

India's Muslim women fight 'triple talaq' divorce



Euro 2016 kicks off in France despite strikes and threats



Private schools' fees to be raised three percent annually

Ramadan Timings

Emsak:	03:03
Fajer:	03:13
Shrooq:	04:48
Dohr:	11:47
Asr:	15:21
Maghreb:	18:47
Eshaa:	20:19



THOUSANDS BID FAREWELL TO THE BOXING LEGEND ALI

FINAL TRIBUTE TO 'THE GREATEST'



Min 28°
Max 47°



LOUISVILLE: The funeral procession for Muhammad Ali makes its way down Muhammad Ali Boulevard in Louisville, Ky yesterday. — AP

LOUISVILLE: Thousands of people came together across creeds and nationalities for a Muslim prayer service in remembrance of Muhammad Ali on Thursday, the start of a two-day farewell to the beloved boxing legend and civil rights hero. Men, women and whole families filled the cavernous Freedom Hall arena in Ali's hometown in Kentucky to pay their respects before the casket of the 20th century's most singular personalities, who died last week at age 74.

The brief ceremony in Louisville launched two days of interfaith tributes, bringing together dignitaries and ordinary fans, honoring a man known for both his tenacity in the ring and his social activism outside of it. "It was fabulous, seeing all the different nationalities, cultures, races, religions come together, even though it's a very sad situation that he passed, it's very inspirational," said Makeeba Edmund, a city employee, who is Muslim. Muslim men and women prayed in separate rows, most of the latter with their heads veiled.

One of those paying his respects was Babacar Gaye, a 54-year-old native of Senegal who remembers watching Ali fights at a house in Dakar as a teenager. "There would be at least 60 people watching it on a small black and white television," Gaye said. Born Cassius Clay at a time of racial segregation in the American South, the boxer converted to Islam in 1964, changing his name to Muhammad Ali and shocking America.

Continued on Page 9

Ramadan Kareem

3 PARTS OF RAMADAN

By Hassan T Bwambale

Ramadan is said to be split into three thirds: the Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said, "It (Ramadan) is the month whose beginning is mercy, middle, forgiveness and its end emancipation from the fire" (Bihar Al-Anwar, Vol 93). Salman Al-Farisi (RA) reported that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "...The first third of the month of Ramadan is the time for mercy, the second third is for forgiveness, the third is for release from Hellfire..." (Ibn Khuzaymah.) We hope to make the most of each third so that we can receive the blessing related to each.

For the first third of mercy, the following hadith comes to mind: The Prophet (PBUH) said, "While fasting remember the hunger and thirst on the Day of Judgment. Give alms to the poor and needy. Pay respect to your elders, have sympathy for your youngsters and be kind towards your relatives and kinsmen. Guard your tongue against unworthy words, and your eyes from scenes that are not worth seeing and your ears from sounds that should not be heard. Be kind to orphans so that if your children may become orphans they will also be treated with kindness."

The second third of Ramadan is characterized as a time when Allah (SWT)'s forgives. The Quran says, "And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord, and a Garden the extensiveness

Continued on Page 9



JERUSALEM: Palestinian men pray at the Al Aqsa Mosque compound, during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, in Jerusalem's Old City yesterday. — AP

LITTLE SUPPORT FOR TRUMP IN ARAB WORLD

JERUSALEM: An Israeli college has conducted an opinion poll of attitudes inside Egypt and Saudi Arabia, finding virtually no support for presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump in the two Arab countries. The survey, conducted by the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya, could signal trouble for Trump if he wins the November election and sets out to devise a Mideast policy. Egypt and Saudi Arabia are two of America's most powerful and important allies in the Arab world. When asked who their preferred candidate was, just 3.8 percent of Egyptian respondents chose Trump. In Saudi Arabia, only 6 percent favored Trump.

The presumptive Democratic nominee, Hillary Clinton, did better, though support was far from overwhelming. In Egypt, 35.7 percent of respondents chose Clinton, while in Saudi Arabia that number was 30.2 percent. "The overall pattern is that most people ... do not support either candidate, but they hate Trump essentially and one out of three support Hillary," said survey director Alex Mintz, director of the IDC's Institute for Policy and Strategy.

Mintz said Trump's poor ratings were likely the result of his inflammatory comments toward Muslims. Following the attacks by Islamic extremists in Paris and San Bernardino, California, last year, Trump called for a temporary ban on Muslims entering the US. He has also spoken against accepting Syrian refugees.

Mintz said the large number of respondents who preferred neither candidate - 41 percent in Egypt and 50 percent in Saudi Arabia - signaled general unhappiness with both of them. But the discontent with the US runs deeper than the presidential candidates. Just 16.7 percent of respondents in Egypt described President Barack Obama as being good or very good for the Muslim world. In Saudi Arabia, that figure was 20.1 percent. — AP



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani. — Amiri Diwan photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani are pictured shortly after Sheikh Tamim's arrival to Kuwait.



Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani is seen off at the airport by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

QATARI AMIR LEAVES KUWAIT AFTER CONGRATULATING AMIR ON RAMADAN

KUWAIT: Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and his accompanying delegation left Kuwait late Thursday after paying a fraternal visit during which Sheikh Tamim congratulated His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the holy month of Ramadan.

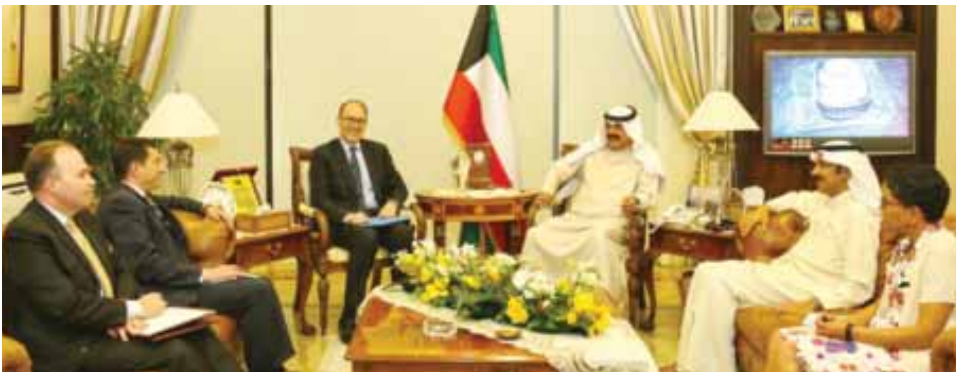
Sheikh Tamim was seen off at the airport by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Premier Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah, Deputy Premier and Defense Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, Deputy Premier, Finance Minister and Acting Oil Minister Anas Khaled Al-Saleh.

His Highness the Amir and Sheikh Tamim held cordial talks during their meeting which reflected the firm fraternal ties between the two nations and countries, and discussed means of enhancing them in all fields to serve mutual interests. They also dealt with issues of mutual interest and the latest developments on regional and international levels.

His Highness the Crown Prince, Speaker of National Assembly Marzouq Al-Ghanem, senior Sheikhs, Deputy Chief of the National Guards Sheikh Meshaal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak, Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, and senior officials were present in the meeting. Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir held an Iftar (fast-breaking) banquet in honor of Sheikh Tamim and his accompanying delegation. — KUNA



Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah bids farewell to Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani.



KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah meets with US Ambassador to Kuwait Douglas Silliman. — KUNA

DEPUTY FM MEETS US AMBASSADOR

KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah met on Thursday the US Ambassador to Kuwait Douglas Silliman, discussing bilateral relations between the two countries and conditions on the regional and international arenas. The meeting was attended by the Assistant Foreign Minister for the Minister's

Bureau affairs, Ambassador Aiham Abdullatif Al-Omar, and the Assistant Foreign Minister for the Two Americas, Reem Al-Khaled. Meanwhile, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem received in his office German Ambassador to Kuwait Eugen Wollfarth. — KUNA



National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem meets with German Ambassador to Kuwait Eugen Wollfarth.

KUWAIT JOINS PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

GENEVA: Kuwait has officially joined the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), the country's Permanent Representative to UN and International Organizations in Geneva Ambassador Jamal Al-Ghunaim has announced. Ghunaim made the statement yesterday after he handed over the country's PCT instrument to the

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Director General, Francis Gurry. By joining the PCT, Kuwait has thus made much headway in organizing intellectual and industrial property, patents in particular, he noted. This is part of a series of agreements Kuwait has joined over the past two years, Ghunaim said. — KUNA



GENEVA: Kuwait's Permanent Representative to UN and International Organizations in Geneva Ambassador Jamal Al-Ghunaim hands over the country's PCT instrument to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Director General Francis Gurry. — KUNA

PRIVATE SCHOOLS' FEES TO BE RAISED 3 PERCENT ANNUALLY

DECISION ISSUED ONE MONTH AFTER FEE HIKES HALTED

KUWAIT: A ministerial resolution will be issued in the coming days to restore the old system of raising private schools' fees by three percent annually, Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa said on Thursday.

The ministry had issued a decision in this respect but it remained under study at the parliament, Minister Essa told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on the sidelines of receiving students who won the International Robot Competition. He explained that the parliamentary educational affairs committee, examining the relevant decision, has not taken a decision yet.

The ministry now is inclining to hike the fees annually by three percent, Dr Essa said. However, he indicated that the fees raise ceiling would be open in the future. The decision will be applicable on new students and not those registered in the 2016-2017 scholastic year, the minister said.

Dr Essa had issued a ministerial decree last month aimed at halting private school fee hikes, and warned schools violating the decree that they would receive a warning letter, followed by suspension if the educational facility continues with the violation. The decree stressed that any additional expenses and charges taken unlawfully by the violating schools should be returned in accordance with the new decision.

Earlier this year, the National Assembly approved a recommendation stipulating that all fee increases by private schools must be suspended immediately until a parliamentary committee reviews the issue with the minister of education. The recommendation was passed following strong criticism by MPs against a number of private foreign schools that unilaterally raised their

fees before obtaining a permit from the ministry. Dr Essa had said the government accepted the recommendation, adding that the ministry had formed a committee to study the issue of fees at private schools.

Students honored

Meanwhile, Dr Essa honored a number of Kuwaiti students who have shown excellence in their scientific research. He noted the distinction of a group of students who recently won prizes in a contest dealing with robotics in Romania and made honorable mention of two female students, Huda Al-Rasheed and Munira Al-Rakhees, whose scientific research was hailed by the Paris Institute of Political Studies, a press statement by the minister said. He congratulated all the students on their commendable achievements in scientific research.

Kuwait University President, Dr Hussein Al-Ansari, said Huda and Munira were selected along with four others from among 180 students worldwide to receive accolades for their post-graduate research papers in economics. Munira Al-Rakhees said her research paper deals with the impact of gender inequality on economic growth in the Arab world, stressing that she collected data from 19 Arab countries toward writing her study.

Huda Al Rasheed said that her research paper deals with the importance of foreign direct investment on Arab economies. Dr Ansari noted that the prizes given to Huda and Munira for their excellent papers stems from an existing partnership between the French institution and Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS).



KUWAIT: Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa receives students who won the International Robot Competition. — KUNA



Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa receives female students, Huda Al-Rasheed and Munira Al-Rakhees.

OOREDOO KUWAIT RECOGNIZED FOR LEADERSHIP IN CUSTOMER CENTRICITY, EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

TEAM COLLECTS SIX CONTACT CENTER WORLD AWARDS

LONDON/KUWAIT: Ooredoo Kuwait, part of Ooredoo International Group, collected a haul of trophies for excellence in customer centricity and employee engagement from The Global Association for Contact Center and Customer Engagement Best Practices at its annual Contact Center World Awards held in London last week. These included individual awards for leadership as well as trophies for implementing best-practice and operational excellence.

The presentations were made at the 2016 Best Contact Center Practices conference at the Grange City Hotel in London last week. This followed a rigorous judging process including a written submission and a public presentation made by the nominees to delegates of the conference. The awards receive on average around 1,500 submissions annually from call centers across all industries including both in-house and outsourced operations.

First trophy

Ooredoo's first trophy was presented to Kuwaiti national Wael Al-Sultan who was named Best Contact Center Director in EMEA. Wael was recognized both for his unique leadership style as well as his efficacy in introducing wide-ranging improvements in Ooredoo's contact center.

These have resulted in the Kuwaiti mobile operator taking a leading position in customer satisfaction and retention whilst generating additional revenues from providing advanced technology services to Kuwait's technologically savvy citizens.

Wael Al-Sultan, Head of Customer Care at Ooredoo Kuwait said: "It is truly an honor to have been presented this award by our peers across the call center industry. Having implemented some significant and wide-ranging enhancements over the past 12 months - it is deeply satisfying to see our efforts recognized, and in particular that our entire team has been rewarded at this



prestigious event."

Sultan continued: "I thank everyone at Ooredoo Kuwait, and especially my colleagues in the contact center and our support functions in IT and HR, for their commitment to team work and their dedication to our customers and staff."

Wael was joined on stage by fellow Kuwaiti nationals, Laila Al-Sharraf and Lina Al-Kaaki - who were recognized for excellence in the Support Professional categories for IT and HR respectively. This recognizes the importance that Ooredoo Kuwait places in its customer care technical infrastructure and Human Resource Practices to ensure its customers are not only buying the latest mobile innovations - but that they are enjoying the experience of being served by motivated employees equipped with the most up-to-date technologies as well.

Positive relationship

Ooredoo Kuwait's contact center was also recognized for providing a positive working relationship with its agents, being awarded for its unique incentive program and in the medium-sized contact center category.

