40 villages with air support from the US-led coalition. Sherfan Darwish, who heads the SDF's Manbij offensive, told AFP the town is surrounded from three sides and "operations are progressing well". At their closest, the SDF stand just two kilometers (just over a mile) to the south of the town, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring group said. Thousands of civilians have fled Manbij from the west as SDF fighters close in from all other sides.

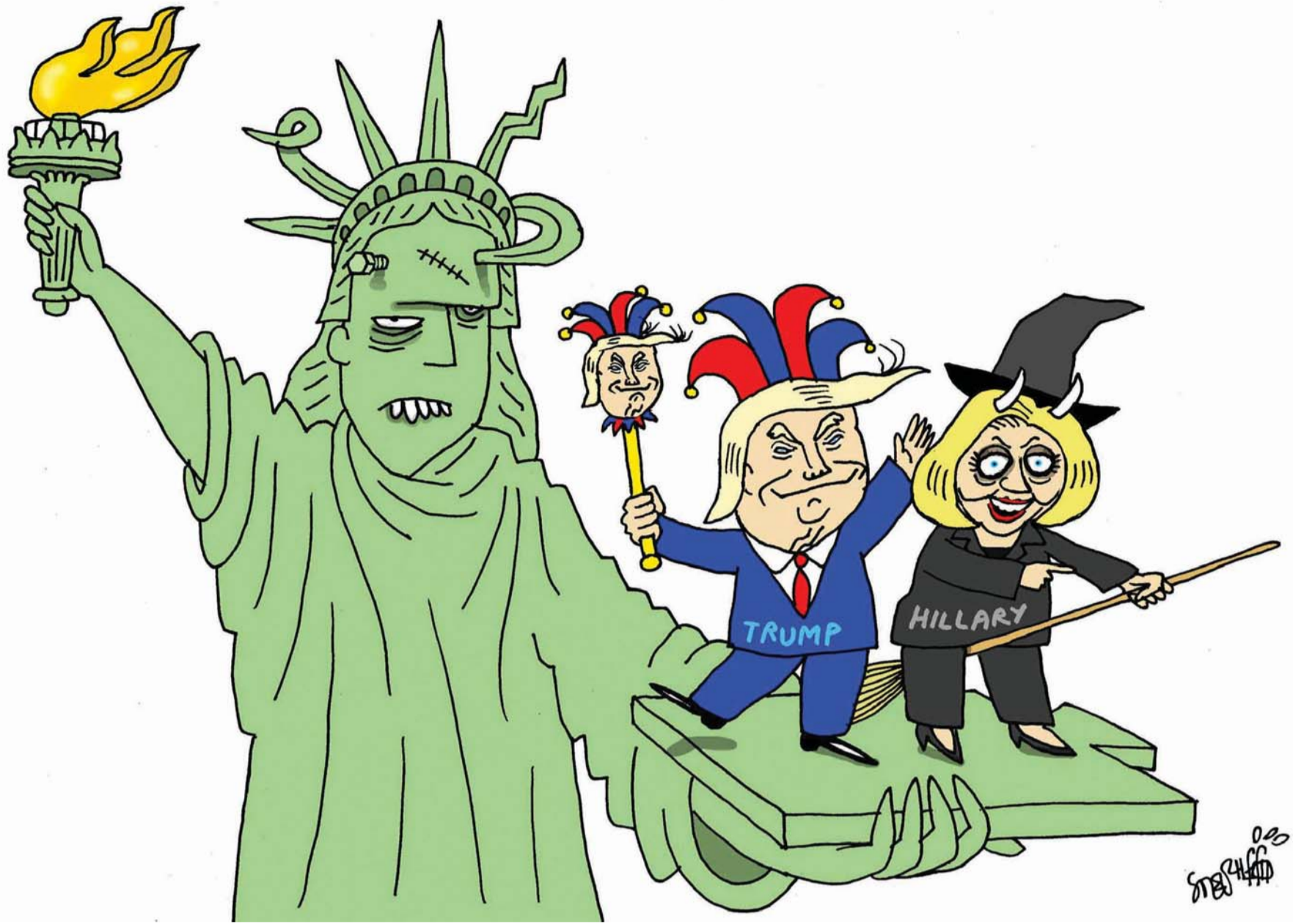
Raqa

Recapturing Raqa city would be one of the biggest symbolic victories for anti-jihadist forces. The SDF has insisted it is not yet preparing to take on IS in the city itself and analysts say any offensive to seize the city remains on the backburner for now. "Neither the SDF coalition backed by the US, nor the regime forces assisted by Russia, have the ability on their own to reach, let alone take Raqa," said Yezid Sayigh, an analyst at the Carnegie Middle East Centre. "They can only succeed if both advance at the same time, but this can only be assured by direct coordination between the US and Russia."

Marea and Azaz

On May 27, IS launched a lightning offensive against the rebel bastions of Marea and Azaz in the north of Aleppo province, cutting off a rebel supply line from Turkey. Fighting between IS jihadists and rebels inside Marea—who received weapons from the US-led coalition in an air drop last week—has been ongoing. The IS advance has stalled five kilometers to the southeast of Azaz. —AFP

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HILLARY CLINTON'S MIGHTY CHALLENGE: TO UNIFY HER CAMP

By Jerome Cartillier

On June 7, 2016, Hillary Clinton made way for Barack Obama to conquer the White House, conceding defeat after a fractious primary race, and throwing her full weight behind him. Eight years later, it is she who faces the arduous task of unifying her camp after a sometimes bitter-battle with Bernie Sanders. On paper, it seems an easier task than the one facing her Republican rival Donald Trump whose insurgent candidacy and incendiary comments—dubbed "racist" by leading GOP figures—are tearing his party apart.

But Clinton's challenge remains very real, with one big question still unanswered: how will "Bernie" behave towards the nominee he fought tooth-and-nail to stop? The Vermont senator told supporters late Tuesday that he would "continue the fight" for the Democratic nomination and stay in the race until the party's convention in Philadelphia next month to drive home his message about reforming Wall Street, the minimum wage and the role of money in politics.

Sanders acknowledged "a very, very steep fight. But we will continue to fight for every vote and every delegate we can." "We understand that our mission is more than just defeating Donald Trump, it is transforming our country," the silver-haired 74-year-old said. After decades of relative isolation in Congress, this campaign has handed him, and his calls for a political revolution, a belated-but spectacular-dose of recognition. "Today's primaries are no longer about the nomination. They are about leverage in the peace talks that are sure to follow," the one-time Obama strategist David Axelrod tweeted on Tuesday.

Delivering her victory speech in New

York, Clinton did not directly urge her rival to stand down. But she held out an olive branch to him—and his supporters. "Let there be no mistake, Senator Sanders, his campaign, and the vigorous debate that we've had about how to raise income, reduce inequality, increase upward mobility, have been very good for the Democratic Party and for America," she said. "As we look ahead, let's remember all that unites us." In 2008, Clinton had thrown her weight unequivocally behind her erstwhile rival, calling for her supporters "to take our energy, our passion, our strength, and do all we

can to help elect Barack Obama, the next president of the United States."

'Fear of Trump'

This time, Clinton will have to earn the support on November 8 of the young, passionate voters fired up by Sanders' grassroots campaign. Her biggest hurdle: the sizeable share of Bernie's fans who view the former first lady, senator and secretary of state as calculating and insincere—echoing the favorite line of attack of her Republican rival Trump. "Clinton doesn't have the ability to do it alone," argued Larry Sabato, a

political analyst from the University of Virginia. "A sizable minority of the Sanders troops have grown to despise her. Sanders will have to back Clinton repeatedly and with enthusiasm." Democrats like to point out that the bad blood between the Obama and Clinton campaign teams was considerably worse than between this year's rival camps—and that it did not stop them from winning.

They are also counting on Obama himself to enter the race in the role of unifier-in-chief. "I think you can expect the president to play that kind of role," White House spokesman Josh Earnest said recently. Obama's message has already been fine-tuned: the two Democratic candidates, while very different in style—are not so different when it comes to substance. "They're both good people. I know them both well," Obama said during a trip to Japan last week—as if laying the groundwork for the necessary reconciliation ahead. "I think that it's important for us to try to end this in a way that leaves both sides feeling proud of what they've done."

For Sabato, "President Obama must reason with his party's left wing, using fear of Trump as the emotional appeal." According to the latest Gallup poll, Obama's popularity with that segment of the electorate is sky-high—at 92 percent. Eight years apart, Obama and Clinton have one asset in common: both offer voters the chance to write a new page in American political history, as the first African American in the White House, and the first woman US president. Whatever the weaknesses of a candidate whose stiff campaign style has struggled to ignite crowds, Democratic voters could yet mobilize massively to prove that their party is, once again, the one that pushes the boundaries in American society. —AFP



BROOKLYN: Democratic presidential candidate former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and her husband former US president Bill Clinton greet supporters during a primary night event on June 7, 2016 in Brooklyn, New York. —AFP

AFRICA'S RICHEST WOMAN EDGES TOWARDS POWER IN ANGOLA

By Susan Njanji

Now that Isabel dos Santos, Africa's wealthiest woman, has been named head of Angola's oil company she could soon be headed for more power—but this time in politics, experts say. Her father, President Jose Eduardo dos Santos, appointed her as boss last week of state-owned oil firm Sonangol in a move that some analysts see as the first sign of succession plans for Angola's longtime ruler. Nicknamed the "Princess", 43-year-old Isabel, has been ranked by Forbes magazine as the richest woman on the continent with a fortune of around \$3 billion (2.6 billion euros). Her appointment at Sonangol has political ramifications in Africa's second largest oil-producing country.

The ruling MPLA party holds a crucial congress in August to elect its leadership and her authoritarian father appears to be winding down his own political career after announcing would not seek re-election in 2017. Her new powerful role at Sonangol may position her for political office in a country ruled by her father for 37 years. "The president wants to establish a dynasty and leave the power to his family," prominent Angolan writer and human rights activist Rafael Marques de Morais said. "One of the ideas is that Isabel steps up as vice president... and then along the way she takes over," Marques said.

Paula Roque, University of Oxford researcher on Angola, says the appointment of Isabel dos Santos "is a clear indication that the president wants to put in place a plan... to hand over power and concentrate power in the hands of his family." "For the first time, the president has made a very overt move to show what he is planning. This is the first open step in the succession plan," Roque said. Three years ago President dos Santos appointed his son Jose Filomeno dos Santos to chair the country's \$5 billion Sovereign Wealth Fund. He has also been tipped as a potential successor to his father.

Establish a dynasty

Most of Isabel's wealth is in stocks and shares in Portugal and Angola. According to Marques, Isabel dos Santos owns billions of dollars worth of shares through GALP Energia, an offshore oil and gas giant, which belongs to Sonangol. It is GALP "she used to become the richest woman in Africa," said

Marques, adding she never paid for the shares. Born in Baku, Azerbaijan in 1973 where her father was studying, she grew up in London, where she studied mechanical and electrical engineering at King's College. She moved to Angola in 1992 when her father secured a brief civil war truce with rebel leader Jonas Savimbi.

Her first business venture was in 1995 when she opened a restaurant, Miami Beach, as a 24-year-old in Angola's capital Luanda. Four years later she won a bid to set up Angola's private mobile operator Unitel. From there she went on an investment spree—including the creation of BIC Angola bank. She now controls 19 percent of Portugal's fourth-biggest bank BPI and has bought shares in several Portuguese companies in recent years, including a cable television firm.

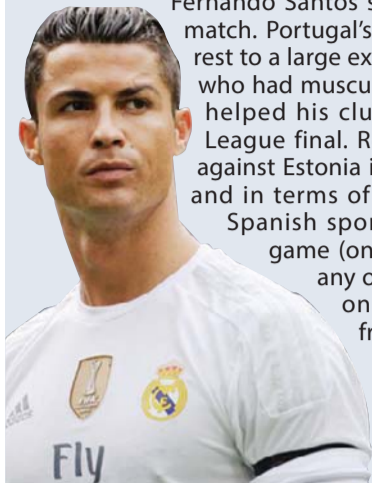
She has also spread her banking empire into neighboring Namibia. Last year she bought 65 percent of Portugal's energy and electrical engineering group Efaced, prompting calls by five European Union parliamentarians to investigate the source of her funding. Critics say she amassed her vast fortune thanks to the state and backing of her father. But in an interview with the Wall Street Journal early this year, she denied being bankrolled by the government. "I'm not financed by any state money or any public funds. I don't do that," she said. "I'm tremendously independent, I always had this wish to stand alone and not be in my parents' shadow." The mother of three is married to art collector and businessman Sindika Dokolo who is from the Democratic Republic of Congo. —AFP



PORTO, Portugal: Angolan businesswoman Isabel dos Santos arrives at the opening of an art exhibition in Porto, northern Portugal. Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos has named his billionaire daughter Isabel to head the state oil firm Sonangol, according to a government statement. He appointed the 43-year-old Isabel dos Santos chairwoman of a new board of directors of Sonangol, after sacking the previous board last month. Isabel dos Santos has been ranked by Forbes magazine as the richest woman on the continent. — AFP

RONALDO FULLY FIT FOR EURO GLORY

MADRID: Cristiano Ronaldo is in top condition and showing more resolve than ever to lead Portugal to the European title, national team coach Fernando Santos said ahead of their final Euro 2016 warm-up match. Portugal's hopes of winning the tournament in France rest to a large extent on the fitness of the Real Madrid forward who had muscular problems at the end of the season yet still helped his club beat Atletico Madrid in the Champions League final. Ronaldo is set to start in Portugal's warm-up against Estonia in Lisbon. "He is very well physically, mentally and in terms of morale," Santos was reported as saying in Spanish sports magazine Marca. "You will see it in the game (on Wednesday). He is in the same condition as any other player." Ronaldo joined his national team on Sunday, having missed out on Portugal's friendly last week at Wembley where they lost 1-0 to England. He was bothered by tendonitis two years ago and was not at his best at the World Cup, where Portugal failed to go beyond the group stages. —Reuters

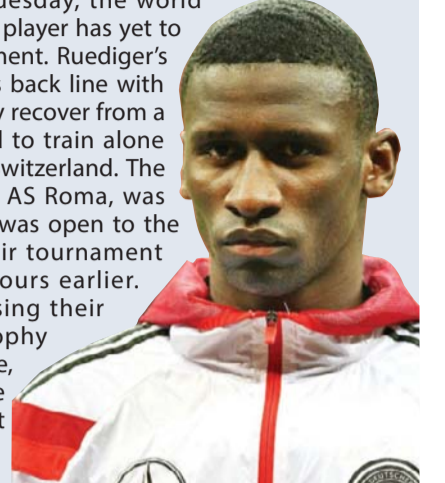


BAILLY SET TO BE JOSE MOURINHO'S FIRST SIGNING

LONDON: Jose Mourinho's first signing for Manchester United looks set to be highly-rated young Ivory Coast international defender Eric Bailly and not veteran Swedish striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic according to British media reports. The 22-year-old Villarreal defender—who scored one of the penalties in the penalty shootout which saw Ivory Coast win the 2015 Africa Cup of Nations — will cost United a reported 30million pounds (38.4million euros, \$43.7million). Bailly, who moved to Spain aged just 17 when he joined Villarreal's rivals Espanyol, impressed last season as his side conceded just 35 goals in 38 league matches and also reached the Europa League semi-finals. Bailly—who cost Villarreal just £4.4million when he joined from Espanyol last year—will have to work on his discipline on the pitch as he was booked 10 times last term and sent off once. Ibrahimovic has been linked with a move to United—having left French champions Paris Saint Germain at the end of the season just finished—as he enjoyed a good relationship with Mourinho at Italian side Inter Milan. However, the 34-year-old—presently in training with the Swedish squad for Euro 2016 — has toyed with questioners who have asked him if he was joining United. — AFP

RUEDIGER OUT OF EUROS THROUGH INJURY

EVIAN: Germany defender Antonio Ruediger will miss Euro 2016 after tearing cruciate ligaments in his right knee in the squad's first training session at their base on Tuesday, the world champions said. "A decision on a new player has yet to be taken," the team added in a statement. Ruediger's injury is a further blow for Germany's back line with centre back Mats Hummels still to fully recover from a leg muscle injury that meant he had to train alone during their pre-Euro 2016 camp in Switzerland. The 23-year-old Ruediger, who plays for AS Roma, was hurt midway through a session that was open to the public. Germany had arrived at their tournament base near the Swiss border only hours earlier. Joachim Loew's men, who are chasing their fourth European Championship trophy but their first since 1996, play Ukraine, Northern Ireland and Poland in the group stage of the competition that starts on Friday. —Reuters



HAT-TRICK OF WINS FOR RASHID AL DHAHERI IN ITALY

DUBAI: Rashid Al Dhaheri, the UAE's most exciting young karting star continued his winning streak in the 2016 Parolin Champion kart Academy Series, taking the top spot on the podium in the Rookie category for a third consecutive race, this time at Circuito Internazionale del Friuli Venezia Giulia in Lignano, Italy. The eight year old Abu Dhabi schoolboy, one of the youngest drivers in the field, battled constantly changing weather conditions to claim fourth place in the Final, earning him top spot in the Rookie Class once again.

Despite intermittent storms and rain showers Al Dhaheri amassed impressive forty sessions on the tricky 1.2 km track in the build-up to the race. On Friday and Saturday weather conditions improved but the rain came down again during warm-up on Sunday before drying out for qualifying and the races in the afternoon. "Al Dhaheri qualified in P4 despite reporting that his kart appeared to be losing power on exiting corners, nevertheless he was in touch with the pace setters who were separated by a mere tenth of a second on the timing sheets.

A chaotic start in the Pre-Final resulted in Al Dhaheri dropping down the order to P6, in an effort to avoid the confusion and a potential collision. Despite this setback, the young Emirati dug deep and fought his way back up to P4. Late in the race he was involved in a wheel-to-wheel battle for third place with one of the most experienced drivers in the field, and although he managed to edge into third on the last lap he could not hold on to it and had to settle for P4. The Final was a tense affair with several drivers battling for the top spot. Al Dhaheri remained calm and delivered consistent laps on his way to another fourth place and with it doing enough to score a third victory in a row in the Rookie Category. "Italian team manager Fausto Ippoliti said: "It was not an easy race weekend for Rashid, the weather conditions kept on changing from session to session and we encountered a number of technical issues on the Saturday.

However, despite this Rashid drove very well in the Pre-Final and Final and took on older and more experienced drivers. In the end it was a challenging weekend, but one in which Rashid and the team have learned a great deal, and this is the best experience for a young driver." Al Dhaheri returned to Abu Dhabi after the race weekend to celebrate Ramadan with his family, and will return to Italy for the ROK North Championship in Adria, on 19 June 2016.



The Champions Young Stars.



Runners Up of the KC U19 Trophy 2016.

YOUNG STARS CRICKET CLUB CLINCH U-19 TITLE OF KUWAIT CRICKET TOURNAMENT

KUWAIT: The finals of Kuwait Cricket U-19 Tournament, organized by Kuwait Cricket, was played between Future Star XI and Junior Young Star at Sulabiya Turf Cricket Ground on Saturday the 4th of June at 4:30 PM. Young Star Cricket Club won the toss and elected to bowl on a pitch that looked conducive to batting. The weather very hot and humid, certainly not the weather in which the cricketers would enjoy playing on it, even the temperature of 45 degrees and above could not stop these young enthusiasts of cricket or hamper their enthusiasm in exhibiting their talent in this scorching heat. Future stars started their innings cautiously but in the second over lost their opener Abdul Rahman, bowled by Hamza and in the last over of the power play Abdul Sadiq had to return to the pavilion at his personal score of 18, hence by the end of power play Future Stars put on a score of 39 for the loss of two wickets. A 48 run partnership between Hamoud and Haseeb with some gritty hitting from the bat of Hamoud, who scored 41 with three sixes and three hits to the boundary put some good score of 91 runs in 11 overs for the Future Stars. Haseeb scored his 50 with some good hitting

in the penultimate over of the innings and was the highlight of the future star innings to get to a respectable total to defend. Young stars bowlers got the important breakthrough regularly, which put the brakes on to the batting of Future Stars, who at one stage looked like scoring above 200 runs, but some good overs and wickets at regular intervals pressurized the future star batsmen to be on their back foot. Future managed to post a total of 154 for the loss of 7 wickets in the stipulated 20 overs. For young cricketers Fiyaz was the pick of the bowlers with 2-13 in two overs while their disciplined bowling attack controlled the intentions the dangerous looking Future Star batting effort. Junior Young Stars started their chase sensibly without losing a wicket in the power-play, they put on 43 runs in the powerplay by picking up sharp singles and doubles and their running between the wickets was exceptional. At the half stage of the chase, after 10 overs the Junior Young Stars had managed to score 65 for the loss of one wicket, thus requiring another 100 runs to win from 60 balls. Good partnerships helped to ease the chase for Junior Young Stars, 46 runs for the first wicket and another exhibi-

tion of excellent second wicket partnership of over hundred runs kept on the score board moving and making the target look easier and within their reach convincingly. Ahmed Hafeez scored unbeaten 65 runs in 33 balls with 7 fours and 3 sixes and Anas scored his 50 in 41 balls with 6 boundaries and 1 six mastered the chase with some good and sensible batting to chase down the target and win with 8 wickets emphatically in the 18th over. Ahmed Hafeez for his useful contribution with the bat in taking his team to win the title was declared Man of the Finals. The dignitaries present at the finals to encourage the young lads were Director General Kuwait Cricket Asad Baig, Vice Chairman Iqbal Vanoo, Director, Coaching Panel, Samer Desai, Director Women's Cricket Mahboob Khan, Director Match Officials, Imran Mustafa, Irfan Adil and Tahir Khan too were present at the post match presentation, encouraging the young boys for their excellent sportsmanship. The post match presentation was conducted by Syed Nadeem and the final vote of thanks was delivered by Iqbal Vanoo for both the teams and the supporters of the game.



Winners of KC U19 Trophy 2016.

SHARKS TRY TO PUT PENGUINS' STANLEY CUP PARTY PLANS ON ICE

NEW YORK: The San Jose Sharks have been the NHL's ultimate road warrior this season and will need to pack their A-game when they travel to Pittsburgh to face the Penguins today in what could be the Stanley Cup decider.

The Sharks, who trail the best-of-seven series 3-1, will be determined to play the spoiler role with the Penguins eager to celebrate a Stanley Cup victory on home ice after each of their three previous championships were clinched on the road. "We want to win one game and get a Game Six back here at home,"

Sharks coach Peter DeBoer told reporters on Tuesday. "I think we would be comfortable in that spot that we could get it to go seven. "Short-term we've got to go in and win one road game. We've been the best road team in the league all year. It's not going to be easy." The Sharks, who have logged more air miles this season than any other team, posted the NHL's best away record this season with a franchise-best 28 road wins and have continued to excel away from the SAP Center during the playoffs. But the challenge ahead is a daunting

one for the Sharks as only one team - the 1942 Toronto Maple Leafs - have erased a 3-1 series deficit in the final and won the Cup. While the odds may favour the Penguins, the team are not taken anything for granted.

"We have to try to do our best to ignore some of the noise surrounding the group," said Penguins coach Mike Sullivan. "I think our players are well aware of it."

"Our players are excited to be in the position we're in, but by no means do we think that we've accomplished what

we've set out to do." Home or away what the Sharks must do is rediscover their scoring touch which has disappeared under a suffocating Pittsburgh defense and the sparkling play of rookie netminder Matt Murray, who has picked up 14 playoff wins.

Coming into the finals the San Jose attack was firing on all cylinders, potting 63 goals in 18 playoff contests, but have managed just seven in the NHL's championship round.

The Sharks big guns have shown little bite in the crunch. Joe Pavelski leads all

players with 13 playoff goals this year but has not collected a point against the Penguins. And Logan Couture, the post-season's leading scorer with 26 points, has just two assists in four games versus Pittsburgh. "I thought every game we've created a little bit more chances to score," said DeBoer. "I think our big guys have gotten more shots off and more looks as the series has gone on."

"But you can't change the fact that we've played behind the entire series. That's something that we have to get fixed." — Reuters

RECHARGED RICCIARDO CAN BE HANDFUL FOR HAMILTON

LONDON: Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo has put Monaco misery behind him and is hoping for another epic battle with Lewis Hamilton in Montreal this weekend.

Two weeks after taking a first Formula One pole position, only to lose out on victory for the second race running due to no fault of his own, the smiling Australian returns to the scene of his first grand prix victory in feisty mood.

Triple world champion Hamilton, aiming for a fifth Canadian Grand Prix win after also taking his first career triumph at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve, and his Mercedes team mate Nico Rosberg will be favourites again. But Ricciardo reckons he can be a contender, particularly at a track where the weather can act as a leveller. Temperatures are forecast to be cool with some rain.

"Now that I've sort of got over Monaco I just want to get back in the car and basically smash it and get amongst it," Ricciardo said on social media.

"You're going to see the same intensity that you saw in Monaco. I plan on keeping that up and not letting anything else get in the way," added the Australian, whose 18-year-old Dutch team mate Max Verstappen won in Barcelona.

Renault's latest specification engine, which Red Bull use with Tag Heuer branding, has provided a good boost in horsepower to help close the gap.

Canada has been a rollercoaster for Ricciardo in the past, his breakthrough win in 2014 followed by 13th last year when

Hamilton won from pole position. He was 15th in 2013.

Hamilton has the momentum from Monaco and is a renowned master of Montreal while Rosberg, 24 points clear at the top, will want to hit back after two races without points. Another win for either would take Mercedes level with Red Bull in the all-time lists, on 51 each, but the champions know the pressure is on.

"The main thing we took away (from Monaco) was the very real threat from Red Bull," said team boss Toto Wolff. "It took a bold strategy, a big push from Lewis and an even bigger slice of luck with Daniel's slow pitstop to get us that win."

"We have no breathing space in this championship." Ferrari hope to add to the pressure, after their early promise fell off. Monaco, with Kimi Raikkonen retiring and Sebastian Vettel fourth, was their worst result of the season.

Both drivers can expect to see the benefit of a power unit upgrade at a circuit named after one of the Ferrari greats but where the Italian team have not won for 12 years, and Raikkonen reckons the results so far have been deceptive.

"Certain races that we're pretty certain will suit us better have been moved from the beginning to later on in the season and all the races that we knew were difficult for us have been moved to the front," said the 2007 world champion.

"Just looking at the results doesn't always tell you the full story." — Reuters



KENTUCKY: A boy is directed as he poses with a photo of boxing legend Muhammad Ali yesterday in Louisville, Kentucky. — AFP

LOUISVILLE READY TO 'WELCOME THE WORLD' TO ALI SERVICES

LOUISVILLE: Muhammad Ali's hometown is ready to "welcome the world" for this week's ceremonies honoring the late boxing legend, Louisville's mayor said Tuesday, with a huge public procession set for "The Greatest."

The largest city in the southern state of Kentucky and home to 600,000 people, Louisville will play host Thursday and Friday to the mass public celebration of the life of Ali, its most famous native son.

Ali, whose remarkable boxing career and civil rights activism made him one of the most indelible figures of the 20th century, died last week at age 74 after a decades-long battle with Parkinson's disease. His death has prompted an outpouring of tributes for The Champ, who won three heavyweight titles and Olympic Gold during his illustrious years in the ring. New York renamed a street outside Madison Square Garden "Muhammad Ali Way" after the boxing great who headlined a string of fights at the iconic sports arena.

"Today, we are paying tribute to the man in the heart of this city," Mayor Bill de Blasio said. "He deserves this naming honor and more."

The ceremonies in Louisville will have three key moments: an Islamic prayer service open to all on Thursday, a long public funeral procession through the city on Friday and a memorial service at a sports arena that same day.

Former US president Bill Clinton and comedian Billy Crystal are among those expected to speak about Ali. Clinton awarded Ali the Presidential Citizens Medal at the White House in January 2001, just before leaving office.

"This celebration for Muhammad will be a one-of-a-kind event for anywhere in the world... and for us," Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer said,

calling on the city's residents to show the hospitality and compassion that Ali championed.

"Muhammad shook up the world and he showed everybody he was a world-class fighter and humanitarian, so now let's welcome the world." President Barack Obama and his wife Michelle Obama will not be among those attending. "They will be attending Malia's high school graduation ceremony in Washington, DC," said spokeswoman Jen Friedman.

Instead, a close aide to Obama "will read a letter from the president and the first lady as part of Friday's service in Louisville," said Friedman. Earlier this week, Obama called Ali's widow, Yolanda "Lonnie" Williams to offer his condolences. He also remembered a man "who fought for what was right" and whose gloves sit in his private White House study.

MEDIA SCRUM

Local authorities have received more than 2,000 accreditation requests from the US and world media, and the hotels in Louisville-no stranger to big events, as the home of horse racing's marquee Kentucky Derby-are booked solid.

"There are so many heads of state attending the funeral service that we are not allowing any foreign dignitaries or heads of state to speak at the funeral service," Ali family spokesman Bob Gunnell said. The list of those world leaders remained unclear-Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's staff confirmed he would attend. Actor Will Smith-who earned an Oscar nomination for his portrayal of Ali on the silver screen-and former heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis will be among the pallbearers for Ali, who was born in Louisville as Cassius Clay in January 1942. The Islamic service on Thursday

will take place in the 18,000-seat Freedom Hall that hosted Ali's last fight in Louisville, in which he beat Willi Besmanoff, in 1961.

On Tuesday, organizers started distributing tickets for the event, with residents waking up at dawn to be sure to get a seat. "I am here to get tickets for my grandson. He is eight. I want him to know that you can be great no matter where you come from," said Angela Smith Ward, who is retired from the US Army.

'JUST WANT TO BE PART OF IT'

First in line was David Alcorn, who arrived at 1:30 am. Like many Americans, he has two jobs-as a bus driver and at a gas station. He was heading to work as soon as he got a ticket, but he said he wasn't worried about being too tired.

"He is the greatest of all time and this is his hometown. I just want to be part of it," Alcorn told AFP. On Friday, the procession-which will see Ali's coffin paraded through the streets of Louisville-will allow those without tickets for the Islamic service or the public memorial to see their hero one last time.

The route will pass by sites that were important to Ali: his childhood home, the Ali Center, the Center for African American Heritage-which focuses on the lives of blacks in Kentucky-and, of course, along Muhammad Ali Boulevard.

Ali had been pondering and preparing his own funeral for years, given the disease that ravaged his once-powerful body. He hoped to send the world a final message of peace, organizers have said. One thousand volunteers will be on hand to assist visitors expected from around the globe. "Now the world is doing more than watching our city-the world is coming to our city," Fischer said. —AFP

TIGER WOODS TO SKIP US OPEN AT OAKMONT

WASHINGTON: For the third time in the past six years, the US Open will go on without three-time champion Tiger Woods.

Woods said on his website Tuesday that he is not ready for tournament competition and will skip the US Open next week at Oakmont, along with his Quicken Loans National the following week at Congressional. "While I continue to work hard on getting healthy, I am not physically ready to play in this year's US Open and the Quicken Loans National," he said. "I am making progress, but I'm not yet ready for tournament competition."

Woods first missed the US Open in 2011 when he was recovering from leg injuries. He missed in 2014 at Pinehurst No. 2 while recovering from his first back surgery a week before the Masters that year.

He has not played since a tie for 10th in the Wyndham Championship in August. Woods had two more surgeries on his back after that, in September and October.

Meanwhile, his absence fueled speculation about when he might return, even though Woods repeatedly has said he does not know. Woods played five holes when he opened his golf course in Houston, and also was seen swinging a club at a junior clinic in South Carolina and at his media day at Congressional - three swings from 100 yards to the 10th green, all of them in the water. Jack Nicklaus said last week at the Memorial he expects Woods to return.

'JUST NOT READY'

"I think Tiger would have liked to have played this week," Nicklaus said. "He's just

not ready." Since Woods was exempt from having to qualify because he won the 2008 U.S. Open, his spot will be filled by an alternate from the 12 sectional qualify sites, though it was not clear which one. The USGA compiles an alternate list that is based on how many spots each qualifying site was allocated and the strength of each field in determining the list.

When qualifying ended on Tuesday, and with Woods saying he will not play, 149 of the 156-man field for Oakmont was set.

The USGA set aside six spots for any players who crack the top 60 in the world ranking after this week. One of them will be William McGirt, who now is No. 44 in the world after winning the Memorial.

If fewer than five more players get into the top 60, the extra spots also go to the main alternate list. But if a player who qualified is to withdraw, his spot is taken by the alternate from his qualifying site.

Meanwhile, speculation on when or if Woods returns this year will resume after two weeks. The Greenbrier Classic, which he has played twice in the last four years when not dealing with injuries, is July 7-10. That's one week before the British Open at Royal Troon.

The PGA Championship is two weeks after Troon, followed by the Travelers Championship, the John Deere Classic and the Wyndham Champion. Woods has never played the Travelers Championship and has not played at John Deere since he was a 20-year-old rookie.

After that, he would not be eligible for any PGA Tour event for the next six weeks during the FedEx Cup and Ryder Cup. —AP



Tiger Woods

WORLD CHAMPION SAGAN SWAPS ROAD FOR MOUNTAINS IN RIO

LONDON: Slovakia's world road race champion Peter Sagan will compete in the mountain bike event at the Rio Olympics, returning to the discipline in which he began his career.

Sagan, who will ride this year's Tour de France for his Tinkoff-Saxo team, has been handed Slovakia's only spot for the mountain bike race which will take place on Aug. 21. He will not ride the road race in Rio.

"Everyone thought that Peter Sagan, as world champion will start the road race. However, Peter offered his place in the road event in exchange for place in the cross country mountain bike race," Peter Privara, president of the Slovak Cycling Association was quoted as saying in a statement from the Slovakia Olympic Committee.

"After finishing the Tour de France, Peter will do some special training for four weeks. He will not go to Rio just to take part but to aim for a good position." Sagan, 26, is one of the biggest names in road cycling but began in cross-country where he became a junior world champion. This year, he claimed his first 'Monument' triumph with victory in the Tour of Flanders, after which he competed in several mountain bike races in Austria and the Czech Republic in order to secure the qualification points required for Rio. After competing in the recent Tour of California, winning the sprinters' category, Sagan stayed in the U.S. and trained on mountain bikes in Park City, Utah.

He will not be a contender for the general

classification at the Tour de France but will target stage victories and aim to win the points classification green jersey for a fifth year in succession.

The Slovakian Olympic Committee said Martin Haring and Patrik Tybor would ride the Rio road race, which will take place on a hilly course not best-suited to Sagan. "The aim is to

give Slovakia the best possible result. Peter Sagan in the past managed to win the world title in mountain biking, so his chances of a good outcome are realistic," head of Slovakia's mountain bike commission John Ilova was quoted as saying in a statement from the Slovakia Olympic Committee. — Reuters



STOCKHOLM: Javier Gomez Noya of Spain during the 10 km running leg of the men's Olympic distance of the 2015 ITU World Triathlon in Stockholm, Sweden, on August 23, 2015. Noya has been awarded the Princess of Asturias Award for Sports, the jury award announced. — AFP

SOUTH AFRICA AGREE TO DAY-NIGHT AUSTRALIA TEST

SYDNEY: South Africa have overcome their reservations and agreed to play a day-night pink ball Test against Australia in Adelaide this year, cricket chiefs announced yesterday.

Australia unveiled plans for day-night Tests against South Africa and Pakistan in April, but admitted player concerns about the experimental format meant the Proteas' fixture was not locked in.

It is now confirmed for November 24-28. "This announcement will further fuel

the excitement about what promises to be a fascinating series between formidable rivals," said Cricket Australia chief executive James Sutherland.

Cricket South Africa chief Haroon Lorgat said the decision was made after talks with players, who initially feared they would be disadvantaged by having no experience under pink ball conditions. "Following careful consideration and engagement with all our Test players, and recognising the need to exploit the

potential of playing day-night Test cricket, I am pleased to announce that we have agreed with Cricket Australia to proceed with this fixture," he said in the same statement.

"Our Proteas were initially hesitant to play such a key Test match without previous experience and adequate preparation but after working through all their concerns and possible options to prepare sufficiently, there is newfound excitement for this novel Test match.

"Our players deserve credit for the way they have worked through the issues which were clearly not insignificant," he added. The day-night Tests using a pink ball, designed to be more visible under floodlights, are a central part of Australia's home international schedule for 2016-17, which also features limited-overs matches against Pakistan, New Zealand and Sri Lanka. Administrators regard the inaugural day-night Test against New Zealand in Adelaide last season as an outstanding

success, attracting 123,000 spectators and an average television audience of two million. However, players from both sides complained about the pink ball's movement and durability, as well as the difficulty batsmen faced seeing it under lights. South Africa play the first Test against Australia in Perth from November 3-7, followed by a second in Hobart before the Adelaide day-nighter. Pakistan also play three Tests in Australia this summer, with a day-night Test in Brisbane. —AFP

PAKISTAN'S DIANA HUNTS FOR GLORY IN CRICKET AND FOOTBALL

LAHORE: Diana Baig shifts restlessly in her seat, checking her watch every few seconds at an awards ceremony after leading her cricket team to victory. Soon she has to play a football match at another venue, and time is ticking.

Baig is no stranger to the pressure. The talented 20-year-old plays for Pakistan's national team in both cricket and football, representing the country as one of the "Girls in Green" at the recent World Twenty20 tournament in India in between practicing her penalty shoot-out skills.

"It was an honour to be selected for the T20 squad," she says, in between glances at her watch. She did not make the starting team, but being at the tournament—even from the sidelines—was "very encouraging for me—it gave me new life, a new energy".

The 20-year-old grew up playing street cricket and football with other children in the magnificent Hunza Valley, their makeshift arenas ringed by some of the world's tallest mountains in Pakistan's northern Gilgit-Baltistan.

The fact that she was a girl did not matter, she says: Baig belongs to the Ismaili

ACCIDENTAL FOOTBALL STAR

Her journey to the forefront of Pakistani women's football was even more dramatic.

In cricket-obsessed Pakistan, football—especially women's football—finds itself largely unable to compete in the popularity stakes. But while playing cricket in Islamabad in 2010, Baig tried out for the Gilgit-Baltistan football team on a whim after friends told her they needed players.

She made the team and, to her disbelief, in 2014 was selected to play for Pakistan at the SAFF Championships in Bahrain.

She has been a member of the starting 11 as a defender ever since, she says, unable to hide her excitement. Baig has had to fight harder for her cricket career.

Unlike in men's cricket, Pakistan's women's players are not contracted and are selected on a match by match basis from lower-ranked teams, such as the several hundred playing at the provincial level.

That means that there were times when Baig was in-and times when she was out.

Fighting to keep her place was complicated by the fact that—again, unlike the men—Pakistan's women have no regular facilities or practice time, meaning Baig was forced to rely on training with her university team to keep up to international standard. But her selection for the World T20 meant the hard work on the playing fields at the Lahore College for Women University had paid off. "It is because of this college, this ground, because regular practice is very important," she says.