Ooredoo's incentive program rewards agents with 'points' based on the value and priority of the service they sell. They are also deducted points for unsatisfactory service as judged by the customer. Ooredoo Kuwait converts these points into a financial bonus which is awarded at the end of the month - supplementary to the agent's salary and other benefits.

Ooredoo Kuwait's incentive scheme was so influential that it has not only supported annual year-on-year revenue growth - but it has also reduced staff turn-over and improved employee advocacy. This program is now being rolled out across the Ooredoo Group.

These awards were collected by Cobus Crous, the operational manager for Ooredoo Kuwait's contact center who was himself recognized in the Best Contact Center Operational Manager category.

The Contact Center World Awards have been encouraging excellence across the industry for eleven years. They pride themselves on the transparency and fairness of the awards process which has multiple layers and stages of judging. 1,500 submissions were judged in the early stages and 70 companies eventually recognized for being the best of EMEA.

The Contact Center World Awards are organized by The Global Association for Contact Center and Customer Engagement Best Practices. The association has a truly global footprint (members in over 200 countries) and supports 148,000 personal members from enterprises of all sizes with ideas, information and opportunities including best practice awards, conferences and certification programs.

NURSES END STRIKE

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Two hundred and seventy male and female nurses ended their strike at Adan Hospital on Thursday. The nurses went on

a two-day strike in protest of not receiving their salaries from the contracted company with the Health Ministry. The nurses resumed their work after receiving one month's salary, while officials promised to pay the second month within days.

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.

2016/76

Kuwait Times Ramadan Quiz Answer & Win

6. The fundamental principles of Islam are how many? Islam is based on five fundamental principles.

YES NO

Kuwait Times Ramadan Quiz Answer & Win

Date: _____

Name: _____

Civil ID.: _____

Tel: _____

Email: _____

Crime

Report

FOUR ARRESTED ON DRUG TRAFFICKING CHARGES

KUWAIT: Criminal detectives arrested three male citizens and a girl in Salmiya, after a police patrol suspected a vehicle parked in an open yard. When police approached it, the driver attempted to drive away, but detectives stopped him and asked for his ID. Detectives also noticed a bag of shabu. The citizen, in his twenties, was arrested, and told police that he gets drugs from another citizen, a former soldier wanted to serve 16 years jail sentence on a drugs case. Authorities went to his house and found a sensitive scale, money and a safe where illicit material was kept. A cross-dresser was found in the house along with a tomboy, who was under the influence of drugs. The girl sold drugs to other girls. They were sent to the drugs prosecution.

Drug dealer caught

Interior Ministry Assistant Undersecretary for Criminal Detectives Affairs Major General Abdelhameed Al-Awadhi sent an Egyptian man to the public prosecution charged with trading in drugs. Meanwhile, a security source said a Pakistani inmate is being interrogated as the Egyptian said he works for him. The arrest was made following information about an Egyptian selling drugs in Salwa. A task force was formed and the suspect's residence was raided, where hashish and shabu were found. He led police to the house of an Arab expat in Farwaniya, from whom he received the drugs. Drugs and a sensitive scale were found in the house, and the Arab told police about the prison inmate.

Neighbors' fight

An Egyptian man accused his Kuwaiti neighbor of beating him and lodged a complaint at Farwaniya police station. The citizen said his neighbor leaves his garbage in front of the flat and causes filth in the area. He said that he asked the neighbor several times to stop this practice but does not care for the feelings of his neighbors, so he argued with him and it turned into a fight. Separately, a citizen stormed the diwaniya of his neighbor in Fahd Al-Ahmad and beat him while demanding, "Why did you park your car in front of my house?" The victim lodged a complaint with a medical report attached.

Scam

An Ethiopian man told Salmiya policemen that he received a call from a special number and was told he had won KD 5,000 in a draw by a telecommunications company, and that the money will be deposited within an hour in his account. He was asked for his account number and PIN so that the company could access the account. The victim said only a few minutes after the call, he received an SMS from the bank telling him his account was debited by KD 1,790. Preliminary investigations revealed the call came from a Gulf country. Investigations are underway.

— Al-Rai and Al-Anbaa

INTERIOR MINISTRY RESPONDS TO UNIVERSITY'S CRITICAL REMARKS

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Director General of the Relations and Security Information Department at the Ministry of Interior (MoI) Brigadier Adel



Brigadier Adel Al-Hashash

Al-Hashash expressed regrets towards statements made by the admissions and registration department at Kuwait University (KU) about MoI's temporary postponement of admitting student officers for the next two academic years. KU said this will negatively affect the admissions process and the number of those applying at the university.

Hashash said the Interior Ministry does not accept any statements that "do not serve our youth, and the ministry is keen on their future and interest in all fields that serve the country." Hashash said the postponement decision came following full studies and intensive research and continued evaluation. It also came following accurate analyses and results on the importance of linking graduates and security training with the comprehensive security strategy, and based on education and practical needs.

82 KG SPOILED FISH, MEAT DESTROYED

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Farwaniya municipality branch launched a field campaign that resulted in destroying 62 kg of fish unfit for human consumption and 20 kg of spoiled meat. The municipality's public relations department said the campaign lasted from 9:00 pm Thursday to 12:30 am Friday morning, and included several shops, restaurants and supermarkets in various areas of the governorate. Head of the emergency team at Farwaniya branch Khalid Al-Radaan said some of the workers do not know how to move and store food, which causes it to spoil, and they should be educated on proper handling of foodstuff.

Food safety

Meanwhile, Kuwait Municipality Director General Ahmad Al-Manfouhi said municipality departments will continue intensifying

their supervisory role at all branches to guarantee the safety of foodstuff, be it on sale or stored. He said the municipality will tackle any violation that may constitute a danger to citizens' and expats' health.



Kuwait Municipality Director General Ahmad Al-Manfouhi

Photo

o f t h e d a y



KUWAIT: The Arabian Gulf's coast seen moments after sunset during Ramadan in Kuwait. — Photo by Joseph Shagra



KUWAIT: Businesswoman Amal Al-Jarallah (left). — KUNA photos

RAMADAN EXHIBITIONS, IMPORTANT VENUES FOR KUWAITI BUSINESS VENTURES

KUWAIT: Vendors and business owners in Kuwait await for the advent of Ramadan to sell their products at various exhibitions held during the Holy Month. Ramadan exhibitions provide a platform for them to sell their goods due to the huge turnout of clients that these events generate.

In a number of interviews, business personnel spoke about how Ramadan exhibitions allowed them to exchange expertise with their peers, as well as benefit financially from the huge number of clients attending. It is an opportunity for us to explore possibilities for growth in our respective businesses, said Fouzi Al-Shibeeb, a businessman.

He said that business owners could benefit from various means to promote and sell their products, adding that exhibitions during the month of Ramadan were the perfect venues for such goals. The huge turnout that the events produce was an indication of the success of these types of exhibitions, Shibeeb stressed, noting that most of the customers were ladies.

Meanwhile, businesswoman Amal Al-Jarallah said that she benefited greatly from the use of Social Media in the promotion of her products and added that the Ramadan exhibitions also provided more exposure for her business. Jarallah indicated that she was involved in the traditional Kuwaiti cuisine business, noting the exhibition had helped her in bringing the business out the boundaries of her home. Other business vendors partaking the exhibitions expressed their gratitude towards organizing such events, which had a great impact on the success of each of their own individual businesses. — KUNA



International

SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 2016

Desertions on the rise as Islamic State loses ground

8

Hindu monastery worker hacked to death in B'desh

12

Clinton tells Trump: 'Delete your Twitter account'

13



NEW HAMPSHIRE: In this June 3, 2007 file photo, then-Democratic Presidential candidates, then-Sen Hillary Clinton, D-NY, left, answers a question alongside then-Sen. Barack Obama, D-III during the Democratic presidential primary debate in Manchester. — AP

OBAMA ENDORSES CLINTON FOR PRESIDENT

SHOT IN THE ARM FOR THE CLINTON CAMPAIGN

WASHINGTON: President Barack Obama endorsed one-time rival Hillary Clinton to be his successor Thursday, signaling to Democrats it is time to unify after a bitter primary campaign and beat Donald Trump. "Tens of millions of Americans made their voices heard. Today I just want to add mine," Obama said in a video endorsement. "I'm with her."

Their first joint campaign event will take place next Wednesday in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Obama won the state in 2008 and 2012, but Democrats expect a tough fight this year. Obama's endorsement, although long expected, is a shot in the arm for the Clinton campaign. She has struggled for a year against leftist rival Bernie Sanders. The 74-year-old ran an unlikely grassroots campaign that swelled to a 12-million-strong movement.

Clinton finally clinched the nomination just days ago, prompting Obama to offer his backing. "I don't think there's ever been someone so qualified to hold this office," Obama said. The 44th president's support gives Clinton a potent surrogate on the campaign trail. Ex-presidents George W Bush and Bill Clinton were so toxic by their eighth year in office that would-be successors kept them at arm's length.

By contrast, Obama is still one of the country's most popular politicians. His approval ratings among black, Hispanic, young and liberal voters are stratospheric. Clinton welcomed the vote of confidence: "Honored to have you with me, @POTUS. I'm fired up and ready to go!" she tweeted, echoing one of Obama's own campaign rallying cries from 2008.

In that primary race, Obama bested Clinton and eventually

became the first black president. They later made peace, as Clinton became his first secretary of state. Now the 68-year-old Clinton is trying to make history of her own by becoming the first female commander in chief. Standing in her way is bombastic businessman Trump. He has shocked the world by becoming the presumptive Republican presidential nominee. "Obama just endorsed Crooked Hillary. He wants four more years of Obama - but nobody else does!" Trump tweeted.

'Fascist threat'

Trump's racially tinged rhetoric has split the Grand Old Party. A growing number of Republicans say they will not vote for him. But "The Donald" appears to be uniting Democrats. "We must come together to confront the fascist threat to our democracy presented by Donald Trump," said Martin O'Malley, who had sought the Democratic nomination and on Thursday also endorsed Clinton.

Senator Elizabeth Warren, a darling of the left who had been pressed by supporters to mount her own White House bid, and who has since been discussed as a possible vice presidential pick, rounded out the high-profile Democratic endorsements. "I am ready to get in this fight and work my heart out for Hillary Clinton," the liberal stalwart told MSNBC, "and to make sure that Donald Trump never gets any place close to the white house."

The timing of Obama's announcement appeared designed to push the process forward. It came just an hour after he hosted Sanders in the Oval Office. Sanders has pointedly refused to bow out. The two men strode along the West Wing

colonnade laughing, a very public show of respect for Sanders' insurgent bid.

Sanders "has run an incredible campaign," Obama said, offering praise for raising issues like campaign finance reform. The septuagenarian emerged from the White House vowing to continue his fight into next week-but also saying he would meet Clinton soon to find ways to work together.

Later in the day Sanders held a rally in the capital Washington, which hosts the final primary of the season Tuesday. "We have shown the world that you can run a winning national campaign without being dependent on Wall Street, drug companies or big money interests," Sanders told a crowd outside a stadium where he touched on his many campaign themes including alleviating income inequality and racial injustice.

"Thank you Bernie! Thank you Bernie!" the crowd chanted. Some Sanders supporters would like him to battle all the way to the party convention in Philadelphia next month. For weeks he has pledged to do so, but it was notable that in Thursday's hour-long speech he made no mention of it. For many, Clinton-a former first lady, secretary of state and US senator is the epitome of a political establishment that has failed the people.

More pragmatic Sanderistas are pressing him to leverage his new-found political clout to shift the party to the left. They would like to see the party platform overhauled and reforms to the next nominating process in 2020 — opening primaries to independent voters and curbing the role of bigwig "superdelegates." — AFP

HOW ONE FAMILY ESCAPED BESIEGED FALLUJAH

BAGHDAD: Abu Marwan, his wife and his three children are among the very few Iraqi civilians to have escaped from the heart of the Islamic State group's besieged stronghold of Fallujah. Most of the more than 20,000 people who have reached safety since Iraqi forces launched an offensive last month are from the outskirts of the city, which lies only 50 kilometers west of Baghdad.

The 49-year-old man and his family were able to leave Fallujah this week but tens of thousands more civilians remained trapped in the city by IS. This is the account he gave AFP by telephone of life under the jihadists and how his family eventually got out:

"We did not flee Fallujah when Daesh (IS) took over at the end of 2013," he said, referring to the start of a period of anti-government protests during which IS's previous incarnation gradually took over the city. "We expected

the crisis would end within weeks or months. But the gunmen soon had the people on a tight leash, imposing new rules, issuing decrees, setting up barriers and planting bombs on the streets. "That continued through 2014 and 2015... We were already affected by this but our living conditions deteriorated abruptly at the beginning of this year. "My neighbor and I contacted somebody called Abu Omar, who is a Daesh member known as the "wali" (local chief) of southern Fallujah, to facilitate our exfiltration from the city in return for smuggling his wife with us," Abu Marwan said.

"He had cut a deal for his wife to be taken to Kirkuk. "Daesh calls the wives of its members 'State women' and women in the city who have not pledged allegiance to the movement are called 'common women'," Abu Marwan explained.

Euphrates crossing

The deal was sealed with the 'wali' in two days. Abu Marwan prepared his car and his family and Abu Omar's wife all squeezed in. "We were stopped at many checkpoints but when we said Abu Omar sent us, they let us through. Then he appeared on a motorcycle and drove in front of us to open the way. He told us we should keep a distance of 100 meters.