HAVING IT ALL

Now Baig is fighting to maintain a crucial balance between her sporting dreams and an education. "It becomes very hard," she says.

"I try to start from football... I play football in the morning, then our cricket training starts around 11 or 12 noon and continues until 3:00 pm or 4:00 pm." After that, she says, she heads to her university hostel for food and drink. "I start studying during the night, continuing until late." Women's cricket is growing in popularity in Pakistan, she says, with corporations such as mobile companies increasingly arranging sports events. The women's team received unprecedented support from Pakistani fans disillusioned by the men's dismal performance during the World T20 in India, with the hashtag #GirlsInGreen trending.

With cricket taking up more and more time, her studies—she is on a full scholarship at the university, where she is in her first semester of a health and physical education degree—are suffering, Baig admits. "But one has to manage it." Though determined, she knows that one day she will have to choose. When asked which path she will take, she laughed. "You know, in Asia, there is more charm in cricket," she says, acknowledging her playing for the football team is the harder road. She adds: "I see my future better in cricket." — AFP



Diana Baig poses with a cricket trophy.

sect of Shia Islam, who are followers of the Aga Khan—infamous in conservative Pakistan for their moderate views.

That largely freed her from the restrictions placed on other, more conservative women in the Muslim country, where her gender is battling for greater freedom.

From the streets, Baig began playing in community events and for local teams, and by 2010 she was leading the newly-formed Gilgit-Baltistan women's team.

Two years later, she was selected for Pakistan's A side, and then as a reserve player for the 2013 World Cup. In 2015 she finally won her first international cap, playing for Pakistan against Bangladesh.

But Baig says she had her moments of despair along the way. "A time came when I could not see my future bright like this," she admits. Being selected for the A side changed all that. "After that, I started to work hard."



ISLAMABAD: In this photograph taken on April 25, 2016, Pakistani national cricket and football player Diana Baig (R), delivers the ball during a domestic cricket championship match in Islamabad. — AFP



GEORGETOWN: Australia's Aaron Finch plays a shot during a One-day International (ODI) cricket match between South Africa and Australia in the Tri-Nation Series in Georgetown, Guyana on Tuesday. — AFP

SOUTH AFRICA BACK IN BUSINESS AFTER ODI WIN OVER AUSTRALIA

PROVIDENCE: South Africa roared back into contention in the Tri-Nation One-Day International series with a 47-run victory over Australia in the third match of the tournament at the Guyana National Stadium on Tuesday.

Defending a modest 189 for nine on another pitch that challenged the patience and technique of all batsmen, the Proteas bowlers were resisted only by opener Aaron Finch's defiant 72 before he was ninth out as the World Cup holders folded for 142 off 34.2 overs.

By virtue of their margin of victory, South Africa also earned a bonus point and leapt from last to first on net run-rate over Australia, leaving hosts West Indies third. Competition resumes in St Kitts on Saturday with South Africa and Australia renewing their rivalry at Warner Park. Farhaan Behardien's workmanlike innings of 62 held South Africa's innings together and earned him the "Man of the Match" award. However pacer Kagiso Rabada shared the plaudits with a useful unbeaten 15 as the tail contributed important runs and then led the way with the ball as he claimed three for 13 off seven probing overs.

Rabada disposed of Usman Khawaja in his opening spell and returned to account for wicket-keeper-batsman Matthew Wade and tailender Nathan Coulter-Nile in an excellent display of controlled fast bowling. His effort was supported by Wayne Parnell, who shared the new ball and got rid of the dangerous David Warner in his very first over. Playing his first ODI for almost 16 months, Parnell then trapped Australian captain Steve Smith leg-before.

Spinners Imran Tahir and Aaron Phangiso then tightened the stranglehold with two wickets apiece, while Tabraiz Shamsi, the left-arm leggie, marked his debut with the wicket of Glenn Maxwell in his first over to ensure there was no escape for the Aussies.

"We started well with the two seamers although this wasn't the kind of surface where they were having the time of their lives," captain A.B. de Villiers said. "(Tabraiz) Shamsi was a

handful for their batters. I didn't see a lot of them picking him."

TOUGH GAMES COMING UP

Earlier, Australia's fast bowling pair of Coulter-Nile and Josh Hazlewood proved most effective with two wickets each in restricting the Proteas after de Villiers surprisingly chose to bat first on winning the toss. "We didn't adapt well enough with the bat today," was Smith's assessment of his team's reply. "We've got a couple of tough games ahead of us now and we have to improve on this effort."

Coulter-Nile, who replaced Mitchell Starc from the opening victory over West Indies two days earlier, made the most of the opportunity with a spell of two for 38 off 10 overs.

He claimed the vital wickets of de Villiers and J.P. Duminy in consecutive overs to reduce

the South Africans to 104 for five midway through the innings, effectively killing off any realistic chance they had of posting a formidable total.

Hazlewood was even more economical in conceding 20 runs off 10 metronomic overs. He earned an LBW verdict against Quinton de Kock to break the opening partnership with Hashim Amla and returned to get rid of Parnell. South Africa entertained hopes of a challenging total when de Villiers and Amla were at the crease. The two most experienced batsmen in the side put on 40 for the third wicket before Amla was run out for the third time in ODIs against Australia. Wickets continued to fall regularly thereafter and it was left to the lower-order players Phangiso and Rabada to assist Behardien in lifting the South Africans closer to the 200-run mark. — AFP

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close of play in the third Triangular Series match between Australia and South Africa on Tuesday in Georgetown, Guyana.

South Africa Innings:		Australia Innings:	
H. Amla run out (Smith, Finch)	35	D. Warner lbw b Parnell	1
Q. de Kock lbw b Hazlewood	18	A. Finch c de Villiers b Phangiso	72
R. Rossouw lbw b Lyon	7	U. Khawaja b Rabada	2
A. de Villiers b Coulter-Nile	22	S. Smith lbw b Parnell	8
J. Duminy b Coulter-Nile	13	G. Maxwell lbw b Shamsi	3
F. Behardien b Maxwell	62	M. Marsh c de Kock b Tahir	8
W. Parnell b Hazlewood	2	M. Wade c de Kock b Rabada	2
A. Phangiso c Hazlewood b Zampa	9	N. Coulter-Nile b Rabada	0
K. Rabada not out	15	A. Zampa lbw b Tahir	0
I. Tahir c Coulter-Nile b Maxwell	0	N. Lyon lbw b Phangiso	30
T. Shamsi not out	0	J. Hazlewood not out	11
Extras (lb-1 w-5)	6	Extras (lb-5)	5
Total (for 9 wickets, 50 overs)	189	Total (all out, 34.2 overs)	142
Fall of wickets: 1-29 Q. de Kock, 2-41 R. Rossouw, 3-81 H. Amla, 4-97 A. de Villiers, 5-104 J. Duminy, 6-112 W. Parnell, 7-149 A. Phangiso, 8-188 F. Behardien, 9-188 I. Tahir		Fall of wickets: 1-1 D. Warner, 2-10 U. Khawaja, 3-21 S. Smith, 4-47 G. Maxwell, 5-72 M. Marsh, 6-83 M. Wade, 7-85 N. Coulter-Nile, 8-90 A. Zampa, 9-113 A. Finch, 10-142 N. Lyon	
Bowling: J. Hazlewood 10-3-20- 2 (w-1), N. Coulter-Nile 10-2-38-2 (w-2), N. Lyon 10-0-40-1, A. Zampa 10-0-46-1 (w-2), M. Marsh 4-0-18-0, A. Finch 3-0-11-0, G. Maxwell 3-0-15-2.		Bowling: K. Rabada 7-1-13-3, W. Parnell 6-1-23-2, I. Tahir 8-0-39-2, A. Phangiso 5.2-0-26-2, T. Shamsi 8-1-36-1. Result: South Africa won by 47 runs	

S LANKA'S PERERA EAGER FOR RETURN AT LORD'S

LONDON: If all cricketers dream of playing at Lord's, Sri Lanka's Kusal Perera has more reason than most to hope he's selected for today's third Test against England at the spiritual home of the game. The 25-year-old endured a potentially career-ending spell on the sidelines after he was suspended from all cricket during Sri Lanka's tour of New Zealand last December, when a laboratory in Qatar, accredited by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), said he had produced a positive result in an out-of-competition test.

Perera tested positive test for a banned anabolic steroid, but his lawyers later raised concerns the amounts were so low that they could have been produced naturally by the body or formed in the samples after they were submitted. And last month he was cleared to play again by the International Cricket Council (ICC) after the laboratory withdrew its "adverse original finding" and replaced it with an "atypical finding", and said no further investigation was warranted.

The wicket-keeper/batsman wasn't allowed to take part in any formal cricket training during his suspension and missed this year's World

Twenty20, but an injury to seamer Dhammika Prasad created a space in Sri Lanka's tour party.

"They haven't told me if I'm playing yet," Perera told reporters at Lord's on Tuesday after a training session. "If I do get to play, it's a great opportunity to play at Lord's. I was thrown into trouble and to come back from that at Lord's would be great." Perera said belief in his own innocence had helped sustain him in the months he was banned from cricket. "Even the time I was out of the team I knew I hadn't done anything wrong," he said. "I couldn't really think about cricket much in those months, because my focus was on the problem I was facing. I didn't have any time to think about whether I was in touch, or whether I could train, or even what was happening in cricket. I started training after the day I was cleared. I didn't have a lot of centre-wicket training because of the rain (in Sri Lanka)." He added: "After six months your body needs to get used to training again.

Your body starts to hurt—but that's normal. But what I've found is that because I'm coming into it quite fresh, I'm hitting the ball well, I'm

seeing it well." Sri Lanka are already 2-0 down in the three-match series, with their batsmen having struggled so far in English conditions against new-ball duo James Anderson and Stuart Broad. But Lord's, where no side has been dismissed for under 350 in three County Championship matches so far this season, promises to provide the best batting pitch of the series.

Perera, who could come in for injured all-rounder Milinda Siriwardana (twisted ankle), said he hoped forecast warmer temperatures than those the tourists experienced during a nine-wicket defeat in the second Test at Chester-le-Street would also benefit Sri Lanka later this week. "I watched the (England) attack and it's mostly fast bowlers," he said. "In London the conditions seem easier, because it must have been very cold in Durham.

"When it's cold you are a bit stiff and your feet don't work as well. With this weather and given the pitch as well—which looks like it will be batting-friendly—I think there's a chance for us to dominate them." — AFP



LONDON: Sri Lanka's opening batsmen Kaushal Silva (L) and Dimuth Karunaratne (2nd L) chat during a practice session at Lord's cricket ground in London yesterday. Sri Lanka play England in the third Test match starting today. — AFP

CHINA COOL ON ANOTHER BADMINTON SWEEP AT RIO

SYDNEY: China shrugged off badminton's biggest Olympic scandal to sweep all five titles at London four years ago but the Asian super-power is trying to keep a lid on expectations of another bumper gold medal haul at the Rio de Janeiro Games.

The peerless team that set up the 'Great Haul of China' in London will line up almost unchanged at Rio, anchored by men's singles great Lin Dan and women's champion Li Xuerui.

So strong were the Chinese in 2012 that they swept the titles without the reigning world champion women's doubles pairing of Wang Xiaoli and Yu Yang, who were expelled from the tournament in disgrace. Wang and Yu were among eight players disqualified for deliberately playing to lose pool round matches to secure more favourable draws in the knockout rounds. In Rio, all of China's

singles and doubles contenders are expected to vie for podium places but the days of gold medal-deciders fought exclusively by shuttlers in identical red shirts may be gone for good.

World badminton has moved the Olympic goalposts by limiting nations to two singles entrants in each event, down from the three at London and previous Games. The move was intended to increase competition but naturally prompted grumblings in China of a containment strategy. With the new limits, fewer team mates means more pressure on the remaining Chinese to perform for a nation which has become used to gold flowing from the badminton arena.

"Actually, I don't believe it's discrimination against China, but the rule came out and we just accept it," Olympic women's singles champion Li Xuerui told Reuters in Sydney on Wednesday. Li,

who upset compatriot Wang Yihan for the gold at London, returns to Rio with Wang again among her biggest threats. World number six Wang Shixian, who competed at London, would have qualified under the former regime but the reigning Asian champion misses out. "Maybe (we feel) it's a pity that there are three of us but we can only enter two," added Li.

CLOSING THE GAP

Since London, other nations have been closing the gap and the tournament will open in Brazil without Chinese players dominating the world rankings in every event. Li is currently ranked fourth behind Spanish world number one Carolina Marin, second-ranked Thai sensation Ratchanok Intanon and Wang Yihan. There is little prospect of a shake-up to the rankings at the season-ending

Australian Badminton Open in Sydney this week. After breezing through her opening match at the Sydney Olympic Park Sports Centre on Wednesday, the 25-year-old Li forecast a much tougher run for China at Rio.

"Yes, London was London, now it's a new Olympic cycle," she said. "The whole world's level has improved, so I think it will be difficult for all countries. So, we just need to worry about our own game."

"Everyone's got a chance. It can't be said that there are just a few contenders. It's possible for any player to go all the way." With its richly-funded programmes and punishing training regimes, China's Soviet-style sports system has been an assembly line for Olympic champions in sports like badminton and table tennis, but it has also inadvertently become an exporter for coaching talent.

Top teams, including European pow-

erhouse Denmark, have employed Chinese coaching consultants, while former world champion Ratchanok has credited her current mentor Xie Zhuhua for much of her success.

Along with Spaniard Marin, Ratchanok has repeatedly pricked China's aura of invincibility at high-profile tournaments in recent years and has no fear of the Chinese at Rio.

"Before when I was young, if I beat the Chinese players I would feel very happy, very proud of myself," she told Reuters at her hotel in Sydney's Olympic Park precinct. "But now there are many countries like Japan, India, Korea. Many young players (are) coming up and I think now it's not the Chinese players only. There are a lot of players going up, so I have to look at, not only the Chinese, (but) just look at who is getting better." —Reuters



SAN FRANCISCO: Boston Red Sox's Xander Bogaerts swings for an RBI single off San Francisco Giants pitcher Albert Suarez during the third inning of a baseball game Tuesday, in San Francisco. Boston won 5-3.—AP

MLB results/standings

Pittsburgh 3, NY Mets 1; Philadelphia 3, Chicago Cubs 2; Baltimore 9, Kansas City 1; NY Yankees 6, LA Angels 3; Pittsburgh 3, NY Mets 1; Detroit 3, Toronto 2 (10 innings); Cincinnati 7, St. Louis 6; Texas 4, Houston 3; Minnesota 6, Miami 4 (11 innings); Milwaukee 5, Oakland 4; Washington 10, Chicago White Sox 5; Arizona 5, Tampa Bay 0; San Diego 4, Atlanta 3; Seattle 7, Cleveland 1.

American League				
Eastern Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB
Baltimore	34	23	.596	-
Boston	34	24	.586	0.5
Toronto	31	29	.517	4.5
NY Yankees	28	30	.483	6.5
Tampa Bay	26	31	.456	8
Central Division				
Cleveland	32	25	.561	-
Detroit	30	28	.517	2.5
Kansas City	30	28	.517	2.5
Chicago White Sox	29	29	.500	3.5
Minnesota	17	40	.298	15
Western Division				
Texas	36	22	.621	-
Seattle	32	26	.552	4
Houston	28	32	.467	9
LA Angels	26	32	.448	10
Oakland	25	33	.431	11
National League				
Eastern Division				
Washington	35	23	.603	-
NY Mets	31	26	.544	3.5
Miami	30	28	.517	5
Philadelphia	29	30	.492	6.5
Atlanta	16	42	.276	19
Central Division				
Chicago Cubs	40	17	.702	-
Pittsburgh	32	26	.552	8.5
St. Louis	30	28	.517	10.5
Milwaukee	27	31	.466	13.5
Cincinnati	22	36	.379	18.5
Western Division				
San Francisco	35	25	.583	-
LA Dodgers	32	28	.533	3
Colorado	26	32	.448	8
Arizona	26	35	.426	9.5
San Diego	25	35	.417	10

BOGAERTS 10TH INNING HIT LIFTS RED SOX OVER GIANTS

SAN FRANCISCO: Xander Bogaerts hit a go-ahead, two-run single in the top of the 10th, and Boston snapped San Francisco's five-game home winning streak. The Red Sox loaded the bases against Santiago Casilla (1-1), who struck out two in a perfect ninth before running into trouble. Bogaerts also had a third-inning RBI single in Boston's first visit to San Francisco in nearly three years. Dustin Pedroia extended his majors-best hitting streak to 14 games with an eighth-inning single, while David Ortiz's streak ended at 13 after his tying groundout as a pinch-hitter in the seventh. Pedroia also has hit in 11 straight road games. Junichi Tazawa (1-1) pitched the ninth for the win and Craig Kimbrel closed it out for his 14th save.

ORIOLES 9, ROYALS 1

Kansas City right-hander Yordano Ventura hit Manny Machado with a pitch to spark a bench-emptying fray, and the Baltimore Orioles extended the Royals' losing streak to a season-high six games with a 9-1 rout Tuesday night. Mark Trumbo homered and drove in

four runs, and the Orioles also got long balls from Ryan Flaherty, Chris Davis and Adam Jones. But the game's most striking moment came in the fifth, when Ventura (4-4) drilled Machado in the back with a 99 mph fastball. In the second inning, with Baltimore leading 5-0, the two exchanged words after Ventura twice threw inside to the two-time All-Star. So in the fifth, an instant after the ball hit him, Machado charged the mound. Ventura prepared for the onslaught by slinging aside his cap and glove, but Machado landed a solid punch before the pitcher tackled him to the ground. Both dugouts and bullpens emptied before peace was restored. Machado was restrained by teammate Chris Tillman after the initial thrust. Machado and Ventura were ejected.

DODGERS 4, ROCKIES 3

Trayce Thompson hit a game-ending homer in the ninth inning to give Los Angeles a win over Colorado in the home debut for teenage prospect Julio Urias. The 19-year-old Urias struck out seven over four innings. The Mexican left-hander allowed three hits and

one run and was removed after 86 pitches with his workload being strictly monitored in just his third career start. It was by far his best so far in the majors. Kenley Jansen (2-1) got the win after pitching a scoreless ninth. Thompson hit a two-out blast in the ninth off Carlos Estevez (1-3) to give the Dodgers the win. Justin Turner hit a three-run homer in the first to give the Dodgers an early lead but the Rockies tied it 3-3 in the seventh.

TIGERS 3, BLUE JAYS 2, 10 INNINGS

Ian Kinsler drove in the winning run with a 10th-inning single, and Detroit won its fifth straight game, 3-2 over Toronto. The Tigers tied it with two runs in the ninth, spoiling an outstanding effort by Blue Jays starter Aaron Sanchez. The right-hander struck out a career-high 12 and took a one-hitter into the ninth inning, but he didn't get another out as Detroit rallied. Kinsler's RBI double in the ninth chased Sanchez, and Miguel Cabrera's one-out double off Roberto Osuna tied it. The Tigers loaded the bases in the 10th with no outs against Joe Biagini (3-2), and Kinsler won it with a chopper into left field. Justin Wilson (2-1) pitched a scoreless 10th for the win.

REDS 7, CARDINALS 6

Joey Votto homered with one out in the bottom of the ninth inning, powering Cincinnati over St. Louis after it blew a five-run lead for the second straight day. Votto connected off left-hander Kevin Siegrist (4-1) for his fifth career game-ending homer and Cincinnati's third homer of the game. Left-hander John Lamb shut down the Cardinals with his 65 mph curveball, allowing only one earned run in a career-high 7 1/3 innings. Blake Wood gave up Johnny Peralta's bases-loaded double in the eighth, cutting it to 6-4. Matt Carpenter tied it with a one-out, two-run double in the ninth off Tony Cingrani (1-2), the Reds' 12th blown save in 19 chances this season.

BREWERS 5, ATHLETICS 4

Zach Davies took a no-hitter into the seventh before allowing a two-out home run to Oakland's Billy Butler, and Milwaukee withstood a shaky ninth inning to hold on for a win. Davies (4-3) allowed two hits and three walks over seven innings while striking out five. Butler turned on an 0-1 fastball from Davies to end the shutout. Davies outdueled Oakland rookie Sean Manaea (2-4), who turned in seven solid innings but allowed two home runs to Chris Carter.

PIRATES 3, METS 1

Juan Nicasio retired his first 12 batters and

got his second win in six starts, and Pittsburgh beat New York to complete a doubleheader sweep. The Pirates also won the first game 3-1 behind seven scoreless innings from Jon Niese (6-2) against his former team. Josh Harrison had three hits and Jordy Mercer hit his first home run at PNC Park since Aug. 31, 2014 in the first victory. Nicasio (5-4) allowed a run on three hits and two walks over five innings. He had gone 1-2 with a 6.23 ERA in his previous five starts, and manager Clint Hurdle acknowledged last week that he was considering moving the right-hander to the bullpen. Jacob deGrom (3-2) is winless in his last seven starts after he allowed three runs in six innings with nine strikeouts and no walks. He has not won since April 30 against San Francisco despite allowing three earned runs or fewer six times. The Pirates snapped left-hander Steven Matz's (7-2) seven-game winning streak in the first game.

RANGERS 4, ASTROS 3

Ian Desmond hit a tiebreaking two-run homer in the eighth inning and Texas extended its dominance of Houston with its season-high fifth straight win overall. The Rangers are 8-0 this year against their AL West and instate rivals and have won 12 straight in Arlington against the Astros. AL Cy Young Award winner Dallas Keuchel (3-8) now has as many losses as he had all last season while winning 20 games. Lefty reliever Jake Diekmann (1-1) had a scoreless eighth after seven solid innings from Cole Hamels. Sam Dyson pitched out of a ninth-inning jam, eventually striking out the side for his eighth save.

MARINERS 7, INDIANS 1

Nelson Cruz homered twice and Wade Miley pitched seven scoreless innings to pace Seattle over Cleveland, snapping the Indians' six-game winning streak. Cruz hit a two-run homer in the first inning off starter Cody Anderson (1-4) and added a solo shot in the fifth, his 15th, to put Seattle up 7-0. Miley (6-2), who had allowed 18 runs in 14 2/3 innings in his last three starts, allowed four hits, striking out three and walking two. Anderson, who was called up from Triple-A earlier in the day to replace the ailing Danny Salazar, allowed six runs and seven hits in 3 2/3 innings.

YANKEES 6, ANGELS 3

Carlos Beltran and Starlin Castro homered for the second consecutive game, sending a resurgent Michael Pineda and New York past Los Angeles. Pineda (3-6) threw 22 of 27 first-pitch strikes and tossed seven efficient innings in his longest start since July 4 last year at

Tampa Bay. He gave up three runs and four hits, building on a solid performance last week in Detroit after struggling for much of the season. With his past two outings, the enigmatic right-hander has quieted talk about him losing his spot in the rotation and perhaps getting sent to the minors.

PHILLIES 3, CUBS 2

Jerad Eickhoff threw seven impressive innings, Ryan Howard hit a solo homer and Philadelphia beat Chicago. Eickhoff (3-8) allowed one run and two hits, striking out eight. Jeanmar Gomez pitched out of a bases-loaded jam in the eighth and got the final six outs for his 19th save in 20 tries. Kyle Hendricks (4-5) gave up two runs and four hits, striking out six in five innings.

NATIONALS 10, WHITE SOX 5

Bryce Harper drove in three runs, Anthony Rendon homered and Washington handed Chicago its 19th loss in 25 games. Rendon hit a two-run homer off Mat Latos (6-2). Michael Taylor added a two-run double and reliever Blake Treinen (4-1) pitched two-hit ball over three scoreless innings after a shaky start by Joe Ross.

TWINS 6, MARLINS 4

Brian Dozier's two-out, two-run home run in the 11th inning gave Minnesota a 6-4 victory over Miami, the third game-ending homer in Dozier's career and just the second win for the Twins in their last eight games. Dustin McGowan (0-2) walked Joe Mauer and gave up the drive to Dozier to take the loss for the Marlins. Buddy Boshers (1-0), the eighth Twins pitcher of the game, struck out two batters in the 11th for his first major league victory.

DIAMONDBACKS 5, RAYS 0

Zack Greinke threw a three-hitter and Arizona beat Tampa Bay. Greinke (8-3) struck out two and walked two in his fifth career shutout and first since July 13, 2013, against Colorado at Dodger Stadium. Rays starter Matt Moore (2-4) went seven innings, allowing five runs on seven hits with a walk and three strikeouts.

PADRES 4, BRAVES 3

Derek Norris tied the game with a home run leading off the ninth and Wil Myers singled in the winning run to give San Diego a victory against Atlanta. Norris hit the second pitch from Arody Vizcaino (1-1) over the fence in left-center, his seventh. Matt Thornton (1-0) pitched a perfect ninth for the win. —AP



BALTIMORE: Manny Machado #13 of the Baltimore Orioles hits a fly ball out to left field in the second inning during a MLB baseball game against the Kansas City Royals at Oriole Park at Camden Yards on Tuesday in Baltimore, Maryland. — AFP

GERMANY'S TAH EARNS EURO CALL TO REPLACE INJURED RUEDIGER

EVIAN: Defender Jonathan Tah was called up for Germany in place of injured Antonio Ruediger yesterday, two days before the start of Euro 2016, with coach Joachim Loew keeping his sights on the title despite the mounting injury woes.

Loew has turned to the 20-year-old Bayer Leverkusen player after he enjoyed a good Bundesliga season, hoping he can provide solutions to his injury-ridden backline that also includes centre-back

Mats Hummels, as the world champions eye their first continental crown in 20 years.

"I wanted a one-on-one replacement for Ruediger, someone who can play a centre-back role," Loew said, praising Tah's individual fitness regime of the past three weeks despite not being called up in the preliminary squad last month.

Tah, who has won one senior cap, replaces Ruediger who was injured in

their first training session in France on Tuesday, only hours after the team's arrival.

"Players who were a key part of my plans a few months ago are now missing," Loew told reporters in his first news conference at their tournament base.

"Marco Reus, Ilkay Guendogan and now Ruediger. Bastian Schweinsteiger and Mats Hummels are nursing injuries. Obviously I would have liked to have the

squad I had imagined a few months ago. But that is not the case," said the coach.

Loew's men, who are chasing their fourth European Championship trophy but their first since 1996, play Ukraine, Northern Ireland and Poland in the group stage of the competition that starts on Friday.

"But we won't be complaining. What is important is to find solutions and we are not lowering our target. We know

where we want to go and this target will not shift," Hummels was also making progress, recovering gradually from a muscle injury, Loew said. "Hummels shows very positive development," Loew said. "We are now going day by day and will increase his training programme." But he still trained alone yesterday, looking unlikely to be fit in time for the first match, against Ukraine on June 12. — Reuters

PORTUGAL SEEK SUPPORT FOR RONALDO'S GENIUS AT EURO

PARIS: Cristiano Ronaldo's Portugal tower above their rivals and should ease into the knockout stages at Euro 2016, but the illustrious team cannot underestimate a blossoming Austria side.

Ranked eighth in the world, Portugal cruised towards a sixth straight appearance at the finals-in Group F against Austria, Hungary and Iceland-by reeling off seven straight qualifying wins after an opening defeat to Albania.

But 12 years after the losing the final to Greece on home soil, Ronaldo's hopes of landing an international title appear remote unless his supporting cast can deliver where they have failed in the past.

Portugal lost on penalties to Spain in the semi-finals at Euro 2012 and then crashed out in the group stage of the World Cup in Brazil. Ronaldo, slowed by a knee injury, was then a shadow of the player who won that year's Ballon d'Or.

"If he is so important in Madrid, just imagine he's the same if not more so with Portugal," coach Fernando Santos told Spanish sports daily Marca.

"When you have a player who scores 50 or 60 goals a season, and can always score, they are vitally important.

UNDERRATED AUSTRIANS

"But Cristiano can't win alone. No one can win matches on their own. He needs help from the others. But, for sure, he's more important for us than he is for Madrid." The Portuguese have never failed to advance beyond the group stage at a European Championship and Ronaldo will fancy his chances of becoming the first player to score at four editions.

But Santos admitted Ronaldo, who netted Real's winning penalty in the Champions League final against Atletico Madrid having laboured through 120 minutes in Milan, is unlikely to be fully fit in France although he shrugged off any genuine concerns about his skipper.

"Look, they always took about players having to arrive at 100%, but it's never the reality," said Santos. "Obviously, the ideal thing would be for him to be at his best,

but I would never leave out a Cristiano at 80 percent."

Austria flew under the radar as they topped their qualifying section ahead of Russia and Sweden, with Marcel Koller's men participating at the finals for just the second time having co-hosted the 2008 event. Austria broke into the world top 10 for the first time in November and in versatile Bayern Munich star David Alaba they possess one of Europe's most coveted players. But the 23-year-old also has the likes of Marko Arnautovic, Zlatko Junuzovic and skipper Christian Fuchs to help ease the burden. Austria, ranked above England, Italy and France, has the potential to finish far higher than the one that exited with just a single point on their debut appearance.

"We did very well in qualifying and we've been enjoying more and more success in recent years and have constantly improved," Alaba told bundesliga.com.

"Our biggest strength, though, is the collective and it's this which sets us apart. We want to get even better and we certainly are no longer a team who need to have any fear." Iceland—with a population of 330,000 — became the smallest nation to qualify for the finals after twice beating 1988 European champions the Netherlands as well as Czech Republic and Turkey.

Swansea City midfielder Gylfi Sigurdsson supplied a team-leading six goals and the Nordic side will use the experience of former Sweden coach Lars Lagerback and ex-Chelsea and Barcelona striker Eidur Gudjohnsen, now 37, as they plot further surprises.

Hungary returned to the finals of a major tournament for the first time since the 1986 World Cup after beating Norway 3-1 on aggregate in the play-offs, but the current generation is a far cry from the Ferenc Puskas-inspired Magical Magyars of the 1950s. The Hungarians lack genuine star quality but goalkeeper Gabor Kiraly, 40, is poised to become the oldest player in tournament history-eclipsing the record set by Germany's Lothar Matthaus, who appeared aged 39 years and 91 days at Euro 2000. — AFP



BORDEAUX: (L-R) Belgium's forward Michy Batshuayi, Belgium's defender Laurent Ciman, Belgium's midfielder Kevin De Bruyne and Belgium's midfielder Radja Niangolan take part in a public training session during the Euro 2016 football tournament at the Chaban-Delmas Stadium in Bordeaux, yesterday. — AFP

STAR-STUDDDED BELGIUM THINK 'BIG' AT EURO

PARIS: Marc Wilmots' Belgium are aiming to topple the established favourites at Euro 2016 and with stars like Eden Hazard and Kevin de Bruyne have the weapons to do so.

Belgium have qualified for the European Championship finals for the first time since co-hosting the 2000 tournament. They are in a tough Group E with Italy, Sweden and Irish Republic but Wilmots is eager for success.

"There's no doubt that we have big ambitions; our aim must always be to reach the final," coach Marc Wilmots told FIFA.com. Thanks to a golden generation that has produced stars like skipper Hazard, De Bruyne, Romelu Lukaku and Thibaut Courtois, the 'Red Devils' have risen to number two in the world rankings behind Argentina. "Favourites, no," Wilmots cautioned. "France are playing at home, Spain, Germany and then maybe we're just behind."

Loaded with attacking talent they have been hit however by injuries to key defenders including Vincent Kompany, Bjorn Engels, Nicolas Lombaerts and Dedryck Boyata. "The defenders who I have at my disposal are still very good players," insisted Wilmots.

CONTE FAREWELL

Belgium reached the last eight at the 2014 World Cup, without really excelling, before falling 1-0 to eventual finalists Argentina. It was

too high a hurdle for what Wilmots called "easily the youngest of the quarter-finalists".

Two years on, high home expectations are matched by a sense the time has arrived for the team to justify its world ranking.

"People will be waiting for Belgium and waiting for me (to deliver) but we'll give our utmost," said skipper Eden Hazard. Belgium's first Group E match is on June 13 in Lyon against Italy who they swept aside 3-1 in Brussels in November.

Italy are always a force to be reckoned with though and are expected to at least progress from the group, even if coach Antonio Conte might be distracted by his impending move to Chelsea following Euro 2016. Italy announced on Tuesday that Gianpiero Ventura of Torino will take over as national coach on July 11.

Conte has played down the Azzurri's chances after ending preparations with a patchy 1-0 win over Scotland and a 2-0 win over Finland. "We have to believe that we can challenge Belgium, but we know they're a great side," he said.

Italy still appear a work in progress for Ventura to pursue. Two years after exiting the World Cup at the first round for the second successive edition, a solid and reliable starting XI has yet to emerge. Claudio Marchisio and Marco Verratti are out through injury, while Conte overlooked the veteran Andrea Pirlo and Marco Ballotelli, the semi-final hero of

Euro 2012. At that tournament Italy cruised to a 2-0 win over Ireland and will expect a similar outcome when they meet in Lille on June 22. Ireland's boisterous fans have called their draw the Group of Death, but will travel undaunted in hope of a better campaign than Euro 2012 when they crashed to defeats by Croatia and Spain.

It is 14 years since the "Boys in Green" last won a match at a major tournament, a 3-0 win over Saudi Arabia at the 2002 World Cup. Record goal scorer Robbie Keane was Ireland's star then but is now 35 and has fitness issues that had put his selection for the squad in doubt. Ireland's first major tournament since Martin O'Neill took over as coach in 2013, a prolonged stay in France will depend on players like Shane Long and Robbie Brady proving that they have Keane's star quality. The opener against Sweden will be eyed as their best chance for a win and a third-place finish but the Swedes, anchored by talisman Zlatan Ibrahimovic and bolstered by a convincing 3-0 win over Wales last Sunday, will have the same idea. While it might be unfair to call Sweden a one-man team, they are heavily reliant on the sublime goalscoring talents of the 34-year-old Ibrahimovic who, unlikely to play in another major tournament, will look to grace Euro 2016 with his legendary flourish. — AFP



LISBON: Team captain Cristiano Ronaldo, center, shakes hands with Portuguese President Eduardo Ferro Rodrigues, left, as Portuguese President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, center left, talks to defender Pepe, right, as they pose for a photo at the Belem presidential palace in Lisbon Tuesday. The Portugal team was invited by the president for dinner at the palace before departing for France to compete in the Euro 2016 Soccer Championship. — AP

STARS TO WATCH FOR AT EURO 2016

PARIS: Stars to watch for at Euro 2016:

SUPERSTARS

CRISTIANO RONALDO - PORTUGAL

A three time world player of the year, Cristiano Ronaldo again rose to the occasion to fire Portugal to Euro 2016. The Real Madrid striker scored five of his country's 11 goals in qualifying, but an international title remains a glaring absence from his exhaustive list of honours. Snapped up by Manchester United in 2003 as an 18-year-old, Ronaldo helped the Red Devils to three successive Premier League crowns and the 2008 Champions League. He became the world's most expensive footballer when Real Madrid splashed out 94 million euros for him in 2009, but Ronaldo has more than delivered a return on the investment after leading the Spaniards to the 2012 La Liga title and two Champions League victories in the past three seasons. However, an agonising defeat to Greece in the Euro 2004 final on home soil is the closest Ronaldo has come to international success.

GARETH BALE - WALES

With seven goals and two assists in qualifying, Bale did more than any other player to end Wales's 58-year wait to qualify for a major tournament. After coming through the ranks at Southampton, he exploded onto the global scene at Tottenham Hotspur, where he was twice named England's Player of the Year, before mov-

ing to Real Madrid in 2013 in a world-record 100.8 million euro transfer. Lightning quick, superb in the air and with a jackhammer left foot, he operates in a free role for Wales and his devastating pace on the counter-attack will be a source of concern for every defence he encounters. He has won two Champions League titles in three years at Real and his heart-sign goal could become a feature of Euro 2016.

ZLATAN IBRAHIMOVIC - SWEDEN

The Swedish striker is steeling himself for a final farewell to France after four glorious years at Paris Saint-Germain. Having landed league titles with Ajax, Inter Milan, Barcelona and AC Milan, Ibrahimovic sent records tumbling during a trophy-laden spell at the Parc des Princes as PSG established themselves as the dominant force in French football. Time may be ticking down on the Swede's international career, but Ibrahimovic reinforced his reputation as one of the greatest strikers of his generation with 11 goals in qualifying — three against Nordic rivals Denmark in a 4-3 aggregate play-off victory. The 34-year-old, Sweden's record goalscorer, is undoubtedly the key to his country's hopes at Euro 2016 but has never gone beyond the quarter-finals at a major tournament.

NEWCOMERS

MARCUS RASHFORD - ENGLAND

On February 25 this year, 18-year-old Marcus

Rashford awoke a virtual unknown. By the time he went to bed he was a sensation, having scored twice on his Manchester United debut in a 5-1 Europa League win over FC Midtjylland. More goals followed—a brace against Arsenal on his Premier League debut, a classy derby winner at Manchester City, a stunning effort at West Ham United in the FA Cup—and he ended the campaign with eight goals in 18 appearances, as well as an FA Cup winners' medal around his neck. Manchester-born, he came through United's youth academy and has won admirers everywhere with his athleticism and remarkable calmness in front of goal. After scoring within three minutes on his England debut against Australia, he was handed a surprise place in Roy Hodgson's Euro 2016 squad.

ANTHONY MARTIAL - FRANCE

Derided as an expensive panic buy when Manchester United forked out an initial £36 million (\$52.6 million, 47 million euros), Anthony Martial silenced critics with an impressive debut season at Old Trafford. The 20-year-old finished with 17 goals and emerged as one of the few bright spots as United missed out on Champions League football. Hailing from the same Paris suburb as Thierry Henry and Patrice Evra, Martial is following a path to stardom similar to that of the one taken by Henry. After breaking into Didier Deschamps' squad in September, the forward has

established himself as a key cog in a side chasing a third European title. The goals have yet to flow at international level, but France are waiting for the floodgates to open once Martial gets off the mark.

RENATO SANCHES - PORTUGAL

Born and raised in Lisbon, the 18-year-old Renato Sanches made his first-team debut with Benfica in October, then earned his first international cap in March before Bayern Munich shelled out an initial 35 million euros—a fee that could rise to 80 million euros—to tie down one of Europe's most promising youngsters. Injuries to Bernardo Silva and Tiago opened the door for the teenager's inclusion in Fernando Santos' 23-man squad, with Sanches the youngest player to feature for Portugal at a major finals since Cristiano Ronaldo at Euro 2004. After drawing rave reviews from Pep Guardiola and Diego Simeone for his commanding displays in the heart of midfield, Portugal will hope Sanches can provide fresh impetus to a side heavily reliant on Ronaldo.