Abu Marwan said they snaked their way down to an area called Zoba by the Euphrates. "There were many Daesh fighters along the way, heavily armed and hiding in various shelters," he said. A senior commander in the operation to retake Fallujah, one of the jihadists' most emblematic bastions, said up to 2,500 IS fighters were defending the city. —AFP



SHUHADA: Iraqi government forces members gesture as they stand at the edge of Shuhada neighborhood, south of Fallujah, during an operation to regain control of the area from the Islamic State (IS) group. —AFP

DESERTIONS ON THE RISE AS ISLAMIC STATE LOSES GROUND

PARIS: Growing numbers of Western jihadists are deserting the Islamic State (IS) group and returning to countries like France, where security services are trying to sort genuine repenters from terror suspects, experts say. IS, which is losing ground on several fronts in Syria and Iraq, is also battling to prevent some of the thousands of foreign volunteers who have joined its ranks since 2014 giving up the fight and going home.

"They sense that we have entered the final stage. Many are starting to send us messages to know how they can return," France's national intelligence coordinator, Didier Le Bret, told AFP. "Expanding the glorious caliphate is no longer on the agenda and we know that some have been killed while trying to flee," he added. Slipping past the Sunni extremists is no easy task, making Western security services wary of returning jihadists. "We worry when we get someone back. How do you know whether he is sincere or on a mission?" Le Bret said. Patrick Calvar, head of the domestic intelligence agency DGSI told the National Assembly, or lower house of parliament, in mid-May that 244 people had returned to France from Syria and Iraq.

"We're seeing more and more (expressions) of intention to return home," he told lawmakers. But

many of those who wanted to defect were "prevented by Daesh (IS) policy, which considers those who want to leave Syria as traitors to be immediately executed," he said. In January 2014, five months before IS proclaimed a caliphate in parts of Syria and Iraq, a study by the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation (ICSR) at King's College London set up a database of returning jihadists, to try understand their motivations. The list currently runs to 60 names.

'It's just slaughter'

The ICSR gave various reasons for the growing disenchantment among IS recruits. "The defectors' reasons for leaving may be as complex as the reasons they joined," ICSR director Peter Neumann wrote in a report in September. "Not everyone has become a fervent supporter of liberal democracy. Some may have committed crimes."

Neumann said four main complaints emerged from the testimonies of the returnees: "IS is more interested in fighting fellow (Sunni) Muslims than the Assad government", 'IS is involved in brutality and atrocities against (Sunni) Muslims', 'IS is corrupt and un-Islamic' and 'life under IS is harsh and disappointing'. Shiraz Maher, one of the researchers who interviewed the deserters, told AFP that "most" of the returning fighters insisted "I

didn't come (to Syria) for that". "I want to tell all the mujahideens not to come to Syria. This is not jihad. You will find yourself killing other Muslims," she quoted them as saying.

Wanton barbarity

The losses sustained by IS in Syria and Iraq in recent weeks may also spur the homeward movement. Scores of IS fighters have been killed on various fronts, according to monitors. Life in Islamic State strongholds like the Syrian city of Raqqa is often a far cry from the utopian visions of a pure Islamic society that lured some foreign combatants.

Heady dreams of adventure, comradeship and glory on the battlefield founder on a daily diet of grinding hardship, wanton barbarity and constant fear-of IS itself, bombardments by its adversaries or both. Shiraz recalled: "One told me they think nothing of bringing down buildings with women and children inside, just to kill one person. It's not revolutionary jihad, it's just slaughter." Some of the returnees also complain of discrimination by IS commanders on the basis of country of origin. An Indian who went to fight was relegated to the most menial of tasks. "They made me clean the toilets," he said. —AFP

FIRST FOOD AID REACHES DARAYA

BEIRUT: After nearly four years of siege, first food deliveries have reached the Damascus rebel suburb of Daraya but government airstrikes were holding up the distribution of the aid yesterday, opposition activists said. In northern Syria, Kurdish-led opposition fighters besieged the Islamic State-held town of Manbij yesterday in the climax to a Western-backed offensive that could see a major strategic victory in the region against the militant group.

Before surrounding Manbij, the predominantly Kurdish Syria Democratic Forces captured dozens of villages and farms around it in the past weeks, according to the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which closely monitors the fighting in Syria. SDF has been pushing in an offensive since late May in an attempt to capture the Islamic State's stronghold, one of its largest in Aleppo province. The Observatory said an IS commander from north Africa was killed in the latest round of fighting.

If the US-backed SDF captures Manbij, it will be the biggest strategic defeat for IS in Syria since July 2015, when it lost the border town of Tal Abyad, a major supply route to the militants' de facto capital of Raqqa. The Damascus suburb of Daraya, just southwest of the Syrian capital, has been under siege by government forces since November 2012 and has witnessed some of the worst bombardment during the country's civil war, now in its sixth year. Severe cases of malnutrition have been reported among its few thousand residents due to severe shortages of food and medicine.

Convoys organized by the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and the United Nations delivered the food from late Thursday into early hours of Friday, after the UN said the Syrian government had approved access to 15 of the 19 besieged areas within Syria. SARC said the food delivery was coordinated with the UN in the Syrian capital. It said food, flour and medical supplies were delivered. The aid was placed in storage and activists and local council members were to deliver it during the day.

Last week, a joint convoy of the UN, the International Committee of the Red Cross and SARC reached Daraya and delivered medicines, vaccines, baby formula, and "nutritional items for children" - but no food. The UN estimates that there are currently 592,700 people living under siege in Syria, with the vast majority of them - some 452,700 people - besieged by government forces. Lifting the siege on rebel-held areas was a key demand by the opposition during indirect peace talks held in Geneva earlier this year.

But yesterday, the Observatory reported new government airstrikes and bombardment of Daraya. An opposition activist in Daraya said the government allowed only minimal amounts of food in order to create problems between the starving residents. "Nothing has been distributed so far and the barrel bombs are falling on the city," said media activist Muhannad Abu al-Zein. "They allowed in food stuff for a quarter of the families here." —Agencies

MIGRANT SWIMMING LESSONS CAUSES STORM IN AUSTRIA

VIENNA: Swimming lessons for refugee children have whipped up a storm in Austria, with a lifeguard's car window smashed and a newspaper yesterday filing charges against a woman who said the migrants should drown. Local newspapers reported this week that the southern state of Carinthia was offering the courses free of charge for unaccompanied minors in order to prevent accidents in lakes

and swimming pools this summer.

This provoked a torrent of what local politician called Heinz Kernjak called "ignorant and offensive" online comments, while an unknown assailant smashed the window of a van belonging to lifeguards in the town of Wolfsberg. When national daily Kurier reported the story on Thursday, it provoked complaints-alongside messages of support-

about the costs of the lessons to the taxpayer and how the courses would only encourage more immigration.

One woman even commented on Facebook that the migrants "should drown", prompting the Kurier yesterday to file charges with the authorities, the first time it has done so for a comment on an article on the social media website. "Because of the

growing number of hate posts, Kurier will from now on be more rigorous in its efforts against hate posts and in bringing charges," the daily said.

Austria last year received some 90,000 asylum requests, the second highest per capita in the European Union, resulting in a sharp rise in the number of racist attacks, although it lags well behind neighboring Germany. —AFP



ISTANBUL: Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim (C), surrounded by security, leaves the Friday Prayer. —AFP

KURDISH REBEL GROUP TAK CLAIMS ISTANBUL BOMBING

ISTANBUL: Militant Kurdish group the Kurdistan Freedom Falcons (TAK) yesterday claimed a car bombing in the centre of Istanbul that killed 11 people, warning foreign tourists that Turkey was no longer safe for them to visit.

The TAK-seen as a splinter group of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) said Tuesday's attack was revenge for operations by the Turkish army in the Kurdish-dominated southeast. "The action was carried out to counter all the savage attacks of the Turkish republic in Nusaybin and Sirnak and other places," it said, referring to the areas in the southeast where the army had been carrying out operations against Kurdish rebels.

The TAK has already claimed two attacks this year that killed dozens of people in the capital Ankara in February and March, heightening concerns over security in the country. It also claimed an unprecedented attack in April in Turkey's former Ottoman capital of Bursa last week, where the female assailant had failed to reach her intended target and only killed herself. The group, which also previously claimed to have shelled Istanbul's second international airport, reaffirmed a previous warning that foreign tourists should not visit Turkey.

"We again warn foreign tourists who are in

Turkey and who want to come to Turkey: foreigners are not our target but Turkey is no longer a safe country for them," it said. The group described the attack as a "sacrifice action", implying it was a suicide bombing, but did not give any further details. It said the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP), "which obstinately insists on a wild war against the Kurdish people, is responsible for the civilian deaths. The Turkish people, who keep quiet about this war, continue to be victims".

'Nothing to discuss'

TAK's founders are believed to have broken away several years ago from the PKK, which has waged an insurgency against the Turkish state stretching back more than three decades. Little is known about the TAK but analysts consider its aims and methods to be more radical than those of the PKK, which concentrates its attacks in the southeast conflict zone rather than cities like Istanbul or Ankara.

Turkey has been on edge after a string of bombings this year blamed not just on Kurdish militants but also Islamic State (IS) jihadists. The new Istanbul attack is set to be a further blow to the country's key tourism industry, which has already seen visitor num-

bers slump almost 30 percent this year over security fears.

The bomb struck near Vezneciler metro station, within walking distance of tourist sites including the Grand Bazaar and Suleymaniye Mosque. The front of the upscale Celal Aga Konagi Hotel, a converted Ottoman mansion favored by foreign tourists, was wrecked by the bombing while the 16th-century Sehzade Mosque was also damaged.

Six police officers and five civilians were killed, according to a final toll. The attack was followed by a bombing in Midyat in the southeast of Turkey on Wednesday that killed six people, including a pregnant policewoman, and was claimed by the PKK. Prime Minister Binali Yildirim has said the PKK had made a bid for dialogue after almost a year of renewed violence that ended a two-and-a-half year truce but vowed there would be no talks. "There's nothing to discuss," he said.

One of the PKK's top leaders based in northern Iraq, Cemil Bayik, said in comments published yesterday that Erdogan was exposing Turkey to "great danger" with his policies in the southeast. "Today Tayyip Erdogan and his forces... are about to bring about the end of Turkey," he said in comments to pro-PKK media. —AFP

3 PARTS OF RAMADAN

Continued from Page 1

of which is the heavens and the earth, prepared for those who guard against evil. - Quran 3:132. Will they not turn to Allah and seek His forgiveness, and Allah is oft-forgiving, Merciful (Quran 5:74). A prophetic tradition reported by Abu Huraira (RA) says, "Whoever observes fasts during the month of Ramadan out of sincere faith, and hoping to attain Allah's rewards, then all his past sins will be forgiven." Bukhari 2: 37.

The third portion of Ramadan is considered to be a time for seeking release from the hellfire. Abu Said Al Khudri (RA) said, "Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said Allah frees some people from hellfire every day and night - meaning of Ramadan - and every Muslim has an answered supplication every day and night [of Ramadan]. (Reported by Al Bazar and authenticated by Sheikh Albaani in SaheehTargheeb No 1002).

This is also the part of the month that Lailat-ul-Qadr falls in. The Quran describes this special night: "Verily! We have sent it (this Quran) down in the night of Al-Qadr. And what will make you know what the night of Al-Qadr is? The night of Al-Qadr is better than a thousand months Therein descend the angels and the Ruh (Gabriel) by Allah's Permission with all Decrees. Peace! until the appearance of dawn. (Quran 97:1-5)

It is sunnah to spend some time in seclusion (itikaf) for a spiritual retreat in the mosque during the last third of Ramadan. 'Aishah (RA) narrated that "The Prophet (PBUH) used to do a retreat in the mosque during the last ten nights of Ramadan until he died. His wives continued to observe this practice after his death." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim). While fasting for a whole month may seem like a lot, it becomes easier when it is divided into three parts, as above, or even into 30 separate days. If we fast one day at a time, or one third at a time until we complete the entire month, it will seem easier. The benefits of each third are so worthwhile, that nobody who is aware of them can purposefully forfeit them. Wishing all our readers the benefits of Ramadan - mercy, forgiveness, and release from Hellfire.

THOUSANDS BID FAREWELL...

Continued from Page 1

Thursday's prayer service was held at the site of Ali's last fight in his hometown, where he defeated Willi Besmanoff on November 29, 1961. The three-time heavyweight world champion died after a decades-long battle with Parkinson's disease.

'Live his legacy'

"Muhammad Ali has a very, very special significance for the Muslim community," Imam Zaid Shakir, who helped organize the prayer service, said earlier. "This is about... sending him off in the very best of fashion," said the Muslim cleric, adding that Ali would want his supporters to "honor his memory, live his legacy and love each other." For millions of Muslims around the world, Ali symbolized the true face of Islam, promoting peace and tolerance.

Semsudin Haseljic comes from a small village in central Bosnia and resettled in Louisville after being injured in the war in 1993. He remembers how the whole community would gather for Ali's fights-typically broadcast at around 4 am-in one of the two houses in the village with a television set. "We had one of our elders who pretty much knew all of his fights by heart," said the 54-year-old. "At that time there was not much entertainment in the community, so people who gather and ask him: 'Come on, narrate the fights'."

On Friday morning, a funeral procession will wind through the city of 600,000, passing 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 before arriving at the cemetery for a private burial. 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. An anonymous individual has pledged to cover the path to the grave with red rose petals. — AFP



HETTSTEDT: In this May 30, 2016 picture migrants sit in their home for asylum seekers. — AP

MAYOR OF FAILING GERMAN TOWN WANTS MIGRANTS TO FILL THE GAPS

IDEA MAY REJUVENATE ONCE PROSPEROUS TOWNS

HETTSTEDT: Nestled in the foothills of Germany's Harz mountains, Hettstedt has many points of pride: idyllic surroundings, a history dating back nearly 1,000 years and a traditional copper industry that brought ages of prosperity and prestige.