VETERANS

GIANLUIGI BUFFON - ITALY

At 38, the evergreen Buffon has shown few signs of slowing down and remains Italy's undisputed number one. A star of the Azzurri's 2006 World Cup winning side, Buffon is still at the top of his game a decade later. He set a new Serie A record by going unbeaten for 974 consecutive

minutes as Juventus claimed a fifth straight league championship. He joined the Turin giants from Parma in 2001 for a reported 53 million euros, making him the world's most expensive goalkeeper. Having signed a two-year contract extension in May, Buffon is planning to hang about until the 2018 World Cup before calling time. Twice a Champions League runner-up in 2003 and 2015 — Buffon will captain an Italy side seeking redemption after a 4-0 thrashing by Spain in the Euro 2012 final.

IKER CASILLAS - SPAIN

A winner of two European championships and the 2010 World Cup, Casillas will forever be associated with the golden era of Spanish football. However, the 35-year-old endured a torrid 2014 World Cup in Brazil and then made an ignominious and tearful departure from boyhood club Real Madrid a year later. After breaking into the Real first team at just 18, Casillas won three Champions League titles and La Liga five times before leaving for Porto to bring down the curtain on a 25-year association with the Spanish giants. Despite inconsistent displays in Portugal and the superb form of their apparent David de Gea, Spain coach Vicente del Bosque has stayed fiercely loyal to his captain. Casillas, who could bow out after Euro 2016, set a new European record with his 167th international cap in Wednesday's 6-1 mauling of South Korea. — AFP

Sports

Louisville ready to 'welcome the world' to Ali services



Pakistan's Diana hunts for glory in cricket and football



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ILLINOIS: USA's Clint Dempsey shoots to score a penalty against Costa Rica during their Copa America Centenario football tournament in Chicago, Illinois, United States, on Tuesday. — AFP

DEMPSEY NETS 50TH AS US ROUT COSTA RICA

COLOMBIA FIRST TEAM TO BOOK PLACE IN LAST EIGHT

PASADENA: Colombia became the first side to book a spot in the Copa America Centenario quarter-finals on Tuesday after beating Paraguay in Pasadena, while the United States kept their hopes of advancing alive by thrashing Costa Rica 4-0. Colombia's 2-1 win put them top of Group A on six points, with the United States on three and the other two teams on one point each.

After losing their opener 2-0 to Colombia, the United States were in clinical form against the Costa Ricans in Chicago and scored three times in the first half through Clint Dempsey, Jermaine

Jones and Bobby Wood. Substitute Graham Zusi added a fourth in the 86th minute to cap the win and improve the hosts' goal difference. "It was important for us to get off to an early start," said Dempsey. "Once the second went in and the third we got into a bit of a rhythm."

Dempsey got the first, his 50th international goal, from the penalty spot after Cristian Gamboa was adjudged to have pushed Wood in the box with six minutes gone. Dempsey was involved in the Americans' second after 36 minutes when his run at the Costa Rica defence saw the ball fall to

Jones, who struck a low shot from the edge of the box past the outstretched hand of goalkeeper Patrick Pemberton. The third goal came five minutes later and once again it was Dempsey who set it up. Wood won the ball in midfield and played a one-two with Dempsey before turning to strike home a low drive from 15 yards out.

Costa Rica, who reached the World Cup quarter-finals in 2014, improved in the second half with captain Bryan Ruiz playing a more influential role, but they were ineffective in the last third of the field. Ruiz hit the post with a header midway

through the second half but Costa Rica lost a fourth goal in the dying moments when Zusi stole the ball in midfield and strode forward before slotting the ball home from 15 yards.

In the second Group A game, played at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California, Colombia took a 2-0 lead in the first half but were pushed hard in the second. Carlos Bacca scored the opener in the 12th minute with a header before James Rodriguez doubled Colombia's lead with a left-foot strike on the half-hour mark. Paraguay gradually played their way back into the match and hit the woodwork

before half-time before forcing David Ospina into a world-class save in the 62nd minute, the Colombia goalkeeper diving full stretch to turn a header around the post. Paraguay continued to dominate the second half and were rewarded when midfielder Victor Ayala scored with a stunning 30-yard rocket in the 71st minute. However, they could not force an equaliser and Colombia hung on to take all three points and claim a berth in the next round. Paraguay must now beat the United States on Saturday to have any chance of advancing to the quarters. — Reuters

SHARAPOVA BANNED FOR TWO YEARS BY ITF

LONDON: The career of Russian former world number one Maria Sharapova was in tatters yesterday after she was given a two-year ban by the International Tennis Federation (ITF) following her positive test for the banned drug meldonium at this year's Australian Open. In a statement the ITF said the 29-year-old five-times grand slam champion's ban would be backdated to Jan. 26 this year, meaning her results and prize money from the Australian Open, where she reached the quarter-finals, would be cancelled out. Sharapova said she would appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), describing the punishment as "unfairly harsh". She said an independent tribunal in London on May 18-19 had found that she had not intentionally violated anti-doping rules. In a statement on its website the ITF said the ban had been backdated due to Sharapova's 'prompt admission' of her violation.

"An Independent Tribunal appointed under Article 8.1 of the 2016 Tennis Anti-Doping Programme has found that Maria Sharapova committed an Anti-Doping Rule Violation under Article 2.1 of the Programme and as a consequence has disqualified the affected results and imposed a period of ineligibility of two years, commencing on 26 January 2016," the statement said. "Ms. Sharapova, a 29-year-old player from Russia, provided a urine sample on 26 January 2016, after her quarter-final match at the 2016 Australian Open in Melbourne, Australia. "That sample was sent to the WADA-accredited laboratory in Montreal, Canada, for analysis, and was found to contain meldonium, which is a metabolic modulator that is included under section S4 (Hormone and Metabolic Modulators) of the 2016 WADA Prohibited List, and therefore is also prohibited under the Programme."

Meldonium was added to WADA's list of banned substances at the start of the year after evidence

that it boosted blood flow and enhanced athletic performance.

Sharapova, the world's highest-paid female athlete, stunned the sporting world in March when she announced that she had tested positive for meldonium, a drug she said she had been taking for a decade to treat diabetes and low magnesium. At the time Sharapova, the highest-profile tennis player to fail an anti-doping test, said she had made "a huge mistake" blaming her failure to read an email sent by the ITF that meldonium had been added to the banned list. Sharapova, who could have been given a four-year ban, reacted to the punishment on her Facebook page. "The ITF spent tremendous amounts of time and resources trying to prove I intentionally violated the anti-doping rules and the tribunal concluded I did not," she said. "You need to know that the ITF asked the tribunal to suspend me for four years—the required suspension for an intentional violation—and the tribunal rejected the ITF's position. "While the tribunal concluded correctly that I did not intentionally violate the anti-doping rules, I cannot accept an unfairly harsh two-year suspension."

Sharapova's career now hangs in the balance. Unless her ban is reduced she will not be eligible to play until after the 2018 Australian Open when she would be 30. The ban will also impact on her earning potential. Swiss watchmaker TAG Heuer cut its ties with Sharapova after the news of her doping violation while other sponsors such as Nike and Porsche distanced themselves from her. Sharapova has 35 WTA singles titles and has won all four of the sport's grand slam titles.

Her career earnings amount to \$36 million while her off-court earnings, according to Forbes, are around \$200 million. —Reuters



Maria Sharapova

FORMER NIGERIA CAPTAIN, COACH STEPHEN KESHI DEAD

ABUJA: Stephen Keshi, Nigerian soccer's charismatic and outspoken "Big Boss" who won African Cup titles as both captain and coach of his country, died early yesterday. He was 54.

Keshi, one of only two men to win the African Cup of Nations as a player and a coach, died after being rushed to the hospital in Benin City in southern Nigeria late Tuesday night, the Nigerian Football Federation said.

"This is devastating. We have lost a superhero," NFF president Amaju Pinnick said in a statement. The federation said Keshi died of suspected heart problems and was experiencing an irregular heartbeat and pain in his legs when he was taken to the hospital. He was preparing to fly back to his home in the United States.

Keshi had lost his wife to cancer late last year. The South African and Ghana federations, and English club Chelsea, were among those to pay tribute to Keshi. Keshi captained Nigeria to the African Cup title in 1994 and was coach when Nigeria won again in 2013. He also coached the Togo and Mali national teams. He had immediate success when he turned his hand to coaching, guiding Togo to the World Cup for the first time in 2006.

Although he brought success back to Nigeria, his time in charge of his home nation was marked by disputes



Stephen Keshi

with his NFF bosses. But Keshi was so popular that former Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan once personally intervened to make sure he remained as national coach.

As a tall, heavily-built central defender, Keshi led Nigeria's golden age of players to the African Cup title in Tunisia in 1994 and to the brink of the World Cup quarterfinals the same year in the United States. That team contained the likes of Finidi George, Jay-Jay Okocha, Sunday Oliseh and Rashidi Yekini. "Horrible news & Sad day as Our legendary Captain & brother Stephen Keshi dies," Oliseh, Keshi's former teammate and successor as Nigeria coach, wrote on Twitter. "We lost an iconic Hero 2day." —AP

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IRKUTSK, Russia: Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev arrives to give a speech in front of the new medium-haul MC-21 airliner during the rollout ceremony at an aircraft plant yesterday. - AFP

RUSSIA UNVEILS PASSENGER PLANE

MOSCOW CHALLENGES AIRBUS, BOEING WITH NEW JET

MOSCOW: Russia unveiled yesterday the first MC-21 medium-haul passenger plane as Moscow aims to revive its beleaguered civil aviation industry and challenge giants Airbus and Boeing. The prototype of the MC-21 plane that can carry up to 211 passengers was presented in the hangar of the Irkut aircraft manufacturer in the Siberian city of Irkutsk in a glitzy ceremony broadcast on Russian state television.

The unveiling of the aircraft was a "long-awaited event for our civil aviation, for aeronautic construction and for our whole country," said Prime Minister Dmitry

Medvedev. "This confirms that we are able to create such aircraft that not only make our civil aviation progress but that will compete with other countries," he said. Medvedev also pledged that Russia would keep updating its domestically-produced civil aircraft.

The MC-21 passenger jets - which can be up to 42.3 m long and have a wingspan of 35.9 m - are expected to replace the ageing, Soviet-era Tupolev Tu-204 and make their first test flights by the end of the year or in early 2017. The aircraft, 30 percent of which is made up of foreign parts, is sched-

uled to come into service in late 2018. Irkut said that it has signed contracts with a number of airlines, including Russian flagship carrier Aeroflot, UTair and the Kyrgyzstan Air Company, for the delivery of 175 planes and that it had preliminary agreement to sell another 100 planes. A number of the planes will be purchased by state-owned Russian companies for leasing.

Medvedev said that the demand for Russia's MC-21 would grow once it makes its first flight. Russia has its hopes set on competing with the Airbus A320 and Boeing 737, which dominate the international civil avi-

ation market. The unveiling of the MC-21 comes five years after Russia's short-haul Sukhoi Superjet aircraft came into service and has since had serious technical issues.

Russia's aviation agency in 2013 grounded the Superjets - which have had technical issues with landing gear and leak detection systems since they came into service in 2011 - over a series of technical issues before being allowed to resume flights. A Superjet performing at an Indonesian air show in 2012 slammed into a volcano, killing all 45 on board, in a crash Indonesia blamed on pilot error. — AFP

SAUDI GAINS FOR SECOND DAY OIL LIFTS GULF SHARES

MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia's stock index rose 1.1 percent on Wednesday as investors accumulated shares in companies set to benefit from economic reform plans, while oil hitting fresh 2016 highs buoyed investor mood across the region. Saudi Arabia's Dar Al Arkan Real Estate Development Co jumped 9.2 percent to 5.95 riyals, surging by its daily limit for a second straight day. After the market close on Tuesday, the developer said it was in talks with the government to provide housing under the kingdom's economic reform plan. It did not give further details.

Emaar Economic City also said it was in talks with the housing ministry to build homes for Saudi citizens, and its shares surged 8.6 percent. The Saudi government published a five-year National Transformation Plan (NTP) on Monday, part of a wider set of reforms launched in April as "Vision 2030". The plan, which sets targets for government agencies and also includes spending on new initiatives in healthcare, mining and renewable energy, will cost an estimated 270 billion riyals (\$72bn) to implement. Finance Minister Ibrahim Almassaf said on Tuesday it will partly be paid for by making public sector efficiency savings and cutting spending on existing projects.

It also targets increasing the percentage of Saudi families that own homes to 52 percent by 2020 from the current 47 percent and cutting the waiting period to obtain housing financing to five years by 2020 from 15 years at present. Also benefiting from the planned economic reforms, Al Tayyar Travel Group jumped 3.1 percent to 39.70 riyals. The company, which offers religious tourism services in the kingdom, is set to benefit from a push to expand the role of tourism and hospitality sector in the economy, as outlined in the plan. Petrochemical shares were also strong, with the sub-index gaining 1.4 percent as Brent crude prices hit fresh 2016 highs. The Kuwaiti index edged up 0.2 percent to 5,406 points.

Dubai, Egypt

Dubai's Shuaa Capital jumped 5.7 percent after it confirmed in a bourse state-

ment on Wednesday that Abu Dhabi Financial Group had reached an agreement to buy the 48.36 percent stake of the investment bank held by Dubai Banking Group. The transaction, for which no value was disclosed, is subject to regulatory approvals, it said. Dubai's main index rose 0.8 percent as winners outnumbered losers 18-to-four. Blue chips Emaar Properties and DAMAC Properties closed up 1.3 and 3 percent respectively. Real estate and banking shares buoyed neighboring Abu Dhabi's index, which gained 1.4 percent. First Gulf Bank and Aldar Properties each rose more than 2 percent. In Cairo, the main index added 0.8 percent to 7,780 points, its highest close since April 27. The Egyptian pound strengthened on the black market on Tuesday, a sign that worries over further devaluation have abated, for now, encouraging investors to accumulate Egyptian shares. Palm Hills Development extended the previous session's gains and added a further 2.3 percent. The company said on Tuesday that shareholders had approved its plan to increase its share capital to 4.6 billion Egyptian pounds (\$518 million) through an issue of bonus shares. Investment firm EFG Hermes, which has been on an uptrend since mid-May, dropped 3.1 percent on profit taking after the company said it had sold its 40 percent stake in Credit Libanais, a Lebanese bank.

YESTERDAY'S HIGHLIGHTS SAUDI ARABIA

* The index gained 1.1 percent to 6,605 points.

DUBAI

* The index climbed 0.8 percent to 3,354 points.

ABU DHABI

* The index jumped 1.4 percent to 4,408 points.

QATAR

* The index added 0.6 percent to 9,919 points.

EGYPT

* The index increased 0.8 percent to 7,780 points.

OMAN

* The index rose 0.8 percent to 5,888 points.

PHARAOHS' SHADOW AN OMEN IN GOLD SEARCH

EASTERN DESERT, Egypt: Careering around Egypt's rocky Eastern Desert, Alexander Nubia CEO Mark Campbell peers from his jeep and sees hills so rich with gold they could lure billions in investments and jumpstart the ailing economy. His company just has to find it. Egypt's gold mining industry has for years been long on potential and short on investment - the result of a jarring mismatch between spectacular geology and an unattractive commercial framework for mining.

Despite a history of gold mining that stretches back to the pharaohs, the industry is largely dormant. With just a single gold-producing mine, Centamin's Sukari, the sector contributes a fraction of one percent to gross domestic product (GDP). But last year, Egypt's government said it wanted mining to contribute upwards of 5 percent to GDP within 10 years. This month it will launch its first bid round for new mining concessions since 2009, when a global gold-mining boom brought a handful of first-time investors to Egypt, despite what many of them say were poor commercial terms.

Most of these investors left after the 2011 uprising, driven away by rising political turmoil and falling global gold prices. Now, armed with a 2014 mining law that helps streamline investment, Egypt wants

to lure them back. If successful, the industry could create jobs and attract foreign currency to an economy that is in dire need of both.

Paul Jones, CEO of Nuinsco, a Canadian explorer that left in 2011, likens Egypt's mineral-rich Nubian shield rock formation that straddles the Red Sea to the Canadian shield of a century ago, before it "developed the northern part of Quebec and Ontario with tens of millions of ounces of gold, and billions of pounds of copper, zinc, and lead". Leonard Karr, a geologist with Vancouver-based Alexander Nubia, says the ancient continental crust upon which the company's two concessions sit is chock full of potentially recoverable mineral wealth. "There are hundreds of good plays," he said.

Tough Terms

That the allure of Egypt's geology has yet to spur a gold rush is down to regulation, investors and analysts say. Despite the mineral-rich concessions on offer and the 2014 law, they predict a tepid response to this month's tender. Rather than levy a modest royalty on mineral production and collect tax - a system that helped Peru and Mexico launch their mining sectors - Egypt offers investors a production-sharing agreement similar to its oil and gas deals.

Mining companies say the mod-

el does not fit their work. Unlike companies drilling wells, their capital costs can stretch for decades as they build out mines requiring hundreds of millions of dollars in investment. They say production sharing, on top of a royalty payment, makes Egypt a prohibitively expensive play. "Production sharing works for the oil and gas industry, however it does not work anywhere in the world for mining," said Centamin chairman Josef El-Raghy. "As such, companies will not come and invest in Egypt despite the hugely prospective mineral resource area."

For Abdelal Attia, an adviser to the Egyptian Mineral Resource Authority (EMRA), Egypt's commercial terms reflect the lower risk of exploration in a country where ancient mines populate the desert, indicating known areas of mineralization. "You will not go to an area and start from scratch ... you know you have gold there. It's just about how much," said Attia. "The tax and royalty system can be applied in countries that don't have any information about their lands ... but EMRA has a century of work, reports, and maps."

EMRA has yet to announce the commercial terms for this month's bid round, but Attia says it will likely stick to the production-sharing model and offer five to seven concessions. Yousef Hussein, an ana-

lyst with EFG Hermes, said the data available is not enough to lure investors on the current terms. "It's clear there is a lot of potential but investors want a more definitive answer. They want to know where minerals are and how much is present," he said.

Back to the Future

Alexander Nubia, just one of three active explorers in Egypt, is nonetheless bullish. Campbell says a prospect his firm began exploring in 2011 will likely yield a commercially viable discovery next year. He plans to begin building Egypt's second mine there by 2019. For Alexander Nubia, an exploration junior that takes on a multitude of high risk bets in hopes of occasionally striking it big, Egypt's mining history makes it a sound wager.

The work of past miners dots the hilly expanse of the company's concession - a crumbling Roman fort and an abandoned 20th century British mine are not far from its own drill holes. Campbell says these relics are cost-saving guides to future discoveries, while new technology allows modern miners to drill deeper and extract lower grade minerals than their predecessors. "There's about 6,000 years of mining history here and a large part of it was gold ... It offers almost a roadmap to the opportunities," said Campbell. —Reuters

TURKISH ECONOMY MINISTER STRESSES GROWTH, INVESTMENT

ANKARA: Turkey's central bank should keep cutting interest rates and make supporting growth its priority, Economy Minister Nihat Zeybekci said, promising tax breaks for investors and shrugging off market worries about deteriorating security. In his first interview since taking office two weeks ago, Zeybekci told Reuters that boosting growth needed to be a priority for an economy which expanded 4 percent last year, while shrinking 10 percent in dollar terms as the lira weakened.

Zeybekci, who like President Tayyip Erdogan is a strong critic of high interest rates, forecast economic growth would remain buoyant despite security and political worries which have undermined investor sentiment towards Turkey. He

said the central bank should continue with 50 basis point rate cuts, echoing strident calls for lower borrowing costs from Erdogan, which have unnerved investors concerned about the independence of the bank. "From now on there will be a determined stance tailored to interest rate levels sought by investors for production, growth and exports, in short the real sector," he said late on Tuesday.

New governor Murat Cetinkaya, appointed in April, has so far cut the top end of the central bank's interest rate corridor by a total 100 basis points, after his predecessor trimmed it by 25 basis points in his final meeting. "My expectation on rates is that they will continue in the same way, with 50 basis point (cuts) a good lev-

el," Zeybekci said. He also said that lira declines against the dollar had been overdone. "For me, the losses of the lira against the dollar beyond those of other currencies in the dollar index are froth," he said.

Economic growth in the first quarter and full year was likely to be above market expectations, he said, adding there was no need to revise the 2016 GDP target of 4.5 percent. "In the short-term, markets could experience tensions with the change in government, terror and such factors but that will last a couple of months at most," he said. Gross domestic product data tomorrow is expected to show growth of 4.5 percent in the first quarter, with 2016 growth at 3.6 percent, according to a Reuters poll of econo-

mists. Last year the economy grew a stronger-than-expected 4 percent.

Data yesterday showed a slowdown in industrial output growth, with expansion of 0.7 percent year-on-year in April down from 2.9 percent in March. Turkey's tourism sector has been hit hard by a revived Kurdish militant conflict and bomb attacks by Kurdish and Islamic State militants, as well as tensions with Russia. Zeybekci said "strong additional support" was planned for the sector.

Zeybekci, whose main responsibility is foreign trade, said he expected exports to reach \$150 billion in 2016, just shy of a target of \$155.5 billion, after declines amounting to some \$6 billion in the first half. He stressed the government's readi-

ness to do all it could to attract investment, whether providing land, infrastructure such as ports, roads or railways, or tax breaks. "We will do whatever is necessary to promote investments in strategic areas," he said. "Do you want land? Do you want a tax exemption for 10 years? I will give you everything. We will tell you, 'Just do it in Turkey.'"

He emphasized sectors such as iron and steel, petrochemicals and electrical products for strategic investments. A year-end inflation forecast of 7.5 percent was achievable, he said. Consumer price inflation hit its lowest in some three years in April and was also below forecast at 6.58 percent year-on-year in May, having neared 10 percent in January. —Reuters



HANOI: A man, helped by another riding a motorcycle, transports steel rods as he makes way to deliver them to a construction site yesterday. —AFP

OIL HITS EIGHT-MONTH HIGH ON DISRUPTIONS

LONDON: Oil prices jumped to their highest level in eight months yesterday, rising for a third consecutive session on supply disruptions in Nigeria and strong Chinese demand data. There was also a larger-than-expected drop in US crude inventories on Tuesday, indicating an easing of the global supply glut. A weak dollar, which hit a five-week trough against a basket of currencies yesterday, also boosted prices. "The market sentiment is positive; the trend and the momentum points to further gains," said Carsten Fritsch, commodities analyst at Commerzbank.

Brent crude futures rose to the highest level since last October at \$52.24 a barrel. They were up 67 cents at \$52.11 a barrel at 1042 GMT. US crude futures were up 65 cents to \$51.01 a barrel, after reaching \$51.12, their highest since last July. Supply disruptions caused by a string of attacks by

the Niger Delta Avengers militant group in Nigeria have brought the oil exporter's production to its lowest level in 20 years. The group said yesterday it had attacked another oil well owned by US oil group Chevron, adding to assaults on oil infrastructure owned by Shell and ENI. Nigerian Oil Minister Emmanuel Ibe Kachikwu said output had dropped to 1.5-1.6 million barrels per day (bpd), down from 2.2 million at the start of the year.

At the same time, May trade data on yesterday showed the biggest jump in China's crude oil imports in more than six years, adding to hopes that the economy of the world's second-largest oil consumer may be stabilizing. "China's economic activity is not slowing down as much as expected, which is a support to the market," said Kaname Gokon at brokerage Okato Shoji. —Reuters

GOLD NEAR 3-WK HIGH

LONDON: Gold rose one percent to a near three-week high yesterday, bolstered by a weaker dollar on declining expectations that the US Federal Reserve will raise interest rates any time soon. Investors have almost priced out the chance of a rate increase at the Fed's June 14-15 policy review, and see the likelihood of a July rate hike reduced to around 26 percent since disappointing jobs data last week and comments by Fed Chair Janet Yellen on Monday. Spot gold rose as high as \$1,256.10 an ounce earlier, its strongest since May 20 and was up 0.9 percent at \$1,254.91 by 1201 GMT. US gold climbed 0.9 percent to \$1,258.80.

"We know the Fed wants to carry on normalizing monetary policy but they won't ... if the economy is actually slowing," Macquarie analyst Matthew Turner said. "So we are once again dependent on the next non-farm payrolls data, which is however not going to be out for another four weeks," Turner said. He expects the Fed at its June meeting to reiterate Yellen's message on Monday when she gave a largely upbeat outlook for the US economy but did not specify whether the Fed will raise rates over the summer months.

Gold is highly sensitive to rising rates, which lift the opportunity cost of holding

non-yielding bullion. The metal, which slid more than 6 percent in May, has risen about 2.7 percent so far this month on reduced expectations for an early rate hike. The World Bank slashed its 2016 global growth forecast on Wednesday, which could also throw cold water on a possible Fed move. Nervousness over Britain's referendum on its EU membership on June 23 could also bolster gold prices over the next few weeks, Macquarie's Turner said. "Brexit is the next thing to look out for because if there was going to be a vote to leave, it would boost gold, if only because it pushes the Fed back again."

The world's biggest consumer of the yellow metal, China, kept its gold reserves unchanged, at 58.14 million ounces at the end of May, the central bank said on Tuesday. Analysts, however, said China still has enormous US dollar holdings and is likely to keep purchasing gold in order to diversify its forex reserves, which should serve as a supportive factor for the metal. Among other precious metals, silver and palladium touched three-week highs, while platinum marked its highest in two weeks. Silver rose 3.1 percent to \$16.88 an ounce, platinum rose 1.1 percent to \$1,009.37 and palladium was 2 percent higher at \$565. —Reuters

ARAMCO LISTING LURES BANKS WITH GAME-CHANGING DEALS

WATER DESALINATION AGENCY, OTHER FIRMS ALSO TO BE LISTED

LONDON/DUBAI: Investment banks are jostling to take part in the listing of a chunk of Saudi Arabia's state-owned oil giant Aramco as a portal to the lucrative deals they expect to flow from the kingdom's plan to revamp its economy. The prospect of new business will offer a respite for investment banks, struggling with dwindling revenue as the global economy slows and regulation eats away at their business.

"For banks, being on this (Aramco) deal is a game-changer for the league tables," said one senior executive at a European bank, declining to be named due to the sensitivity of doing business in Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia's government released on Monday its National Transformation Plan, a 110-page list of policies and targets for 2016-2020 that aims to wean the economy off its dependence on oil. It is part of a wider, long-term reform drive known as Vision 2030, announced by Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in April, and it includes the initial public offering of less than 5 percent of Saudi Aramco's value.

So big is the state oil company because of its rights to the kingdom's crude reserves, that selling even 1 percent of it would create the world's biggest IPO, Prince Mohammed said. He expects the IPO will value Aramco at at least \$2 trillion. Generally, government work across the world is poorly paid, but banks often vie for the contracts simply to build a relationship with the state in the hope of getting future business. "The Aramco IPO of itself is not that interesting to us in terms of business," said a senior source at a big investment bank, speaking on condition of anonymity. "The

fees won't be great, but it's about what other business will result."

Wall Street bank JPMorgan and independent boutique bank Michael Klein have already been picked to advise the country ahead of any listing. A beauty parade, where banks will pitch for a role, is expected to be held in the coming months to determine what could be a roster of dozens of banks, both international and local, coordinating the share sale. "We would be doing it for sure in part as it would lead to other things," a chief executive of a major bank said, speaking anonymously. "If we're not on it, then it's a problem."

Aramco subsidiary companies will also be listed, as will stakes in other publicly held companies, such as the stock exchange. Details in Monday's plan showed the Energy Ministry aimed to transfer all its power generation to "strategic partners" by 2020 and Riyadh will also privatise its water desalination agency. Saudi Arabia also signaled it is adopting new strategies to invest in petrodollars, with the \$3.5 billion purchase of a stake in US ride-hailing firm Uber, advised by JP Morgan.

Modest Pickings

So far the market has been modest. Investment banking in Saudi Arabia has netted banks just \$1.75 billion in fees in the last ten years, Thomson Reuters data shows. In the past decade, banks made the highest fees in 2007, when they shared \$391 million, data shows. By comparison, banks working on the acquisition of Mannesmann by Vodafone in 1999, got more than \$530 million, the largest-ever fee tally.

HSBC led the rankings in 2015 in terms of highest fees earned in Saudi Arabia, but even at number one, they reaped a mere \$22.7 million, Thomson Reuters data shows. So far this year Deutsche Bank is number one in terms of investment banking fees as well as mergers and acquisitions in Saudi Arabia, having earned \$10 million, according to Thomson Reuters data published in June. "Historically, transactions have been competitively bid out to both local and international banks with the lowest bidder typically winning the mandate," said Tamim Jabr, Deutsche's head of corporate and investment banking coverage in Saudi Arabia. "We see this trend slowly shifting as more and more clients look for innovative solutions to meet their capital raising needs in order to fund their growth strategy."

In the past, Saudi companies were able to borrow very cheaply from local banks, which held vast deposits from oil sales. The fall in the price of oil has squeezed domestic liquidity, forcing companies to look internationally. Jabr said Deutsche Bank views Saudi Arabia as a core growth market with huge potential for global investment banks. There is plenty of other prestigious work for banks in Saudi Arabia - pitching is taking place this week for arranger roles on the country's long-anticipated sovereign bond, which is expected to run close to Argentina's \$16.5 billion record for largest emerging market issuance. "You need to show up ... get all your big guns out because it's such a big opportunity," said a fourth banking source, who also did not want to be named. "These deals don't happen twice." —Reuters

DOLLAR HITS 5-WEEK LOWS

LONDON: The dollar underperformed yesterday, hitting a five-week trough against a basket of currencies, hurt by waning expectations that the Federal Reserve will raise interest rates anytime soon. The dollar index, which tracks the greenback against a basket of six rivals, edged down 0.15 percent to 93.694 after dropping as low as 93.68, its lowest since May 6. Against its Japanese counterpart, the dollar fell 0.3 percent to 107.06 yen, after hitting a low of 106.72 earlier. It climbed from those lows after data showed that China's imports beat forecasts in May, adding to hopes that the three economy may be stabilizing.

Nevertheless, traders are convinced the dollar

will struggle to gain higher ground unless incoming data beats expectations. Investors have almost priced out the chance of a rate increase at the Fed Reserve's June 14-15 policy review, and reduced the likelihood of a July rate hike to around 26 percent. With worries about Brexit also gathering, investors are uncertain whether the Fed will raise rates in the near term.

The dollar continues to remain soggy with June priced out and chances that the Fed will move in July waning. Investors will need some good payrolls data and signs of inflation picking up, before they are convinced that a rate hike in September is on the cards, said Jane Foley, senior currency strategist at Rabobank. —Reuters

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.		
CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
ASIAN COUNTRIES		
Japanese Yen	2.825	
Indian Rupees	4.513	
Pakistani Rupees	2.885	
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.051	
Nepali Rupees	2.826	
Singapore Dollar	222.820	
Hongkong Dollar	38.900	
Bangladesh Taka	3.852	
Philippine Peso	6.540	
Thai Baht	8.553	
GCC COUNTRIES		
Saudi Riyal	80.616	
Qatari Riyal	83.042	
ani Riyal	785.213	
Bahraini Dinar	802.840	
UAE Dirham	82.307	
ARAB COUNTRIES		
Egyptian Pound - Cash	31.900	
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	34.416	
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.214	
Tunisian Dinar	143.200	
Jordanian Dinar	425.890	
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.014	
Syrian Lira	2.154	
Morocco Dirham	31.805	
EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES		
US Dollar Transfer	302.150	
Euro	344.450	
Sterling Pound	436.610	

Canadian dollar	234.040	
Turkish lira	104.730	
Swiss Franc	310.850	
Australian Dollar	222.680	
US Dollar Buying	300.950	
GOLD		
20 Gram	250.790	
10 Gram	128.310	
5 Gram	65.000	
DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD		
Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate	
US Dollar	303.000	
Canadian Dollar	234.405	
Sterling Pound	440.385	
Euro	345.255	
Swiss Frank	296.765	
Bahrain Dinar	801.595	
UAE Dirhams	82.735	
Qatari Riyals	83.950	
Saudi Riyals	81.480	
Jordanian Dinar	426.835	
Egyptian Pound	34.024	
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.057	
Indian Rupees	4.498	
Pakistani Rupees	2.889	
Bangladesh Taka	3.855	
Philippines Peso	6.508	
Cyprus pound	577.120	
Japanese Yen	3.835	
Syrian Pound	2.375	
Nepalese Rupees	3.805	
Malaysian Ringgit	75.020	

Chinese Yuan Renminbi	46.470	
Thai Bhat	9.540	
Turkish Lira	104.640	
BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY		
CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.431464	0.441464
Czech Korune	0.004674	0.016674
Danish Krone	0.042045	0.047045
Euro	0.0337538	0.0346538
Norwegian Krone	0.032900	0.038100
Romanian Leu	0.075871	0.075871
Slovakia	0.008995	0.018995
Swedish Krona	0.033074	0.038074
Swiss Franc	0.304558	0.315581
Turkish Lira	0.098508	0.108808
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.216219	0.228219
New Zealand Dollar	0.202875	0.212375
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.2230251	0.239251
US Dollars	0.298050	0.302750
US Dollars Mint	0.298550	0.302750
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003404	0.003988
Chinese Yuan	0.044523	0.0478023
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036809	0.039559
Indian Rupee	0.004192	0.004602

Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002721	0.002901
Kenyan Shilling	0.002979	0.002979
Korean Won	0.000249	0.000264
Malaysian Ringgit	0.070066	0.076066
Nepalese Rupee	0.002879	0.003049
Pakistan Rupee	0.002709	0.002999
Philippine Peso	0.006387	0.006687
Sierra Leone	0.000073	0.000079
Singapore Dollar	0.217112	0.227112
South African Rand	0.014171	0.022671
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001669	0.002249
Taiwan	0.009233	0.009413
Thai Baht	0.008206	0.008756
Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.794890	0.803390
Egyptian Pound	0.027923	0.033041
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000190	0.000250
Jordanian Dinar	0.422155	0.431155
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000150	0.000250
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020069	0.044069
Nigerian Naira	0.001245	0.001880
Omani Riyal	0.778385	0.784065
Qatar Riyal	0.082182	0.083632
Saudi Riyal	0.079487	0.080787
Syrian Pound	0.001280	0.001500
Tunisian Dinar	0.139062	0.147062
Turkish Lira	0.098508	0.108808
UAE Dirhams	0.080839	0.082539
Yemeni Riyal	0.001365	0.001445

LANCÔME FACES GROWING ANGER, PROTESTS IN HK

HONG KONG: Cosmetics giant L'Oréal's Lancome closed some outlets in Hong Kong Wednesday as protesters gathered at a major mall after the company cancelled a concert featuring a local singer who is critical of China. Many Hong Kong residents believe the promotional gig by pro-democracy activist Denise Ho was cancelled after China's state-run media criticized the French company for allowing her to perform. Ho was a leading activist during mass rallies in 2014 calling on Beijing to allow fully free elections.

The row comes as fears grow in the semi-autonomous city that Beijing is tightening its grip. Dozens of protesters gathered at the Times Square shopping mall in Causeway Bay district yesterday afternoon shouting: "Boycott Lancome!" and "Shame on self-censorship!" Carrying cardboard cut-outs of Ho, they entered the mall and stuck posters all over the Lancome counter, which had shut for the day ahead of the demonstrations.

In the same building, a Lancome beauty center and the offices of parent company L'Oréal were also closed. Local media said the company had issued an internal memo Tuesday asking staff to take the day off. Organizers warned of more action unless the company

responds to growing public anger. "The key point of this protest is to show the world that we should unite together and, through boycotting (their products), show Lancome and L'Oréal that you cannot just focus on the China market," said Avery Ng, chairman of the League of Social Democrats, one of a dozen groups planning to join the protest.

Shoppers in the busy mall stopped to watch the demonstration and take photos. "I'm worried that commercial organizations in Hong Kong will increasingly come under Chinese influence," said passer-by Natalie Chan, a researcher in her 40s, adding that she had stopped buying L'Oréal products. Calls to L'Oréal's Hong Kong office went unanswered and the latest statement from Lancome is dated Sunday, the day of the concert's cancellation.

'Stop Kowtowing'

A petition on the website change.org asking people to boycott Lancome products has gathered more than 4,000 signatures. "The civilized world needs to stop kowtowing to China. Make an example of Lancome for disrespecting the people of Hong Kong and freedom," Lawrence Lau from Hong Kong commented on the site. Politicians have also voiced anger. District councillor

Christine Fong flushed her Lancome products down the toilet in a video posted on Facebook and watched more than 128,000 times. "I'm going to squeeze out all of this brand's product and I will never use them again. Lancome go to hell!" she said, squeezing a tube of cream down the toilet.

The row began Saturday when China's Global Times accused Lancome of cooperating with a "Hong Kong poison" and a "Tibet poison" - a reference to Denise Ho's praise for the Dalai Lama. The concert was also slammed on mainland social media, with critics saying Lancome was using money from Chinese customers to support independence for Hong Kong and Tibet. Lancome announced the cancellation of the concert Sunday, citing "possible safety reasons".

Ho, who was not at yesterday's protest, hit back. "This incident is serious because Hongkongers have been under political pressure for quite some time," she told AFP, describing what she termed bullying tactics by China as "a message of fear to other brands". Hong Kong was returned to China in 1997 under a "One country, two systems" agreement and enjoys far greater liberties than in mainland China, but there are fears these are being eroded. —AFP



HONG KONG: Protestors display placards denouncing Lancome cosmetics at their sales counter inside a department store at Hong Kong's Times Square yesterday. —AP



TOKYO: A bullet train runs on a railroad yesterday. —AFP

JAPAN REVISES UP GROWTH, COOLING STIMULUS HOPES

TOKYO: Japan's economy expanded at a slightly faster pace than first thought, revised figures showed yesterday, knocking hopes that the central bank will unleash fresh stimulus this month. The data were unlikely to inspire renewed faith in Prime Minister's Shinzo Abe's faltering growth policies, after Tokyo last week said it would delay a tax hike to avoid damaging Japan's fragile recovery. Gross domestic product expanded by 0.5 percent in the first quarter - or 1.9 percent at an annualized rate - up from a preliminary reading of 0.4 percent given last month. The world's number three economy contracted in the final quarter of 2015.

The yen strengthened in response to the figures, which were likely to cool expectations that Bank of Japan will unveil fresh policy moves at a meeting next week. In currency trading, the dollar was at 106.86 yen, down from 107.57 yen in US trading. Yesterday's finalized figures, which matched market forecasts, come a week after Abe said he would delay a sales tax hike that threatened to derail the country's turnaround.

Under his signature policy blitz, Abe has sought to boost the lumbering economy with a combination of massive monetary easing, fiscal spending and structural reforms. But the decision to delay the tax hike drew a warning from credit rating agency Fitch, which said it would "undermine the credibility" of Japan's commitment to paying down one of the world's biggest national debts. Japan's conservative premier has repeatedly said he would follow through on the levy hike, planned for 2017, after it was already delayed once. But last week he said raising the tar-

iff to 10 percent from eight percent would be pushed back by more than two years to late 2019, when Abe will likely no longer be in office.