What the town doesn't have, if predictions prove true, is a future. Hettstedt has been hemorrhaging residents since communism collapsed in East Germany 26 years ago, stoking economic competition and giving young people newfound freedom to travel in search of adventure and opportunity. Where once 20,000 people lived, only 15,000 remain today, with the loss of another 5,000 forecast in the coming decade.

The man who hopes to reverse this demographic decline is Hettstedt's mayor, a jovial 38-year-old lawyer with a radical idea: Why not take advantage of the influx of migrants to Germany and settle some of them here? "I see this as a huge chance, that through migration we can become more open-minded, but also fill the skills gaps," Danny Kavalier said in an interview at his office overlooking the medieval town square.

But Kavalier's idea is sensitive in a region with few foreigners and strong anti-immigrant sentiment. In March, a fledgling nationalist party called Alternative for Germany received more than 30 percent of votes in the region, reflecting hostility to Chancellor Angela Merkel's refugee policy that permitted almost 1.1 million asylum-seekers to arrive last year.

Conflict of beliefs

The 3-year-old party argues that the country can't integrate hundreds of thousands of Muslims because their traditions and beliefs conflict with German values. "I think it's a bit narrow-minded to think you can preserve Hettstedt as a town solely with refugees," said Jens Diederichs, a regional lawmaker for Alternative for Germany, who favors increasing state incentives for families to have children. "We should do more for our own children and youth."

Kavalier, mayor since 2011, says the departure of thousands of young Hettstedters in the early 1990s caused lasting damage to the birth rate and workforce

in a town where the average age today is approaching 50. Local employers already complain they can't recruit enough apprentices, and bigger labor supply problems loom with much of the workforce poised for retirement within the coming decade. The mayor says he's realistic about the pace of social change that locals should be expected to accept. With 233 asylum-seekers currently resident, he says the arrival of 10 to 15 foreign families a year would best enliven the town's prospects again.

One of those seeking acceptance is Rawad Younes, a 33-year-old electrician from the Syrian coastal city of Latakia. He came to Germany seven months ago and lives in a shelter for asylum-seekers on the edge of Hettstedt. "First of all I want to learn perfect German," he said shyly, displaying a passable command of the language already. "And then I want to find work in my profession."

When asked about Syrians' experiences in Germany, Younes switched to Arabic. "We find it difficult here, difficult to make German friends," he said. "There is a certain perception of refugees that's kind of difficult to deal with. We don't know what will become of us. Maybe things will get better for refugees. But the most difficult thing we face here is integrating with Germans."

Younes noted that some Germans appeared unwelcoming to migrants "because they feel (they) already have enough problems." Anti-immigrant feeling in Hettstedt has swelled on social media, with some locals complaining of the costs of providing housing and food aid. Kavalier, a member of Merkel's Christian Democratic Union, is countering such criticism by making a case grounded in morality and economic necessity.

Kavalier listed amenities at risk of closure if Hettstedt cannot maintain its tax intake and young population: the library, swimming pool, museum and three out of four primary schools. Utility bills also would rise more quickly, he said. "A sinking population means fewer people have to pay more money to maintain the structures," he said.

He and council allies have sought to highlight the upsides of immigration in other ways. After one recent town hall meeting,

they invited refugees to serve Middle Eastern food. "Love goes through the stomach," Kavalier suggested.

Soccer the key?

The greatest sense of appreciation may well be generated on Hettstedt's soccer field, where the town team has just completed an undefeated season and won promotion to a higher league thanks to a squad that includes three Syrians. "They're absolutely key players," said Michael Thiesler, manager of FC Hettstedt. "They've brought us forward a great deal and contributed a lot to our success." Thiesler, 36, noted that before the Syrian athletes arrived, he sometimes had to don a jersey himself to ensure they could field a full team. He said fellow players and fans have welcomed the immigrant talent. "If people perform well, they're accepted and then over time you get to know each other," he said. "I've never heard anything negative from the fans."

Even the nationalist lawmaker, Diederichs, said he wanted to see newcomers join sports and cultural clubs. "It's important that they can develop a sense of belonging here," he said. But not every migrant can win local affections by scoring goals. For many, daily life offers physical challenge enough, partly because the main shelter is nowhere near Hettstedt's center.

"It's really good here, but the market is really far from where I live. I get tired," said Abed Alsalam Lahafi, a father of three in his 50s who hopes to find a home closer to town. Lahafi said his sons were hoping to finish high school in Hettstedt, while his 7-year-old daughter was enrolled in a local primary school and already speaking more German than her parents. As his daughter cheerfully counted to 10 in German, Lahafi said in Arabic, "We too will learn, God willing." Kavalier faces re-election in two years. He says he's concerned about growing support for the Alternative for Germany party - but even more concerned by the lack of enthusiasm for his pro-refugee stance among some in his own Christian Democratic Union. "I'm a bit disappointed, to be honest, that there's so little bravery to take advantage of this opportunity," he said. — AP

ERITREAN DENIES BEING TOP MIGRANT TRAFFICKER

ROME: An Eritrean man extradited from Sudan to Italy on suspicion of being the head of a migrant trafficking ring has told investigators he is not the man they want, his lawyer said yesterday. The suspect, identified by Italian authorities as Medhanie Yehdego Mered, 35, is accused of shipping thousands of people to Europe and sending some to their deaths in the Mediterranean.

But Italian prosecutors admitted on Thursday that they were checking his identity after reports that the arrested man was the victim of a case of mistaken identity. Lawyer Michele Calantropo said his client "denied being the suspect and also denied being linked in any way to a trafficking network", when questioned by Italian magistrates. Sudan's interior ministry, Italian police and Britain's National Crime Agency (NCA) had made much of the arrest of Mered — dubbed "the general" and described as "cynical and unscrupulous" — in Khartoum at the end of May and his deportation to Italy this week. But family and friends soon came forward to say the man pictured being dragged off a plane in Rome was not "the general".

Calantropo was hired by a woman claiming to be the sister of the detainee, a man she named as Mered Tesfamariam. Segem Tasfamariam Berhe, who said she had recognized her 27-year-old brother in the footage, told Italian media he had nothing to do with human trafficking. "I want to tell Italian police my brother is innocent, he is not the man they are looking for. Please, investigators, release my brother," she was quoted as saying from Khartoum by Italy's Rai News.

From Eritrea's capital of Asmara, a woman claiming to be his stepsister, Saliem Kesete, told the Italian broadcaster Mered Tesfamariam "was a carpenter, with a family"... an "innocent man" who "wanted to go to the US. Europe was his second choice". The suspect Medhanie Yehdego Mered, on a wanted list since 2015 for people smuggling, is accused of packing migrants onto a boat that sank in 2013 off the Italian island of Lampedusa, claiming at least 360 lives in one of the worst disasters in the Mediterranean.

Referred to in wiretapped conversations between his alleged subordinate traffickers as "the general", Mered is accused of organizing the smuggling of up to 8,000 people a year on migrant boats. Italy, Sudan and Britain had hailed his capture as a significant blow to the people smuggling business as Europe moves to stem the flow of migrants across the Mediterranean. 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. — AFP

BELGIUM ARRESTS ATTACKS SUSPECT

BRUSSELS: Belgian police investigating the Brussels airport and metro attacks have arrested a man in connection with "terrorist murders", the federal prosecutor said yesterday. The 31-year-old man, identified only as Ali E.H.A., was detained on Thursday during a house search in the Schaerbeek area of the capital, the prosecutor's office said.

Several people have previously been charged over the March 22 suicide bombings at Zaventem airport and Maalbeek metro station which killed 32 people. "In connection with the federal investigation after the terrorist attacks in Zaventem and Brussels, a house search was conducted," the statement said. "The Belgian national Ali E.H.A., born on 23rd September 1984, was arrested and later put in detention by the Investigating Judge for participation in the activities of a terrorist group, terrorist murders and attempted terrorist murders, as a perpetrator, co-perpetrator or accomplice." It added: "Currently, no further information will be given in the interest of the investigation." The announcement comes a day after a Belgian court approved the extradition to France of Mohamed Abrini, a key suspect in both the Brussels attacks and the November Paris attacks in which 130 people were killed. He will not be handed over to French authorities for some time as he is still being investigated over the Belgium attacks.

Abrini has confessed to being the "man in the hat" caught on video with the two airport bombers and who was allegedly preparing to detonate a third bomb before fleeing the scene. Another key suspect linked to both the Paris and Brussels killings, Salah Abdeslam, was extradited to France in April. Abdeslam's brother Brahim blew himself up during the Paris massacre. Both attacks were claimed by the Islamic State group and appear to be linked to the same cell of attackers. The airport bombings were carried out by Ibrahim El Bakraoui and Najim Laachraoui—who was the alleged bomb-maker for the November 13 attacks on Paris. The metro bomber was Khalid El Bakraoui, Ibrahim's brother. — AFP

INDIA CLOSER TO NUCLEAR TECH CLUB MEMBERSHIP

VIENNA: India appeared closer Thursday to achieving its US-backed efforts for membership in a group of nations controlling access to sensitive nuclear technology after some previously skeptical countries softened their resistance, diplomats said. But rival China remained opposed.

Countries grouped in the 48-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group are focused on restricting nuclear proliferation by strictly controlling access to which country can gain access to technology used in making atomic weapons.

Only countries that have ratified the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty are normally eligible for membership. India hasn't. But it has committed to some controls of its nuclear program and under a nuclear cooperation pact with the United States has gained substantial exemptions to NSG regulations, even while remaining outside of the club.

Two diplomats at an NSG meeting said it ended Thursday with several countries that were previously opposed to India's membership softening their resistance. They demanded anonymity in exchange for speaking to The Associated Press because they were not authorized to talk about the substance of the closed session. One of them said that one scenario discussed was additional commitments by India meant to move it closer to nonproliferation commitments that countries party to the Nonproliferation Treaty must adhere to.

China remained opposed, he said. But resistance had softened from some within a group that includes New Zealand, Ireland, Turkey, South Africa and Austria. One key problem posed by Indian membership would be what to do with applications from rival Pakistan and Israel, which also are not party to the Nonproliferation Treaty.

US President Barack Obama first expressed support for Indian membership in the NSG in 2010. Since then, his administration has been lobbying opponents to change their minds. The NSG was formed in 1975 in response to and a year after India's nuclear weapon test, in a program clandestinely developed from peaceful technology. —AP



BHOPAL: In this photograph taken on April 28, 2016, Muslim shoppers walk through a market. — AFP

INDIA'S MUSLIM WOMEN FIGHT FOR 'TRIPLE TALAQ' DIVORCE

ONE OF THE FEW NATIONS THAT PERMITS THE PRACTICE

BHOPAL: Only three words were scrawled on the letter from her husband and posted to her parent's home in central India, but they were enough to shatter Sadaf Mehmood's life. Using an ancient and controversial Islamic practice, Mehmood's husband wrote "talaq, talaq, talaq" or "I divorce you" three times in Arabic, instantly ending his marriage of five years. "I was completely shocked and shattered. We had differences soon after we wed but it never looked so bad," the mother-of-three told AFP.

Mehmood, who is from Bhopal, is one of a number of Indian Muslim women whose husbands dissolved their marriage using triple talaq. The message delivered by everything from traditional letters to Facebook and Whatsapp. Banned in many Muslim countries, India, which is officially secular, is one of the few nations that legally permits the practice.

"The talaqnama (divorce letter) came without any intimidation or warning," said Mehmood, 31, adding that she now struggles to make ends meet without her husband's support. Now another divorcee, Shayara Bano, has asked the Supreme Court to outlaw it, as a backlash against the practice gathers steam. "I understand my marriage is over but something needed to be done so that other Muslim women do not suffer," Bano told AFP of her petition filed in February, which has encouraged at least one other divorcee to follow suit.

'Second-class citizens'

India's religious minorities, including its 155 million Muslims, are governed by personal laws that are meant to enshrine their religious freedom in Hindu-majority India. But women say the Muslim Personal Law Application Act, which is based on Sharia law and permits triple talaq, is being misused, allowing men to instantly walk away from their families.

"Women are generally treated as second class citizens in our society and they are further discriminated against by those misinterpreting religion," Sadia Akhtar who works for Bharatiya Muslim Mahila Andolan, a charity helping to empower Muslim women.

A survey of Muslim women by the charity last year found an overwhelming majority favored abolition of the practice, deeming it unIslamic. Some 500 of the 4,000 women surveyed said they had been divorced that way. In recent weeks some 50,000 Muslims signed a petition organized by the charity as part of a campaign to ban it.

The Quran prescribes a procedure for divorce to be under-

taken in 90 days, starting from the first utterance of talaq, followed by two more but with a 30-day gap in between each one. Islamic scholars say this gives couples time to reflect on their marriage and possibly reconcile. Most Muslim scholars say the instant talaq diverts from the Koran. Although it was given official approval during the reign of Islam's second caliph Omar in the seventh century, it was discouraged.

Akhtarul Wasey, a professor of Islamic studies, said it was only supposed to be used as a last resort when husbands were "traumatizing their partners" by endlessly pronouncing talaq and then revoking it. "(But) It has lost its essence and become an arbitrary law," Wasey from New Delhi's Jamia Millia Islamia university told AFP. Many Muslim majority countries including neighboring Bangladesh have already banned it, while legislation on the same is pending in Pakistan's parliament.

Changes unacceptable

But India's Muslim leaders are reluctant to amend the personal law, fearing an erosion of their religious identity. Some fear Hindu hardliners will use such changes as an excuse to push for the law's entire abolition. The issue comes at a time of heightened concern among minorities of rising intolerance by Hindu hardliners, who have become emboldened since Prime Minister Narendra Modi's election in 2014.

Modi's Hindu nationalist government is committed to replacing personal laws for all religious minorities with a common civil code, to enhance national unity. Kamal Faruqi, member of an influential Muslim body, said Muslims have a right to practice their religion according to Sharia law and that should be protected at all costs. Faruqi conceded triple talaq was a "problem for Muslims" but changes to the personal law were "unacceptable to us".

"We discourage Muslims to seek divorce and certainly triple talaq should never be used. Instead couples should go for the honorable exit route mentioned in the Koran," said Faruqi, from the All India Muslim Personal Law Board. Shaista Ali, also from Bhopal, said she appealed to clerics for assistance after her husband suddenly divorced her and she was shunted from the family home, but "they sided with my in-laws".

Divorcee Mehmood accepts that her marriage is over, but she remains hopeful of change so that other women are spared her ordeal. "We can't stop talaqs but there should be some consequences so that men think ten times before uttering talaq, talaq, talaq," she said. — AFP



NEW DELHI: In this Thursday, June 9, 2016, photo, one of the five convicts in the gang rape of a 51-year-old Danish tourist in 2014, is escorted by the police for a hearing at a city court. — AP

INDIA COURT JAILS FIVE FOR LIFE FOR TOURIST GANG RAPE

NEW DELHI: Five men convicted of gang-raping a Danish tourist in the Indian capital in 2014 were yesterday sentenced to life in jail, a prosecutor said, the maximum term possible. They were convicted on Monday of assaulting the 52-year-old woman at knifepoint as she returned to her Delhi hotel, a crime that raised fresh fears about the safety of women in the city.

"All the convicts have been sentenced to life imprisonment. They will remain in prison for the remainder of their life," public prosecutor Atul Shrivastava told reporters outside the Delhi court after the judgment. "We had sufficient evidence to prove the charges and the court was satisfied with our arguments to hand down life sentences."

Shrivastava said the men were also given jail terms for more minor offences including robbery, which will run concurrently with the main sentence. Lawyer Dinesh Sharma, who defended all five, said he would appeal their convictions. Three others charged over the attack are being tried separately in the juvenile justice system. A ninth accused, an adult, died before the end of the trial. India toughened its laws on sexual violence and overhauled policing procedures in the wake of the gang-rape of a Delhi student on a moving bus in December 2012. The victim later died in hospital and the incident sparked mass street protests as well as global headlines about the treatment of women in India. — AFP

PAK COURT UPHOLDS LIFE SENTENCE FOR ACTIVIST

ISLAMABAD: A Pakistani court has upheld the life sentence of a political activist from the country's semi-autonomous north, which observers say could see a "nationalist upsurge" in a region also claimed by India. Baba Jan, a left wing political activist from the Hunza Valley in Pakistan's northern Gilgit-Baltistan, was convicted by an anti-terrorism court for participating in political riots in 2011 and lost an appeal against his life sentence on Thursday.

Jan has vocally protested what he and supporters describe as political, constitutional and human rights violations in the region, organizing rallies and demonstrations in protest. He contested local elections last year from prison, placing second in the polls. "The decision was aimed at barring Baba Jan

from contesting elections but it will have a counter-productive impact," said political analyst Amir Hussain. "This decision will backfire and trigger extremist views like a nationalistic upsurge," he said.

A simmering resentment has been building in Gilgit-Baltistan since Islamabad began mulling upgrading its constitutional status in a bid to provide legal cover to a multi-billion-dollar Chinese investment plan in the area. Gilgit-Baltistan, which borders China and Afghanistan, is not constitutionally part of Pakistan, and like Kashmir, it is also claimed by India.

Islamabad has historically insisted that the area, along with the parts of Kashmir it controls, are semi-autonomous and has not formally integrated

them into the country, in line with its position that a referendum on sovereignty should be carried out across the whole of the region.

But Pakistan's adviser on foreign affairs Sartaj Aziz last week confirmed that a committee established to come up with a plan to reexamine the area's constitutional status had completed its work, adding that it was waiting a final approval from the prime minister. Aziz did not give any further details on what the plan entailed. Human rights organizations have been demanding the release of Baba Jan. An international petition for his release has been signed by leading left wing intellectuals, including Noam Chomsky, Tariq Ali and David Graeber. — AFP

S KOREA SENDS VESSELS TO REPEL CHINESE BOATS

SEOUL: South Korean military vessels started an operation yesterday to repel Chinese fishing boats illegally harvesting prized blue crabs from an area near Seoul's disputed sea boundary with North Korea. Four naval and marine boats were in neutral waters around South Korea's Ganghwa island to chase away about 10 Chinese boats.

The operation was approved by the United Nations Command that governs the zone where fishing activity is prohibited, said an official from Seoul's Defense Ministry, who didn't want to be named, citing office rules.

"United Nations Command takes its responsibility to maintain the armistice very seriously. We had a responsibility to act and we are doing that," Gen. Vincent Brooks, the US commander of the United Nations Command, said in a statement on the decision to authorize the operation. The governments of China and North Korea were notified about the operation before it started, the Seoul ministry official said. The official refused to say how the vessels were planning to repel the ships, or provide further details about the operation.

The operation came days after South Korean fishermen towed away two Chinese fishing boats catching crabs south of the sea boundary with North Korea and handed them over to local South Korean authorities. North Korea said in response that South Korean fishing and naval vessels had invaded their territory.

Tougher measures

Seoul has called for Beijing to employ tougher measures against Chinese boats illegally fishing in South Korea-controlled waters, which has caused bad feelings between the neighbors in recent years. South Korean authorities seized about 600 Chinese ships last year for illegal fishing and more than 100 this year as of May, most from waters off the western coast of South Korea, according to the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries.

China expressed anger in October 2014 when a South Korean coast guard shot and killed the captain of a Chinese fishing vessel who had violently resisted the inspection of his ship for suspected illegal fishing. In 2011, a South Korean coast guard officer was killed in a clash with Chinese fishermen in South Korean waters.

The waters off the Korean Peninsula's western coast have also seen violent clashes between the rival Koreas because Pyongyang doesn't recognize the sea boundary unilaterally drawn by the American-led UN command at the end of the 1950-53 Korean War. North Korea last month threatened to fire without warning at South Korean warships if they crossed into its waters, a day after the South's navy fired warning shots to chase away two North Korean ships that briefly crossed the boundary. The countries have also fought three bloody naval skirmishes in the area since 1999. — AP



PABNA: Locals surround the body of a Hindu holy man after assailants hacked him to death. — AP

HINDU MONASTERY WORKER HACKED TO DEATH IN B'DESH

RELIGIOUS MINORITIES BEING SLAUGHTERED BY IS

DHAKA: A 62-year-old Hindu monastery worker was hacked to death in Bangladesh yesterday, police said, the latest in a series of such attacks on religious minorities in the mainly Muslim country. The latest murder came as Bangladeshi police announced a special week-long crackdown on militants as they ramp up efforts to stem the killings, with five members of a banned Islamist outfit killed in gunbattles with officers in the past three days.

Nityaranjan Pande was taking his regular early morning walk when unidentified attackers set upon him, killing him on the spot, police said. "As a diabetic, everyday he walks early in the morning. Today as he was walking, several attackers hacked him in the neck... He died on the spot," local police station chief Abdullah Al-Hasan told AFP. "He had been working at the monastery for around 40 years. In recent years he was the head of its office staff," he said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack. But the head of police in the northwestern district of Pabna, where the Shri Shri Thakur Anukulchandra Ashram is located, said the killing bore the hallmarks of recent attacks by Islamist extremists on minorities and secular activists.

"There was no eye-witness to the attack as it happened very early in the morning," Alamgir Kabir told AFP. Bangladesh is reeling from a wave of murders of secular and liberal activists and religious minorities that have left nearly 50 people dead in the last three years.

Police crackdown

The murders have spiked in recent weeks with a gruesome wave of killings that has spanned from the capital Dhaka to remote parts of the north and coastal south. In the past week

alone, an elderly Hindu priest was found nearly decapitated in a rice field, a Christian grocer was hacked to death near a church while the wife of an anti-terrorism officer was stabbed and shot. Her husband had led several high-profile operations against the banned Jamayetul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), an Islamist militant group, in the southeastern city of Chittagong.

Most of the latest attacks have been claimed either by the Islamic State group or by a South Asian branch of Al-Qaeda. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government has however blamed homegrown Islamists for the attacks, rejecting claims of responsibility from the international jihadist groups. The JMB is one of the main domestic militant outfits in the frame for the murders, with police shooting dead five members of the group since Tuesday.

Shahidul Hoque, inspector general of police, vowed in an address to a meeting of top police officials in Dhaka Thursday that those involved in the killing of the police officer's wife would be "brought to justice very soon". Experts say a government crackdown on opponents, including a ban on Bangladesh's largest Islamist party Jamaat-e-Islami following a protracted political crisis, has pushed many towards extremism.

Victims of the attacks by suspected Islamists have included secular bloggers, gay rights activists and followers of minority religions. Although it is officially secular, around 90 percent of Bangladesh's 160 million-strong population is Muslim. Some eight percent of the population is Hindu. A Hindu shop owner was hacked to death outside his store in a northern district late last month, while a Hindu tailor was killed in April after allegedly making derogatory remarks about the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). IS claimed responsibility for both those killings. — AFP

CLINTON TELLS TRUMP: 'DELETE YOUR TWITTER ACCOUNT'

ALMOST AS FUNNY AS IT WAS AWKWARD

WASHINGTON: "Delete your account." Hillary Clinton's snarky tweet Thursday to her White House rival Donald Trump was among the funniest of the campaign. Almost as funny as it was awkward. The message by the 68-year-old former secretary of state—actually written by a young staffer, a Clinton aide told AFP—was in response to the latest broadside by Trump, who had commented on how "Obama just endorsed Crooked Hillary" on Thursday.

"He wants four more years of Obama - but nobody else does!" the presumptive Republican nominee added. When Clinton trolled back, social media exploded. Within two hours her message was retweeted 200,000 times, making it "the most retweeted tweet of the campaign!" according to Clinton's social media director Alex Wall.

With "Delete your account," Clinton, who has struggled to connect with young voters, embraced the quick-witted dry humor of America's millennials. But it also triggered ferocious comebacks from her critics over use of a private email account while she served as America's top diplomat—a scandal she has been unable to shake.

Republicans including Trump have savaged her for her judgment, saying she put US national security at risk, and have accused her of deleting key emails that she did not want Americans to see. "@HillaryClinton, if anyone knows how to use a delete key,



NEW YORK: Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton greets supporters as she arrives to speak during a presidential primary election night rally. —AP

it's you," the chairman of the Republican National Committee, Reince Priebus, wrote in a stinging tweet of his own.

Trump, known for his sharp tongue on social media, returned fire against Clinton, mocking her less-than-spontaneous attempt at hipness. "How long did it take your staff of 823 people

to think that up—and where are your 33,000 emails that you deleted?" he wrote. Clinton turned over some 30,000 emails to State Department officials after she stepped down from the job in 2013. But she also said she deleted more than 30,000 other emails that were of a personal nature and not related to her work as secretary of state.

Warren on the attack

Sen Elizabeth Warren threw her support behind Democrat Hillary Clinton for president Thursday, following President Barack Obama in sending a signal to progressive voters now backing Bernie Sanders that it's time to unite around the presumptive Democratic nominee.

"I am ready to get in this fight and

work my heart out for Hillary Clinton to become the next president of the United States and to make sure that Donald Trump never gets anyplace close to the White House," the Massachusetts senator said on MSNBC's "The Rachel Maddow Show."

Warren was the only holdout among the Senate's Democratic women and, given her stature among liberals, her endorsement could be an important boost for Clinton. She also is being floated as a potential vice presidential pick for Clinton. Ahead of her endorsement Thursday, Warren spoke to the American Constitution Society and attacked Trump as a "loud, nasty, thin-skinned fraud." Trump "has never risked anything for anyone and serves nobody but himself. And that is just one of the many reasons why he will never be president," Warren said in the scathing broadside also aimed at the top two Republicans in Congress.

The liberal lawmaker increasingly has tangled with Trump, taking on an attack-dog role that she seems able to execute more effectively than other Democrats, including Clinton herself. Trump has lashed back, labeling her "Goofy Elizabeth Warren" and ridiculing her claims to Native American heritage.

Warren took aim at Trump's contention that US District Judge Gonzalo Curiel can't preside fairly over a case involving Trump University because the US-born Curiel is of Mexican descent and Trump wants to build a wall along the border with Mexico.

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UNLIKELY PATH FOR FOES HOPING TO DUMP TRUMP AT CONVENTION

DISMAYED REPUBLICANS COULD STILL DUMP TRUMP

WASHINGTON: It's exceedingly improbable, but not completely farfetched: Dismayed Republicans could still dump Donald Trump and find a different presidential nominee at their national convention next month. Once viewed as a political joke, the blunt-spoken billionaire has stormed to the cusp of becoming the GOP nominee. He has more than enough delegates to be formally anointed at the party's gathering in Cleveland.