'One Step Further'

Japan's last sales tax rise in April 2014 was blamed for pushing the country into a brief recession. There were widespread fears another hike would hammer the economy by taking a bite out of consumer spending. Critics say it is crucial to shrink a debt mountain that is more than twice the size of the economy, as social welfare costs balloon in the ageing nation. Abe insisted delaying the tax hike would give Tokyo breathing room to take his growth program "one step further".

His plans appeared to work at first, as they sharply weakened the yen - a plus for exporters' profitability - and sparked a stock market rally. But the economy is still struggling to mount a firm recovery more than three years later, and a resurgent yen is threatening Japan Inc's bottom line. "One notable thing in the economy is the rising yen, which has taken a big toll on companies," said Taro Saito, senior economist at NLI Research Institute. The Japanese leader - who swept to power in late 2012 on a pledge to kick-start growth - is expected to announce a fresh spending package within several months.

The top-selling Yomiuri newspaper has said the stimulus could reach 10 trillion yen (\$93 billion). Japan holds upper house parliamentary elections in July and Abe's time in office ends in September 2018, unless his party approves an exceptional measure to extend his leadership. —AFP

S KOREA CREATES FUND OVER SHIPYARD WOES

SEOUL: South Korea's government and central bank will create an 11 trillion won (\$9.50 billion) fund to support two state-run banks most exposed to the country's struggling shipping and shipbuilding firms. "Our key industries like shipping and shipbuilding are being aggressively caught up by countries like China and management conditions have worsened due to weak global trade," Finance Minister Yoo Il-ho said in a speech announcing the corporate restructuring plans on Wednesday.

South Korea expects a 20 percent drop in major shipbuilders' capacity and a 30 percent drop in their workforce by 2018 from 2015, after the restructuring process. The two state-run banks to be capitalized are Korea Development Bank (KDB) and the Export-Import Bank of Korea (KEXIM). Following the announcement, the International Monetary Fund said it supported Korea's corporate reforms and urged the government to implement additional fiscal stimulus and the central bank to ease monetary policy.

The Bank of Korea will lend a maximum 10 trillion won for the state-bank fund via a conduit bank, the Industrial Bank of Korea (IBK), and that fund will later purchase contingent convertible bonds (CoCos) from the two state-banks. Contingent convertible bonds are hybrid assets that can be switched by the borrower from bonds into shares if a pre-set trigger is reached. The rest of the capital for the state-bank fund will be provided by loans from Korea Asset Management Corporation (KAMCO), a state-backed distressed assets bank, which will also be in charge of setting up the actual fund. The fund is expected to be operational by end-2017.

Separately, the government plans to transfer 1 trillion won worth of assets to KEXIM by September, which will be reflected in next year's budget. The central bank will also consider direct capital injections into KEXIM in the future, if needed. South Korean markets were unmoved by the announcement as the measures were widely expected. —Reuters

CHINA CENTRAL BANK HOLDS LINE ON GROWTH FORECAST

PBOC SEES MORE PAIN TO COME

SHANGHAI: China's central bank slashed its forecast for exports yesterday, predicting a second straight annual fall in shipments, but said the economy will still grow 6.8 percent this year. The People's Bank of China (PBOC) also warned in its mid-year work report that the government's push to reduce debt levels and overcapacity could increase bond default risks and make it more difficult for companies to raise funds. And, ahead of a meeting of the US Federal Reserve's policymaking board next week, it said the pace of US interest rate rises would affect global capital flows and emerging market currencies, but it did not mention the yuan.

"Since the beginning of this year, the global and domestic economic environment has experienced a number of changes," the PBOC said in the report. "Reflecting these recent developments, we revised our China macro-economic forecasts for 2016. Compared with our published forecasts in December last year, we maintain our baseline projection of 2016 real GDP growth at 6.8 percent."

The report was released shortly after monthly data showed China's exports fell an annual 4.1 percent in May, more than expected and the 10th decline in the past 12 months. Imports were more encouraging, declining only marginally and much less than expected,

pointing to improving domestic demand and adding to views that the economy may be slowly stabilising. Preliminary commodity trade data showed sharp rises in imports of copper and iron ores.

However, some economists cautioned that imports from Hong Kong may have once again been inflated by fake trade invoicing to disguise speculation on the yuan, which came under renewed depreciation pressure last month as the US dollar surged. Chinese customs data showed the mainland's imports from Hong Kong jumped 242.6 percent in May from a year earlier, while its exports to the territory fell 7 percent. "We don't expect the trade figure will change the PBOC's attitude towards the (yuan) exchange rate. They still prefer stability," wrote ANZ economists in a research note.

The yuan has eased this week after disappointing US jobs data saw markets pare back expectations of a US rate rise. US officials have been in China this week pressing China to reduce trade barriers for foreign businesses, and also expressing concern that Chinese firms in glutted sectors like steel are dumping under-priced goods in offshore markets. Those concerns are unlikely to be relieved by the May trade data, as steel and rare earth exports continued to rise.

More Growth

Despite cutting its forecast for exports to minus 1 percent from growth of 3.1 percent, the PBOC saw a domestic recovery remaining on track. It upgraded its forecast for fixed-asset investment growth to 11 percent, an increase of 0.2 percentage points from estimates it made late last year. A government spending spree on major infrastructure projects and a continuing recovery in the housing market have boosted demand for materials from cement to steel.

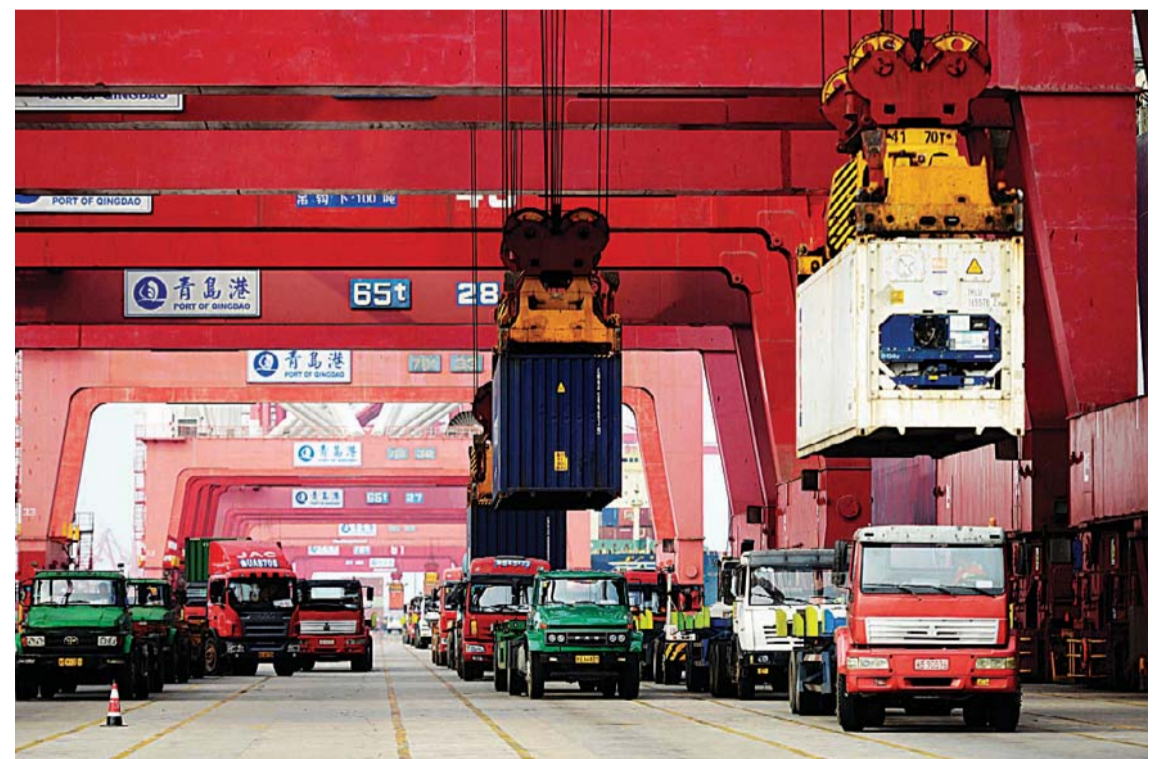
China's trade shrank 8 percent last year, compared with the government's goal for 6 percent growth, in the worst performance since the global financial crisis. The PBOC also said it expected consumer price inflation to pick up to 2.4 percent this year, 0.7 percentage points higher than its earlier forecast and signalling that worrying deflationary pressures seen in 2015 were easing. Indicators from the consumer, investment and factory sectors have suggested the prolonged slowdown in the world's second-largest economy may be bottoming out, and many analysts no longer expect much in the way of aggressive policy easing going forward, given concerns about rising levels of bad debt. —Reuters

CHINA IMPORTS FALL SLOWS

BEIJING: China's imports decreased at their slowest pace in more than a year-and-a-half in May, official data showed yesterday, in a possible sign domestic demand in the world's second-largest economy may be recovering. The country is a key driver of world growth and its demand for commodities has enormous implications for resource-rich nations from Australia to Nigeria. China's imports have been shrinking since late 2014 as the country's once blistering expansion lost steam, slowed down by manufacturing overcapacity, a slowing property market and mounting debt.

But the year-on-year drop of 0.4 percent in May imports marked the slowest rate of decline since October 2014, when they grew 4.6 percent, customs data showed. The results were also well ahead of the Bloomberg News median forecast of a 6.8 percent decrease based on a poll of economists. "Recovering commodity prices and relatively resilient domestic demand are driving a recovery in import growth," Julian Evans-Pritchard, an analyst with research firm Capital Economics, said in a note.

The value for May imports stood at \$131.1 billion, according to the Chinese customs office. The improvement in imports is likely to last for the remainder of this year and "return to positive territory before long" partly because "the continued feed-through from earlier policy easing helps to prop up domestic demand," said Evans-Pritchard. However, exports fell 4.1 percent last month from a year ago to \$181.1 billion, following a 1.8 percent decline in April and leaving



QINGDAO, China: Trucks transport containers at a port in east China's Shandong province yesterday. —AFP

a trade surplus of just under \$50 billion, the figures showed. The key export sector has shown year-on-year declines for eight of the past 10 months as the country's economic growth has fallen to its slowest level in a quarter of a century.

Supply Glut

Steel and aluminium exports continued to rise by volume in May, as the international community takes Beijing to task over concerns that it is flooding the market with the commodities. China's steel exports increased 20 percent last year to 112 million tonnes, a record high, and in May rose 2.4 percent year-on-year to 9.4 million tonnes,

official data showed. China shipped 420,000 tonnes of aluminium last month, up 2.4 percent on year, according to the customs.

The increases come as countries around the world blame China for a supply glut that has left industry in Europe and elsewhere in turmoil. As part of its promised reforms, the government has listed reducing overcapacity and excess inventory and cutting down borrowing as top priorities, with the country's ailing steel industry a key target. But foreign governments say they have seen little movement towards implementing its promises to tackle the problem.

The issue was a major sticking

point at a key annual meeting between the US and China this week, where American treasury secretary Jack Lew said Chinese steel and aluminium production has had a "distorting and damaging effect on global markets", an accusation angrily denied by his Chinese counterpart. Washington has punished Beijing with harsh tariffs, most recently in March, when it slapped a 300 percent rate on the cold rolled steel used to make auto parts. The EU, the second-biggest steel producer, has launched a dumping probe into Chinese steel, with angry manufacturers urging it to mirror the US' tough tariffs. —AFP

WORLD STOCKS STRUGGLE TO BUILD ON HIGHS

MILAN: World stocks struggled to build on six-week highs yesterday after mixed Chinese data, weighed down by a weaker session in Europe and political concerns that sent Germany's 10-year government bond yield to a record low.

even though there isn't much conviction," said Anthilia Capital fund manager Giuseppe Sersale. Wall Street looked set to open flat to higher yesterday with futures on the Dow Jones, S&P and Nasdaq up around 0.1 percent.

earlier losses, as investors weighed May Chinese imports that beat predictions against worse-than-expected exports. The MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan added 0.3 percent.

Despite the weak exports, the Chinese central bank said on Wednesday it still expects the economy to grow by 6.8 percent this year. Anthilia's Sersale said the Chinese data were not that bad overall but cautioned that sentiment could be weighed by ongoing concerns surrounding the outcome of a UK vote on whether to stay in the European Union later this month.

affect the pound. Sterling was steady at \$1.4545 after having gained roughly 0.8 percent on Tuesday after two polls gave a narrow lead to the "Remain" camp. But waning expectations that the Fed will raise interest rates anytime soon following a disappointing labor market report week sent the dollar to a five-week trough against a basket of currencies.

"We are a few basis points away from negative territory and given the Brexit vote later this month, that may give it a final push, it is quite likely we will over the next couple of weeks dip into negative territory," said Martin Van Vliet, senior rates strategist at ING. The Bund rally was unchecked even by the potential inflationary impact of an oil prices rally and uncertainty over whether the ECB's corporate bonds purchase program, which started yesterday, could undermine the bid for government debt.

The weaker dollar, along with the strong Chinese import data, boosted copper prices, while aluminium climbed to the highest levels in nearly a month. Meanwhile, US crude oil prices jumped to the highest level in almost 11 months on Wednesday, rising for the third consecutive session, buoyed by ongoing supply disruptions in Nigeria and strong Chinese oil demand data.

"After 48 hours of gains due to fading expectations of a rate increase in the U.S. this summer, the market is seeing a correction

Asian shares edged up yesterday, erasing

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report. Includes sections for Global Stock Indices, MENA Stock Indices, Global Currencies Exchange Rate, MENA Currencies Exchange Rate, Global Interest Rates, and Global Bond Yields. Lists various securities with their prices and changes.

National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report. At 02:00 PM Previous Day. Includes a line chart and detailed tables for Global Stock Indices, MENA Stock Indices, Global Currencies Exchange Rate, MENA Currencies Exchange Rate, Global Interest Rates, and Global Bond Yields.

BALL-MAKING TOWN FIGHTS TO GET BACK IN GAME

CHICHIHUALCO, Mexico: A shirtless man sits under a tree in a town in southern Mexico, stitching together a football. At the central square, several women congregate to make balls for the national pastime. Others toil in workshops or inside their ramshackle homes: A grandmother sewing on a chair in her dirt-floor home, or a pregnant woman pulling threads in her kitchen while her six-year-old niece hands her panels of synthetic leather.

Hundreds work like this in Chichihualco, a town famous for hand-stitching colorful footballs for over 50 years in the mountains of the impoverished state of Guerrero. In its heyday, Chichihualco made the balls that were kicked around on the pitches of Mexico's first division clubs, and those used by the national team. But competition from Asia, emigration to the United States and drug trafficking have relegated Chichihualco's footballs to amateur recreational sales.

Mexico's national squad, meanwhile, is using Adidas balls during practice for this month's Copa America Centenario tournament in the United States. Despite Chichihualco's losing streak, entire families in the community of 25,000 people continue the tradition that they inherited from their parents and grandparents. "All of us sew balls. Men, women, children. Even my husband. There's no other work," said Virginia Ramirez, 72, as she stitched together segments of vinyl in her small house with a dirt floor.

Ramirez has been making footballs since age 17. She has been doing this for so long that she doesn't need a thimble to protect her leathery hands from the needle. She earns 10 pesos (50 US cents) per ball and can make up to five per day. "We are very poor. We don't have beans or salt. We have nothing," she said under a roof made of wood planks.

'Can't Compete' with Asia

The first workshop in Chichihualco appeared in the 1960s, when a man named Eulalio Alarcon brought ball segments from Mexico City to have



CHICHIHUALCO, Mexico: Men work in the manufacturing of footballs in Guerrero State on May 18, 2016. — AFP

them stitched together. Others in the community were inspired and 70 workshops opened, churning out 60,000 balls per month, said Mayor Alfredo Alarcon, who owns a football-making facility and is not related to Eulalio. But today there are only 15 workshops and production has dropped to 15,000 balls per month, he said.

The workshops have machines to make and cut the synthetic leather into panels, which are then sewn together by villagers in their homes. The balls then go back to the workshops, where they are pumped full of air and finishing touches are

applied. Alberto Morales, who opened his factory in the 1960s, stared recently at the 1,200 balls that his facility produces every week.

They come in hot red, shiny black or lime green and each sell for \$3 to \$5, leaving Morales with an eight-cent profit per ball. His company remains afloat despite competition from cheaper balls made in China and Pakistan, but things used to be better. "We are stuck. We can't produce more because we can't reinvest in material or machines," Morales said as he held one of the 200 balls that first division club Tigres of Monterrey ordered for its fans. "We

could compete with balls from anywhere in the world. Our ball is really spherical, sewn by hand, while the Chinese ones go all over the place when you kick them," he said.

Fewer people are making footballs than before, as they can find more lucrative work than 10 pesos per ball. The drug trade has become an option in a region known as the country's top producer of opium poppies. "Some people don't want to sew anymore. They prefer to cultivate poppies in the mountains. They earn more," said Arturo Alarcon, a distant cousin of the mayor who runs a workshop that makes fluorescent balls.

17 Bodies

Chichihualco has not escaped the pressure of drug cartels that have spread fear across Guerrero, which had the highest murder rate among states in Mexico last year, with 56.5 homicides per 100,000 people. In December, 17 bodies were discovered at the bottom of a ravine, including eight that were burned. The labor force has also dwindled due to migration to the United States. Alarcon estimates that 70 percent of the town has gone across the border and sends money back home, fueling much of Chichihualco's economy.

Workshops have outsourced some of the work to surrounding communities and even a local prison, where inmates produce 5,000 balls per week. "The boys (prisoners) put work into it. It helps them to not think about bad things," Arturo Alarcon said as he sat amid dozens of balls, some painted with the face of Spider-Man or the words "FIFA World Cup Brasil." Some 40 families sew balls in Chichihualco and another 200 do the work in surrounding communities. "Ten pesos per ball isn't much, right?" said Erasmo Flores, a 43-year-old farmer and musician who has been sewing balls since the age of six. "It's not enough to get lunch. One eats what God gives him," said Flores, who has a heart tattooed on his arm, as he made his second football of the day while sitting under a tree in front of his house. — AFP



STRASBOURG, France: European Commission Vice President Jyrki Katainen speaks during a debate on the European Commission's €315 billion investment plan for Europe yesterday at the European Parliament. — AFP

ECB IN CORPORATE BOND BUY TO REVIVE INFLATION

BERLIN: The European Central Bank yesterday took the unprecedented step of buying corporate bonds, its latest weapon in a desperate battle to kick-start sluggish growth and inflation in the eurozone. Having already slashed interest rates to below zero and pumped massive amounts of cash into financial markets, it started to directly finance businesses by buying their debt in the bond market. In the first major trades, the ECB bought millions of euros worth of bonds of French power company Engie and Spain's Telefonica, reported the Bloomberg financial news wire, citing unnamed market players.

Other purchases were of debt issued by brewer Anheuser-Busch InBev, German engineering giant Siemens, Italian insurer Assicurazioni Generali and French automaker Renault, Bloomberg said. ECB chief Mario Draghi hopes the scheme - set to be worth billions of euros every month - will deliver the financial medicine directly where it is needed, with Europe's major public corporations. The Frankfurt-based bank wants companies to use the extra cash to boost investment, creating jobs and growth in the flagging 19-country currency bloc.

With prices currently falling, the ECB hopes to boost activity and raise inflation back to close to two percent, a level it deems healthy for growth. Critics however charge that the ECB is overstepping its mandate by lavishing billions on corporate giants and say it could be distorting markets and creating bubbles. Some also fear that large companies - which already have access to cheap money thanks to rock-bottom interest rates - could be tempted to use the extra liquidity for risky merger and take-over gambles.

Billions Per Month

To kick-start lending in the bloc, the ECB has already made unprecedented amounts of ultra-cheap loans available to banks on condition they pass it on as credit for businesses and households. The ECB has also embarked on a major asset purchase program known as quantitative easing, or QE. It has beefed up that scheme from A60 billion to A80 billion (\$68 billion to \$91 billion) a month until March 2017, with part of the extra money earmarked for the new corporate bond purchases.

Under the so-called corporate sector purchase program, or CSPP, the central bank will

buy euro-denominated, investment grade corporate bonds that mature within six months to 30 years. Many analysts are betting on a monthly volume of five to A10 billion, while Germany's Commerzbank expects just three to five billion euros in the long term. The ECB is making the purchases through the national banks of Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Italy and Spain.

These six national central banks will publish lists of bonds they hold on a weekly basis, starting Monday July 18, without revealing the exact amounts of their holdings. The ECB has said it won't buy bonds issued by banks or bank subsidiaries - but it can buy bonds of, for instance, a car company such as Volkswagen that operates an internal bank. The eurozone central bank has also said it will be able to hold on to bonds even if the companies' ratings are downgraded to sub-investment grade, so-called "fallen angels".

'Little Impact'

The market for corporate bonds is far smaller than for sovereign bonds or for stocks. European businesses rely mainly on bank loans rather than bonds to raise capital. The total volume of eligible bonds is estimated at A500-700 billion. Companies have issued a flurry of bonds since Draghi announced in March that the ECB would intervene in the corporate bond market, a first on this scale for a large central bank. Early spring saw the biggest euro-denominated corporate bond issue of all time by AB Inbev, worth more than 13 billion euros, while US companies like FedEx and IBM have issued bonds through their European subsidiaries.

Capital Economics said that, despite the initial spike in bond issuance, there was unlikely to be a major long-term impact on inflation and growth. Despite all the cheap money already available to them, companies have refrained from boosting their investment so far, wrote its Europe economist Jack Allen. "Demand is still subdued and there is a large amount of spare capacity in the economy, so firms are unlikely to feel a strong need to increase investment," he wrote. "The upshot is that while the ECB's corporate bond purchases seem to have had a positive effect so far, they are unlikely to materially impact the outlook for economic growth and inflation." — AFP

INVESTORS SAY 'DON'T PANIC' OVER INDIAN CENTRAL BANK LEADERSHIP

RBI GOVERNOR WIDELY RESPECTED, HAS BROUGHT IN REFORMS

MUMBAI/LONDON: The reappointment, or not, of India's central bank head Raghuram Rajan has caused enough of a stir to be known locally as "Rexit", a play on Britain's EU referendum, reflecting the esteem in which the governor is held at home and abroad. Were Rajan to leave when his tenure ends in September, Indian markets are expected to fall to reflect his standing, but some foreign fund managers are of the view that, even if he does go, it would not be the end of the world.

The main reason is that Rajan would leave behind policies that have altered the way the central bank works, namely the adoption of an inflation target and plans to create a monetary policy committee to set interest rates. Both reduce the discretion the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor has historically enjoyed in setting policy, making the institution more consensus-based and bringing it closer into line with other big central banks like the US Federal Reserve.

"The short answer is that investors, especially fixed income investors, will not be happy if he leaves, and it will surely trigger some sales," said Kieran Curtis, investment director of emerging markets debt at Standard Life Investments in London. "I think there is a more nuanced view, though, and unless he is replaced by a polar opposite character it may not matter that much," he added.

Rajan declined to comment on speculation over his future, telling reporters on Tuesday: "You will know when there is news." He left rates unchanged, as was widely expected, after the latest policy review. A two-year extension at the helm of the RBI still looks a real possibility. Reuters reported last week that, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi behind Rajan, the central bank chief was more likely to be reappointed, despite considerable opposition to him within the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Rajan may not want the job, and, when a regional newspaper cited sources close to the governor saying he could walk away, markets were briefly spooked.

Emerging Market Darling

Rajan's appointment in Sept 2013, as India faced its worst currency crisis in over two decades, and the election of Modi in May 2014, have helped turn India into an emerging market darling at a time when countries like Brazil and South Africa are struggling. India has attracted \$62 billion in foreign portfolio investments since Rajan's appointment, including a yearly record of \$42 billion in 2014, and the proportion of overseas ownership in debt and equity markets has hit record highs.

Rajan moved quickly to calm markets by raising short-term interest rates and pushing hard to shore up foreign exchange reserves, which hit a record \$363 billion in recent weeks before dipping somewhat. But his quest to use a target to bring inflation under control in a country that frequently faced double-digit price increases was widely seen as a more lasting legacy. In that he was helped significantly by the collapse in crude oil prices. Even if political winds shift, investors say it would be difficult for India to jettison consumer inflation targeting after formally adopting it as law in 2015. Future governments and RBI governors could tinker with the target, now set at 2 to 6 percent, but that would threaten India's credit ratings.

Setting Policy

India is also setting up a monetary policy committee that will decide interest rates, ending the current system under which the governor decides on policy and writes the statement. Under a bill passed by parliament, the panel would be composed of six members - three nominated from the central bank and three from the government. The RBI governor would have the casting vote in the event of a tie, meaning the position retains significant influence, but the committee, which Rajan supports, is expected to bring transparency to decision making and make the bank less reliant on a single person.

"There is no reason why anyone should assume that the RBI cannot remain a credible institution," said Kenneth Akintewe, a fund manager for Aberdeen Asset Management in Singapore. "Sensible foreign investors ... will understand that, with or without Governor Rajan, India has the ability to realize its tremendous potential, but it will take time."

Were Rajan to step down, other candidates would struggle to match his pedigree as former chief economist at the International Monetary Fund and one of the few who predicted the 2007-08 global financial crisis. But Urjit Patel, a deputy governor at the RBI, has been named by some analysts as a plausible replacement. Other names mentioned in the market include Arundhati Bhattacharya, head of India's biggest lender State Bank of India and economic affairs secretary Shaktikanta Das. Nevertheless, Rajan would be many investors' favored choice. "In our conversation with investors, there is no question that people would feel more reassured about their investments if Governor Rajan remained in office, so it is certainly a risk factor," said Kamakshya Trivedi, chief emerging markets macro strategist Goldman Sachs in London. — Reuters



MUMBAI: India's central bank - Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor Raghuram Rajan walks after addressing a press conference following a monetary policy review meeting on Tuesday. — AFP

US INVESTORS SKEPTICAL ABOUT CHINA MOVE TO WIDEN MARKETS

NEW YORK/BOSTON: US asset managers and hedge funds are wary about pouring more money into China until the government addresses its stock market crash last year and wild swings in the yuan, they said on Tuesday, as China unveiled measures to attract US buyers of its assets. China will give the United States a 250 billion yuan (\$38 billion) investment quota for the first time to buy Chinese stocks, bonds and other assets, officials said, deepening financial ties and interdependence between the world's two largest economies.

China's regulators have been pushing to expand foreign investors' access to domestic financial markets to make its markets broader and attract more capital inflows. But foreign interest has waned after a near meltdown in Chinese stock markets last year and heavy-handed official intervention to shore them up. "I would imagine that investors would look for certain financial reforms in order to dive in," said Gregory Peters, a senior investment officer at Prudential Fixed Income with more than \$621 billion of assets. "A consistent application of the rule of law is paramount.... Not sure China is quite there yet."

Carson Block, the head of Muddy Waters Capital LLC who gained prominence for short-selling shares of Chinese companies, was more skeptical. "China increased the quota in an effort support the country's equity, credit and fixed asset bubbles," he said in an email. US investors are cautious about investing in China, saying they worry about regulatory issues including when the government would reintroduce a circuit breaker mechanism to stabilize the country's stock markets.

The benchmark Shanghai Composite Index has tumbled more than 40 percent over the past year on fears that slowing economic growth would hurt profits. William Kirby, a Harvard Business School professor with ties to several funds that invest in China, said "the fundamental governance and political issues that destabi-

lized the Shanghai exchange last summer remain unaddressed. Caveat emptor."

Michel Del Buono, managing director at Makena Capital Management, which oversees \$20 billion of assets, noted that China was dealing with an investment outflow. "There are questions about regulatory snafus and there are questions about valuations. It is a stock picker's market there," he said. "What they really want is to make their markets more credible. They want more foreign investors to come in and they see it as patient money, you see it as patient money."

The investment quota is part of a recent Chinese program called Renminbi Qualified Foreign Institutional Investor, or RQFII. The program allows approved fund managers overseas to use funds raised outside the mainland, in Chinese yuan, to invest in China's financial markets. An older program, called Qualified Foreign Institutional Investor, or QFII, set quotas in dollars, which could be converted into yuan for investments. "For an institutional investor this announcement doesn't change much, though to the extent it makes their markets deeper and more liquid, it represents an improvement," Del Buono said.

Another big catalyst for foreign investment flow is on the horizon. Index compiler next week MSCI is expected to announce whether it would include Chinese shares in its benchmark index. Vanguard, the largest US mutual fund manager, said in a statement that it was premature to discuss its plans in the wake of China's announcement. "China is one of the world's key emerging economies and the second-largest stock market in the world by market cap," Vanguard spokeswoman Linda Wolohan said. "With the world's second-largest GDP, China accounts for 11 percent of global trade and 8 percent of global consumption. As a result, China can offer significant long-term benefits for investors." Vanguard's Australian affiliate was granted an RQFII quota earlier this year. — Reuters

BAYT.COM, UDEMY PARTNER TO CLOSE MIDEAST SKILLS GAP

DUBAI: Bayt.com, the Middle East's number one job site, has partnered with UdeMy, a global marketplace for learning and teaching online, to provide job seekers in the Middle East with hundreds of courses to boost their employability and help them gain a competitive edge by mastering new skills. Bayt.com's 25 million users can now access a large array of UdeMy courses on the "Learning" portal of the Bayt.com website, and learn the skills they need to get a job in a region that is characterized by an ever-widening skills gap and one of the highest unemployment rates in the world.

According to the Middle East Skills Gap Survey, released by Bayt.com in May 2016, the skills gap in the Middle East is prevailing. The problem is particularly amplified for senior-level positions, with 70 percent of respondents claim-

ing it is difficult to find senior-level candidates with the required skills.

Bayt.com has designed solutions to help employers find the most suitable talent and help job seekers learn the skills they need to find a job for years. This integration with UdeMy will help bridge the skills gap between job seekers and employers in the Middle East. Courses will be recommended to job seekers based on their job titles and interests. Job seekers will also be able to add UdeMy courses they take to the education section of their CVs. The courses are available in English and Arabic, and range in topics from problem solving and communication to technical skills, particularly those relevant to growing fields like mobile technology and software development.

"The job market in the Middle East is charac-

terized by fierce competition for a limited supply of jobs. In the face of this competition, job seekers who seek to continually upgrade their skills and who pursue a path of lifelong learning stand to win the best job opportunities," said Omar Tahboub, VP of Product, Bayt.com. "Earlier last year, we launched a Learning channel on Bayt.com to help job seekers gain access to some of the best learning opportunities. Today, we announce our partnership with UdeMy, a leading global provider of online learning content. We hope that this partnership will empower job seekers in the region in their pursuit of lifelong learning."

"Learning is no longer something confined to the classroom — there is a real demand for lifelong learning that allows people to up-skill to

meet the changing needs of today's workplace," said Richard Qiu, VP of Business Development at UdeMy. "We are pleased to be partnering with Bayt.com to provide even greater access to flexible, online learning on the most in-demand skills for employment in the Middle East."

Bayt.com plans to translate and offer more UdeMy courses in Arabic in the coming weeks, further increasing opportunities for people to learn in their native language. All UdeMy courses are available on-demand and once purchased, students have lifetime access to the course content so they can learn at their own pace and succeed on their own terms. Courses may be taken on a computer, tablet, or smartphone, and content can be downloaded and viewed without an Internet connection.

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AL-TIJARI LAUNCHES WESTERN UNION MONEY TRANSFER SERVICES

KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) yesterday announced the launch of Western Union account based money transfer service. This service will allow CBK account holders to transfer money in a simple and fast manner to more than 200 countries and territories from their account at any time. Customers have access to the service twenty four hours a day seven days a week through the CBK Mobile application or CBK Online Banking and transfer to Western Union's 500,000 agent locations around the world.

Sahar Al-umaih, General Manager - Corporate Credit Division and Acting General Manager of Retail Banking Division at the Commercial Bank of Kuwait, stated that Western Union is one of the most recognized and widely used companies in the world for fast money transfer and by having this alliance

CBK customers will benefit from this electronic transfer services.

Rumaih further said that Commercial Bank of Kuwait endeavors to provide its customers with the best services through alliance with renowned and reputed institutions, so CBK customers can enjoy flexible, easy and safety channels when transferring funds abroad. "We are delighted to launch our services with CBK which enables us to extend our account-based money transfer footprint in Kuwait," said Hatem Sleiman, Regional Vice President - Middle East at Western Union. "We always look for new ways to provide our consumers with more choices and convenience to send and receive money around the world and today's launch is a clear exhibit of how Western Union recognizes the growing use of technology by consumers and opens up more options for them."

BANK MUSCAT APPOINTS NEW CEO FOR KUWAIT BRANCH

KUWAIT: Bank Muscat, the flagship financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, has appointed Najah Al-Sulaiman as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Kuwait branch. Najah is a seasoned banker with 25 years of experience in the field of corporate banking. She joined Bank Muscat's Kuwait branch in 2014 as Head of Corporate Banking and led the team to expand corporate business as part of the bank's strategic plan to sustain its position in the region.

Najah brings a wealth of experience to the role which includes stints with leading banking and financial institutions in Kuwait. Prior to joining Bank Muscat, she occupied the position of Assistant General Manager of Corporate Banking at Burgan Bank. As part of its leadership strategy, Bank Muscat aims to attract and develop Kuwaiti talent to strengthen its operations in Kuwait.

Najah takes over from Osamah Al-Abdullatif, former CEO - Kuwait Branch, who has returned to Bank Muscat Head Office in the sultanate to assume a senior management role.

Bank Muscat commenced Kuwait branch operations in April 2010, becoming the first bank from Oman to open a commercial banking branch in Kuwait. With the focus to support investment and trade

flows between Kuwait and Oman, Bank Muscat's Kuwait branch offers a comprehensive range of corporate banking, trade and treasury services.

Outside of Oman, Bank Muscat has a branch each in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, as well as representative offices in the UAE and Singapore. Muscat Capital LLC is a brokerage and investment banking subsidiary of the bank in Saudi Arabia.



Najah Al-Sulaiman

FRUSTRATED IN CHINA, US INDUSTRY HOPES FOR RESET

BEIJING: As the United States and China wrapped up talks this week touting bilateral cooperation on strategic and economic issues, many in the US business community say the annual dialogue is delivering diminishing returns in resolving commercial disputes. Foreign business in China is growing increasingly pessimistic, in part due to the country's slowing economy, but also because of growing fears of protectionism and rules that companies think could make it harder to operate there.

Concerns include draft regulations for China's insurance and banking industries and a pending cyber-security law that business groups say could limit sales for foreign companies in favour of domestic competitors. Beijing's Made in China 2025 plan also calls for a progressive increase in domestic components in sectors such as advanced information technology and robotics, and President Xi Jinping has pledged to increase government support for technology companies, raising concerns that foreign providers will be at a disadvantage.

Those plans and proposals sit uneasily with China's "commitments to not impose nationality-based conditions on the sale, purchase or use (of info-technology)", a pledge repeated during the US-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue (S&ED), which on Tuesday wrapped up its eighth and final round under President Barack Obama.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said on Wednesday that China would "earnestly put into effect" the many important consensus reached during the talks, but

many in the US business community feel the talks provide a forum to repeat previously made promises rather than push progress on market-opening reforms.

"Increasingly, there's been a sense that commitments have been made, and not necessarily adhered to. There's a sense that a growing set of bilateral challenges is outpacing the ability of the dialogue to effectively manage those areas of difference," said Jeremie Waterman, executive director for Greater China at the US Chamber of Commerce.

Just hours after the S&ED finished in Beijing, the US House Judiciary Committee on Tuesday heard testimony on concerns over China's enforcement of competition law, which include draft regulations that could force firms to license technology to competitors or face sanctions. But the list of outcomes from this week's talks made no mention of antitrust policy. China's promise to table next week an updated list of sectors off-limits to US investors for ongoing talks on a bilateral investment treaty was seen as a highlight of the dialogue, though people in the US business community privately say they are not optimistic it will be enough to make real progress on the treaty before Obama leaves office.

Relationship Benefits

James McGregor, Greater China chairman for communications consultancy APCO Worldwide, who attended a Tuesday event for executives with senior US and Chinese officials, said executives were blunt in stressing

how negative things were becoming for foreign companies in China. "I think they (officials) all walked out of the room feeling like they'd learned something today and that things are changing and not heading in a good direction now," McGregor said.

The official rhetoric in China has focused less on the concrete achievements of the dialogue and more on the relationship benefits. The official Xinhua news agency said the talks had infused relations with a "shot of confidence." "Only by constantly augmenting the areas of cooperation and pursuing consensus can China-US ties move in a positive direction," it said in a commentary late on Tuesday.

That can help counter some of the anti-China sentiment whipped up during the American presidential race, some Chinese officials have said. "During the ongoing raging fire of the US election, candidates from both parties frequently make a fuss about trade problems with China. But China has not made an excessive response because we can more truly and accurately understand the true nature of problems and avoid misjudgments through the dialogue mechanism," Vice Premier Wang Yang said in a speech on Monday.

US businesses also acknowledge that the S&ED has provided a high-profile forum to air their concerns and are advocating reforming it, not writing it off. "In the next administration, the mechanisms for dialogue can be tweaked to make further improvements and become more effective, but high-level engagement is now mandatory in the US-China relationship," the US-China Business Council said in a statement. — Reuters

ARCHITECT UNVEILS 3D PRINTER TO MAKE 'ENDLESS' HOUSE

AMSTERDAM: A Dutch architect yesterday unveiled a unique 3D printer with which he aims to construct a large building "without beginning or end" shaped like an infinite loop. "It's just like a normal printer," architect Janjaap Ruijsenaars told AFP as he presented the tool he hopes to use to build what he has dubbed the "Landscape House". "But instead of putting ink onto paper, we are putting a liquid onto sand which solidifies wherever the liquid has been spread."

Ruijsenaars, of Universe Architecture in Amsterdam, aims to print the Mobius strip-shaped building with around 1,100 sq m of floor space using the massive D-Shape printer. Designed by Italian Enrico Dini, the printer can print up to almost a six-metre-by-six-metre square, using a computer to help build up fine layers of 5-10 mm thick. The machine is almost two metres long and has been set up in a warehouse in Amsterdam, where the final tests are being carried out before pressing ahead with the start of building.

"The ambition was to make a building that has an infinite structure, like planet Earth," said Ruijsenaars. "Planet Earth doesn't have a beginning or an end and we were looking for a shape that has the same quality," he added. "It didn't become a circle but it became a very complex, Mobius strip which is a well-known mathematics figure which just has one side."

The ambitious project was first unveiled in 2013, and the team has been in touch with various partners hoping to be able to start construction "within the next few years". It is hoped the building, which will also include more traditional design elements, can be used as a space for exhibitions or sculptures. The initial plan had not been to print the building, but it turned out that a 3D printer was the most practical way of making his house without beginning or end. It will not be the world's first 3D building, however, as such projects have been undertaken in China and Dubai, although using a different method. — AFP

RAMADAN KAREEM

DRAWS ON CARS & GUARANTEED GIFTS

A TIME OF GREAT OFFERS




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AL SAYER CELEBRATES THE JOYOUS SPIRIT OF RAMADAN

KUWAIT: Toyota and Mohamed Naser Al Sayer (MNSS), one of the Al Sayer Group Holding Companies has announced the commencement of attractive offers for the month of Ramadan. This year's special offers will feature the Ramadan Raffle Draw, through which customers purchasing a new car will get the chance to win one of eight Toyota Yaris hatchbacks, with two cars up for grabs each week.

According to Johan Heislitz Senior Business Director Toyota MNSS: "As always this year's Ramadan offers is also very special. This is the season of joy and we want to celebrate this spirit for our valued customers. Along with the exceptional quality, durability and reliability of Toyota cars we are presenting Grand raffle prizes, guaranteed scratch and win gifts as well as attractive benefits. There is no better time to

bring home your Toyota, we wish all families in Kuwait Ramadan Mubarak."

Customers will pick their scratch & win coupon with every purchase to win a guaranteed prize including any of the following: Up to 1500 liters fuel card, Canon IXUS 170 camera, perfume gift box or Caribou coffee voucher. In addition to all of the above customer will also benefit from valuable a Ramadan gift, five years open mileage warranty, service for one year or 20,000 km, courtesy car, third party insurance, free registration, T-Connect service and convenient financing solutions.

Ramadan offers will be only valid for invoices issued between May 29 and July 7, 2016. During the month of Ramadan working hours for Toyota showrooms at Rai, Ahmadi, Jahra, Tilal and the Ardiya new car delivery center will be 9:30 am - 12:30 pm and 8:30 pm - 11:30 pm.

OVER 53,000 RESIDENTS TO BENEFIT FROM MALABAR GOLD CSR INITIATIVES

KUWAIT: The holy month of Ramadan is here and millions of people around the world honor this month with acts of service and prayers. Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the leading jewellery retailer strengthens its CSR activities in the GCC and Far East region this Ramadan, embracing the spirit of giving. Such month long activities are planned in association with like-minded organizations from the respective countries to benefit the needy. Over 53,000 special iftar meals will be distributed during this period.

In UAE, 24,000 Iftar meals will be provided at Sajaa Industrial area throughout the holy month of Ramadan in an air conditioned tent which is set up

with the support of Sharjah Charity International. Apart from this, iftar kits will be distributed across the Emirates to the needy.

In Bahrain, the group is planning to provide over 4,500 iftar meals to the workers at different labor camps located all over Bahrain. Like in previous years, they will be associating with Discovery Islam, Al Hedaya Centre and Friendship Society for Blinds to carry out such activities in Bahrain.

In Kuwait, the group will provide iftar meals to over 3,600 laborers in different parts of various governorates in Kuwait. In Qatar, the group will be providing iftar meals to over 1,500 laborers during the time of

Ramadan through their tents located in Al Khor & Industrial Area near Asian Town. In Oman, the group is distributing special Ramadan kit to the under privileged, 300 such kits includes of grocery which will be enough for a person to break the fast for 15 days during Ramadan.

In Singapore, 370 special iftar kit will be distributed to the under privileged people, one such kit will include of grocery will be enough for a family to break the fast for a week. In Malaysia, the group will be distributing 2,500 food kit to the less fortunate & blind people in the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur in association with the likeminded organizations. One

such kit includes grocery which will be enough for a family to break the fast for a week.

Since its inception in 1993, Malabar Group has been actively involved in CSR activities with the aim of creating a difference to the community in and around their area of operations. The importance of CSR activities for Malabar Group has grown over the decades and the group sets aside a fixed percentage of its net profit for the benefit of the needy. They undertake social welfare activities all year long, focusing on five priority areas such medical, educational sector, environment as well as housing and women empowerment.

INDIA MONSOON FORECASTING IN HIGH-TECH MAKEOVER

NEW DELHI: India's forecasting of the monsoon - the crop-nourishing seasonal rains that are the lifeblood for farmers in the country of 1.3 billion people - is getting a high-tech makeover. Jettisoning a statistical method introduced under British colonial rule in the 1920s, India's meteorology office is spending \$60 million on a new supercomputer to improve the accuracy of one of the world's most vital weather forecasts in time for next year's rains. The new system, based on a US model tweaked for India, requires immense computing power to generate three-dimensional models to help predict how the monsoon is likely to develop.

Experts say better forecasting could help India raise its farm output by nearly 15 percent, by helping farmers tweak the best time to sow,

irrigate or apply fertilizer to crops and if rains fall plan state-wide measures. This would be a major boon for a country already either the world's biggest or second-biggest producer and consumer of rice, wheat, sugar and cotton.

"If everything goes well, by 2017 we'll make this dynamical model operational by replacing the statistical model," said M Rajeevan, the top scientist in the ministry of earth sciences, which oversees the weather office on a 30-acre campus in the heart of New Delhi. The June-September rains are relied on to replenish reservoirs, recharge aquifers and for half of all farmland that does not have irrigation. Many areas receive more than 70 percent of their annual rains during the monsoon and plentiful rains means more money in rural communities, sustaining some

600 million people and boosting demand for an array of goods and services.

Melting Snow

Rajeevan declined to name the companies the bureau was talking to obtain the new supercomputer, but said it would be 10 times faster than the existing one supplied by IBM. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) issues forecasts for the country as a whole and five regions, though does not give separate ones for the country's 29 states. "We didn't adopt the dynamical model earlier because it was not able to forecast monsoons. Now, it can and with better results than the statistical model," said Rajeevan.

The existing model uses historical relationships between rainfall and six to eight predic-

tors such as sea-surface temperatures and southeasterly winds over the Indian ocean. Because of India's size, one national forecast is of little help to farmers spread across diverse climatic zones. "I'll cherish the day they'll come up with a forecast for my state. It's going to mitigate our risks and help us plan our crop better," said Dharmendra Kumar, whose farm is in Uttar Pradesh, a state roughly the size of the United Kingdom and with a bigger population than Brazil.

The IMD, set up in 1875, produced its first monsoon forecast in 1886 after the famine of the 1870s. Back then, it relied on melting snow in the Himalayas to predict rains. Early forecasters also observed plants and animals, consulted almanacs and invoked Lord Indra, the rain god of Hindus. Now, about 5,000 IMD employ-

ees gather data, obtained from radar, observatories, ships, sensors and satellites, for the weather office, where staff peer at computer screens flickering with charts, graphs and multi-coloured maps of India.

In 2015, the IMD accurately forecast a second straight drought year, in contrast to predictions of bountiful rains by Skymet, India's only private forecaster. But the weather office failed to foresee the worst drought in nearly four decades in 2009 and, as this year's monsoon starts, farmers hope its forecast of above-average rains will be right. "In the last one decade we've gained a greater degree of precision in forecasting rains, but monsoon still remains a very complex weather system which only God has the ability to understand fully," Rajeevan said. —Reuters

BEZOS BETTING ON INDIA WITH \$3BN INVESTMENT

NEW DELHI: Amazon chief executive Jeff Bezos has pledged to invest \$3 billion in India, in a big bet on the growth of online shopping in the fast-growing South Asian economy. Speaking in Washington DC as India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi visits the United States, Bezos told a gathering of business leaders that he saw "huge potential" in India. The investment, announced Tuesday, comes on top of \$2 billion Amazon invested in India in 2014, and will boost Modi's campaign to attract foreign cash to create much-needed jobs.

"We have already created some 45,000 jobs in India and continue to see huge potential in the Indian economy," Bezos said at the US-India Business Council meeting, according to a statement from the group. "Our Amazon.in

team is surpassing even our most ambitious planned milestones," he said. Amazon has made steady inroads in India since entering the cutthroat, rapidly growing e-commerce market in 2013.

But it faces stiff competition from local rivals Snapdeal and Flipkart, which have attracted billions of dollars in overseas investment. E-retailers in India, including Amazon, typically adopt a "marketplace" structure, acting as technological platforms that connect buyers and sellers rather than stocking their own products. The government in March set new rules for foreign investment in online marketplaces, including allowing up to 100 percent foreign ownership. India's e-commerce market was worth about \$23 billion in 2015, according to business body Assocham. —AFP



WASHINGTON: Jeff Bezos (right), CEO of Amazon, is presented with the 2016 USIBC Global Leadership Award by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the 41st Annual Leadership Summit at the Mellen Auditorium on Tuesday. —AFP

AIRBNB AWAITS BERLIN RULING ON LEGALITY OF HOME-SHARING

BERLIN: A Berlin city court was due to make a landmark ruling with ramifications for home rental firms such as Airbnb yesterday when it decides if homeowners can engage in short-term lets. Several home-sharing companies have lodged a complaint against an effective ban on such lets in Berlin in the first substantial challenge to such city legislation in Europe. People renting out their homes in the German capital for periods of less than two months face fines of up to €100,000 (\$111,700). Although landlords can seek a permit, city officials have said they will reject 95 percent of requests.

The Berlin showdown comes a week after the European Commission cautioned member states against erecting roadblocks or even outright bans on the emerging "sharing economy" in everything from apartments to local rides by enforcing decades or even centuries-old laws. Airbnb and other home-sharing companies, such as Rocket Internet's Wimdu, requested the legal opinion of the former head of the city of Berlin's constitutional court following Berlin's crackdown. Helge Sodan deemed the new regulation unconstitutional and drafted the complaint.

Airbnb, whose website lists 11,700 apartments in Berlin, did not join as a plaintiff but a company spokesman said the verdict would impact Airbnb's business and it was watching closely. Berlin's authorities estimate that a total of 15,000 apartments have been taken off the city's rental market to be operated as businesses housing tourists. City officials say rising rents and a significant housing shortage left them with no choice but to impose the measures.

Home-rental groups say the city is using the new legislation to whitewash structural housing problems, turning short-term home-sharing companies into scapegoats. Although a positive verdict would not have binding legal consequences for other jurisdictions, experts expect it to have repercussions throughout Europe, as cities try to balance the interests of the travel and tourism industry with those of tenants who fear rising rents. "Cities are closely watching each other to see what types of regulations are possible and Berlin's verdict will surely impact the behavior of other cities," said Gracia Vara Arribas, a lawyer who advised the EU on the sharing economy. —Reuters



PUDASJARVI, Finland: In this picture taken Aug 21, 2009, a reindeer walks out of the road. —AP

REINDEER HERDERS LAUNCH APP TO REDUCE ROAD KILLS

HELSINKI: In efforts to cut road kill, Finnish reindeer herders have painted Rudolph's antlers in fluorescent colors, hung reflectors round their necks and even used movable traffic signs. They've not been successful, so they're turning to drivers with a reindeer warning app hoping it will reduce the annual 4,000 reindeer road deaths. In a pilot project, drivers of heavy transport vehicles are being giv-

en 1,000 free interactive mobile gadgets which warn them of nearby reindeer and allow them to register their own sightings with a tap on the screen.

If successful, the app will be available for download on all smart phones later this year. Some 300,000 reindeer roam the wilds of Arctic Finland, providing work for 10,000 people in the sparsely populated northern wilderness. —AP

TALENT SHORTAGE STYMIES INDONESIA'S TECH SCENE

GOVT TO PUT CODING ON SCHOOL CURRICULUM

SINGAPORE/JAKARTA: Indonesian online retailer Bilina spent two years looking for a chief technology officer before it finally discovered Ridy Lie, who had returned home after eight years with Amazon in the United States. Until Lie, the company had struggled to find someone who could "take us to the next level," said Eka Himawan, group chief financial officer at the company, which was renamed Orami after a merger this year. "He is the one who is guiding (the engineers) and telling them: this is how the things are done in Amazon and this is how we should do it," Himawan said.

Even as internet giants like Alibaba and SoftBank are making major investments in startups heavily exposed to Indonesia, recruitment of talented executives is proving to be a huge drag on the country's technology sector. Indonesia is the most populous country in a region where 3.8 million internet users are coming online every month. A recent report by Google and Singaporean state fund Temasek estimated that Southeast Asia needed to attract investment worth \$40-50 billion in sectors such as e-commerce over the next

decade to potentially become a \$200 billion internet economy, with Indonesia poised to receive a big chunk.

But the tech talent needed to drive such growth is scarce, the result mainly of shortcomings in Indonesia's education system, a lack of experience and the low salaries on offer compared with those available in the United States. Highly skilled workers account for only about 10 percent of total employment in the archipelago of 250 million people, the lowest ratio of any major Southeast Asian nation, according to the World Economic Forum.

"I would say it definitely means things grow slower. If I compare a startup in Indonesia with startups in some other places, they will tend to be less on the cutting edge of technology, less efficient," said Vinnie Lauria, a founding partner at Singapore-based Golden Gate Ventures. Some investors are offshoring tech work to fill the talent gap as they seek to grow startups. So far, however, no private Indonesian tech firm has reached a valuation of more than \$1 billion, compared with more than 20 in China. "The solution of last resort is to solve the problem out

of the country," Adrian Vanzyl, CEO of Thailand-based Ardent Capital, told Reuters in April.

Ardent has invested in Thai logistics firm aCommerce, which has engineers in Indonesia but leaves "a lot of the core platform development" to staff in Thailand, he said. Another creative workaround is a fly-in-fly-out approach to get people with specialised knowledge to advise local startups on a temporary basis. "Spend three or six months ... to help the company scale," Chua Kee Lock, chief executive at Vertex Venture Holdings, part of Temasek, told Reuters.

Hurdles Ahead

Skills shortages are only one of many challenges startups and technology investors face in Indonesia. Others range from difficulties in finding materials for training engineers to poor logistics and frequent policy flipflops. When Jakarta's taxi drivers protested violently against ride-hailing apps like Grab and Uber in April, the government bowed to pressure and forced the tech firms to partner with local transportation companies.

The government is also trying to pursue back-taxes from Yahoo and Twitter, and has ordered companies that deliver content over the internet to establish Indonesian offices and pay Indonesian taxes. Indonesia ranks 109 out of 189 countries in terms of ease of doing business, according to a World Bank Study, below neighbors such as Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam.

But for startups and their investors, the talent shortage is the biggest headache. "Getting good people is tough. The education system is mismatched - what's taught in university isn't much in use at work," said Lie, who worked in a development engineering team at Amazon before joining Orami. The government plans to tackle the skills shortage by putting coding on the public school curriculum and through knowledge transfers from foreign investors. "There is plenty of capital available ... and Indonesia is exploding on every possible level," said Vanzyl at Ardent. "Why are things growing less fast than they can? The answer is talent shortage. That is the number one factor." —Reuters

FRANCE LAUNCHES 'TERROR ALERT' APP

PARIS: A new smartphone app designed to alert users to possible terror attacks was launched by the French government yesterday, amid growing security concerns over the Euro 2016 football tournament. The application, which will be free to download in both French and English, will send users a warning "in case of a suspected attack," said the interior ministry, which has piloted and introduced the service. It will also alert users - who must agree to be geolocated - about "unexpected events" such as the breaching of flood defenses.

Alerts will appear on the app less than 15 minutes after the incident has been confirmed by authorities, and will be customized according to user's exact location. App users will also be able monitor alerts for up to eight different geographical zones, allowing them to check on family members or friends. It will also provide advice on how to stay safe, with information tailored to each particular situation, the ministry added.

The idea emerged after the Nov 2015 terror attacks in Paris, with Prime Minister Manuel Valls pushing for it to be launched in time for Euro 2016. The government hopes the app will help users - or app "ambassadors" as it calls them - spread reliable, official information about the security situation across social media. This could help prevent France's emergency services hotlines from becoming overwhelmed, said Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve, adding the app would "keep the public up to date with what we know." Authorities have pledged to protect the privacy of users. The launch comes a day after Britain warned that stadiums and fan zones could be targeted during Euro 2016. —AFP



This photo taken yesterday shows a smartphone with the logo of the SAIP (Système d'Alerte et d'Information aux populations, or Population Alert and Information System), a new smartphone app designed to alert users to possible terror attacks amid growing security concerns over the UEFA Euro 2016 football tournament, launched by the French government. —AFP

MAMMALS THRIVED LONG BEFORE DINOSAURS DIED

PARIS: The prevailing theory that mammals only flourished after an asteroid strike wiped out the dinosaurs 66 million years ago is doubly wrong, according to a study published yesterday. Our warm-blooded predecessors thrived and spread over millions of years even as Tyrannosaurus and other flesh-ripping monsters lorded over the planet, researchers reported. Moreover, these mammals took a big hit when the asteroid slammed into Earth, creating a hemispheric firestorm followed by a prolonged, bone-chilling drop in global temperatures.

"The traditional view is that mammals were suppressed during the 'age of

dinosaurs," and thus held in check, said co-author Elis Newham, a doctoral student in evolutionary biology at the University of Chicago. "However, our findings were that therian mammals—the ancestors of most modern mammals—were already diversifying considerably before the Cretaceous-Tertiary extinction event," also known as the K-Pg boundary.

The researchers pulled together dozens of studies that challenged and chipped away at the old theory. But key to the new conclusion, they said, was teeth. An analysis of hundreds of molars from mammals alive during the 20 million years before the K-Pg boundary revealed a huge variety of

shapes—a telltale sign of varied diets and species diversity.

Surviving an extinction event

The scientists were surprised to find a sharp decline in the number of mammals after the asteroid crash. "I didn't expect to see any sort of drop," said lead author David Grossnickle, also of the University of Chicago. "It didn't match the traditional view that after the extinction, mammals hit the ground running." Once again, teeth told a story, this time revealing which mammals made it across the K-Pg boundary, and which did not.

Those with molars indicating a special-

ized diet—only plants, for example—were less likely to weather the disaster than those with all-purpose chompers ready to eat whatever was available. The findings, published in Proceedings of the Royal Society B, may hold a lesson for today's world, Grossnickle said. Scientists say Earth is experiencing another mass extinction event, driven mainly by climate change—only the sixth in the last half billion years, he pointed out.

"The types of survivors that made it 66 million years ago, mostly generalists, might be indicative of what will survive in the next hundred years, or the next thousand," Grossnickle said in a statement. The

Cretaceous-Tertiary extinction wiped out three-quarters of the plant and animal species on Earth, including all dinosaurs which could not fly.

With the exception of a few crocodiles and sea turtles, there is no evidence that tetra-pods-four-limbed vertebrates—weighing more than 25 kilos survived. The discovery in the 1990s of the 180-kilometer wide Chicxulub crater straddling the Yucatan Peninsula and the Gulf of Mexico, pinpointed the likely spot where the asteroid hit. After the K-Pg event, new forms of mammals such as horses, whales, bats, and primates emerged and spread in a dinosaur-free world.—AFP



THAILAND: In this file photo, Thai children who are HIV positive and orphaned wait for a function to begin at the Human Development Foundation in Klong Toey slum of Bangkok, Thailand. —AP

THAILAND TO ELIMINATE MOTHER-TO-BABY HIV

FIRST ASIAN COUNTRY TO ELIMINATE TRANSMISSION

BANGKOK: Thailand has become the first Asian country to eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV, the World Health Organization said yesterday, a milestone in the fight against the disease. The announcement is a boost for a generation of Thai health workers who have transformed the nation from one of Asia's most HIV-ravaged societies to a pin-up for how to effectively tackle the crisis. Describing the elimination as a "remarkable achievement," the WHO said Thailand was "the first (country) with a large HIV epidemic to ensure an AIDS-free generation."

Belarus and Armenia were also declared free of mother-to-baby HIV transmissions yesterday but both nations have a much lower prevalence of the virus. Previously Cuba was the only other country to have eliminated mother-to-child

transmission under the WHO's criteria back in July 2015. The global health body said Thailand's routine screening and universal free medication for pregnant women with HIV was crucial in stopping the virus being passed to new generations.

If left untreated, mothers with HIV have a 15-45 percent chance of transmitting the virus to their children during pregnancy, childbirth or while breastfeeding. But taking antiretroviral drugs during pregnancy significantly reduces those chances to just over one percent. In 2000 Thailand became one of the first countries in the world to provide free antiretroviral medication to all pregnant women diagnosed with HIV. Screening for the virus during pregnancy is also routine, even in the country's most remote areas, the WHO added.

Not 100 percent effective

According to Thai government figures, the number of babies born with HIV has dropped from 1,000 in 2000 to just 85 last year, a large enough fall for the WHO to declare mother-to-child transmission over. A small number of cases are taken into account, as treatment with medicine is not 100 percent effective. It is a major turnaround for Thailand. The country went from 100,000 HIV cases in 1990 to more than a million three years later, fuelled in part by its huge sex trade. Health workers initially struggled to persuade governments to act.

But an eventual push to distribute free condoms among sex workers throughout the late 1990s and the widespread rollout of antiretroviral drugs in the 2000s has seen huge success and won the country widespread praise. "Thailand's

progress shows how much can be achieved when science and medicine are underpinned by sustained political commitment," UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibe said in a statement. But there is still work to be done.

The UN estimates there are some 500,000 living with HIV in the kingdom, while infection rates have risen slightly in recent years, particularly among gay men. Piyasakol Sakolsatayadorn, Thailand's Minister of Public Health, said the landmark announcement "belongs to everyone" but added "a challenge remains: how we make this success sustainable." Each year, 1.4 million women living with HIV around the world become pregnant. The number of children born annually with HIV was 400,000 in 2009. By 2013, the number was down to 240,000.—AFP

NEW SYNTHETIC DRUG U-47700 HAS STATES RUSHING TO STOP SPREAD

KANSAS CITY: A new synthetic drug that can be purchased online and is connected to at least 50 deaths nationwide has several states scrambling to stop its spread, with Kansas law enforcement agencies seeking an emergency ban. At least three other states - Ohio, Wyoming and Georgia - already have taken action to ban U-47700 after it was connected to overdoses. A spokeswoman for the US Drug Enforcement Administration said that the agency is studying the opioid but hasn't yet moved to control it.

Nearly eight times more potent than morphine, U-47700 comes in various forms and can be injected, snorted or taken orally. Synthetic opioids are comprised of man-made chemicals and produced in a laboratory, while organic drugs are made with ingredients found in nature, DEA agent Melvin Patterson said. Considered by public health officials as "new psychoactive substances," synthetic marijuana and bath salts, a stimulant, started showing up in the U.S. around 2008 but were banned a few years later by the DEA because of serious health issues attributed to them.

'Mimics the effects'

Synthetic opioids like U-47700 comprise one of four categories of the new fake drugs, along with synthetic marijuana (K2), stimulants (bath salts) and hallucinogens. Each category mimics the effects of their organic drug counterparts, DEA spokeswoman Barbara Carreno said. Johnson County, Kansas, District Attorney Steve Howe said two deaths in his county have been connected to U-47700, while a handful of overdose deaths elsewhere in the state also might be linked. Howe declined to provide any details about the deaths.

It's hard to get a firm count on fatal overdoses because the drug is new and doesn't always show up on initial post-mortem examinations, Howe said. It's most likely to be found during an autopsy drug screen. "The sense we get is that this drug is even more dangerous than other synthetic drugs we've seen across our desk," Howe said. Even so, it could take until August before it's

banned in Kansas because of the steps necessary to get it designated a Schedule I controlled substance. That designation would make it illegal to possess, sell or distribute the compound, which has no street name and goes for about \$40 a gram online.

'Novel painkilling drug'

The U in the name stands for Upjohn, a pharmaceutical manufacturer that developed the drug in the mid-1970s as scientists were looking for a synthetic alternative to morphine, said Barry Logan, chief of forensic toxicology at NMS Labs in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania, which provides lab services for government and private clients. "They were searching for a novel painkilling drug, the holy grail of analgesics that didn't have the addictive or respiratory depression properties of opiates or heroin," said Logan, who recently spoke about synthetic opioids at an international conference in Budapest.

The Upjohn researchers devised and patented several different compounds in search of their super drug, Logan said. Some of the compounds were written about in scientific literature, including methods for making them. Upjohn merged with Pharmacia AB two decades ago and eventually became part of Monsanto. Chemists in China and Eastern Europe can find recipes for many of the drugs - including U-47700 - by combing through online patent records and old scientific journals, he said.

NMS has identified about 50 deaths across the U.S. that can be connected to U-47700, which came onto the company's radar screen in December, Logan said. Carreno said the DEA is struggling to keep up with all of the new compounds being created in labs. DEA forensic chemists have identified 300 to 400 of those chemicals, but the agency has controlled only two or three dozen, she said.

U-47700 is produced by chemical companies in China, which last year banned 116 new psychoactive substances at the urging of the U.S. "Chemical companies are making new ones to replace them," Carreno said. "Somebody pulled this one off a shelf." —AP



RIO, Florida: This photo taken, shows mosquito larvae breeding in a plastic pot with standing water, outside a home in Rio, Florida.

INNOVATIONS SCIENTISTS HOPE WILL END MALARIA

ARUSHA, Tanzania: After being abandoned as too ambitious in 1969, global plans to eliminate malaria are back on the agenda, with financial backing from the world's richest couple, Bill and Melinda Gates, and US President Barack Obama. The Gates aim to eradicate malaria by 2040 by doubling funding over the next decade to support the roll out of new products to tackle rising drug resistance against the disease. Their goal of permanently ending transmission of the disease between humans and mosquitoes is more ambitious than the Sustainable Development Goal of ending epidemic levels of malaria by 2030. They are also supporting a push to create the world's first vaccine against a parasite. Here are some innovations scientists are working on are:

New insecticides

Mosquitoes are becoming resistant to insecticides used to spray inside homes and in bed nets. "There is no current insecticide that doesn't show insect-resistance at the moment," said Jed Stone, a spokesman for the UK-based Innovative Vector Control Consortium (IVCC). Indoor spraying of walls with insecticide which was used to wipe out malaria in the United States in the 1940s has fallen by 40 percent since 2012 due to resistance to older products and the high cost of newer ones. The IVCC is developing three new insecticides for use in indoor sprays and bed nets that kill insecticide-resistant mosquitoes.

"The insecticides are virtually ready but it will take about five years to finally develop them," Stone said, adding that this largely involves registration with regulators. A single-dose cure: A pill that would wipe out all parasites in the body could be available by 2019, the Gates Foundation says. Human trials of one candidate are planned following successful tests on mice, published in 2015. Existing drugs have to

be taken for three days with the risk that people do not finish their medication, contributing to the development of drug-resistant malaria.

They also only kill parasites at the asexual-stage where they cause fever but not at the sexual-stage where they are picked up by mosquitoes in blood. Insecticide-treated wall liners: Scientists hope insecticide-treated wall liners, which look like wallpaper, will be more effective than spraying people's homes with insecticide every three to eight months. The wall liners kill mosquitoes that rest on them and can last for three years. Tanzania's National Institute for Medical Research is testing wall liners in 6,000 homes to see if they protect people from malaria. Results will be published in 2017.

Insecticide-embedded clothing

American soldiers have been wearing combat uniforms treated with permethrin, a synthetic insecticide, since 2010 to protect them against insect-borne diseases. The U.S. government's Walter Reed Army Institute of Research will test the effectiveness of treated combat uniforms and repellent creams in July on Tanzanian soldiers who often catch malaria when working at night as peacekeepers.

A vaccine

This is a big one, given vaccines success in eliminating smallpox, polio and measles in many countries. More than 30 malaria vaccines are under development. The Mosquirix vaccine, discovered in 1987, is a decade ahead of other candidates but, to date, it only halves the number of bouts of malaria young children suffer. The World Health Organization is seeking funding for a pilot programme to administer Mosquirix to 400,000 to 800,000 African children. The results will be used to make a decision on whether to use the vaccine more widely. —Reuters

INDONESIA PLANS TOUGHER PENALTIES FOR POACHERS

JAKARTA: Indonesia plans to quadruple maximum jail terms for animal poachers and traffickers in a major overhaul of wildlife crime laws, but environmentalists expressed skepticism yesterday the changes would be effective. Maximum sentences for poaching and trading protected animals will be increased from five years to 20 under the new legislation proposed by the environment and forestry ministry.

"We want stronger law enforcement, we want people who transgress the law to face higher sentences," Tachrir Fathoni, a senior ministry official who is spearheading efforts to get the law passed, told AFP. Indonesia is one of the most bio-diverse nations on Earth, home to vast tracts of rainforest and a kaleidoscope of rare animals, from orangutans to tigers and rhinos. But many have been pushed to the brink of extinction. While destruction of their habitats due to rampant logging has played a role, endangered animals are also frequently targeted by poachers who sell their body parts for use in Chinese medicine.

'Better supervision'

The government has faced criticism for inaction, with green groups saying laws relating to protected animals are not strong enough. The environment and forestry ministry hopes the planned overhaul of the old law, which dates from 1990, can

improve the situation. The ministry will submit its proposal to parliament in the coming months, and hopes the new regulations will come into force next year. Environmental group WWF welcomed the proposed overhaul but cautioned that it will not solve the problem of weak enforcement in far-flung parts of the archipelago, where laws set in Jakarta are often flouted.

"Having a new set of rules doesn't mean much if the law isn't being enforced," said WWF Indonesia spokesman Nyoman Iswarayoga. "Better supervision, investigating cases more intensively, and monitoring how animals are being sold are equally important." Critics also point out that changes to the law won't necessarily translate to longer jail sentences. Convictions for wildlife crime are rare, and courts have been criticized for not taking poaching and trafficking seriously enough and handing down short sentences.

Fathoni insisted efforts were being made to improve enforcement, with a new senior position focusing on enforcing the law created in his ministry, and specialist police officers dispatched to every province to tackle wildlife crime. However he admitted the Indonesian government faced an uphill battle as demand for endangered species remains high. "As long as there is demand, the supply will keep coming," he said. —AFP



SANTIAGO: Alicia Woempner, member of PETA, which stands for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, poses for a picture holding a photo of a sheep to be slaughtered in Santiago, Chile.



SALT LAKE CITY: The front entrance of the Utah's Hogle Zoo is shown in Salt Lake City. —AP

LEOPARD ESCAPES AT UTAH ZOO

SALT LAKE CITY: Hundreds of Salt Lake City zoo visitors took shelter inside buildings Tuesday morning after a rare leopard escaped and fell asleep on a beam just above where visitors would have gathered to watch her. A visitor spotted the 4-year-old female snoozing on the outdoor beam about two feet from the exhibit, Hogle Zoo spokeswoman Erica Hansen said. She told a zookeeper, who raised the alarm.

An emergency team tranquilized the Amur leopard, packed her into a crate and took her to a holding area. No one was hurt, and the leopard named Zeya is expected to be fine after the tranquilizer wears off, said Nancy Carpenter, associate director of animal health at the zoo. The animal instinctually hung onto the beam after the tranquilizer dart struck, leaving visible claw marks on the wooden beam.

She eventually fell the final three feet to the ground and landed in a garden area between the visitor fence and her mesh enclosure. Hansen said they don't yet know how or when the leopard managed to get through the tall steel-grade mesh that surrounds the top and sides of her enclosure, but officials are investigating.

'I'm finally free!'

The reports of a wild animal on the loose caused quite a commotion on social media, and even spawned a parody Twitter account. The first tweet by the account, Hogle Zoo Leopard, said "I'm finally free!" But zoo visitors who were inside said the situation played out

calmly and orderly. Stephanie Gardner said she was looking at the giraffes at the zoo when a staff member told her and her family to take shelter in the gift shop with about 40 other people because of a situation. She said there was "no chaos or anything."

Steve Jones said he and his family were at the monkey exhibit when zoo staff told them to get inside the bistro. They waited inside with several hundred people. Kids were playing, he said. "We never did feel in danger," Jones, 63, of South Jordan, Utah, said. The leopard was reported missing at 9:30 am. It was captured, and people were allowed out of buildings about an hour later, Hansen said.



SALT LAKE CITY: Sander Jones, of London England, photographs the high outdoor ledge in a public area where a 4-year-old female leopard was found sleeping in a public area about one or two feet outside its exhibit at the Utah's Hogle Zoo in Salt Lake City. —AP

It's not clear exactly how long she was out, but zoo staff saw her inside the enclosure at about 7 am. The animal was spotted outside her enclosure shortly after the zoo opened to the public.

'Critically endangered'

There are two Amur leopards at the zoo. Hansen said the other leopard is in a separate enclosure and did not escape. The leopard that escaped is a petite, 60-pound animal that has only been at the zoo for a few years. She was brought in from a sanctuary in England to mate with the other Amur leopard, she said. Amur leopards are considered critically endangered, according to the con-

servation organization World Wildlife Fund. There are only about 60 of them left in the wild.

Hansen said it is rare for animals to get loose at the zoo. In 2006, the zoo was evacuated when a gray wolf scaled the wall of her pen. The animal was shot with a tranquilizer dart and captured within zoo boundaries after about an hour. No one was hurt in that incident. In 1999, three chimpanzees at the Salt Lake City Zoo escaped through an unlocked enclosure door and attacked and injured two zoo workers.

Zoo employees fired shotguns instead of tranquilizer darts at two of the chimps, which were then euthanized. A third chimp was relocated to a Kansas zoo, and the US Department of Agriculture issued a mild reprimand to the zoo for failing to keep the enclosure secured. The zoo hasn't had chimpanzees since that incident, Hansen said. Last month, a zoo in Cincinnati shot and killed a gorilla when a young boy got into its exhibit and was dragged by the 400-pound animal.

While the leopard was quickly contained in Utah on Tuesday, if the animal had actively threatened people zoo officials would have used lethal force, Carpenter said. The lines outside the Utah zoo grew long during the hour-long shut down, but the zoo has since re-opened. Many people returned to finish their outing after staff gave the all-clear signal. The US Department of Agriculture last inspected the zoo on May 3 and found no violations.—AP

THE PROMENADE TEAMS UP WITH PEAK FITNESS TO PROMOTE 'KEEP FIT FOR FUN'

KUWAIT: The Promenade, true to its commitment to offering continuous leisure facilities, has joined hands with Peak Fitness to launch its special Ramadan program for ladies and kids on the 2nd Floor of the Mall. The fun-filled schedule starts at 4 pm on 7th June and ends on 5th July 2016.

Every Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday during the holy month, the 13-day program is prepared to promote healthy lifestyle in Kuwait. Supervised by three experienced trainers, the activities include team games, cardio exercises, body weight movements, boxing drills, power flex & power walks, body sculpt, circuits, Tabata and more.

Alyah Al-Jasser, Al Othman Portfolio Marketing Manager commented: "We want to celebrate Ramadan differently this year therefore we thought this month would be the perfect time to support people keeping healthy and fit. As a family destination with something for everybody, we would like to invite ladies and children to join us in these free fun-filled activities during the holy month".

Rachel Nott, Head Coach at Peak Fitness said: "This is a great opportunity to work-out in a group on a variety of activities with something new every day

which adds to the excitement". She added: "The three experienced trainers Natalie, Amina and Rachel have a passion for fitness, inspiring and supporting others to reach their fitness potential. They make exercising an enjoyable experience whilst improving your fitness and total wellbeing".

The Promenade is the Lifestyle Shopping Mall that houses over a 100 shops and is strategically nestled in the midst of the 12 prime residential areas and only a short 5-10 minutes' drive. The three floors include international lifestyle brands, two floors of indoor entertainment, health and leisure facilities. The tenants include: Anchor fashion brands, Fashion related stores, a Supermarket, Cosmetics and perfumes, Fine jewelry, watches and accessories, Sports shops, Electronics and Home furnishing & Accessories.

Peak Fitness is an all functional women's training facility offering diverse, unconventional training methods to make your workouts fun, challenging and effective. Focusing on group and personal training, it is committed to continuous improvement through knowledge and innovation within the fitness industry and staying up-to-date with the latest training methods.



ELECTRIC EELS CAN KILL HORSES: STUDY

MIAMI: Experiments at Vanderbilt University have proven a 200-year-old observation that electric eels can leap out of water and shock animals to death, a claim originally made by 19th century biologist and explorer Alexander von Humboldt. During a field trip to the Amazon basin in 1800, Humboldt said he saw electric eels leaping out of the water and delivering enough voltage to kill a horse. But with no scientific studies on the matter, and no similar observations since, many had come to believe that the famous naturalist was exaggerating.

"The first time I read von Humboldt's tale, I thought it was completely bizarre," said Ken Catania, the Stevenson Professor of Biological Sciences at Vanderbilt University, in Nashville, Tennessee, where the recent experiments were conducted. "Why would the eels attack the horses instead of swimming away?" The answer, according to Catania, is that the eels felt cornered and threatened.

A biologist who has been studying eels for several years, Catania said he not only validated the

original account but found evidence that leaping eels were far more terrifying than even von Humboldt realized. When an eel is submerged, the power of its electrical pulses is distributed throughout the water, freezing its target into state of shock, he said. Out of water, the high voltage electrical salvo zaps a target directly through the skin near the eel's chin, intensifying the effect. To visualize it, Catania covered a plastic arm and crocodile head with a conductive metal strip and a network of light-emitting diodes (LEDs), which used the voltage supplied by the eels and lit up brightly when attacked.

"When you see the LEDs light up, think of them as the endings of pain nerves being stimulated. That will give you an idea of how effective these attacks can be," Catania said. The research was funded by the National Science Foundation and the findings were published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences this week.—REUTERS

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Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
د. فهد علي المخيزيم

إستشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM



Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St. 1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B - Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368



A DELICIOUS IFTAR AND SOHOOR WITH MCDONALD'S RAMADAN MEAL

In celebration of the Holy Month, McDonald's Kuwait is bringing back its highly popular Ramadan meal, offering its customers a satisfying and delicious McDonald's dining experience for both iftar and sohoor.

The Ramadan Meal includes a choice of any McDonald's Value Meal, along with five pieces of dates, a side salad, a laban drink, and for the perfect ending to a fulfilling meal, a choice of a McDonald's dessert - either an ice cream sundae or an apple pie or a

strawberry custard pie. Offered at all McDonald's restaurants across Kuwait, the Ramadan Meal will be available throughout the month of Ramadan, at great value starting at KD 2.150.

Sherif Coutry, Marketing Director at McDonald's Kuwait, said: "The Ramadan Meal proved to be such a great success last year, it was only natural for us to bring it back. Our goal is always to give our customers creative menu options that provide them with delicious food and high quality ingredients at the greatest

value." During the Holy Month, McDonald's will also be holding children storybook sessions at its restaurants, where they will be reading Ramadan-themed children's books that have been authored especially for McDonald's.

To learn more about the Ramadan meal, and about all other Ramadan activities please visit McDonaldsArabia.com or follow us on our Instagram page (@McDonaldsKuwait).