But Trump's recent disparagement of a judge, claiming he was incapable of impartially hearing a Trump lawsuit because he is Mexican-American, has triggered talk of replacing Trump. Republicans were already divided over his past comments about Hispanics, women and others, and some leaders like House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., are backing Trump but labeling his remark "racist." Here's the scenario for derailing Trump and why it's unlikely - at least now:

THE MATH

Trump has 1,542 delegates, according to The Associated Press' count, including 1,447 required by current GOP rules to vote for him at the convention. That's well above the 1,237 delegates needed for the nomination and more than double the 559 of his nearest rival, Texas Sen. Ted Cruz. Measured another way, Trump has amassed 13.4 million votes in primaries, well above Cruz' 7.7 million. Those numbers add up to one word: Winner.

THE PROBLEM

Some Republicans think Trump can't win and will drag down the party's congressional and other candidates with him. Senate control, and less likely the House, are at also stake in November's election. Such talk is limited, at least publicly. But it's out there. Sen Jeff Flake, R-Ariz, said this week that Trump's denigration of the judge "might spur" talk of finding a different nominee. He noted that Trump's 70th birthday is approaching and said, "It's tough to change. And he certainly hasn't shown any signs that he's going to." "What does Trump have to do or say for the party to disassociate itself from him?" asked Rory Cooper, senior adviser to the Never Trump political committee. And conservative talk radio host Hugh Hewitt said on his show that Trump should be dropped because "the plane is headed toward the mountain."

THE CURE

One way to stop someone from winning a game is to change the rules. Mechanically, if not politically, that's possible in Cleveland next month. The procedures governing the convention will be whatever a majority of its 2,472 delegates approve. Current rules, which they seem likely to adopt, give the nomination to whoever wins a majority of their votes.

GOP rules experts say that to block Trump, one option is to set a higher threshold than he currently can reach, such as requiring a two-thirds margin. That would only be needed for the first ballot. If no candidate wins the nomination by then, most delegates are free to vote for anyone in the second and succeeding rounds of voting. Another option: Let all delegates immediately support whoever they'd like. Though it's widely disputed, some say current rules already let delegates support whomever they please. That would mean no changes would be needed. "The primaries are baloney" and award candidates "bragging rights," not committed delegates, said Curly Haugland of North Dakota, a member of the Republican National Committee.

THE PROBLEM

As torn as the GOP is, many believe booting him is politically unrealistic because it would intensify the party's rifts and is probably impossible. "It's too late," said Trump detractor and former presidential contender Sen Lindsey Graham, R-SC James Bopp Jr, an Indiana convention delegate and rules expert, says disregarding Trump's primary victory and naming a different nominee would mean "the destruction of the Republican Party." Rep Tom Cole, R-Okla, said talk of ditching Trump at the convention was a "Washington fantasy" that would look like the party was "trying to undo the will of the Republican electorate" and pull off "some sort of coup."

BUT WAIT

If Trump has a majority of delegates, does he really have to worry about rules changes that could deny him the nomination? Probably not. But maybe. That's because by party bylaws, delegates are free to vote however they want on the rules, platform and challenges to delegates' credentials. The only thing most must do is support the candidate they are pledged to, and only on the first round of votes. The danger for Trump: Many of his delegates - the numbers are unclear - actually prefer Cruz or perhaps other alternatives. If they're persuaded to do so, perhaps by additional intemperate Trump comments, they can vote for rules changes that would open the door for a replacement. But many say Trump has the delegates needed to prevail. "It's just not going to happen," said Randy Evans, a GOP national committeeman from Georgia. Trump aides did not respond to emails and phone messages requesting comment. Asked Thursday if he was open to the convention picking a different candidate than Trump, Cruz said, "I'm going to leave political punditry to the people who get paid to do it." Cruz spokeswoman Catherine Frazier said the senator did not favor a challenge to Trump, saying, "The voters made their decision." — AP



LOS ANGELES: In this March 21, 2016 file photo, Rusty Page carries, Lexi, while Summer Page, in the background, cries as members of family services, left, arrive to take Lexi away from her foster family in Santa Clarita. — AP

FOSTER PARENTS STILL FIGHT FOR INDIAN GIRL

LOS ANGELES: The scene was wrenching: A sobbing 6-year-old girl, clutching a stuffed bear as her foster father carries her away from the only home she has known for most of her life. But Lexi's story didn't end in March when she was removed from a Santa Clarita home near Los Angeles. Her story isn't one of simple emotions but rather complex issues of ethnicity, government and history. Lexi, who is 1/64th Choctaw, was placed with distant relatives in Utah under a decades-old federal law designed to keep Native American families together, and under California's Juvenile Dependency Law. Her foster parents, Rusty and Summer Page, have fought a yearslong battle to keep her.

Thriving and happy

In a statement Thursday, the Pages said Lexi hasn't been allowed to see or hear from them in nearly three months. "The fact that a child can be ripped away from everything she has ever know is unthinkable and something that no child, anywhere should ever have to endure. Every single day we think of Lexi just as she is surely thinking of us," the statement said.

"Lexi's attorney has regular, ongoing contact with Lexi and her family. She is thriving and happy," said an email from David Estep, director of the Children's Law Center of California, Lexi's court-appointed legal representatives. Yesterday, both sides will argue before the California 2nd District Court of Appeal. Observers say it's unlikely the Pages will win a reversal of a lower court ruling that ordered them to surrender the girl but their attorney has vowed to fight the case to the U.S. Supreme Court, if necessary. The case is one of dozens brought by foster families since the Indian Child Welfare Act was passed in the late 1970s. Lawmakers found that Native American families were broken up at disproportionately high rates, and that cultural ignorance and biases within the child welfare system were largely to blame. Lexi was 17 months old when she was removed from the custody of her mother, who had drug-abuse problems. Her father has a criminal history, according to court records.

Outdated law

Although foster care is supposed to be temporary, the Pages want to adopt Lexi and for years have fought efforts under the federal act to place the girl with relatives of her father, who is part Choctaw. The Pages say the law is outdated and misapplied but their repeated appeals have failed. Lower courts found the Pages had not proven Lexi would suffer emotional harm by the transfer and in March the California Supreme Court refused to intervene.

Lexi is now living with relatives of her father in Utah who are not Native Americans. Lexi's two sisters live with the family or in the neighborhood. Lori Alvino McGill, the Pages' attorney, will argue that based on what is best for Lexi, her case meets a "good cause" exception to the placement preferences of the Indian Child Welfare Act.

The issue is narrow but could have broad consequences, McGill said in an email Thursday. "If the good-cause exception is not satisfied in a case like this one - where a child has thrived in a home for more than four years after suffering from drug exposure, neglect, and instability for the first two years of her life - then I think that raises serious constitutional questions concerning the statute's differential treatment of children based on their status as "Indian," McGill wrote. Estep, of the Children's Law Center of California, said the Pages knew that Lexi wasn't available for long-term placement in their home and that out-of-state relatives had preference. "We are hopeful that the court will find in Lexi's favor, as Lexi deserves to have permanence with her family," he said. All sides in the case say they have Lexi's welfare at heart. The Choctaw Nation has said that the girl had long-time contact with her Utah relatives, who spoke to her online and frequently drove out to see her. "Despite all the delays, the Choctaw Nation can report that Lexi is safely home with her loving family and her sisters, and she is doing well," Waddel Hearn Jr., a spokesman for the Choctaw Nation, said in March. — AP



NEW YORK: Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump pops up from his secret service vehicle to wave at crowds as he leaves Trump Tower. — AP

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PARIS: A man walks past a pile of uncollected garbage yesterday. —AFP

FOOTBALL DIVIDENDS SLIM FOR FRANCE

ECONOMISTS SEE MODEST 0.05% GDP BOOST OVERALL

PARIS: Shaken by attacks and beset by strikes, France is hoping the “feel good factor” of a successful Euro 2016 football tournament will fire up a tentative economic recovery, although the direct impact will be short lived. France’s economy has shown signs of renewed vigor in the last 18 months after three years of near stagnation, growing 1.3 percent in 2015 and confounding expectations in the first quarter with a 0.6 percent growth spurt.

But scenes of uncollected rubbish piling up in the streets of Paris, cancelled trains, pickets and the spectre of flight cancellations as Air France pilots stop work are spoiling the efficient, prosperous image the government was hoping to project. As he watches the opening France-Romania match at the Stade de France stadium yesterday, President Francois Hollande, a keen football fan, will also certainly be hoping a winning French team will give his dismal popularity ratings a desperately needed fillip. “It can showcase ‘things are getting better,’” Sport Minister Patrick Kanner told Reuters, referring to Hollande’s televised assertion that has become a mantra repeated by ministers and mocked by opponents.

In pure financial terms, the windfall France can expect from the month-long tournament is relatively modest, however. A study by Limoges University, commissioned by European soccer’s governing body UEFA, put the net injection of foreign funds into the economy, including tickets bought by tourists and organization spending, at €1.27 billion (\$1.43 billion). That is about 0.05 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), nothing more than a “flash in the pan” on the scale of one quarter, according to economist Nathalie Henaff of Limoges University. “There will be a windfall, but a limited one from a macro-economic point of view,” her colleague Christophe Lepetit added. “The Euros won’t kick-start the economy. It can simply momentarily support some sectors,” he said.

Image Boost

That would be no small feat for the hotel and restaurant sector, which has yet to recover from last November’s militant attacks that killed 130 people in Paris bars, a concert hall and outside the stadium where the opening game will take place. “A successful tournament should help France to boost its image as a safe tourist desti-

nation, which had been somewhat damaged following the terrorist attacks last year,” economist Diego Iscarro at IHS Global Insight said. Should the “Les Bleus” national team do well, France can also expect a small, temporary jolt for consumer confidence, he added.

But if the government failed to get a grip on the strikes, or if a bloody attack took place just as millions of fans watch the world’s second-biggest soccer event, the damage to France’s reputation could outweigh any economic benefit. France is deploying nearly 90,000 police and security staff to head off any risk of violence. “Images of road blockades and riot police using water cannon and firing tear gas, widely reproduced by international media, could discourage many ticketless fans to travel to France to enjoy the festive atmosphere,” IHS’s Iscarro said.

As for Hollande’s popularity, languishing at a record low of just 16 percent approval, Frederic Dabi from the Ifop pollsters does not expect much of a boost, even if star strikers Olivier Giroud and Antoine Griezmann propel France to victory. “In the 1984 Euros, (President) Francois Mitterrand was very unpopular and it didn’t change anything for him, even though France

had a stellar performance and (Michel) Platini scored nine goals,” he said.

‘Remove the Blockages’

In another headache for organizers, Air France pilots have called for a four-day strike from today, when an estimated two million foreign fans will begin arriving in earnest. But Air France chief executive Frederic Gagey promised that more than 80 percent of flights would operate today. While striking workers have varying demands, they are united in protest against labor reforms which the government forced through parliament without a vote, locking them in a power struggle with unions.

Despite the potential negative impact of the strikes on the championships, the French government is refusing to budge on a law it says will help reduce unemployment. “Let us be clear, the government has no intention of withdrawing this law, or of unraveling it,” Labour Minister Myriam El Khomri told AFP. She said she would meet powerful union leader Philippe Martinez, who is spearheading the industrial unrest, “in a minute if it would allow us to remove the blockages in this country”. —Agencies

CAUTIOUS TONE DRIVES YEN, SWISS FRANC UP

LONDON: The yen and Swiss franc climbed yesterday as investors, worried that Britain could vote to leave the European Union at a referendum in less than two weeks' time, ditched riskier assets in a flight to safety. As the yields on Japanese and German 10-year bonds, both traditional safe havens, hit record lows, the yen strengthened 0.4 percent to 106.68 against the dollar, not far from a 1-1/2-year high of 105.55 yen touched last month. The Swiss franc also firmed 0.3 percent to 1.0888 per euro, just shy of an eight-week high of 1.0886 touched the previous day.

The dollar index was on track for a modest weekly gain of 0.3 percent, having last week shed 2 percent as a much worse than expected US jobs report poured cold water on the view that the US Federal Reserve could

raise interest rates in June or July. The Fed will kick off its two-day policy meeting next Tuesday, while the Bank of Japan will start a two-day policy meeting on Wednesday.

In London, Bank of New York Mellon currency strategist Neil Mellor said Brexit uncertainty could limit central bank action, and therefore market action, until Britain's June 23 referendum on EU membership had passed. "We've got a market that is about to batten down the hatches - we're heading into a period of a lot of uncertainty," Mellor said. "A lot of central banks are putting off decisions because of the referendum, and I think next week could therefore be a bit of a wash-out."

BlackRock, the world's largest asset manager, said financial markets may be under-pricing the risk of Britain leaving the EU. The euro was flat at \$1.1319, about 3 US

cents down from a nine-month high of \$1.1616 hit a month ago. "We believe we are starting to see the early signs of defensive positioning (on the euro) ahead of the June 23rd Brexit referendum," ING currency strategist Chris Turner wrote in a note to clients. "The euro is clearly under-performing the typical safe havens of the yen plus the intra-European safe havens of the Swiss franc, the Czech crown, and the Danish crown." For the week, the best-performing currency was the New Zealand dollar, which staged a broad rally after the Reserve Bank of New Zealand on Thursday skipped a chance to cut interest rates and appeared reluctant to cut again. The kiwi powered to a one-year high just shy of 71.5 US cents and was last at \$0.7097, up more than 2 percent for the week, though down 0.1 percent on the day. — Reuters



TOKYO: People walk by an electronic stock board of a securities firm yesterday. — AP

WORLD STOCKS SLUMP ON ECONOMIC UNREST

MARKETS JITTERY OVER BREXIT

LONDON: Global stock markets slumped yesterday as traders expressed unease over central bank policy and Britain's looming referendum on EU membership. After a healthy run of gains for stocks helped in part by a recovering oil market, European indices were down between by over two percent, a day after European Central Bank chief Mario Draghi called for political action to help kickstart eurozone growth. His comments were taken as a sign that the ECB's arsenal is running low following its unprecedented stimulus program launched this week.