NAIR SERVICE SOCIETY KUWAIT ELECTED NEW OFFICE BEARERS

Nair Service Society (NSS) Kuwait had conducted area wise Annual General Body meetings during the month of March-April 2016, in which Annual Report and Audited Annual Accounts for the 2015-16 were passed and Pradhi Nidhi Sabha and Executive Committee members were elected. These Executive Committee members in their meeting held on 13th April 2016 in Riggae elected the following Office Bearers for the year 2016 - 2017. President: Ullas Kumar; General Secretary: Prasad Padmanabhan; and Treasurer: Sreekumar V Pillai. Vice

President: Madhu Vettiayar; Joint Secretary: Aneesh P Nair; Joint Treasurer: Jayakumar; General Program Convener: Hari V Pillai; Joint program Convener: Anoop Soman; Welfare Coordinator: Saji Kumar; Joint Welfare Coordinator: Madhav Chandran; System Coordinator: Sandeep Pillai; Service Magazine Coordinators: Harikumar and Internal Auditors: Rajesh and A S B Thampi. Area Coordinators: Dinachandran (Abuhalifa/Mahboula), Manoj Kumar (Mangaf), Radhakrishnan (Fahaheel/Ahmadi), Sajeev Manathodi (Riggai), Harikumar and Vinod V Pillai

(Abbasiya/Hassawi/Jahra), Sujith Sureshan (Salmiya/Sharq), Arjun Satya Mohan (Farwaniya) and Suresh Kumar (Sharq) Sunil Menon and R.C Suresh will continue as patrons of Nair Service Society(NSS), Kuwait. President Ullas Kumar in his presidential address welcomed newly elected Executive Committee members, General Secretary Prasad Padmanabhan gave felicitation speech and Treasurer Sreekumar V Pillai conveyed vote of thanks.



INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY CURTAIN RAISER 'YOGATHON 2016'

On the occasion of International Yoga Day, Seva Darshan Kuwait along with the Indian Embassy of Kuwait, Amma Kuwait and Artistryoga and Pilates Kuwait conducted Yogathon 2016 at the Indian Embassy Auditorium Kuwait on 3rd June 2016. Deputy chief of Mission, Sri Subhash Goldar inaugurated the function Junior and senior batch of Seva Darsan group

demonstrated few yoga postures and was followed by the presentation of Artistic Yoga. Both were well received by the Audience Dr Roopesh Seva Darshan coordinator explained the benefits of each yoga postures to the Audience A talk on Amma Yoga protocol was presented by Haridas Warriar.



ADVISORY FROM EMBASSY OF INDIA IN KUWAIT ON DEALING WITH FRAUD

Government of India has recently come across several reports of frauds where Indian community members abroad were targeted by gangs of fraudsters. The modus operandi of these fraudsters is to call victims saying that the local authorities have initiated legal proceedings against them because they have submitted false information in their immigration papers, and that it can result in their arrest or deportation. These fraudsters would then demand money to be transferred urgently to a lawyer/consultant's account say-

ing that this lawyer/consultant has been appointed by Indian Embassy to assist the victim in his legal proceedings. However, to avoid any delay due to bureaucratic procedures, fraudsters will ask the money to be transferred immediately to the account, assuring the victim at the same time that the money will be reimbursed to him/her later by Indian Embassy. It is suspected that these fraudsters are using their hacking skills to access personal details of their targets and to off-gard their victims, they pretend as if they are Indian Embassy staff call-

ing from the embassy. The embassy advises all members of Indian community in Kuwait not to fall prey to such fraudsters' calls. If any such calls are received by any member of the community, he/she should immediately contact Embassy officials in person (phone numbers are available on the website at <http://www.indembkw.org>) so that necessary remedial actions are taken by this embassy.

NOTICE FROM THE CUBAN EMBASSY

The Consular Section of the Embassy of the Republic of Cuba kindly informs that during the summer vacation period the consular office will remain closed from July 1st until August 21. The Consular Section will receive requests of consular services, specially request of touristic visas until June 27. The Consular Office of the Embassy of the Republic of Cuba in Kuwait, Rawda, Block 3, Shahab Ahmed Al-Bahar street, House 74, phone: 965 2 2549361, Fax: 965 2 2549360. Emails: embajada@kw.embacuba.cu, consularem-bacubakuwait@gmail.com, consular@cubaemba.gov.kw

BUWAIR HOSTS EVENT TO HONOR MARTYRS

Kuwaiti author and historical researcher Abdullah Abbas Buwair invites the public to attend a grand celebration to be organized on Sunday, June 19, 2016 at Crowne Plaza Hotel, in the honor of martyrs' families as well as officials and staff of the Martyrs' Bureau. A number of statesmen, sheikhs and diplomats will also be honored during the event, which Buwair is holding on the occasion of issuing his newest publication titled 'Speeches of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.'



Abdullah Buwair

Congratulations



Mohammed Ashraf Mohammed Ahmed Ali from Fahaheel National Secondary School recently passed his school leaving certificate exams with excellence, as he scored a GPA of 99.83 percent. Mohammed, who plans to study medicine in Egypt, received sincere congratulations from his parents, siblings, friends and family in addition to uncle Roshdi. Well done and congratulations, Mohammed.

AKSHARA DRAMATIC CLUB (ADC) ELECTS NEW OFFICE BEARERS

Akshara Dramatic Club (ADC) Kuwait, a cultural organization, mainly promoting Malayalam dramas, held its 12th Annual General Body meeting on Friday 20th May 2016. President Ninan Cherian presided over the meeting. General Secretary Valsala Georgekutty presented the annual report and Treasurer Raju Daniel presented the annual accounts and later proposed vote of thanks. New office bearers for the year 2016-2017 were selected: President Jaison Varghese Vice President Joy A Cherian General Secretary Jeena Mariam Joseph Program Director Thomas Varghese Treasurer Jacob John Manayil This year, as part of clubs continuing charity projects, decided to donate KD.1,000/- (KD. One Thousand) to Cancer Care Center, Parumala.



KUWAIT NATIONAL ENGLISH SCHOOL HOLDS SECONDARY GRADUATION CEREMONY

The Kuwait National English School (KNES) successfully celebrated the Secondary Graduation Ceremony recently in the Ebreez Ballroom at the Symphony Style Hotel in Salmiya. Students who have completed their Secondary Education at Kuwait National English School received their Diploma. The Guest of Honor was Abdullah Ali Al-Basry, General Manager of Private Sector at the Ministry of Education. Two long service members of staff, Abdul Majeed and Zenhum Mosbah, received the Chairman's Award in recognition for their good and loyal service to Kuwait National English School.

Eloquent speeches were given by members

of the Kuwait National English School Student Council, the Head of Secondary and the School Director Madame Chantal Al-Gharabally. Members of the Student Council spoke of their positive experience and successes at Kuwait National English School, they showed their gratitude to the many members of staff who had helped them throughout their life at the school. The Head of Secondary wished all the graduates the best and commended them on their hard work and dedication throughout the years and stressed on the needs to maintain high academic standard. He emphasized that Kuwait National English School would continue to maintain progress

at External Examinations. To that end, the school would keep on working closely with the Council of International Schools (CIS), New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), British Schools in the Middle East (BSME) and British Schools Overseas (BSO). The School Director, Madame Chantal Al-Gharabally gave a philosophical approach to a student's future journey through life and explained all the values which are placed in the educational goals at Kuwait National English School and the benefit to school from its intellectual heritage from combining nationalities, ethnicities and beliefs. She concluded by congratulating class 2016 and

thanked them for giving a meaning to her life dedicated to students and education. Music was performed by the Choir of Kuwait National English School.

In addition to the awarding of Diplomas, awards were given in individual subjects for achievement and endeavor. The Prestigious Student of the Year Award 2016 went to Khaled Al Huwaishel (year 12). The Council of International Schools (CIS) Award for International Understanding was given to Hawazan Mohamed Alaj (year 11).

The Graduation ceremony concluded with the traditional cutting of the "Class 2016 Graduation Cake" by members of the Student

Council, the School Director, the Chairman and the Guests of Honor. To end the evening, a delicious snack was served to everybody in a very friendly and chic atmosphere in the Hotel. The Graduation was a very successful event which gave the students and their families a chance to reflect on a successful time at Kuwait National English School, to thank the school's staff and management for all their hard work and to look to the future. Kuwait National English School would like to wish the Class of 2016 a happy and prosperous future. It has been our privilege watching these students develop over the years and reach their full potential.



Embassy of India timings

For continued rendering of best possible services to the Indian community, Kuwaiti nationals and expatriates residing in Kuwait, during the Holy month of Ramadan, the office timings of Embassy and its Passport and Visa Service Outsourcing Centers operated by COX and KINGS Global Services, Kuwait, are as follows:

- Indian Embassy Consular Wing (for attestation and grievances etc):
Sunday to Thursday
0730 hrs to 1630 hrs (1300 hrs to 1400 hrs break)
(Friday and Saturday are closed holidays)
- Cox and Kings Global Services (for passport and visa services)
From Sunday to Thursday
(0800 hrs to 1200 hrs and 1600 hrs to 2000 hrs)
On Friday and Saturday
(1600 hrs to 2000 hrs)

Cox and Kings Global Services have their offices located at:

- (i) Behbahani Tower, 17th Floor, Sharq, Kuwait
- (ii) Complex Kais Alghanim, 4th Floor, Mecca Street in front of Al-Anood Complex, Fahaaheel, Kuwait
- (iii) 2nd Floor, Jeleeb Al-Shuyoukh Block 1, Street 1, Xcite building, Kuwait

TSC WRAPS-UP ITS 4 WEEKS' CHARACTERS' EVENT

The Sultan Center (TSC) wrapped up its fun filled activities held during the month of May/June with an enchanting and memorable event: "The Grand Finale of Customers' Favorite Characters" which was held on Friday June 3rd in TSC Hawally from 6 to 9 pm. The event included a live show complete with Mickey and Minnie, Aladdin and the Princesses.

Families shopping at TSC Salmiyah and Hawally during this period experienced a range of fun-filled activities including face painting, contests, arts and crafts along with a photo booth where pictures could be taken alongside their favorite characters.

Children and adults were delighted to see Mickey, Minnie, Donald Duck and Moonies shopping and greeting the customers in TSC Salmiya, while Aladdin and his magic lamp along with Cinderella, Snow White and the Mermaids were skipping down the aisles of TSC Hawally.

The Grand Finale of Characters show was attended by a large audience of children and parents who watched as the characters put on a memorable and fun-filled show for the whole family to enjoy. TSC is committed to providing customers with promotions and events, along with an enjoyable shopping atmosphere.



AMC

03:30 Piranha
05:05 Hero's Island
06:40 The Hills Run Red
08:10 The Indian Fighter
09:40 Fuzz
11:10 Futureworld
12:55 Natural Causes
14:25 Death Rides A Horse
16:20 The Garbage Pail Kids Movie
17:55 Inspector Clouseau
19:30 The Haunted Palace
21:00 Blue Steel
22:40 Report To The Commissioner
00:30 High Tide
02:10 PI

Discovery Family

19:05 Nathan For You
19:30 Hungry Investors
20:15 Lip Sync Battle
20:38 Lip Sync Battle
21:30 Owen Benjamin: High Five
21:40 Til It Hurts
22:30 South Park
23:00 South Park
00:00 Owen Benjamin: High Five
00:05 Fuzz
00:50 South Park
01:15 South Park
02:05 Owen Benjamin: High Five
21:40 Til It Hurts

ANIMAL PLANET HD

03:25 Gangland Killers
04:15 Gator Boys
05:02 Treehouse Masters
05:49 Dog TV
06:36 Call Of The Wildman
07:00 Call Of The Wildman
07:25 Cats 101
08:15 Dog TV
09:10 Treehouse Masters
10:05 Tanked
11:00 Cats 101
11:55 Bondi Vet
12:50 Dog TV
13:45 Gator Boys
14:40 Treehouse Masters
15:35 Tanked
16:30 Gangland Killers
17:25 River Monsters (Best Of Series 1-5)
18:20 Restoration Wild
19:15 Tanked
21:05 Natural World
21:05 Treehouse Masters
22:00 Restoration Wild
22:55 Gator Boys
23:50 River Monsters (Best Of Series 1-5)
00:45 Man-Eating Super Croc
01:40 Restoration Wild
02:35 Tanked

COMEDY CENTRAL

03:00 Hungry Investors
03:50 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
04:40 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
05:30 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
06:20 Nathan For You
06:50 Nathan For You
07:15 Tosh.0
07:40 Tosh.0
08:05 Lip Sync Battle
08:30 Lip Sync Battle
08:55 Hungry Investors
09:45 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
10:35 Catch A Contractor
11:00 Catch A Contractor
11:25 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
12:15 Nathan For You
12:40 Nathan For You
13:05 Tosh.0
13:30 Tosh.0
13:55 Lip Sync Battle
14:20 Lip Sync Battle
14:45 Hungry Investors
15:35 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
16:30 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
17:25 Hungry Investors
18:15 Nathan For You
18:39 Nathan For You
19:03 Tosh.0
19:27 Catch A Contractor
19:50 Catch A Contractor
20:13 Lip Sync Battle
20:37 Lip Sync Battle
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
21:30 Hungry Investors
22:30 Catch A Contractor
23:00 Catch A Contractor
23:30 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah

Discovery Family

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 Too Cute!
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 Too Cute!
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 Lost & Found With Mike & Jesse
17:50 Driving Me Crazy
18:40 You Have Been Warned
19:30 Mythbusters
20:20 How It's Made
20:45 How It's Made
21:10 Lost & Found With Mike & Jesse
22:00 Driving Me Crazy
22:50 Untamed & Uncut
23:40 Morgan Freeman's Through The Wormhole
00:30 Mythbusters
01:20 Lost & Found With Mike & Jesse
02:10 Driving Me Crazy

ID. INVESTIGATION DISCOVERY

03:00 Discovery ID
05:00 Discovery ID
06:50 Discovery ID
07:15 Tosh.0
07:40 Tosh.0
08:05 Lip Sync Battle
08:30 Lip Sync Battle
08:55 Hungry Investors
09:45 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
10:35 Catch A Contractor
11:00 Catch A Contractor
11:25 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
12:15 Nathan For You
12:40 Nathan For You
13:05 Tosh.0
13:30 Tosh.0
13:55 Lip Sync Battle
14:20 Lip Sync Battle
14:45 Hungry Investors
15:35 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
16:30 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
17:25 Hungry Investors
18:15 Nathan For You
18:39 Nathan For You
19:03 Tosh.0
19:27 Catch A Contractor
19:50 Catch A Contractor
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21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
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ID. INVESTIGATION DISCOVERY

03:00 Discovery ID
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06:50 Discovery ID
07:15 Tosh.0
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12:15 Nathan For You
12:40 Nathan For You
13:05 Tosh.0
13:30 Tosh.0
13:55 Lip Sync Battle
14:20 Lip Sync Battle
14:45 Hungry Investors
15:35 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
16:30 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
17:25 Hungry Investors
18:15 Nathan For You
18:39 Nathan For You
19:03 Tosh.0
19:27 Catch A Contractor
19:50 Catch A Contractor
20:13 Lip Sync Battle
20:37 Lip Sync Battle
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
21:30 Hungry Investors
22:30 Catch A Contractor
23:00 Catch A Contractor
23:30 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah

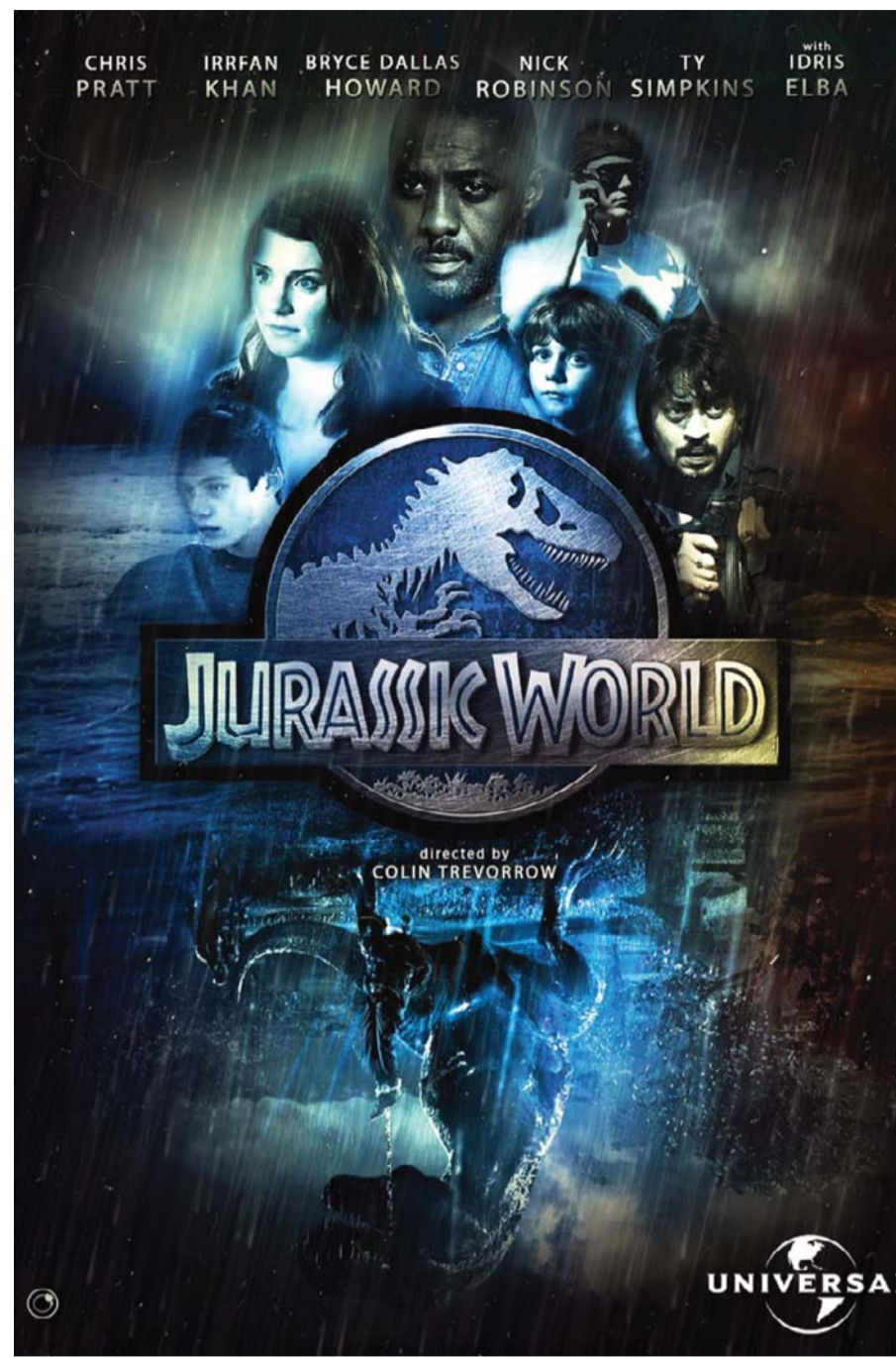
19:05 Food Factory USA
20:20 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
21:10 How The Universe Works
22:00 Food Factory USA
22:25 Food Factory USA
22:50 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
23:40 Food Factory USA
00:05 Mythbusters
00:55 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
01:15 How It's Made
02:10 Food Factory USA
02:35 Food Factory USA
Discovery World
03:00 Discovery World
09:00 Discovery World
15:00 Discovery World
21:00 Discovery World

Disney

03:15 The Hive
03:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
03:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
04:10 Hank Zipzer
04:35 Binny And The Ghost
05:00 Violetta
05:45 The Hive
05:50 Mouk
06:00 Hank Zipzer
06:25 Sofia The First
06:50 Gravity Falls
07:15 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
07:40 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
15:20 Mythbusters
08:05 Shake It Up
08:30 Shake It Up
08:55 Hannah Montana
09:20 Hannah Montana
09:45 Wizards Of Waverly Place
10:10 Wizards Of Waverly Place
10:35 Good Luck Charlie
11:00 Good Luck Charlie
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 Liv And Maddie
14:50 Dog With A Blog
15:20 Gravity Falls
15:45 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
16:10 Violetta
17:00 Backstage
17:25 Austin & Ally
17:50 Jessie
18:15 Best Friends Whenever
18:40 Girl Meets World
19:05 Evermoor Chronicles
19:30 Liv And Maddie
19:55 Liv And Maddie
20:20 Backstage
20:45 Good Luck Charlie
21:10 H2O: Just Add Water
21:35 H2O: Just Add Water
22:00 Binny And The Ghost
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
00:05 The Hive
00:30 Henry Hugglemonster
00:45 Calimero
01:00 Zou
01:10 Loopedidoo
01:15 Art Attack
02:05 Calimero
02:20 Zou
02:30 Loopedidoo
02:45 Art Attack

Disney Junior

03:10 Henry Hugglemonster
03:20 Calimero
03:35 Zou
03:45 Loopedidoo
04:00 Art Attack



JURASSIC WORLD ON OSN MOVIES HD

HISTORY HD

18:05 Miles From Tomorrow
18:30 Sofia The First
19:00 PJ Masks
19:25 Unbungaleivable
19:50 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 Loopedidoo
00:05 Art Attack
00:30 Henry Hugglemonster
00:45 Calimero
01:00 Zou
01:10 Loopedidoo
01:15 Art Attack
02:05 Calimero
02:20 Zou
02:30 Loopedidoo
02:45 Art Attack

18:00 The Pioneer Woman
18:30 The Pioneer Woman
19:00 Chopped
20:00 Iron Chef America
21:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
21:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
22:00 Man v Food
22:30 Man v Food
23:00 Kitchen Casino
00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
01:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
01:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
02:00 Man v Food
02:30 Man v Food

06:50 This Is Brazil
07:40 Meat v Veg
08:05 Valentine Warner's Wild Table
08:30 Valentine Warner's Wild Table
08:55 My Dubai
09:20 American Food Battle
09:45 Chefs Run Wild
10:10 Lucky Chow
10:35 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
11:25 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
11:50 Maximum Foodie
12:15 Sara's New Nordic Kitchen
12:40 This Is Brazil
13:35 Meat v Veg
14:00 Fearless Chef
14:55 American Food Battle
15:25 American Food Battle
15:50 Lucky Chow
16:20 Carnival Eats
16:45 Carnival Eats
17:15 Great Escapes
17:40 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
18:10 Maximum Foodie
18:35 David Rocco's Dolce India
19:05 American Food Battle
19:30 American Food Battle
20:00 Lucky Chow
20:25 Carnival Eats
21:15 Great Escapes
21:40 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
22:05 Maximum Foodie
22:30 David Rocco's Dolce India
22:55 This Is Brazil
23:45 Meat v Veg
00:10 Fearless Chef
01:00 World's Best Chefs
01:25 Miguel's Feasts
01:50 Maverick Chef
02:15 Dream Cruises



THE TRIP TO ITALY ON OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

Discovery Channel HD

03:00 South Park
03:25 Tattoo Disasters
03:50 Hungry Investors
04:40 Workaholics
05:05 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
05:55 Tosh.0
06:20 Tosh.0
06:50 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
07:40 Workaholics
08:05 Key And Peele
08:30 Key And Peele
08:55 Key And Peele
09:20 Tosh.0
09:45 Tosh.0
10:10 Nathan For You
10:35 Nathan For You
11:00 Lip Sync Battle
11:25 Lip Sync Battle
11:50 Workaholics
12:15 Workaholics
12:40 Key And Peele
13:05 Key And Peele
13:30 Tosh.0
14:20 Nathan For You
14:45 Nathan For You
15:10 Lip Sync Battle
15:35 Lip Sync Battle
16:30 Workaholics
16:55 Key And Peele
17:25 Key And Peele
17:50 Tosh.0
18:15 Tosh.0
18:40 Nathan For You

20:20 Tabloid
21:10 California Investigator
21:35 California Investigator
22:00 Shadow Of Doubt
22:50 Murder Among Friends
23:40 Disappeared
00:30 Breaking Point
01:20 Shadow Of Doubt
02:10 Murder Among Friends

Discovery Science

03:00 Mighty Ships
03:48 How The Universe Works
04:36 Mythbusters
05:24 Long March Into Space
06:12 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
07:00 Mythbusters
07:50 Food Factory USA
08:15 How It's Made
08:40 Mighty Ships
09:30 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
10:20 Long March Into Space
11:10 How The Universe Works
12:00 Mighty Ships
12:50 Mythbusters
13:40 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
14:30 Food Factory USA
14:55 How It's Made
15:20 Long March Into Space
16:10 Mighty Ships
17:00 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
17:50 How The Universe Works
18:40 Mythbusters
19:30 Food Factory USA

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 Basics
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 Unbungaleivable
10:30 Goldie & Bear
11:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
11:25 The Lion Guard
11:50 Doc McStuffins
12:15 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse Basics
12:45 Unbungaleivable
13:00 Sofia The First
13:25 Doc McStuffins
13:50 Miles From Tomorrow
14:15 The Lion Guard
14:40 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse Basics
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

food network

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

NAT GEO WILD HD

01:10 Duck Dynasty
02:50 Big Rig Bounty Hunters
02:50 The Curse Of Oak Island

OSN MOVIES HD FAMILY

03:00 Eight Below
05:00 The Shaggy Dog
07:00 Dinosaur
09:00 The Rookie
11:15 Postman Pat: The Movie
13:00 Big Miracle
15:00 Underdog
17:00 Alice In Wonderland
19:00 Eragon
21:00 College Road Trip
23:00 Underdog
01:00 Eragon

OSN MOVIES HD FESTIVAL

03:00 What's Love Got To Do With It
05:00 Vanity Fair
07:30 Second Coming
09:30 A Civil Action
11:30 Vanity Fair
14:00 Monkey Kingdom
15:30 Ed Wood
17:45 A Civil Action
19:45 At Any Price
21:30 Walk The Line
23:45 Decoding Annie Parker
01:30 A Civil Action

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD

03:50 Dirty Rotten Survival
04:45 Planet Carnivore
05:40 Hunter Hunted
06:35 Seconds From Disaster
07:30 Man v Viral
08:25 Maneater Manhunt
09:20 Shark Men
10:15 Desperate Hours
10:40 Desperate Hours
11:10 Lockdown Compilation
12:05 Locked Up Abroad
13:00 Maneater Manhunt
14:00 Street Genius
14:30 Street Genius
15:00 Seconds From Disaster
16:00 Desperate Hours
16:30 Desperate Hours
17:00 Underworld, Inc.
18:00 Locked Up Abroad
19:00 Seconds From Disaster
20:00 Desperate Hours
20:25 Desperate Hours
20:50 Underworld, Inc.
21:40 Locked Up Abroad
22:30 Seconds From Disaster
23:20 Hunter Hunted
00:10 Desperate Hours
00:35 Desperate Hours
01:00 Underworld, Inc.
02:00 Locked Up Abroad
02:55 Seconds From Disaster

OSN MOVIES HD KIDS

04:30 Egon And Donci
06:00 The Tale Of The Princess Kaguya
08:15 Bolts And Blip
09:45 Charlie And The Chocolate Factory
11:45 The Heart Of The Oak
13:00 Minuscule: Valley Of The Lost Ants
14:30 Dixie And The Zombie Rebellion
16:00 Mostly Ghostly: Have You Met My Ghoulfriend?
18:00 Charlie And The Chocolate Factory
20:00 Pixie
22:00 Dixie And The Zombie Rebellion
23:30 Mostly Ghostly: Have You Met My Ghoulfriend?
01:15 Bolts And Blip

OSN FIRST HD

03:00 Dominion
04:00 Good Morning America
06:00 Complications
07:00 Chicago Fire
08:00 Prison Break
09:00 Code Black
10:00 Stitches
11:00 Chicago Fire
12:00 Chicago Fire
13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
14:00 Live Good Morning America
16:00 Complications
17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
18:00 Prison Break
19:00 Royal Pains
20:00 Complications
21:00 Castle
22:00 Lucifer
23:00 The Player
00:00 Tyrant
01:00 Tyrant
02:00 Lucifer

OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

04:00 Hope Springs
06:00 50 First Dates
08:00 My Girl
10:00 Green Card
12:00 50 First Dates
14:00 The Trip To Italy

JOAQUIN PHOENIX REESE WITHERSPOON

Love is a burning thing.

walk the line

WALK THE LINE OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL

CLASSIFIEDS

THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 2016

Kuwait CINEMA		KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (09/06/2016 TO 15/06/2016)	
SHARQIA-1 TE3N (Hindi) WARCRAFT	9:30 PM 12:15 AM	THE CODE OF CAIN	12:15 AM
SHARQIA-2 THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE HASAN WA BOQLOZ	9:30 PM 11:45 PM	AVENUES-3 THE JUNGLE BOOK TE3N (Hindi)	9:30 PM 11:45 PM
SHARQIA-3 THE ASIAN CONNECTION THE ASIAN CONNECTION	10:00 PM 12:05 AM	AVENUES-4 THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE THE ASIAN CONNECTION	10:00 PM 12:05 AM
MUHALAB-1 TE3N (Hindi) Hepta	9:45 PM 12:30 AM	AVENUES-5 WARCRAFT WARCRAFT	9:45 PM 12:15 AM
MUHALAB-2 THE ASIAN CONNECTION THE ASIAN CONNECTION	10:15 PM 12:15 AM	AVENUES-6 Hepta CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR	9:30 PM 12:05 AM
MUHALAB-3 THE JUNGLE BOOK WARCRAFT	9:30 PM 11:45 PM	AVENUES-7 THE ASIAN CONNECTION THE ASIAN CONNECTION	9:45 PM 11:45 PM
FANAR-1 THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE X-MEN: Apocalypse	9:30 PM 11:45 PM	AVENUES-8 TE3N (Hindi) GO WITH ME	10:00 PM 12:45 AM
FANAR-2 THE JUNGLE BOOK Hepta	9:45 PM 12:05 AM	AVENUES-9 THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE HASAN WA BOQLOZ	10:30 PM 12:30 AM
FANAR-3 TE3N (Hindi) THE ASIAN CONNECTION	10:00 PM 1:00 AM	AVENUES-10 Ely Ektashou Matou UN HOMME A LA HAUTEUR	9:45 PM 12:05 AM
FANAR-4 HASAN WA BOQLOZ WARCRAFT	9:45 PM 11:45 PM	AVENUES-11 WARCRAFT (Atmos 2D) WARCRAFT (Atmos 2D)	10:00 PM 12:30 AM
FANAR-5 HOUSEFULL 3 (Hindi) THE ASIAN CONNECTION	9:30 PM 12:15 AM	360° 1 CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR NOTHU GO WITH ME	9:30 PM 12:30 AM
MARINA-1 THE ASIAN CONNECTION UN HOMME A LA HAUTEUR	10:00 PM 12:05 AM	360° 2 THE CODE OF CAIN NOWED PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND NOWED	10:00 PM 12:15 AM
MARINA-2 WARCRAFT CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR	9:30 PM 12:05 AM	360° 3 THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE HASAN WA BOQLOZ	9:45 PM 11:45 PM
MARINA-3 THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE Hepta	9:45 PM 12:15 AM	360° 4 UN HOMME A LA HAUTEUR UN HOMME A LA HAUTEUR	10:45 PM 12:45 AM
AVENUES-1 PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND	10:00 PM		

LUXORIOUS APARTMENT AND FLOORS FOR RENT

IN SOUTH SURRA (ALSEDEEQ) NEW NEVER OCCUPED

MOB 55439438

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Kotakonda Manohar (Passport No: Z3017614) S/o Kotakonda Ramachandra, age 33 years, R/o bearing K Vaddipalli, Obulavaripalli, Kadapa Dist, AP, India, is here by declare that with my free consent I have embraced Islam on 14-3-2016 at state of Kuwait and I have adopted my name as Shaikh Umar Farooq. (C 5182)

I, Devarapalli Narasimha Sasindhar (Passport No J7195771) s/o Devarapalli Narasimulu, age 29 years, r/o bearing Kondur H.W, Pengalur, Kadapa Dist, AP, India, is hereby declare that with my free consent I have embraced Islam on 20-4-2016 at state of Kuwait and I have adopted my name as Shaikh Muhammad. (C 5182)

I, Ande Narasimulu (Passport No. J5342718) s/o Ande Bala Raju, Age 39 years, r/o bearing Akkulayapalli village, Viswanathapuram post, Mydukur Mandal, Kadapa Dist, AP, India, is hereby declare that with my free consent I have embraced Islam on 5-9-2012 at state of Kuwait and I have adopted my name as Shaikh Abdul Khaliq. (C 5182) 8-6-2016

JOB VACANCY

A Company is requiring

Finance Manager

- Qualified CA from UK / India / Pakistan.
- 5 – 10 years experience.
- Good command of English and Arabic languages.
- Transferable residency in Kuwait.

Please email your C.V.(Not more than two pages) to the following address before June 30, 2016. Email:hr.fin.man2016@gmail.com

REQUIRED FOR A 4 STARS HOTEL

In Benid Al Qar area

- Housekeeping supervisor
- Housekeeping staff
- Laundry Attendant

Experience in Kuwait hotels industries

Please send C.V to:

sh_huss@hotmail.com

STUDY MBBS IN GEOGIA

- ADMISSION FOR SEPTEMBER 2016 BATCH
- FEW MORE SEATS ARE AVAILABLE

Contact 00965 66577069



BUSINESS IN OMAN

We Are Providing Visas, Registration, Local Sponsor, Business Partner, Decoument Clearing.

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JOB OPPORTUNITY

A Leading Automobile company in Kuwait is looking for

SERVICE MANAGER

(Internal PDI Cum Preparation Works)

requirements :-

- * Minimum of 5 years working experience as a qualified Service Head for a reputed automobile company.
- * Candidate with previous experience in Internal PDI Cum Preparation works will be given priority
- * Diploma or University Graduate
- * Age between 32 to 40 years
- * Transferable residence

candidates, meeting the above requirements may e-mail their CVs with complete details to hrjobz2012@gmail.com



Flight Schedule

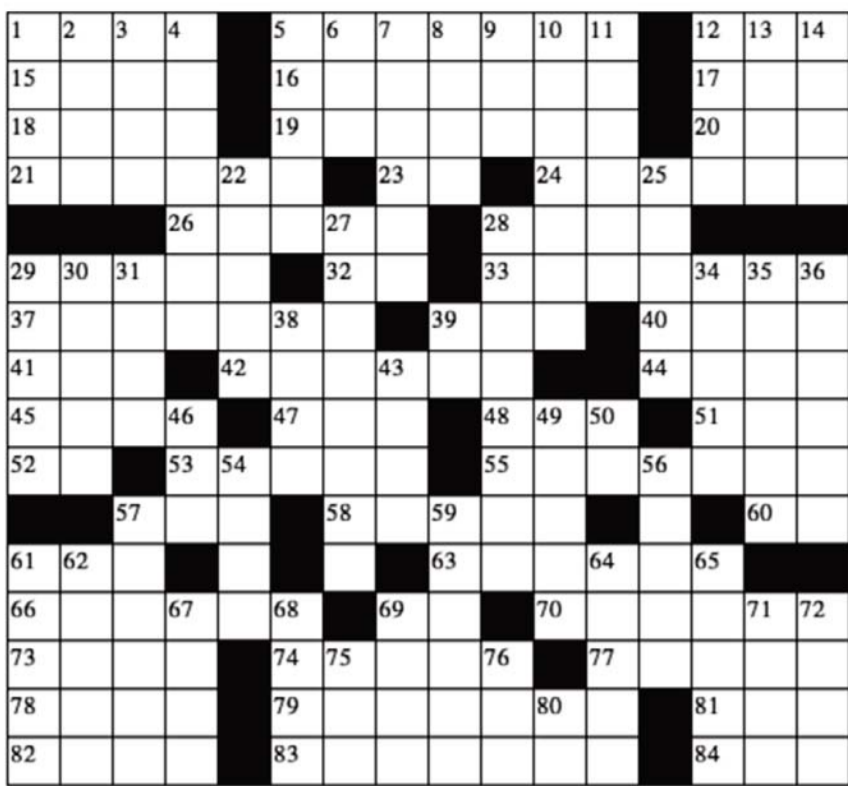
In case you are not travelling, your proper cancellation of bookings will help other passengers to use seats

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

Arrival Flights on Thursday 9/6/2016				Departure Flights on Thursday 9/6/2016			
Airlines	Fit	Route	Time	Airlines	Fit	Route	Time
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10	KAC	742	Jeddah	14:30
MSC	415	Sohag	00:10	KAC	742	Dammam	14:55
JZR	239	Amman	00:20	SYR	341	Damascus	15:00
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	KAC	788	Jeddah	15:00
DLH	635	Doha	01:00	OMA	645	Muscat	15:10
JZR	539	Cairo	01:20	ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:10
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30	JZR	1771	Jeddah	15:15
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:40	ABY	127	Sharjah	15:35
RJA	642	Amman	01:45	UAE	857	Dubai	15:45
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45	RJA	640	Amman	16:00
AXB	395	Kozhikode	01:50	FDB	051	Dubai	16:10
KKK	6506	Istanbul	02:05	QTR	1072	Doha	16:15
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	JZR	535	Cairo	16:20
KAC	418	Manila	02:15	KAC	118	New York	16:30
UAE	853	Dubai	02:25	KNE	531	Jeddah	16:35
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	NIA	251	Alexandria	16:45
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	KAC	562	Amman	16:55
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:15	SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15
QTR	1076	Doha	03:25	KNE	535	Jeddah	17:20
KAC	544	Cairo	03:40	GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	CCE	345	Sohag	17:35
JZR	555	Alexandria	04:15	JZR	177	Dubai	17:45
FEG	931	Alexandria	05:00	FDB	8053	Dubai	17:45
QTR	8511	Doha	05:05	KAC	678	Muscat/Abu Dhabi	17:50
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	JZR	777	Jeddah	17:50
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	QTR	1080	Doha	17:55
JZR	529	Asyut	06:00	SVA	2450	Jeddah	17:55
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	06:25	KAC	176	Geneva/Frankfurt	18:20
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	06:30	JZR	483	Istanbul	18:20
BAW	157	London	06:40	KAC	774	Riyadh	18:35
JZR	1541	Cairo	06:55	KAC	786	Jeddah	18:35
IRA	673	Ahwaz	07:15	KAC	502	Beirut	18:35
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15	JAV	621	Amman	18:45
JZR	503	Luxor	07:25	KAC	618	Doha	18:55
KAC	382	Delhi	07:30	KAC	542	Cairo	18:55
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	07:35	KAC	104	London	19:00
KAC	204	Lahore	07:40	UAE	875	Dubai	19:05
KAC	206	Islamabad	07:40	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50	KAC	614	Bahrain	19:10
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:15	ABY	123	Sharjah	19:15
KAC	344	Chennai	08:15	THY	6634	Istanbul	19:15
KAC	362	Colombo	08:20	MSR	620	Cairo	19:20
KAC	352	Kochi	08:20	JAI	572	Mumbai	19:35
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	KAC	154	Istanbul	19:45
KAC	784	Jeddah	08:50	KAC	674	Dubai	19:45
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:00	FDB	059	Dubai	19:50
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:05
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	KNE	381	Taif	20:10
IRA	667	Esfahan	09:05	MEA	402	Beirut	20:15
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20	OMA	647	Muscat	20:20
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	MSR	618	Alexandria	20:30
CCE	341	Alexandria	10:00	FDB	5053	Dubai	20:55
UAE	873	Dubai	10:40	JZR	802	Taif	20:55
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:05
MEA	404	Beirut	11:00	UAE	859	Dubai	21:15
JZR	561	Sohag	11:25	ALK	229	Colombo	21:20
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:30	KLM	417	Amsterdam	21:25
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25	KAC	676	Dubai	21:35
JZR	241	Amman	12:30	QTR	1082	Doha	21:55
MSR	507	Beirut	12:40	GFA	219	Bahrain	22:00
FEG	933	Sohag	12:55	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:10
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	NIA	151	Cairo	22:10
KAC	620	Doha	13:10	JZR	125	Bahrain	22:15
KNE	231	Riyadh	14:00	AIC	981	Chennai/Ahmedabad	22:25
KNE	529	Jeddah	14:05	MSC	501	Alexandria	22:30
QTR	1078	Doha	14:05	THY	764	Istanbul	22:55
KAC	672	Dubai	14:05	MSC	403	Asyut	23:10
AXB	393	Kozhikode	14:10	JAI	574	Mumbai	23:20
FDB	057	Dubai	14:20	MSR	614	Cairo	23:30
GFA	221	Bahrain	14:20	FDB	071	Dubai	23:35
JZR	779	Jeddah	14:25	PIA	205	Lahore	23:40
				JAD	301	Amman	23:45

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

CROSSWORD 1279



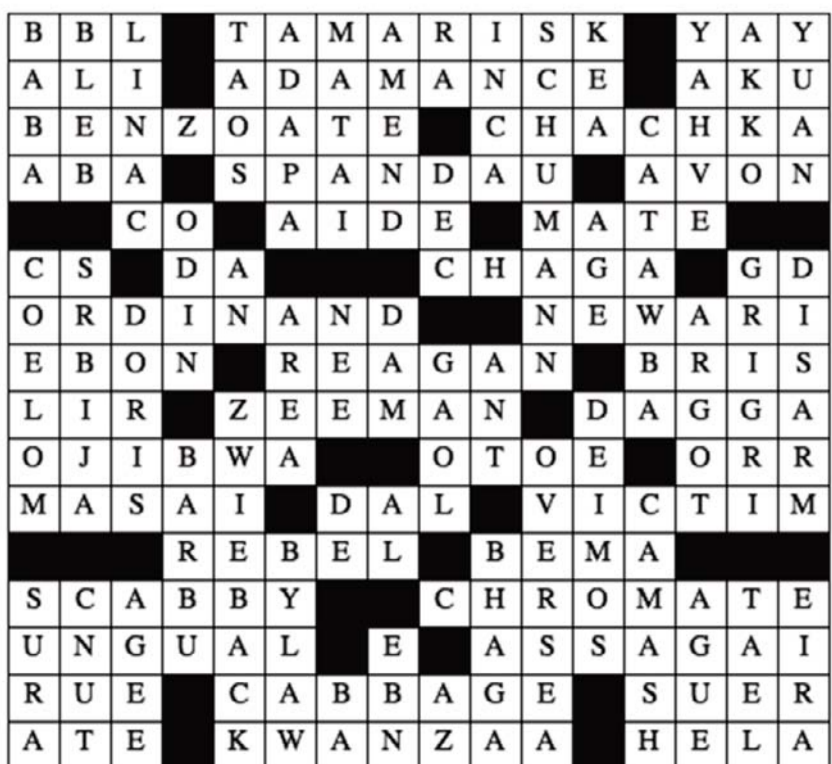
ACROSS

- Waterproofed canvas.
- Relating to or characterized by spasm.
- The compass point midway between south and southwest.
- A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
- The fare charged for traveling by airplane.
- South American wood sorrel cultivated for its edible tubers.
- Sudden sharp painful emotion.
- Harmed or injured or spoiled.
- Resinlike substance secreted by certain lac insects.
- Naked freshwater or marine or parasitic protozoa that form temporary pseudopods for feeding and locomotion.
- An edge tool with a heavy bladed head mounted across a handle.
- Skin disorder characterized by patchy bluish discolorations on the skin.
- An honorary arts degree.
- A feudal lord or baron in Scotland.
- An informal term for a father.
- Fishing with a hook and line (and usually a pole).
- A musical composition for voices and orchestra based on a religious text.
- Toward the mouth or oral region.
- A member of a nomadic people who invaded Europe in the 4th century.
- A percussion instrument consisting of a pair of hollow pieces of wood or bone (usually held between the thumb and fingers) that are made to click together (as by Spanish dancers) in rhythm with the dance.
- Port city that is the capital and largest city of Latvia.
- By bad luck.
- The basic unit of money in Albania.
- Light informal conversation for social occasions.
- A fractional monetary unit of Japan and Indonesia and Cambodia.
- Diabetes caused by a relative or absolute deficiency of insulin and characterized by polyuria.
- Green algae common in freshwater lakes of limestone districts.
- A genus of Nymphalidae.
- Complacently or inanely foolish.
- A state in northwestern North America.
- The 19th letter of the Greek alphabet.
- (Greek mythology) One of the three Graces.
- Activity involved in maintaining something in good working order.
- A gradual decline (in size or strength or power or number).
- Marked by the reception of pay.
- A member of the Siouan people formerly living in the Missouri river valley in NE Nebraska.
- Relating to the deepest parts of the ocean (below 6000 meters).
- Made agreeably cold (especially by ice).
- Any of several cultivated sour cherry trees bearing fruit with dark skin and juice.
- A federal agency established to coordinate programs aimed at reducing pollution and protecting the environment.
- A game in which numbered balls are drawn and random and players cover the corresponding numbers on their cards.
- Relating to or occurring on the undersurface of the foot.
- An informal term for a father.

DOWN

- Thin fibrous bark of the paper mulberry and *Pipturus albidus*.
- The biblical name for ancient Syria.
- A city in western Nevada at the foot of the Sierra Nevada Mountains.
- An elaborate representation of scenes from history etc.
- Egyptian statesman who (as President of Egypt) negotiated a peace treaty with Menachem Begin of Israel (1918-1981).
- Perennial herb of East India to Polynesia and Australia cultivated for its large edible root yielding Otaheite arrowroot starch.
- A large fleet.
- The second largest city in Tunisia.
- A label made of cardboard or plastic or metal.
- A republic consisting of 26 of 32 counties comprising the island of Ireland.
- The act of ceding.
- Being the only one.
- Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.
- A city in east central Texas.
- Flesh of any of various freshwater fishes of the families Centrarchidae of North America or Cyprinidae of Europe.
- The qualities of a hero or heroine.
- A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
- (sometimes followed by 'to') Causing harm or injury.
- Stems of beans and peas and potatoes and grasses collectively as used for thatching and bedding.
- A former copper coin of Pakistan.
- Of or relating to or characteristic of Ireland or its people.
- Small genus of Asian evergreen trees having columnar crowns and distinguished by leaves lacking a midrib.
- A city of northern Poland near the mouth of the Vistula River on a gulf of the Baltic Sea.
- The basic unit of money in Western Samoa.
- The district occupied entirely by the city of Washington.
- A Kwa language spoken in Ghana and the Ivory Coast.
- An honorary degree in science.
- Administer an oil or ointment to.
- A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
- The lean flesh of a fish similar to cod.
- Tropical American trees with palmately compound leaves and showy bell-shaped flowers.
- Any of the forms of Chinese spoken in Fukien province.
- A city in western Germany near the Dutch and Belgian borders.
- With rapid movements.
- Find repugnant.
- Having help.
- Edible starchy tuberous root of taro plants.
- Ceremonial elegance and splendor.
- God of death.
- Plant with an elongated head of broad stalked leaves resembling celery.
- Showing or causing joy and pleasure.
- The molecular weight of a substance expressed in grams.
- Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).
- A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

A need to be respected is strong at this time. Work, achievement and ambition—these things mean a lot to you. You could be working overtime and having a difficult time making everyone happy. Agree to set aside some time tonight or tomorrow for someone who may need your emotional support. This is a time you may decide to set up ways in which to teach your children how to deal with time and money. Help them spend time wisely and budget their money carefully. You have a strong drive to be seen and known-to network with others. Personal appearance and the way you present yourself are also motivating factors in your purchase of some new work clothes. Enjoy connecting with family this evening.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You interact with the people around you best when all the chores and errands are out of the way for the day. Whether or not you are the designated cook and bottle washer, you might want to take on that responsibility for today. Consider preparing a light and attractive late lunch for those that are home this afternoon. They will appreciate your thoughtfulness and be more ready to listen to your ideas. You draw emotional sustenance and a sense of security from your friends and loved ones. This may be a time when many of you decide to marry. If you are already married, there will be opportunities to deepen the relationship. Friends and a social life are in order this weekend. There will be many opportunities to enjoy your loved ones.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Self-determination is the attitude for today. There are projects to complete and new discoveries to make. This may mean a fun tour of some exhibit introducing all sorts of new ways to travel and move around the country or perhaps new camping equipment or survival equipment. Your self-determination comes into play because you want to learn about all the new technology and perhaps decide what you might want to take on for yourself to enjoy. You are open to all sorts of exciting possibilities. You are very friendly and you enjoy having deep, searching conversations. Unexpected news tips the scales in your favor. You appreciate change, variety and making local connections. Surprises can be enjoyed all day long.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Your love of groups and the social scene may find you less concerned about you as a person and more interested in relationships of all kinds today. Others find you very unselfish and open to sharing and cooperation. You are very original when it comes to your home and surroundings—the environment you build around you. This could also manifest in unusual ways of supporting yourself. When you have breakthroughs, they often come as insights into your immediate surroundings, home and environment—your support system in general. You may have new ideas about the past, history and young people, finding it easy to create an unusual environment. This is a good time to work out a schedule to get your redecorating ideas started.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Close relationships take on more emotional depth, power and importance. You have had unusual relationships in the past, perhaps a number of them and not always of long duration. You are creative when it comes to partnerships or lovers; you seem to establish unusual and different relationships. Perhaps because you want to enjoy more security these days, you may put more effort into keeping people close to you now. You appear very at ease and relaxed. You may gather your friends or family together to enjoy playing tennis, softball, basketball, inline skating or just about any other outdoor sports. If you are not traveling this evening, you will enjoy spending time with an animal, perhaps a dog. One of you learns a new trick.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

A hobby such as topiary, or just pulling weeds and trimming bushes, has you working with the land and creates opportunities to relax. You may resist getting personal today by avoiding particular issues. Perhaps this is good for today, but do not be afraid to speak the truth. In some cases, you can agree to disagree. Usually when there are things to hide, we express this in body language and can actually have pain in the muscles. This is a great day to reflect and understand better your own situation and just how you feel about yourself. There is an opportunity this afternoon for a new understanding or a healing between yourself and a loved one. Forgiveness and understanding human frailties prevail; misunderstandings dissolve.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Contact with a testy older member of the family could put you in a negative position. Help the older person find someone that can give advice and direction, even if you must help pay for this service. Your mate will be very appreciative and you will have contributed the help that is needed. You might enjoy entertaining children and adults with enchanting stories this afternoon. This older member of the family might enjoy joining in on these activities. Your understanding of the unity behind appearances, along with the ability to put these thoughts into words, is a rare and valuable gift. You would make a good director, for you like working with mental images.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

This morning you may be supporting the feelings of a friend—maybe even helping to give compliments on behavior. You become actively involved on a social level, contributing a big part in collective events and developments. Perhaps an issue that is in need of being heard could be the basis of your enthusiasm. You can make lasting impressions and generate positive changes. You have little patience for people who do not live up to their principles. You are reminded of your various responsibilities and feel the need to tend to personal business this afternoon. This is a good time to tend to the basics of your life and take care of some personal business you have postponed lately. A visit with someone older or in authority is positive.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Keep your priorities in order today as you could feel that you are moving in circles. You could become carried away under some sort of stress. Saying and writing things with style counts for a lot now and you may enjoy writing some letters to people that you might not have been in touch with lately. Neighbors or brothers and sisters will likely bring all kinds of good experiences your way. You are a great doer and someone that enjoys accomplishing goals. You will probably enjoy a little yard work this afternoon. Your outgoing nature, coupled with extremely skillful ways of handling other people, makes you a natural for entertaining others. You value change and transformation and have an almost reckless faith in the life process.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

There is an urge to strike out on your own in a new direction, to take on new challenges, no matter what the risks. You could be bold, perhaps impatient. Considering this workday one hour at a time and pretty soon it will be quitting time. Perhaps it is time to plan your afternoon and evening to be more relaxed and an early bedtime as well. You could consider playtime to be one evening, instead of three or more evenings. After your body lets you know you are in a healthier condition, you could expand your playtime to one other day in a week. Working is important to you and making a name for yourself is something you can remind yourself of when it comes to play or simply saying yes to helping in some extra curricular volunteer service.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Neighborhood affairs and relationships could come on the scene today. Communication efforts are rewarded and positive strokes from others make this a good day. You could be a bit too serious for most, but all would agree that you are organized and able to take care of any business that surfaces in office or home. You may seem older, perhaps wiser than your age and you probably treat authority with great respect. Very disciplined—perhaps too sober just now, you may be analyzing and psychoanalyzing life's predicaments. You are very imaginative in your approach to home, family and the domestic scene and can really see how to get into traditional values. You have natural insight into sensations, feelings and just living life.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

There is an emphasis on communication, expression of ideas and the connections between things, places and people. What goes on in your mind is the all-important motivation in your life. You tend towards mental pursuits and admire intelligence. You may have some trouble understanding a highly emotional person today. Circumstances can throw you into positions where you must use your mind and deal with communications, service or hidden interests. This may mean you get a new phone, join a ham radio club or find a fascinating communication museum. You may deal with education, psychology, spiritual enlightenment or teaching principles and techniques. Someone you know may have a child that you would be happy to tutor.

WORD SEARCH

80's Songs 3 - Word Search

Find the words hidden in the grid of letters.

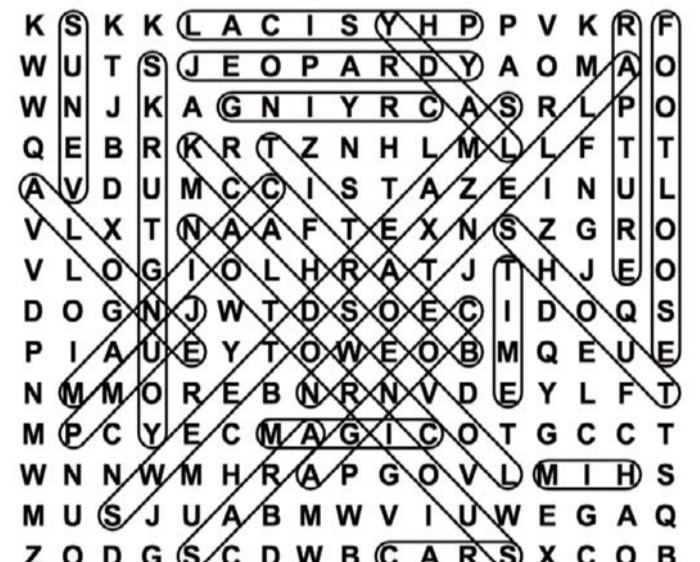


- AFRICA
- AMERICA
- CALL ME
- DOWN UNDER
- ENDLESS LOVE
- FAME
- FREEDOM
- GLORIA
- HEAVEN
- INFATUATION
- MANIC MONDAY
- OUR HOUSE
- PINK HOUSES
- SUKIYAKI
- SUSSUDIO
- THE LOOK
- THE ROSE
- TIME
- TRULY
- TWO HEARTS
- VACATION
- VALERIE
- WHIP IT

Yesterday Solution

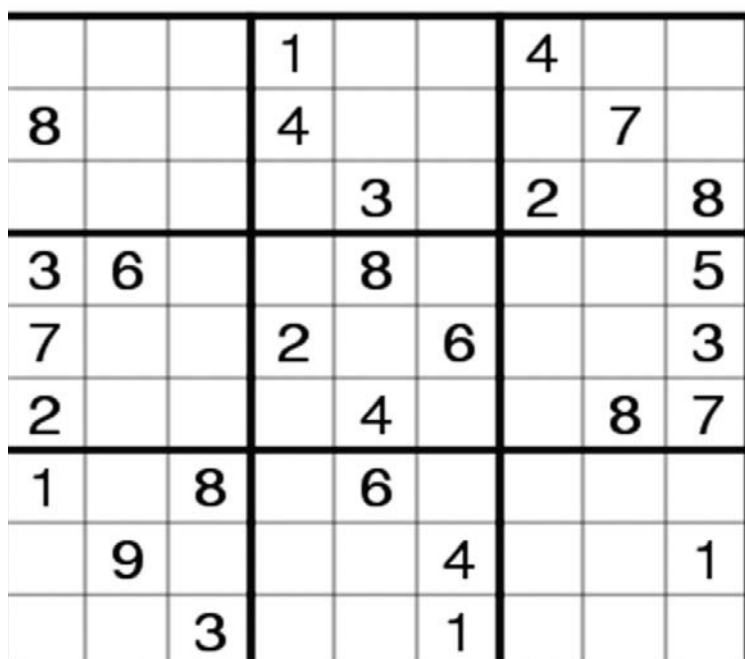
Large Print Word Search Puzzles

80's Songs 2 - Solution

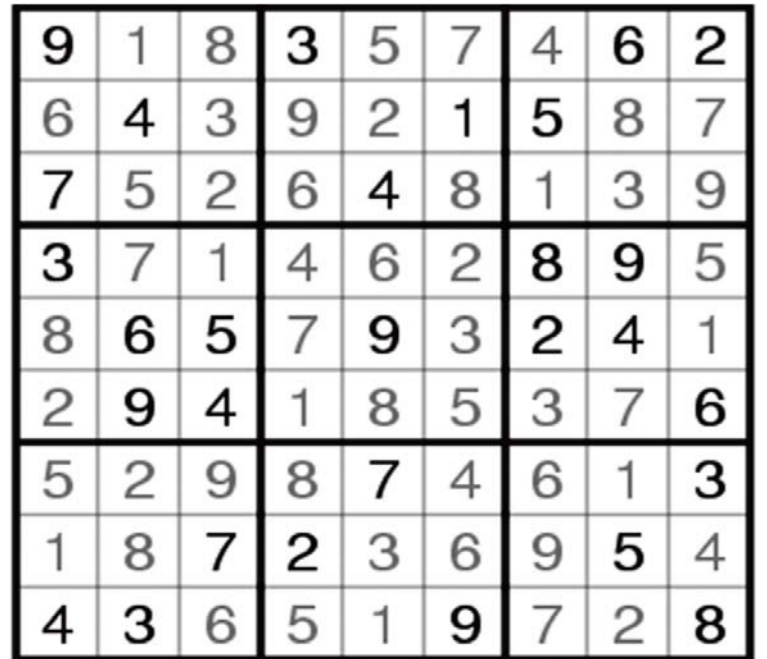


- ALLEN TOWN
- ALONE
- BEAT IT
- CARS
- CONGA
- CRYING
- FOOTLOOSE
- HIM
- JEOPARDY
- JUMP
- LADY
- LOVE SHACK
- MAGIC
- MANIAC
- NOTORIOUS
- PHYSICAL
- RAPTURE
- SARA
- SHOUT
- SWEET DREAMS
- TIME
- VENUS
- YOUNG TURKS

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution





Lake Hillier

Lake Hillier is a saline lake on the edge of Middle Island, the largest of the islands and islets that make up the Recherche Archipelago in the Goldfields-Esperance region, off the south coast of Western Australia. It is particularly notable for its pink color. A long and thin shore divides the Southern Ocean from the lake.

Lake Hillier is about 600 meters in length by about 250 meters in width. The lake is surrounded by a rim of sand and a dense woodland of paperbark and eucalyptus trees with a narrow strip of sand dunes covered by vegetation separating its northern edge from the northern coast of Middle Island. The most notable feature of the lake is its pink color. The vibrant color is permanent, and does not alter when the water is taken in a container. The pink color is considered to be due to the presence of the organism *Dunaliella salina*.

Forms of life

The only living organisms in Lake Hillier are microorganisms including *Dunaliella salina*, which causes the salt

content in the lake to create a red dye which helps produce the color, as well as red halophilic bacteria present in the salt crusts. Despite the unusual hue, the lake exhibits no known adverse effects upon humans. From above, the lake appears a solid bubble gum pink, but from the shoreline it appears more of a clear pink hue. The shoreline is also covered in salt crust deposits.

Safety and accessibility

Despite the high salt content levels (comparable to those of the Dead Sea), Lake Hillier is safe to swim in. However, there are very few ways to reach Lake Hillier. Helicopter is one of the most common methods of travel. Cruises are also an option for passengers wanting to visit the isolated lake, and surrounding forest area.

Protected area status

As recently as 2012, Lake Hillier has been located within the boundaries of the Recherche Archipelago Nature Reserve. Since 2002, the lake itself has been considered to be a wetland of "sub regional significance".



RECIPES FOR KIDS

Cream Cheese Cucumber

What you need

- * 3/4 cup light cream cheese, slightly softened
- * half a large cucumber, thinly sliced
- * 8 slices of whole-wheat bread

What to do

1. Spread each slice of bread with cream cheese (about 3 table-spoons per sandwich).
2. Place about 4 cucumber slices on 4 of the slices of bread and top with remaining bread slices.
3. Cut into quarters and serve immediately or wrap sandwiches and save for later.



Did you know..?

- Compared to other animals, dolphins are believed to be very intelligent.
- Dolphins are carnivores (meat eaters).
- The Killer Whale (also known as Orca) is actually a type of dolphin.
- Bottlenose dolphins are the most common and well known type of dolphin.
- Female dolphins are called cows, males are called bulls and young dolphins are called calves.
- Dolphins live in schools or pods of up to 12 individuals.
- Dolphins often display a playful attitude which makes them popular in human culture. They can be seen jumping out of the water, riding waves, play fighting and occasionally interacting with humans swimming in the water.
- Dolphins use a blowhole on top of their heads to breathe.
- Dolphins have excellent eyesight and hearing as well as the ability to use echolocation for finding the exact location of objects.
- Dolphins communicate with each other by clicking, whistling and other sounds.
- Some dolphin species face the threat of extinction, often directly as a result of human behavior. The Yangtze River Dolphin is an example of a dolphin species which may have recently become extinct.
- Some fishing methods, such as the use of nets, kill a large number of dolphins every year.



SUDOKU

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

Solution

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



WELCOME SUMMER

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

AUGUST
BEACH
BIKES
CAMPING
CARNIVAL
COOKOUTS
FIREFLIES
FIREWORKS
FISHING
FLIPFLOPS

FUN
HULA HOOPS
ICE CREAM
JULY
JUMPROPE
JUNE
MOVIES
PARADES
PARTIES
PICNICS
POOL

POPSICLES
ROLLERCOASTER
SANDALS
SPLASH
SPRINKLER
SNOWCONES
SUNGLASSES
SUNSCREEN
SWIMMING
THEME PARK
VACATION

Find the difference



Easy folded flowers

What you need

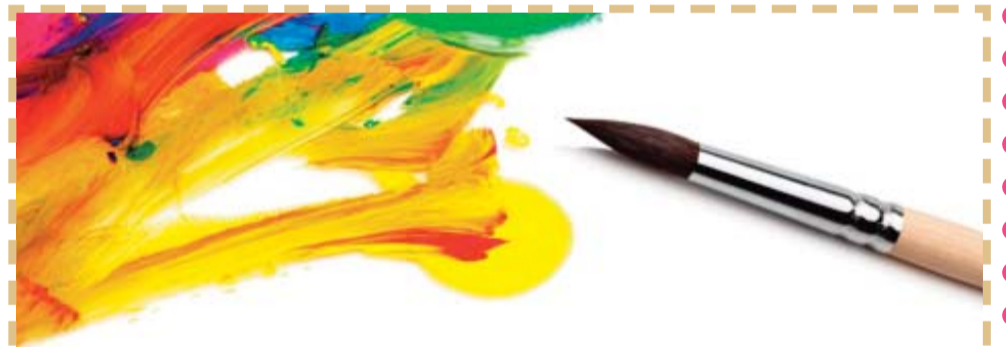
- 1 x A4 piece of colored or patterned paper
- scissors
- hot glue gun
- 1 x button
- 1 x bamboo skewer

Activity

- Cut two 6cm-wide strips, lengthways, out of the A4 sheet of paper.
- Concertina fold each strip.
- Place the concertina strips upright on the table in front of you, so they are balancing on their edges. Join the two strips at each end to form a circle.
- Press the circle flat on the table.
- Put a dab of hot glue in the centre of the circle and pinch it all together so it stays.
- Glue a button to the centre.
- Turn the flower over and glue a bamboo skewer to the back, as a stem.

JOKES

- Q: What do you give a sick bird?
A: Tweetment!
- Q: What is black and white and black and white and black and white and...?
A: A penguin falling down the stairs!
- Q: When does a teacher carry birdseed?
A: When there is a parrot-teacher conference!
- Q: What is a polygon?
A: A dead parrot!
- Q: What kind of bird works at a construction site?
A: The crane!
- Q: Why does a flamingo lift up one leg?
A: Because if it lifted both legs it would fall over!
- Q: Why do birds fly south in the winter?
A: Because it's too far to walk!
- Q: What did the sick chicken say?
A: Oh no! I have the people-pox!
- Q: What do you call a funny chicken?
A: A comedi-hen
- Q: Why do scientists think humming birds hum?
A: Because they can't remember the words!
- Q: What bird is always depressed?
A: The blue jay
- Q: Why do seagulls like to live by the sea?
A: Because if they lived by the bay they would be bagels!



Color me!



Kiefer Sutherland lost 'dignity' in jail

The '24' actor - who spent 48 days in prison in December 2007 after pleading no contest following his fourth arrest for driving under the influence (DUI) - admits he has done "stupid" stuff in the past, but admires the way late country singer Johnny Cash was able to write about life behind bars. And Kiefer - who has penned a country solo album, 'Down in a Hole' with friend Jude Cole - has tried to pay "homage" to the 'Ring of Fire' hitmaker with his own music. He said: "Johnny Cash wrote about men in prison and he managed to do that with a kind of dignity that I always thought was incredible. 'I've never been to prison. . . I have gone to jail a few times in my life for doing some incredibly stupid stuff and I can tell you,

the first thing you lose when you walk through those doors is your dignity. I always really appreciated [Cash] for that. Jude and I wanted to write a song that was an homage to that writing." The 49-year-old star has been writing music for years but was always aware of the pressure of being seen as an actor trying to launch a singing career. But Kiefer no longer "gives a s**t" about people's perceptions, even if he expects people to go to his gigs initially just to see "a crash". He told Rolling Stone Country: "I've always likened it to a NASCAR race. People say they want to see a good race, and that's bulls**t. You want to see a crash! But if no crash, then maybe you settle for a good race. But I get it, trust me. "Fifteen years ago, it wouldn't have been possi-

ble. Jude really had confidence in the way he was making the songs sound, and I couldn't really argue with him. But it was still really five or six songs in until I acquiesced and said, 'OK, I want to do this.' "I had to have that come-to-Jesus moment because, trust me, an actor doing music makes my eyes roll in the back of my head, too. "So I can't blame anyone for thinking that, and that's why we're prepared to go one bar at a time. It's the most constructive thing I've ever done in a bar, so it's working out.



Dakota Johnson and Matthew Hitt have split up

The 26-year-old actress and the 29-year-old musician - who first split in 2015 before reconciling - have called time on their romance because of work commitments. A source told Just Jared: "Dakota and Matthew have dated on-and-off for the past two years. They didn't get a chance to see much of each other recently because their work schedules didn't align. She's been up in Vancouver shooting the 'Fifty Shades' trilogy." Dakota previously admitted she is too busy for love, when she was asked if her boyfriend liked 'Fifty Shades of Grey', in which she stars as Anastasia Steele. She said at the time: "My hypothetical beloved thinks it's great. He's really supportive. "I don't have a lot of time for a relationship. I'm too bustling sanctimonious and afterwards we go home and there's no one." And she also admitted to going through a "phase" where she hated more things about men than she likes. She said: "I think it's unsexy when a man chews with his mouth open or when a man is rude or wears fedoras. I hate fedoras. "Oh God, I can find more things I hate about men than I like. I think it's just a phase!" Meanwhile, Dakota previously insisted being in '50 Shades' affected her love life as men are scared to ask her out. Referring to the racy scenes in the hit movie, she said: "Some people think [S&M] is something I'm interested in, in my private life, which is not the case. "I'm an actor, I pretend. But I guess it's something that happens with a lot of actors; people think that, in real life, they are like the characters they play."

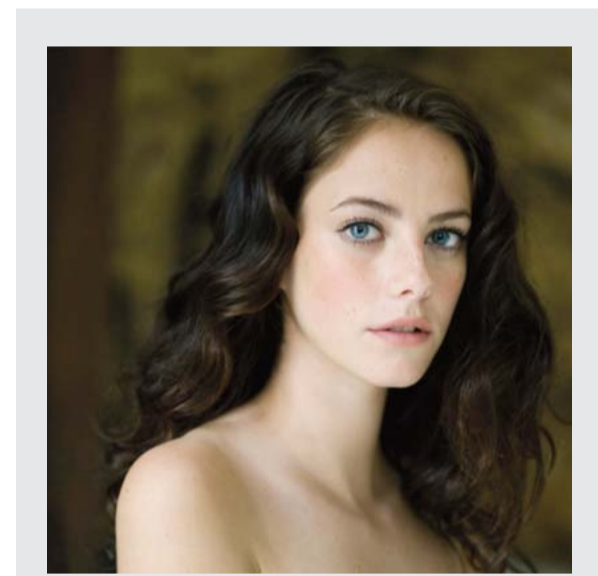
Khloe was trembling when she hosted 'The Ellen DeGeneres Show'

The 31-year-old television personality has taken over presenting duties for yesterday's episode of the daytime program and admits she was terrified of taking the reins in front of a live audience for the first time. During the show, Khloe arranged a FaceTime call with her older sister, Kourtney Kardashian, and admitted: "Can you believe she left me here to do this? I have no idea what I'm doing; I'm literally trembling with fear. "I don't know why she thought this was OK to do. "I have a real audience today! I've never had one before." During her call to her sister - who has sons Mason, six, and Reign, 17 months, and daughter Penelope, three, with ex-boyfriend Scott Disick - Khloe created a series of quickfire questions about their famous family. While Kourtney called Khloe the best babysitter, she described Kendall Jenner as "the worst" because "she doesn't babysit." However, the temporary host defended their younger half-sibling, insisting she is too busy with her career to care for the kids. She said: "She's like, a famous model [so] I think she's good." The sisters were quick to agree that Kim Kardashian West complains the most, and Kourtney showered a number of compliments on Khloe, describing her as the "biggest troublemaker" - an accolade the former 'X Factor' presenter seemed thrilled by - and best giver of gifts. But she saved the highest praise for herself, insisting she is both the funniest and sexiest member of the family.



Nick Jonas insists he can be a bad boy

Although the 23-year-old former Disney star has a squeaky clean reputation, he insists he has a dark side but is just better at hiding it than some of his contemporaries. He said: "I'm not perfect. Perhaps I'm just more low-key than some of my other contemporaries. "I've tried to toe the line of being authentic to who I am and letting the art speak for itself. I'm less inclined, at times, to use the machine of the media to sell things. I think it's something you can choose to do, or play into, but I don't do it that much. If people want to use that, fuel the fire, that's what works for them." Nick's new album 'Last Year Was Complicated' was inspired by his break-up with Olivia Culpo and he tried to be honest about his own faults in the relationship while writing the album. He explained: "The thing that was important to me in the creative process was acknowledging my own faults. I'm not perfect by any means. I had to be willing to get vulnerable and open up; at times that can be uncomfortable but it creates the best work in my experience." However, Nick admitted he has no idea what Olivia thinks of the record as they no longer speak. He said: "I don't know. We don't speak. I've heard from a mutual friend that she's heard it and liked it, at least on some level. That's a thought you have while you're writing: the person will hear it, but you have to be willing to go there with it." And the 'Jealous' singer also called on his peers to embrace their gay fan bases. When asked about claims he has been "gay-baiting" his fans, Nick said: "I think it's a beautiful thing when you can embrace everybody. I wish more of my peers in a similar position-as a heterosexual male pop singer-would embrace that and be more willing to be more comfortable and open about it.



Kaya Scodelario is pregnant

The 'Maze Runner' actress and 'Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter' star Benjamin Walker are expecting their first child together, and Benjamin, 33, announced the pregnancy with a sweet snap of them and their French bulldog Arnie on Instagram. Benjamin's picture shows the pair kissing on a beach, with 24-year-old Kaya's bump clearly visible and he captioned it: "Happy summer from the four of us." He added: "I love you @kayas-cods." Kaya added her own picture and wrote: "I love you @findthewalker. I love our little family." She also posted the image on Facebook and said: "The family is expanding. And no we are not getting another dog, Arnie would be way too jealous." Benjamin and Kaya - who met on the set of 'The Moon and the Sun' - got engaged in December 2014 after just a few months of dating and tied the knot one year later. He married Meryl Streep's daughter, Mamie Gummer in 2011 but the pair separated in March 2013. Kaya moved to New York to be with Benjamin after previously admitting she found maintaining a long-distance relationship tough. She said in October: "Ben lives in New York and I live in London, so we have to work hard to see each other. You have to go for it, which I like." - Bangshowbiz

Radcliffe feels weird to go see new Potter play

The 'Now You See Me 2' actor shot to fame playing the boy wizard in the hit movie franchise and is reluctant to see the upcoming new play in case his presence in the audience distracts from what is going on on stage. He told E! News: "It would be a weird one. I could be completely wrong in this, but I feel like if I went to see it that night, there's going to be a lot of 'Harry Potter' fans there in the audience obviously and would that then become a thing? "Would it be more about them watching me watch the show or would it take away from the show. I would never want to do anything that would distract or take away from the show. "I don't know. I'm busy doing a play here at the moment, but I'm not sure." Author JK Rowling recently pleaded with fans not to spoil the plot of the play for other audience members. She said in a YouTube video: "You've been amazing for years at keeping Harry Potter secrets so you don't spoil the books for readers who came after you. "So I'm asking you one more time to keep secrets and let audiences enjoy 'Cursed Child' with all the surprises that we've built into the story. "Potter fans have always had each other's backs." The play - which will begin preview performances at London's Palace Theatre on July 7 - is set 19 years after the last book ended and sees Harry as an "overworked" employee of the Ministry of Magic and centers on his son Albus.



Prince Harry is romantically pursuing Ellie Goulding

The 31-year-old royal is reportedly smitten with the 29-year-old singer - who he has been friends with for several years - and the pair were said to be "all over each other" at the Audi Polo Challenge recently. A source told The Sun: "It turned into a real party late into the night and there was a complete ban on taking pictures so Harry and the other celebrities there could feel comfortable. "Harry and Ellie only had eyes for each other all night - they spent a lot of time sitting together under blankets. "They were seen having a kiss before Harry had to go because he was playing polo the next day. Ellie left about five minutes later." And Harry is believed to be smitten with the blonde beauty, who he got to know after she performed at his brother William's wedding reception in 2011. The insider said: "Harry got Ellie's number a while ago and got in touch. He has told friends how much he likes Ellie and she is clearly taken by him." Harry has been single since he split from actress and

model Cressida Bonas in 2014 following two years of dating. Prior to that, he romanced Chelsy Davy for five years until they parted ways amicably in 2009. Harry recently claimed his public status shatters his chances of finding the perfect woman because they usually get freaked out by the publicity that comes with dating a prince. He said recently: "If or when I do find a girlfriend, I will do my utmost ... to ensure that me and her can get to the point where we're actually comfortable with each other before the massive invasion that is inevitably going to happen into her privacy. The other concern is that even if I talk to a girl, that person is then suddenly my wife, and people go knocking on her door." Meanwhile, Ellie split from McFly bassist Dougie Poynter bassist after two years of dating but recently admitted she hopes they get back together in the future because they have a "special" connection.

Soap opera recaps

'Saq Al Bamboo' and 'Been Galbin': Episode 2

By Nawara Fattahova

The Kuwait Times is publishing daily review of two of Kuwaiti soap operas showing on Al Rai TV and MBC Drama. Here are the reviews of the second episodes of the season:

'Saq Al Bamboo' (Bamboo stalk)

While on their way to the chalet, Rashid decides to marry Josephine and bring his two friends as witnesses. When the mother complains of Josephine's behavior, Rashid pretends to shout at Josephine.

Ghasan speaks to Rashid's sister Hind at the chalet then Josephine comes, and Hind tells her to wash his wet clothes. Then Josephine finds a letter in his pocket and gives it to Hind. Ghasan wrote in this paper that he knows its late but soon he will announce their victory.

Josephine tells Rashid that she is pregnant and he tells her to get an abortion but she refuses. His friends suggest he take her back to the Philippines but he is confused. The family star notices she is tired and looks sick. Hind tells Rashid they have to take her to the hospital but he refuses so she notices there is something wrong and tells him she is suspecting there is a relationship between them.

Been Galbin (between two hearts)

Dana's father gets married in Dubai but she doesn't attend



his wedding. She tells her friend she didn't go because she always wanted her dad to get married in Kuwait.

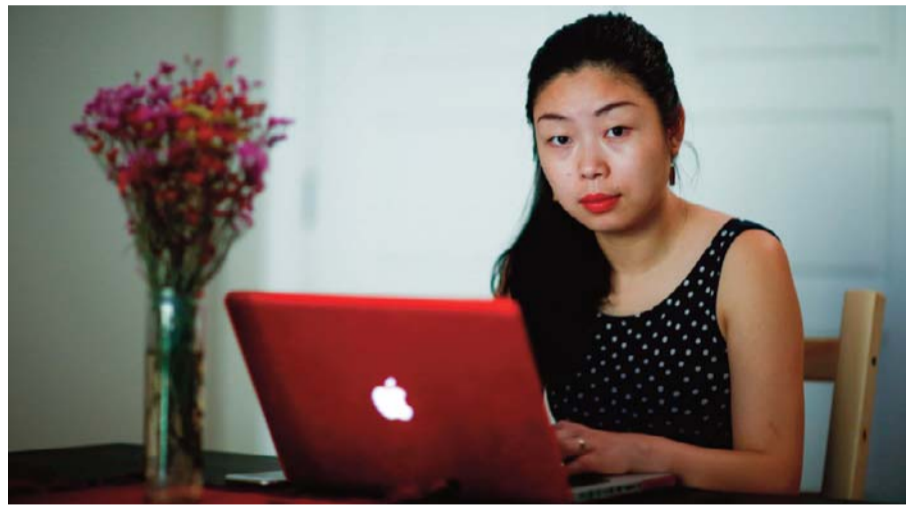
Aryam's director asks her to work with Bashar so she benefits from his experience as he is one of the best employees. Bashar is excited as he likes Aryam, and they



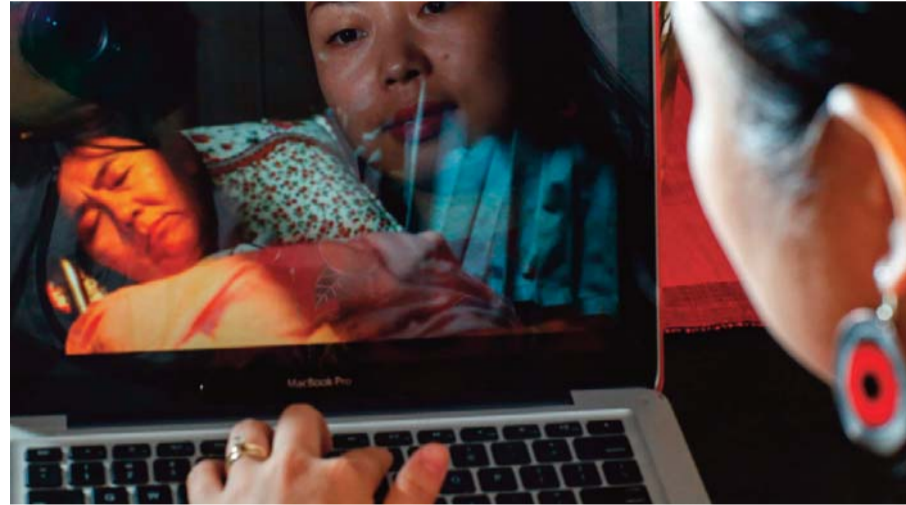
starting talking. When she tells him that she will design her own wedding dress he is shocked and disappointed to find out she is engaged.