Wall Street opened nearly half a percentage point lower following sharp European weakness, before drifting further down. Federal Reserve boss Janet Yellen has indicated that the US central bank is unlikely to lift interest rates until the final quarter of 2016 following weak jobs data from the world's biggest economy. Adding to markets'

unrest are fears that a Brexit vote on June 23 could unleash a wave of turmoil across world indices.

"The economic impact of the EU vote is riding high in investors' minds as they try to assess how it will affect the UK, European and global market outlook over the coming months," said Dave Jeal, head of investment products at stockbroker Interactive Investor. "The direction of the next US interest rate decision looks clear, but the uncertainty over its timing and continuing concerns over global market growth, added to the Brexit decision, make this a time for more cautious investors to take a back seat," he added.

Around 1335 GMT, the main indices in London, Frankfurt and Paris had all lost more than two percent. Milan's main index even slumped three percent shortly after New York's open. Europe's main markets had already retreated by

more than 1.0 percent on Thursday as Draghi again urged politicians to step up in efforts to breathe new life into the tepid eurozone economy. The British pound lost ground against both the dollar and the euro. Market focus was starting to turn toward next week's monetary policy meetings of the US and Japanese central banks.

The Bank of Japan earlier this year adopted a negative interest rate policy, following a similar move in 2015 by the ECB, in a bid to nurture investment. But the move has been criticized as being ineffective. Investors worldwide are now becoming concerned about sharp inflows into bond markets, which have become a safe haven investment, pushing yields to record lows. This, analysts say, makes the fixed-income markets vulnerable to possibly sharp losses should central banks reverse their current low-rate policies. — AFP

OIL PRICES EASE FROM 2016 HIGHS

LONDON: Oil prices fell yesterday as a stronger dollar pulled crude off the 2016 highs hit this week, although strong refinery demand and global supply disruptions lent support. Brent oil futures were trading at \$51.34 per barrel at 1308 GMT, down 61 cents while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) futures were down 64 cents at \$49.92 a barrel. Analysts said a rebound in the dollar had dented oil prices by making fuel imports for countries using other currencies more expensive. The dollar index was up 0.30 percent, adding to Thursday's gains as jittery global financial markets sent investors towards safe haven currencies.

"Oil prices eased back from a near 12-month high as the dollar reversed its recent trend," ANZ bank said on Friday adding that supply disruptions around the world should help to keep prices from falling deeper. Crude prices have almost doubled since touching their lowest in more than a decade in early 2016 as strong demand and supply disruptions erode a glut that pulled down prices by as much as 70 percent from a mid-2014 peak. Declines in US shale oil output are being compounded by steep falls in Nigerian production due to attacks by militants and in Canada due to forest fires. The US government said on Thursday unplanned global oil supply disruptions averaged more than 3.6 million bpd in May, the highest monthly level recorded since it started tracking disruptions in Jan 2011. Yesterday, the Niger Delta Avengers militant group said it had blown up the Obi Obi Brass trunk line operated by ENI.

On the demand side, global refining activity is expected to hit a record high just as crude supply disruptions around the world tighten the market. Available global refining capacity will reach 101.8 million bpd in August, its highest on record, and up from around 97.25 million bpd in March, data on Thomson Reuters Eikon shows. Investment bank Jefferies said yesterday that US refinery utilization reached 90.9 percent in the first week of June. — Reuters

GOLD NEAR 3-WEEK HIGH

LONDON: Gold inched lower yesterday as the dollar recovered, though prices held near a three-week high and were on track for a second straight weekly rise. Often perceived as an insurance against risk, gold has risen nearly 2 percent this week after weaker than expected US payrolls data dented expectations of an imminent rise in US interest rates, though that view was tempered by Thursday's surprise drop in weekly US jobless claims. Prices are likely to be bolstered in the next two weeks by nervousness over Britain's June 23 referendum on its EU membership, analysts said.

"The market is no longer worried that the Fed will raise rates next week and investors are more concerned about the UK referendum, which is likely to help increase demand for gold," Danske Bank senior analyst Jens Pedersen said. Spot gold was down only 0.1 percent at \$1,267.25 an ounce by 1151 GMT, still close to its highest since May 18, the \$1,271.31 hit in the previous session. Spot silver touched a three-week high earlier in the session and was on track for its biggest weekly gain since the end of April. Though it dropped 0.3 percent to \$17.23 an ounce, the metal has risen about 5 percent this week. "Last week's unexpectedly weak U.S. jobs data and subsequent cautious tone by (Fed chair Janet) Yellen opened the door for gold to resume its bull cycle," ANZ analyst Daniel Hynes said. "Investor demand is expected to remain strong in the short term, driven by easing expectations of a rate hike in the United States." Gold is highly sensitive to rising interest rates, which lift the opportunity cost of holding non-yielding bullion while boosting the dollar, in which it is priced.

WANTED: OIL TRADERS WHO KNOW CHINA

BEIJING/SINGAPORE: Chinese independent oil companies are luring traders, marketers and risk managers away from dominant state behemoths, offering better pay and perks in a hiring spree triggered by the freeing up of China's crude import trade. Global oil firms and commodity houses have also been raiding state giants such as Sinochem and CNPC for staff to help handle up to \$50 million a day in new crude flowing into China this year, and the cherry-picking of talent is likely just getting started.

China's independent "teapot" refiners, so called due to their small size, could be processing by the end of this year as much as a fifth of the crude imports of the world's No. 2 oil consumer. Already, in the first five months of 2016 - the first full year of a dozen of them being granted crude import licences - they have captured about 10 percent of the inbound shipments.

Shandong Dongming Petrochemical Group, China's largest independent refiner, has built a Singapore-based trading team of 11 to handle this new business, including trading and shipping managers hired from CNPC Fuel Oil Company and the CNOOC group. "A team of this size is far from enough for our scale of 10 million tonnes a year (200,000 bpd) crude demand," said Zhang Liu Cheng, vice president of Shandong Dongming. "We'll need more to cover products, chemicals and market analysis," Zhang said.

Awarding crude import quotas of up to 1.2 million barrels per day (bpd) to China's teapots has started a tussle for talent as the refiners - and the oil majors and trading houses that aim to supply them - dive into an activity previously restricted to state-owned enterprises (SOEs). This year, use of the quotas has made up most of a 16 percent or around

1 million bpd rise in China's crude imports, even with several underused and more awaiting approval.

Those angling for a slice of this market have already hired more than 40 traders and others, mostly from state companies, say colleagues and acquaintances of people who have moved jobs. "We have a big but not totally motivated team," said a senior trader with a state oil company, noting that offers often beat SOE employment, particularly at smaller firms. "Certainly we're going to see more talent outflows as the teapots have just begun hiring," the senior trader said. Most of the hires are in their mid-thirties, having honed their craft at Chinese state companies such as Sinochem Corp, China National Offshore Oil Corp (CNOOC) and China National Petroleum Corp (CNPC), sources said. "Our traders are very popular," said a source from one of the state oil trading companies. — Reuters

WAGES, SYRIAN MIGRANTS PUSH TURKISH GROWTH

ANKARA: Turkey's economy grew a larger-than-expected 4.8 percent in the first quarter, official data showed yesterday, outperforming major emerging markets peers, as wage hikes and spending by Syrian migrants fuelled private consumption. Domestic demand contributed 6 percent of the growth, data from the Turkish Statistics Institute showed, but net external demand wiped off 1.5 percent, meaning Turkey is importing more than it exports, taking the shine off the headline figure.

"Its peers, Brazil, Russia and South Africa are mired in recession, or with feeble growth drivers," Nomura strategist Tim Ash said in e-mailed comments, but added: "The structure of growth was less impressive, with private consumption and government spending leading the way, over investment and net exports." The year-on-year growth in gross domestic product came in slightly above a Reuters poll forecast of 4.5 percent, prompting the finance and development ministers to say Turkey was clearly on track to meet its goal of 4.5 percent growth this year. Output grew 0.8 percent in the period on a seasonally and calendar-adjusted basis, the Turkish Statistical Institute said.

Deputy Prime Minister Mehmet Simsek said the figures showed the economy was on a strong path and said the government would push ahead with structural reforms in the coming period. Finance Minister Naci Agbal said in a statement that those reforms, as well as closer integration with the European Union, would help Turkey to outperform other emerging markets. Agbal told Reuters last month, after being reappointed in a new cabinet, that Turkey would take "swift and bold" economic decisions this year and promised reforms - which many investors say are long overdue - to boost exports and employment.

But investors fear reform momentum will slow under new Prime Minister Binali Yildirim, a close ally of President Tayyip Erdogan, who wants to see strong consumption-led growth. Economists said public sector salary increases and a 30 percent hike in the minimum wage, a pledge made ahead of elections last November and introduced by the ruling AK Party at the start of the year, had contributed to the strong first quarter growth figures. — Reuters



ISTANBUL: A seller waits for customers in the spice bazaar in the Eminonu district on Thursday. — AFP



JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia: A handout picture provided by the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) on June 7, 2016 shows (from left) Minister of Hajj and Umrah Mohammed Bentin, Minister of Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources Khaled Al-Falih, Minister of Water, Environment and Agriculture Abdulrahman Fadli, Minister of Civil Service Khaled Al-Araj and Cabinet Minister Mohammad Al-Sheikh attending a press conference on the National Transformation Programme (NTP) in this coastal city. — AFP

SAUDI OFFICIALS OPEN UP TO PUSH ECONOMIC PLAN

TRANSPARENCY KEY IN REFORM DRIVE

JEDDAH: Pushed by international advisers and concerned about its image, conservative Saudi Arabia is engaged in an unusual display of openness to promote a wide-ranging economic transformation plan. Over four nights this week, 16 government ministers took the stage at a cramped state television studio in the humid Red Sea city of Jeddah to field questions from local and foreign reporters. Press conferences are traditionally rare in the kingdom.

This week's sessions, which began on the first day of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, were unprecedented. But officials say "transparency" - a word they use frequently these days - is essential to the success of the National Transformation Programme (NTP). The 112-page document, a tool to implement the over-arching Vision 2030 plan, sets five-year targets for transforming the oil-dependent economy following a slump in crude prices.

The reform drive is led by King Salman's 30-year-old son Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who has risen to be among Saudi Arabia's most influential figures since being named second-in-line to the throne last year. Prince Mohammed set an example in April when he stood before reporters and, seeming relaxed, answered questions about the Vision for almost one hour. "There is an element of transparency," Minister of Economy and Planning Adel Al-

Fakieh said during Wednesday night's televised press conference. Questions also came from citizens on Twitter.

By setting benchmarks, the NTP allows for accountability, which will be reinforced by a special body to monitor the performance of government agencies, Fakieh said. The system makes it possible that "we will see a breakthrough leap in the performance of the government," he added. Fakieh's ministry is one of 24 government agencies given initial targets under the NTP. In his case, the economy and planning ministry will be judged on its handling of objectives at the heart of the Vision: diversifying gross domestic product, growing the private sector, and increasing the efficiency of government subsidies.

At the centre of the reform effort is a plan to float less than five percent of oil giant Saudi Aramco on the stock market, with the proceeds to help form what will become the world's largest state investment fund, with around \$2 trillion in assets.

'The Public Should Know'

Fakieh said the NTP is the result of input from about 10 consulting firms and more than 600 Saudi officials who attended months of discussions and workshops. "We do not claim that the initiatives in this program are final," he said, calling for con-

structive public criticism to help it succeed. Fakieh downplayed the input of foreign experts. "We realize that it's only us understanding our own local context that can really make the best use of this international expertise," he said.

Last December the McKinsey Global Institute, the research arm of McKinsey & Co consultancy, published a 156-page report on "Saudi Arabia Beyond Oil: The Investment and Productivity Transformation". That document talks of a need for "greater accountability, coordination, and performance management" by government. "The public should know more about what is happening, too," said the report which is available on the Internet.

McKinsey was also among firms contracted by the government to advise on the kingdom's economic future, Bloomberg News reported. "They've been guided definitely, very, very strongly by McKinsey", including in the emphasis on transparency, said Patrick Dennis, lead Middle East economist at British-based advisory firm Oxford Economics. Government openness is needed for effective decision-making, proper functioning of the market, and to avoid corruption which typically leads to lower growth, he told AFP. Transparency, however, is "something that will come later over time", Dennis said. — AFP



ERFURT, Germany: In this Oct. 27, 2015 file photo, new €20 banknotes are arranged for display during a news conference at the branch office of the German Federal Bank. — AP

JOIN EURO? WE'LL GET BACK TO YOU ON THAT

FRANKFURT: The euro's waiting room is empty. No one is lining up to join the 19-country currency, and the next memberships - if any - will only be years down the road, certainly not in this decade. It marks a shift from a recent steady growth in membership, with seven countries joining in the past nine years, and reflects a sense that the euro is still patching the problems uncovered by the debt crisis that sank Greece's finances.

The issue was highlighted this week when the European Union's executive Commission and the European Central Bank made it clear that none of the seven potential new members - Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Sweden - have put their economies and state finances in shape needed to join, although progress has been made on many counts. And no one's asking to get in, either.

Governments in Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and elsewhere are paying lip service to the requirement to join. They committed to the euro simply by joining the EU in the first place. But they are not moving toward the entrance door. Instead, they are waiting to see whether and how the currency zone sorts out the debt and economic problems that threatened it with collapse and saw Ireland, Greece, Portugal, Spain and Cyprus bailed out. In Poland, the leader of the ruling Law and Justice Party, Jaroslaw Kaczynski, said last year "we could join in 40 years", and there matters seem to remain.