Abdulrazaq gets a scholarship for his training course abroad and asks Aryam to join him and fix the wedding lat-

er, but she refuses. Muhsen, the friend of Bashar is in love with his sister Yasmin, and insists he wants to propose to her. Bashar asks him to wait for some time as she is still affected by her recent mother's death.



Chinese American filmmaker Nanfu Wang works at her computer on June 6, 2016 in Brooklyn, New York. — AFP photos



Chinese American filmmaker Nanfu Wang watches her documentary on a laptop.

'Hooligan Sparrow': The film China doesn't want you to see

Pursued by shadowy security men in plain clothes, New York filmmaker Nanfu Wang mounts the staircase of a decrepit, gloomy apartment block in China, gasping for breath as she reaches the upper floors. The director has been under constant surveillance since she returned to the country of her birth to film the human rights campaigner known as Hooligan Sparrow, who has been highlighting sexual violence against children.

"Hurry! Hurry! I'm so scared," Wang hisses as she ushers Sparrow's teenage daughter into a safe house to escape the men who have just arrested the girl's mother. The gripping scene comes near the end of three months of jaw-dropping footage depicting China's state security apparatus at work across the country's vast southeast, which Wang shot and smuggled out in the summer of 2013.

Edited into "Hooligan Sparrow," a feature-length documentary that comes across more as "found footage" thriller than political reportage, it is expected to shock audiences when it hits US theaters in July. Followed wherever she went, questioned by secret police, threatened with violence and intimidated by organized mobs, Wang captured every detail of her time as an "enemy of the state." She was forced to go on the run after security agents visited her family and friends demanding to know her whereabouts. "I've never had illusions about fairness in China's justice system or the accountability of its government," the director told AFP. "But I never expected to see ordinary people turn on their neighbors who were fighting for their rights."

The filmmaker carried a discreet backpack with a small point-and-shoot camera, a pair of glasses with an embedded micro camera and a small audio recorder, taking all of her footage with her everywhere she went. "I always was afraid that my footage

would be seized and destroyed, or that it would be seen by the authorities and used against my subjects," she said.

'Corruption has no limit'

Wang—who grew up in a remote farming village in southeastern China and moved to the United States as an adult—decided to return when she heard of Sparrow, a divorcee and single mother whose real name is Ye Haiyan. Now 41, Ye was in the middle of a social-media campaign highlighting a string of child-abuse scandals in Chinese schools, pushing for the trial of a head teacher who had raped several students in a hotel.

Ye posted a picture of herself on the southern island of Hainan holding a poster that read "Principal, get a room with me—leave the school kids alone." Her post went viral and the principal was eventually sentenced to 13 years in prison for the rape of four girls aged 11 to 14. One victim's parents claim in the documentary that the government monitored their calls and told them not to speak to journalists or lawyers, and that plainclothes officials followed them wherever they went. Ye was supported at the time by lawyer Wang Yu, one of China's few human rights specialists who has since been detained for nearly a year without trial.

"China is so corrupt that it has become fashionable for government officials to have sex with young girls," she tells Wang on camera. "The corruption has no limit." Days after Ye's Hainan protest, 11 people stormed into her home in Bobai, Guangxi province, and began to beat her because she had exposed abusive conditions in local brothels. The documentary shows Ye screaming at them and chasing them out with a meat cleaver before she is arrested and held for 13 days over accusations that she assaulted three of her attackers.

Harassed and threatened

A constant thorn in the side of officials bent on maintaining social order, Ye began handing out condoms and offering legal services to sex workers in 2006. She took part in a controversial stunt in 2012, volunteering as a free-of-charge prostitute for two days to highlight the plight of China's sex workers, estimated to number up to six million.

She lives under "residential surveillance" and travel restrictions in her hometown of Wuhan in eastern China. The authorities confiscated her passport in November 2014. Wang managed to smuggle her footage out of China by handing a flash drive to friends flying to the United States after she was followed during an earlier attempt to send it through a shipping office. "I've lived in China most of my life and I've always been interested in issues related to sex workers' rights," she says, "so I was curious to learn more about this woman and what motivated her."

Now back in New York, the filmmaker says she began researching Ye and discovered that they shared similar upbringings in poor farming communities with limited access to education. "I appreciated her respect for people whom Chinese society rejected, and I shared her desire to understand their lives more deeply," she says. However, nothing prepared her for the experience of filming "Hooligan Sparrow." "I never expected to be attacked by screaming mobs just for filming on the street," she said. "I never expected to be interrogated by national security agents, and that my family and friends would be harassed and threatened by secret police. But this is the China I saw." — AFP

Axl Rose demands Google take down unflattering pictures

Axl Rose is demanding Google take down several unflattering images of him that have been used as part of an internet meme mocking his physical appearance. Harvard University's Lumen Database lists at least 11 requests made on behalf of the Guns n' Roses frontman citing copyright violations since May 31.

The requests center on the "Fat Axl Rose" meme. One of the images Rose wants taken down includes the message, "Remember the 80s? He ate them." Google says it sends all such requests to the Lumen Database for publication. The database shows Rose used a British company, Web Sheriff, to make the requests. Neither Rose nor Web Sheriff immediately responded to a request for comment.



Axl Rose of the band AC/DC performs at the Olympic Stadium in London, Saturday, June 4, 2016.

'Game of Thrones' calls out newspaper

"Game of Thrones" star Maisie Williams has taken to Twitter to rewrite a recent headline about her. Williams, who plays Arya Stark on the HBO series, tweeted to her nearly 1.3 million followers Tuesday a Daily Mail headline that read Williams "goes braless in sheer lace dress and quirky headpiece at charity masquerade ball."

Her suggested alternative: "Game of Thrones actor, Maisie Williams, helps raise thousands at a Summer Masquerade Ball for @NSPCC." That's the Twitter handle for England's National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. The tweet has received more than 31,000 retweets and 57,000 likes. The 19-year-old Williams started on "Game of Thrones" when she was 12 in her first-ever acting job. — AP



In this June 10, 2014, file photo, models dressed as characters from the video game "Call of Duty" stand at the Activision booth at the Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles. — AP photos



In this June 12, 2014, file photo, people watch the "Call of Duty: Advanced Warfare" video game trailer at the Activision booth at the Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles.

'Call of Duty' fan convention is returning

Activision is re-enlisting "Call of Duty XP." After a five-year hiatus, the video game publisher is organizing a second edition of the fan-focused convention to celebrate the popular military shooter franchise. The three-day event will host this year's "Call of Duty" championship. The e-sports extravaganza will serve as the culmination of a yearlong tournament featuring 32 teams vying for a prize pool of \$2 million in competitive "Call of Duty: Black Ops III" matches.

"Call of Duty XP" will be held Sept. 2-4 at the Forum in Inglewood, California. The event is expected to draw 10,000 fans. "We wanted to seize the opportunity to bring back a great fan event and make it bigger," said Eric Hirshberg, CEO of Activision Publishing. "We're going to have what's sure to be our biggest championship ever for our Call of Duty World League." "Call of Duty XP" will feature the unveiling of the multiplayer modes from the upcoming entries "Call of Duty: Infinite Warfare" and "Call of Duty: Modern Warfare Remastered."

Real-world activities

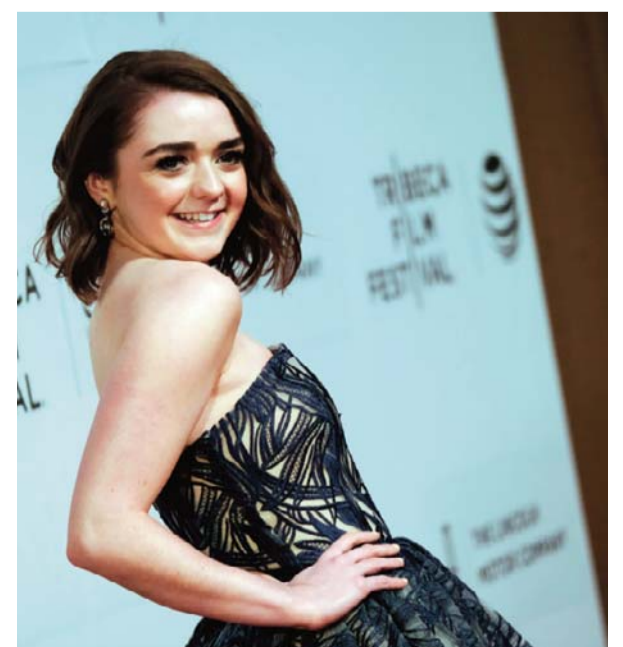
Activision will also bring "Call of Duty" to life with such real-world activities as a paintball battle modeled after the Nuketown map from "Black Ops III" and a laser tag course inspired by the zombie mode from "Infinite Warfare." At the convention, Sony will debut a PlayStation VR experience that will recreate the sensation of sitting in the pilot seat of the Jackal fighter jet from "Infinite Warfare."

"It'll be a celebration of the franchise - past, present and future," said Hirshberg. "It's a good time for us to invite our fans, celebrate the championships and go big." Hirshberg noted "Call of Duty XP" is among the reasons Activision will not be exhibiting on the show floor at next week's Electronic Entertainment Expo, the industry's annual trade show.

"We will have a presence at E3 but not the big booth that we've had in the past," said Hirshberg. "We're holding back content to do more at 'Call of Duty XP' than we have at E3 and other events in years past." The inaugural "Call of Duty XP"

event was held in 2011 and drew more than 6,000 fans to a 12-acre compound in Playa Vista, California. The convention featured the debut of the "Modern Warfare 3" multiplayer mode and a performance by Kanye West. "I think a lot has changed," said Hirshberg. "Obviously, e-sports was already gaining a lot of momentum, but so much more has happened globally and with our 'Call of Duty' World League."

Tickets for this year's "Call of Duty XP" go on sale June 11. They will range from \$49 for general three-day admission to \$199 for a VIP pass that includes a deluxe edition of "Infinite Warfare," a space-set edition of the series set for release Nov. 4. "Call of Duty" continues to be the top-selling gaming franchise. Activision said earlier this year that more than 250 million copies of "Call of Duty" have been sold since the series debuted over a decade ago. — AP



In this April 14, 2016, file photo actress Maisie Williams attends the world premiere screening of "The Devil and the Deep Blue Sea" during the 2016 Tribeca Film Festival in New York. — AP

Nurturing my child and my life

By Yalda Golsharifi

Balancing a hectic schedule while meeting with brands, handling businesses and modeling part time, my favorite full time job with no excuses is being a mom to my two beautiful angels! My life changed forever with my first mischievous bundle on 12th June, 2010. I went from being an early 20 something who had met the love of my life to being a mom!

I wish words were enough to explain the joy of that moment, the moment Laila was put into my arms, it was unreal to say the least, holding my first born for the first time ever. It was my responsibly to nurture, love, care and feed this baby... wait, feed!

I did look forward to the excessive cuddling with my little one but while everyone was busy feeding information into my head during the period of my pregnancy and post-delivery I was mainly dwelling on feeding. I've never done this before...What? How? When? I mean there's only so much books and people can tell you until you're in the situation, right?

Let me just tell you, it's quite the journey!

As the nurse walked in to help me feed Laila, she moved on with so much ease and there I was, feeding a baby?! Then came the other things that I was told that seems like a blur to me but I'm pro at now, thanks to experience of course! The view of our bedroom was quite the sight, if I remember clearly... breast pumps, pads, creams, you name it and I had it!

I wish words were enough to explain the joy of that moment, the moment Laila was put into my arms

Details like the baby latching on perfectly, trying a million (and I mean million) different holds or even overcoming engorgement were things I mainly concentrated on post-pregnancy. I must confess it was hard in the beginning but it gets so easy, yes, easier than formula feeding with all that bottle prep required (sometimes required in the middle of the night).

I did go on to breastfeed both my girls for the first two years of their lives...yes, TWO YEARS. Let me let you in to my secrets. I'd highly recommend investing in a breast pump as well as a pumping bra. This helps busy mamas out there to be able to feed their babies while maintaining a busy schedule. Eating clean is also key to this process so you remain energized and healthy and your body is able to feed better.

I recommend feeding or pumping every couple of hours to keep milk supply up, even if baby does not want

milk pumping stimulates your mind to think your baby is hungry and so your body produces milk accordingly. During my time I was determined to take my breast pump to photoshoots. I would pump in airports, taxis, airplanes and even cafes, all to make sure my milk supply wouldn't go down. I had to empty out the milk so that my body could start making new milk.

Now, why two years and what kept me going? Honestly, it was exhausting but I knew the bond I was creating with my girls is what kept me going despite toughing it out for the countless nights. This was a gift in life that can never be taken away.

The milk also helps fight a number of viruses and bacteria since it is packed with antibodies. Breastfeeding helps mamas out there in postpartum weight loss while also promoting emotional health.

My advice after all this is not to stress, stay relaxed, calm and positive. Just let it all happen if you can do it, do not by any means pressure yourself. When you're pregnant focus on your pregnancy, when you give birth, let it all happen naturally. We are women so this is natural process for us. In the end, some women are unable to breastfeed but that doesn't mean the bond between the mother and baby would be any different. All mothers will create a special bond between them and their baby in one way or the other, it's just the way we were built!



Tissot Quickster Miami HEAT Special Edition

It's time to up your game
Team Spirit

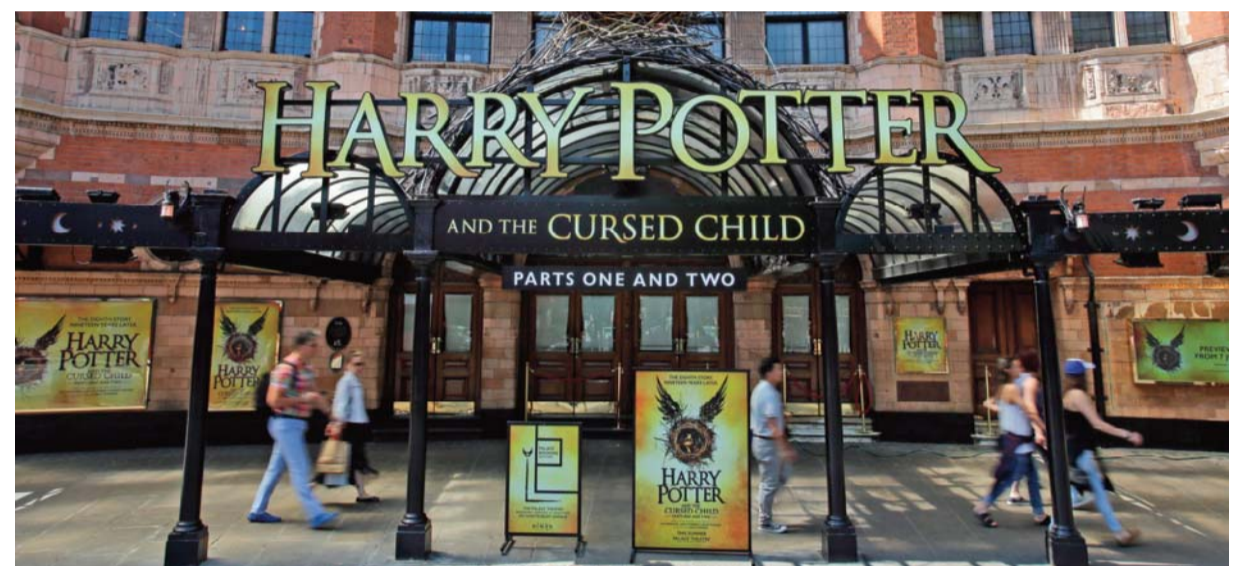
Following the biggest partnership announcement in Tissot history, with the NBA, Tissot reinforced its commitment by signing with the Miami HEAT. Tissot is honoring this association by creating a very special watch dedicated to the team and its fans worldwide. The Tissot Quickster Miami HEAT Special Edition has a fitting sporty look with a contemporary fiery red and yellow Nato strap to match. The instantly recognizable "flaming T" logo is depicted on the back, silk-printed on the case.

Focus and determination

The Tissot Quickster Miami HEAT Special Edition keeps it simple with the number twelve in its right place and straight hands, illustrating the focus of the athletes on court, while adding to the sporty character of the watch. Another one of its many particularities is its bezel design. It is very fine, allowing a greater opening and view of the dial and the counters to show off the precision of the Timekeeper as every second counts.

Features

- Swiss Made
- Quartz chronograph movement
- 316L stainless steel case with silk-printed glass case-back
- Scratch-resistant sapphire crystal
- Water-resistant up to a pressure of 10 bar (100 m / 330 ft)
- Nato strap with standard buckle
- Diameter: 42mm



The front of the Palace Theatre promotes its new show 'Harry Potter and the Cursed Child' in London. — AFP

Harry Potter play gets rave reviews

Harry Potter's stage debut got a standing ovation from a packed theatre audience in a new London play that imagines the fictional boy wizard as a grown-up father of three, British media reported on Wednesday.

"Judging by the whooping and cheering, nobody was disappointed," Clare Fitzmons wrote in The Mirror after the first showing of "Harry Potter and the Cursed Child" at the Palace Theatre. "It was phenomenal, it really was. It lived up to all the hype," said one fan interviewed by the BBC, while another in a Potter-style cape said: "This completely blew me away. JK Rowling did an amazing job." Potter creator Rowling made a special request for fans to keep the plot secret and the 1,500 audience members were handed badges reading "#KeepTheSecrets".

"The storyline, a hymn to friendship and teenage misfits, contains enough twists to please the most knowledgeable of fans," Hannah Furness wrote in The Daily Telegraph. "Any fears that the world of Hogwarts on stage would struggle to compete with the multimillion-dollar special effects of film were quickly kicked into touch." "Has Rowling done it again? The audience was in no doubt," she wrote.

The plot for the play reads: "While Harry grapples with a past

that refuses to stay where it belongs, his youngest son Albus must struggle with the weight of a family legacy he never wanted. "As past and present fuse ominously, both father and son learn the uncomfortable truth: sometimes, darkness comes from unexpected places," it said.

The show officially opens on July 30 and is set to be published as a book on July 31, which is Rowling's and Harry Potter's birthday. Rowling's books have sold more than 450 million copies since 1997 and been adapted into eight films. The show is written by English screenwriter and playwright Jack Thorne, based on an original story co-written with Rowling and the play's director John Tiffany.

Given the millions of fans around the world, the decision to move the characters on two decades was seen as risky. Like many of his fans, Potter has now grown up in the play and has three children with his wife Ginny Weasley, the sister of his friend Ron. He is working at the Ministry of Magic. He still has his trademark round-rimmed glasses and the scar on his head, a permanent reminder of his nemesis Lord Voldemort, but must now help his youngest son Albus confront the family's dark past. — AFP

Film Review

'Conjuring 2' scares but not as well as the first

If "The Conjuring" was a chilling whisper, the sequel is a deafening shriek. That might not be a bad thing for some, but the shock jumps and cheesy-looking demons in "The Conjuring 2" was a definite departure from the first, and not necessarily for the better. The brilliance of director James Wan's elegant original film was how it used our own horror savvy against us.

He'd allow for a long take of a terrified girl peering under her bed and let it stay there long enough to the point where your muscles start to tense. You instinctively brace for the shock that you know is coming ... and then ... nothing. At that point a creepy face or a loud knock on the door wasn't actually needed. The suspense was more than sufficient. The audience was already petrified.

"The Conjuring 2," however, goes all out. It's even louder, somehow. And there are more demons, more jump scares, more creepy antique toys and, thankfully, more Ed and Lorraine Warren (Patrick Wilson and Vera Farmiga), the most

delightfully campy couple of supernaturally sensitive marrieds ever to grace the screen. They're like everyone's favorite Sunday School teachers - she's the earthy one, he's the groovy one. You know they've seen some darkness, too, but then Ed grabs a guitar and starts crooning "Can't Help Falling in Love" and you forget all about the demon spirit lurking in the tattered leather armchair in the corner of the living room.

Heck, the cranky dead man in the corner terrorizing a working-class family outside of London probably even enjoyed Ed's Elvis impersonation, too. Oh, right, there's a cranky dead man in the corner because this is a horror movie and not just a quirky romance about the Warrens.

Highly documented case

The story deals with the Enfield Poltergeist - a highly documented 1977 case about a single mother, Peggy Hodgson (played here by Frances O'Connor); her four children; and the strange and terrifying happenings in their small home. As with

most stories about haunted houses, it starts small - bumps and voices and knocks, mysterious bites and sheets that fly off of children in the middle of the night - and escalates quickly to demonic possession of an 11-year-old girl, Janet (Madison Wolfe), by a 72-year-old Bill Wilkins (Bob Adrian).

This time, though, the Warrens have their own issues. In a prologue about the Amityville murders, Lorraine sees something that scares her so deeply, she has no choice but to put her foot down and demand that she and Ed stop this business of paranormal investigation. They can do the lecture and the press circuit, sure, but no more of this getting inside heads.

Meanwhile, the whole industry of paranormal investigation is being picked apart by naysayers in the press, so when the Enfield situation springs up, the Catholic Church basically asks the Warrens to go ahead and try to get proof first to save the church from another embarrassing hoax situation. While interesting, the constant skepticism and wavering trust also work to dull the fun of the scares. Is the

audience supposed to doubt little Janet, too? It's never really clear. The film is also way too long and the tricks end up feeling a little repetitive and obvious, although there's a really great sequence in the Warrens' home with a creepy picture that Ed painted.

The horror sequel is a tough thing to pull off in general, and "The Conjuring 2" is most certainly one of the better efforts. The case files of the Warrens should provide some wickedly fun material for many sequels to come. But, for better or worse, the first movie was just too good and "The Conjuring 2" can't hold a candle to its predecessor. "The Conjuring 2," a Warner Bros. release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America for "terror and horror violence." Running time: 133 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four. — AP



This image released by Warner Bros. shows Madison Wolfe in a scene from the New Line Cinema thriller, "The Conjuring 2." — AP photos



This image released by Warner Bros shows, from left, Vera Farmiga, Simon McBurney, Abhi Sinha, Frances O'Connor and Patrick Wilson in a scene from the New Line Cinema thriller, "The Conjuring 2."

The marriage advice no one gave you

By Hassan Al Mousawi

Marriage is a beautiful blend between science and art. Expression is artistic yet how men and women think can be analyzed scientifically. For the past decade, the only advice I hear married men give is... don't sleep while upset and don't involve other people in your marriage. Although I fully agree with both, there must be more. While generic advice might save you a lot of heartache, my question is: How do you go from a good marriage to a great one?

My measure of success is always happiness. Not only when you are with your partner, but a general satisfaction with your life feeling that your partner is a true contributor, and no matter how hard it gets, it's never bad because of them.

Well, I may not be the perfect example but the fact that my wife and I haven't killed each other is a good sign.

It is so easy to get overwhelmed with work, obstacles and all the usual life annoyances that keep our mind busy. With time we tend to forget why we fell in love with our spouse in the first place.

Unlike the times you first started talking, where you lay in bed staring at the ceiling thinking of how wonderful they are. We assume that if its love we should feel it always with no effort. That is a big myth, a marriage does require a lot of

effort, love itself does. There are many things we love but when they are not prominent in our mind we tend to forget our love for them.

In order to keep the marriage alive in your heart you must do the work and it does take effort.

My favorite thing to do is to take 10 minutes a day remembering all the little things I love about my wife. Really taking the time to appreciate her. My tone and attention towards her will be elevated the whole day because of it. This makes it easier to forgive her, let the little things go and appreciate her on a whole new level, all factors that are crucial to a marriage.

The rule is simple. Act the same way you did in the beginning and there will be no end. While we work so hard to ensure our spouse is happy (or at least not miserable), we miss the true potential. If we shift the focus to ourselves and reignite our own passion in the relationship, everything else will magically fall into place. The butterflies will be back, and this level of love and appreciation will spill over into all areas of your life.

So take the time today to really appreciate your spouse. Go back in time to all the little things that took your breath away and the reasons why you fell for them in the first place. Seeing your spouse with love struck eyes will bring out the side of them you fell for. As if by magic you will appeal to all the sides of them that drew you in the first place.



Bollywood filmmaker challenges censoring of drug-abuse film

A Bollywood film producer took his row with India's censor board to a court yesterday, challenging dozens of cuts and changes to a film that depicts the menace of drug abuse in the northern state of Punjab.

Censor Board Chief Pahlaj Nihalini said in a newspaper interview that the movie wrongly depicts 70 percent of people of the state consuming drugs and defaming them. He told reporters that the censor board has approved the movie for screening in theaters with the cuts ordered. He accused producer Anurag Kashyap of whipping up a controversy to create interest in his film.

Compared to Hollywood, movie norms in India are extremely strict. Censorship authorities often order filmmakers - both Indian and foreign - to chop scenes deemed offensive. Films with graphic content can be barred completely. Last year, India's censor authorities ordered that kissing scenes in the James Bond movie, "Spectre," be shortened before it was released in the country.

Kashyap asked the Mumbai High Court to overrule the cuts ordered by the censor board. The court is expected to take up the petition later Wednesday.



Producer of Bollywood film "Uda Punjab," or "Flying Punjab" Anurag Kashyap gestures during a press conference, in Mumbai. — AP

It could reject the matter or order reconsideration. Kashyap said the censor board chief Nihalini demanded 89 cuts to the film and even asked him to drop the name of the state from the title, "Uda Punjab," or "Flying Punjab."

Bollywood producers and directors rallied behind Kashyap in his fight with the censor board. "The job of the censor board is to certify films and not suggest cuts," Producer-director Kabir Khan

regretted that the censor board was putting pressure on the film producer to accept cuts or whatever it suggests 10 days before its release.

Punjab state borders Pakistan, and most of the drugs trafficked in the region originate from Afghanistan and are processed in Pakistan's tribal areas. The Taliban control cultivation of opium poppies and smuggling routes, particularly in the south of Afghanistan.

Kashyap said on Twitter: "There is no film more honest than 'Uda Punjab,'" and that opponents of the film were promoting drugs. The controversy took a political twist with state legislature elections due early next year. Opposition Congress and Aam Admi Party accuse leaders of the ruling regional group, the Akali Dal, of providing patronage and shelter to the drug mafia in return for money. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party is an ally of the regional group. Modi's government appointed Nihalini as the censor board chief last year. — AP

Snoop Dogg returns to rap roots on new album

Snoop Dogg has returned to his rap roots-as well as his familiar love of marijuana-as he released a new song Tuesday and detailed his upcoming album. "Coolaid," which will come out on July 1, will be Snoop Dogg's first hip-hop album in five years, he said in a statement.

The first song, "Kush Ups," is driven by a bouncy beat and explores the delights of marijuana, of which a popular strain with origins in South Asia is known as Kush. Fellow hip-hop star Wiz Khalifa, joining Snoop Dogg in the song, boasts of the size of his joints and raps, "So much weight that now I'm doing Kush Ups."

Snoop Dogg and Wiz Khalifa also announced a joint 33-date tour of North America that will open on July 20 in West Palm Beach, Florida. A longtime aficionado of marijuana, Snoop Dogg debuted a video for the song on Merry Jane, a cannabis culture website he founded, and has invested in a smartphone delivery service for medical marijuana in his native California.

Snoop Dogg earlier appeared on a track entitled "Kush" with his mentor, rap mogul Dr Dre. He has previously collaborated with Wiz Khalifa. The pair, along with pop singer Bruno Mars, celebrated marijuana on the 2011 hit "Young, Wild and Free." Emerging from the gangsta rap scene of southern California, Snoop Dogg, who has sold more than 35 million albums, quickly found his calling with smoother sounds.

His last album, "Bush," took an R&B turn and featured songs with singing legends Stevie Wonder and Charlie Wilson. In 2013, he renamed himself Snoop Lion and released a reggae album entitled "Reincarnated." The 44-year-old-despite a past that includes arrests over drug and weapons possession-is also the star of a new reality television show, "Coach Snoop," that shows his side career as a youth football coach. — AFP



This file photo taken on May 16, 2016 shows Calvin Broadus Jr, better known as Snoop Dogg, poses on arrival for the LA Premiere of AOL and First Row Film's Docu-Series "Coach Snoop" in Hollywood. — AFP

The uphill battle for female-driven comedies

"Bridesmaids" was supposed to change the game for the female-driven comedy. But each new movie is still treated like a beta test for the genre and the next unwitting subjects are "Ghostbusters," out July 15, and "Bad Moms," out July 29. Isn't it supposed to be summer?

"Let's wait and see how Ghostbusters does" has become a common phrase in the press and the industry - as if the future of female-led comedic blockbusters depends on Melissa McCarthy, Kristen Wiig, Leslie Jones, and Kate McKinnon.

It all sounds eerily familiar to director Paul Feig, the high priest of female ensemble comedy. He heard the same thing with "Bridesmaids." "It's unfair that women have to be put through litmus tests all the time. What if Ghostbusters doesn't work?" Feig said. "If a giant tent pole starring men doesn't do well, people don't go 'oh well, we can't have guys in movies anymore.'"

Kay Cannon, who wrote the cappella comedy "Pitch Perfect" and its sequel, which together cost \$46 million to make and earned \$402.9 million worldwide, has had similar experiences. "I feel like with every movie, we're auditioning to be members of this business," she said. Former Universal Pictures Chairman Adam Fogelson, who greenlit "Bridesmaids" and "Pitch Perfect," sees it differently.

"I think it is true that the movies are discussed that way. I'm not sure I think it's true that in fact each movie carries that weight. People tend to forget just how many success stories there are," Fogelson said, rattling off titles like "9 to 5," "The First Wives Club," "Bring It On," "Clueless," "Mean Girls" and "Baby Mama." In his mind, if "Bridesmaids" was breaking any new ground, it was around the R-rating.

Frustrations and challenges

Fogelson's company STX Entertainment is behind "Bad Moms," starring Mila Kunis, Kristen Bell and Kathryn Hahn, which he guarantees will have an R-rating, too. "There is no honest PG-13 expression of the frustrations, the challenges and the hilarity of pursuing perfect parenthood," Fogelson said. He also recognizes that beyond its R-rating, "Bridesmaids" took on an added significance that snowballed externally. "Legally Blonde" co-

screenwriter Kirsten "Kiwi" Smith was one leading the charge. "I sent out a mass email saying 'please support the endangered species of the female-driven comedy,'" Smith said.

As with most things in Hollywood, the effects of the film's phenomenal success were complicated. Feig and his stars did well. "Pitch Perfect" got off the ground. But Smith's peers weren't seeing an uptick in project sales.

"It was like, 'no, wait, this isn't supposed to be happening. The movie's a hit. Now we're supposed to be able to sell all our female-driven comedies,'" she said. "It didn't happen." She thinks some thought "Bridesmaids" was an anomaly. Feig, meanwhile, continued to do his thing. "I was hoping that I'd be able to show Hollywood that these movies are profitable and that they can

stop using the excuse that men won't show up," Feig said.

He disproved the old box office myth that female-led movies "don't travel" by creating "Spy," a movie with all the elements of a marketable action-comedy that just happened to have a woman, McCarthy, as the lead. But, again, it seemed to only benefit his circle. "My end game wasn't OK, Paul Feig will make all the female-led movies," Feig said. Now he's dismayed that every summer there only seem to be a few, despite continued proof that they're just good business.

For instance, in the summer of 2015, the so-called "summer of women," four female-led studio comedies ("Pitch Perfect 2," "Trainwreck," "Spy," "Hot Pursuit") made over \$715 million at the worldwide box office. The price tag: \$164 million.



The bottom line

Hollywood, however, is not governed solely by the bottom line, but also by "comps." It wants proven stars and proven properties. That limits the talent pool and leaves less room for originality, and it's forcing those in this genre to get creative with existing properties, whether it's gender swapping like the new "Ghostbusters" or just expanding a current universe like "Sister Act" (Smith and co-writer Karen McCullough recently turned in a draft for a third installment in the franchise). "This is a means to an end and the most important thing is putting more films out there that feature smart, funny, strong and fiery women," Smith said.

There's also the box office lore that movies targeted toward men generally get a pretty even distribution of gender into theaters, whereas movies targeted at women can sometimes have an exaggeratedly female audience. Just last year, "Magic Mike XXL" attracted an opening weekend audience that was 96 percent women.

Yet films like "Bridesmaids" have, of course, proven otherwise and most in the industry are hopeful for the future. After her Netflix series "Girlboss" wraps, Cannon is going to direct her first feature, "The Pact," about three teenage girls hoping to lose their virginity and the parents who try to stop them. She did have to spend some time tweaking the script, which was written by two men.

And there are a few studios that have more female-centric films on their roster, like 20th Century Fox's Amy Schumer comedy "Mother/Daughter" and Universal's "Pitch Perfect 3," "Girl Trip" and "Bridget Jones's Baby." Beyond "Ghostbusters," Sony has a "Charlie's Angels" reboot, a live-action "Barbie" comedy, and the bachelorette party comedy "Rock that Body." But for Feig, it's still the same old issue. "It's nice that there are any... there just need to be more," he said. "Nobody should be celebrating or patting themselves on the back right now." — AP

In this image released by Sony Pictures, from left, Leslie Jones, Melissa McCarthy, Kristen Wiig and Kate McKinnon from the film, "Ghostbusters." —AP



In this late Tuesday, June 7, 2016 picture, Egyptians play with fireworks as they celebrate the holy month of Ramadan in Cairo, Egypt. — AP

Artist Christo walks on water with 'Floating Piers'

It's taken nearly 2,000 years, but regular folks will soon get to feel what it is like to walk on water thanks to a project by the artist Christo, who may or may not have had his namesake in mind when envisioning his latest project: "The Floating Piers." "Any interpretation is legitimate," Christo, 80, allowed graciously in an interview Tuesday with The Associated Press at the picturesque Lake Iseo in northern Italy where his 23rd large-scale installation is just a week and a half from opening.

Since November, Christo and his team have been overseeing the assembly and anchoring of 220,000 floating poly-ethylene cubes to create a 3-kilometer undulating runway connecting the mainland with a pair of islands, one inhabited and towering above the lake.

"For the first time, for 16 days, from the 18th of June to July 3, they will walk on the water," Christo said of the 2,000 residents of Monte Isolo, which is normally only accessible by boat. "The Floating Piers" is expected to draw half a million visitors during the longest days of the year to northern Italy's least-known big lake.

That is considerably fewer than the 5 million who visited Christo's and his late wife Jeanne-Claude's famous "Wrapped Reichstag" in Berlin in 1995 and the 2 million who walked through their work "The Gates" in New York City's Central Park in 2005, due largely to the relatively rural location.

A final touch

The project still awaits a final touch: The application of deep yellow fabric that the artist promises will dramatically shift from nearly red to brilliant gold under the effects of light and humidity. "You will need sunscreen," from the reflection, he says with conviction. The project awakens many metaphors: Yellow brick road, for the fantastical journey it beckons.

Runway, for the attention it commands. Beach for the lapping waves along the sloping edges of the 16-meter wide boulevard. The fabric, which will be sewn into place by German seamstresses with specially made sewing machines, to create natural ruching. This effect prompts Christo to warn that visitors will have to step carefully along the oscillating platform. The artist describes the sensation as "walking on the back of a whale."

Once the installation opens on June 18, 150 volunteers, among them lifeguards, will be posted on the piers and on boats around the clock to ensure safety. Swimming is forbidden-but expected, despite the cold water temperatures.



Workers walk on the installation.

Entrance is free, with the entire cost of the 15 million euro (\$17 million) project financed by the artist himself.

Christo's projects are as much feats of engineering as they are works of art. He has brought in a team of athletes from his native Bulgaria to assemble the specially made, recently invented cubes and divers to anchor them to concrete slabs on the lake-floor, employing oil-rig-inspired two-week rotations. The 190 anchors were moved into place by air balloons.

Like many of his previous installations, "The Floating Piers," had its own destiny. Christo and Jeanne-Claude, who died in 2009, originally envisioned it for the delta of Rio de la Plata, Argentina, in 1970 but they failed to get permissions. They then considered Tokyo Bay, but again failed to get the permits.

"The project is done for ourselves. And if other people like it, it's almost a bonus, very much like a painter who (has) huge big canvases they like to fill it with color. You don't fill

the canvas with color to please Mr Smith, Mr Jones, you fill it with color because you like to have the joy to see this color," Christo said.

'Over the River'

When his 80th birthday was bearing down on him and his "Over the River" proposal to drape fabric over the Arkansas River in southern Colorado was still embroiled in court battles, Christo decided to make another run at "The Floating Piers."

He chose Lake Iseo for its calm waters and simple shoreline against the majestic Alpine foothills that some believe may have inspired the background of Leonardo's "Mona Lisa." Christo suggests the hypothesis is made believable by the misty effect created by the lake climate, softening the mountain contours. In a painterly gesture, he said he made sure that the project offered vistas not only of the mountains, but also



Bulgarian-born artist Christo Vladimirov Yavachev known as Christo walks on his installation.

of the lake's medieval towns and verdant flora. The installation physically draws in visitors, demanding their participation to get the full experience. That's by the artist's design. "I don't like to talk on the telephone, I like to see the real people. And of course I don't understand anything of computers. I like to have the real things, the real water, the real sun, the real kilometer, the real wind, the real fear, the real joy," he said.

Christo delighted in the gentle movement of the nearly finished project. He instructed a boat driver to circle past the runway to create waves and smiled gleefully at the gentle oscillation of the platform. Had the original project gone through, it would have been built with stodgier pontoons, lacking the kinetic grace allowed by the recently invented cubes. "Each project finds his right place," he said. — AP



Aerial views of the in progress installation 'The Floating Piers' by Bulgarian-born artist Christo Vladimirov Yavachev known as Christo, on the Lake Iseo, northern Italy. — AP photos