Concerns

That's at least partly due to concern about repeating the experience with Greece. Many think the country was not economically ready to join the euro when it did so in 2001, and people there have suffered under high unemployment, higher taxes and government cutbacks. Bulgaria, which seems more eager, is being politely told to first sort out its problems with corruption, which can hinder growth and investment. Britain and Denmark won the right to opt-out of the euro when the currency was conceived, and Sweden, though on paper obligated to join, rejected the euro in a 2003 referendum.

While many see stability in binding their countries to rich economies like Germany and France, others are worried it could lead to higher prices, a common view despite the fact that eurozone infla-

tion right now is so low it's negative, at minus 0.1 percent. "One thing is for sure: prices would go up 10-20 percent in the switch," says Marek Liwinski, a 73-year-old furrier in Warsaw. The most recent Eurobarometer survey in April for the EU's executive commission showed that the proportion of residents in favor of introducing the euro varies widely, from 64 percent in Romania to 29 percent in the Czech Republic. Less than one in five, 17 percent, said their country was ready.

The no-rush mood extends to the EU centers of power in Brussels, headquarters of the commission, and Frankfurt, Germany, home of the euro's issuer, the European Central Bank. Asked about the issue at a news conference last week, ECB head Mario Draghi said that while there had been "very significant progress," "we have to judge all these issues in perspective, really. We have to give ourselves time." Countries that want to join the euro must show they can control inflation and keep budget deficits below 3 percent of annual economic output and government debt below 60 percent. None of the seven countries checks all the boxes. The upsides of euro membership include streamlining cross-border business by eliminating foreign exchange transactions. It can also help keep inflation and markets stable and is a stronger form of union with the West. That can be appealing to former Soviet-dominated states worried about Russia's desire to expand its sphere of influence.

Downsides

There are a few downsides as well, however. New members must hand over control of interest rates to the ECB, and lose the possibility to devalue their currency, an important safety valve in an economic crisis and one that would have given Greece an alternative to some of the tough austerity cuts it had to impose under the bailouts.

Even top EU officials say the monetary union, launched with optimism in 1999, remains incomplete. Some weak points are being addressed. In particular, big banks are now supervised at the EU level - by the ECB in a so-called "banking union" - to prevent lenient national regulators from ignoring trouble. But other fixes that would soften financial crises, such as EU-wide deposit insurance or a centralized fiscal pot, remain only on the drawing board.—Reuters

NEW THREAT TO ONLINE LENDERS: 'STACKING' OF MULTIPLE LOANS PRACTICE PROLIFERATING IN SECTOR

SAN FRANCISCO/NEW YORK: Many online lenders have failed to detect the "stacking" of multiple loans by borrowers who slip through their automated underwriting systems, lending company executives and investors told Reuters. The practice is proliferating in the sector - led by LendingClub, OnDeck and Prosper Marketplace - because of many lenders' hurried, algorithmic underwriting, use of "soft" credit inquiries, and patchy reporting of the resulting loans to credit bureaus, according to online lending and consumer credit experts. Such loopholes, they said, can result in multiple lenders making loans to the same borrowers, often within a short period, without the full picture of their rising obligations and deteriorating ability to pay. Stacking is "causing problems with the whole industry," said Brian Biglin, chief risk officer of LoanDepot, a five-year-old mortgage lender that last year started making personal loans online.

New revelations of loose lending could make it harder for the beleaguered sector to win back trust from investors who are already concerned about slipshod underwriting and rising default risk. The marketplace lending industry - which last year hit \$18 billion in annual loan originations - has seen plummeting share prices and the retreat of some major backers, including BlackRock and Citigroup.

Industry leaders LendingClub and Avant said they are aware of stacking and its dangers, but they downplayed the risks and did not provide examples of specific actions taken to prevent the practice. OnDeck and Prosper said they have launched efforts to detect and guard against stacking. "We have established proprietary algorithms," said Prosper spokeswoman Sarah Cain. Some higher-risk lenders allow and promote stacking as debt consolidation, but most lenders consider it a threat, particularly when not disclosed.

Edward Hanson, the owner of Ella's Wood Fire Pizza, said he started stacking loans about five years ago to sustain his business. "You take out another one to help you pay for the first," Hanson said. Hanson, 55, said he already had loans from a variety of online lenders when he received offers from online business lenders OnDeck and Kabbage, which approved his application, he said.

OnDeck knew Hanson had at least one other loan when he applied in August of 2014, and required that the existing debt be paid off as a condition of the new loan, said company spokesman Jim Larkin. When Hanson came back a year later, OnDeck declined his application because Hanson had stacked loans during the course of repayment, Larkin said. Kabbage declined to comment on Hanson's loans and did not respond to questions about its stacking policies. Hanson now pays nearly 40 percent interest on his latest loan, from yet another lender. "I pretty much feel trapped," he said.

Nervous Investors

Institutional investors have lately grown wary of marketplace lenders after initially hailing them as disruptors of banks and credit card companies. Wall Street money is crucial for most online lenders, who need it to fund their loans. Citigroup ended its partnership with Prosper earlier this year. The bank had repackaged about \$1.5 billion of Prosper's loans into securities since the partnership began less than a year ago. Investor sentiment was hammered again last month by a scandal at industry leader LendingClub. The company knowingly sold \$22 million in loans that did not meet the agreed specifications of one investment bank, Jefferies, and falsified the applications of \$3 million of those loans. LendingClub is under investigation by the US Department of Justice, the company said last month, and a number of its large investors have halted investments in the wake of its chief executive's resignation. The New York Department of Financial Services also has said it will launch a probe into online lenders. Now concerns about stacking are adding to the industry's woes. One investment firm that was considering buying equity in a marketplace lender described stacking as a sector "blind spot." The firm declined to be named.

Bill Kassul, a partner in Ranger Capital Group - which has about \$300 million invested in marketplace lending and business lending - said stacking has become a concern in the last two years and poses a "big risk" to investors. Blue Elephant Capital Management stopped buying loans from

Prosper for several months recently over concerns about weak underwriting and profitability. Marketplace lenders need to slow their lending processes and improve sharing of credit information, said Brian Weinstein, chief investment officer at Blue Elephant. Stacking was "one of the reasons why we think we saw credit deteriorate last summer when we stopped our marketplace lending program," Weinstein said. Blue Elephant last month announced plans to resume buying Prosper loans, in part because the company is charging higher interest rates.

'Soft' Credit Checks

In their haste to give applicants quick loan decisions - sometimes within 24 hours - some marketplace lenders do not conduct thorough credit checks, known as "hard inquiries," according to industry executives. Such checks create an updated log of credit and loan applications, and they can lower a borrower's credit score. Soft inquiries don't require the borrower's consent and don't usually show up on credit reports.

OnDeck said it runs only soft checks. LendingClub and Prosper said they initially run soft checks but run hard checks later in the process, just before funding loans. Running hard checks only at the last minute, however, can also leave other lenders in the dark, said Gilles Gade, president and CEO of Cross River Bank, which invests in many online lending platforms. At that point, the borrower may have already obtained other loans, he said, because hard checks can take about 30 days to show up on a credit report.

Another problem: Loans that never show up on credit reports at all, because of uneven reporting by online lenders. "Not all lenders in our industry report to bureaus," said Leslie Payne, a spokeswoman for LendUp, which makes high-interest installment loans. In a February blog post, Experian, the credit bureau, said a "significant number" of marketplace lenders do not report their loans. Prosper, Avant and LendingClub told Reuters that they report their loans to all three major credit bureaus at least monthly. OnDeck said it reports to several leading commercial credit bureaus, including Experian and PayNet.

Many lenders said they also pull data from other sources, including paystubs, tax documents and accounting software for businesses to size up a borrower's ability to pay. LoanDepot said it has taken several steps to mitigate the risks of stacking, including requiring months of bank statements for its borrowers and building custom algorithms to flag potential stacking activity.

When the Music Stops

Most online lenders focus on either business or consumer lending. Those lending to small businesses may face greater risk from stacking, in part because of a separate class of high-risk, high-interest business lenders that actively promotes the practice. Merchant cash advance lenders make loans based mainly on a business's expected revenue rather than its credit record or existing debts. They often scour databases of business loans - such as those by OnDeck or Kabbage - and use them as marketing leads to find new borrowers, online lending executives and investors said.

OnDeck has made efforts to educate customers to stay away from lenders offering stacked loans, said Chief Operating Officer James Hobson. It has also started monitoring borrowers more frequently and joined the Small Business Finance Exchange, an effort to share lending data to guard against stacking. After OnDeck turned down the second application from Hanson, the pizzeria owner, he turned to World Business Lenders, a small business lender founded in 2011. He now pays 39 percent interest.

Hanson would not detail his balance or his payments, but said he put up his house as collateral. The company said Hanson's latest loan reduced his payments from 44 percent of his business's revenue to 12 percent by offering a longer term. Some small business owners will keep borrowing as long as lenders grant approvals, taking one loan after another, said chief executive Doug Naidus. But at some point, he cautioned, the principal needs to get paid back. "The fifth stack pays the fourth stack, and the sixth stack pays the fifth stack," Naidus said. "But when the music stops, everybody's got to find a chair." — Reuters

RUSSIA UNVEILS NEW NAVY ICEBREAKER

SAINT PETERSBURG: Russia yesterday floated a new icebreaker for its navy, the first one in about 45 years, and a further sign of Moscow's growing military focus on the Arctic. Built at the Admiralty Shipyards in Saint

Petersburg, Russia's second-largest city and home to its Baltic fleet, the Ilya Muromets is the first of a series of icebreakers ordered by the defence ministry in recent years.

"In 2017 this icebreaker will join the

Northern Fleet to ensure our priorities in the northern basin," Admiral Igor Zvarich, who heads the technical department of the Russian navy, said during the ceremony. The Ilya Muromets is an 85-m long electric-

diesel powered icebreaker with the deadweight of 6,000 tonnes and is designed to help the deployment of the navy in icy conditions as well as escort or tow other ships.

It can cut through ice of up to one metre thick and travel the entire 5,600 km length of the Northern Passage, according to the defence ministry. Last month the shipyard signed a new contract with the defence ministry for two Arctic corvettes, capable of acting as ice breakers, which will be armed with cruise missiles and delivered in 2020. Construction for those two ships will begin this fall, said Admiralty Shipyards chief Alexander Buzakov.

Russia has made the Arctic a priority in its new military doctrine, building a string of bases and holding war games there at a time when parts of the polar region are contested by different nations. Last year Russia filed a claim in the United Nations over a vast swathe of the region, including the North Pole. The government estimates that the Arctic shelf contains some 4.9 billion tonnes of hydrocarbons. Interest in the Arctic has flared up in recent years as rising temperatures open up shipping routes and make hitherto inaccessible mineral resources easier to exploit. —AFP



SAINT PETERSBURG: The Ilya Muromets diesel-and electric-powered icebreaker, the head ship (project 21180) for Russia's Navy, is seen during a launching ceremony at the Admiralty Verfi shipyard yesterday. —AFP

MTN TO PAY \$1.7BN NIGERIA TELCO FINE

JOHANNESBURG: South African telecoms giant MTN said yesterday it would pay a \$1.7 billion fine to the Nigerian government in a "full and final settlement" over its failure to disconnect unregistered mobile phone users. The Johannesburg-based company said in a statement that "MTN Nigeria has agreed to pay a total cash amount of Naira 330 billion over three years." Africa's biggest mobile-phone operator was fined \$3.9 billion last year and has since been in negotiations with the Nigerian government to reduce the size of the penalty.

The company was hit with the huge demand amid fears that some of the 5.1 million affected lines were being used by Boko Haram insurgents. A Nigerian government spokesman said that he could not confirm the agreement as parliament was still investigating the matter. "The point should be made that MTN cannot singularly decide on what to pay," communications ministry spokesman Victor Oluwadamilare told AFP. "As far as Nigeria is concerned, we have to await the outcome of that intervention by the national assembly." After MTN's announcement, its shares on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange rose as much as 21 percent, on track for the biggest gain since 2008, according to Bloomberg News. The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), the country's telecoms regulator, handed down the fine last year citing an inability to trace users in a country plagued by frequent kidnappings and Boko Haram militants. The sum was originally set at \$5.2 billion before being lowered to \$3.9 billion on appeal.

'Relief to Investors'

"MTN is pleased to inform shareholders that the matter has been resolved with the Federal Government of Nigeria," the company statement said. MTN executive chairman Phuthuma Nhleko "expresses his thanks and gratitude to (the Nigerian government) for the spirit in which the matter was resolved," it added. MTN paid one instalment in February and has scheduled six other payments to cover the fine by May 2019.

"The news is a huge relief to investors, given the fact that Nigeria ended up not imposing the initial amount of the fine," Dobek Pater, telecoms specialist at the Africa Analysis consultancy, told AFP. "MTN could not afford to lose a major market such as Nigeria and by paying the fine it shows that they still have faith in keeping their investment there." Boko Haram violence has left at least 17,000 dead and forced more than 2.6 million people from their homes since 2009. President Muhammadu Buhari announced in December the group was "technically" defeated but attacks continue. "The concern of the federal government was basically on the security, not the fine imposed on the MTN," Buhari said in March. —AFP



LEEWARDEN: Netherlands' F-35C Lightning II joint striker fighter aircraft fly in formation with F16 Fighting Falcon aircrafts during the Dutch Air Force Days at Leeuwarden Air Base yesterday. —AFP

US MILITARY TO SHOW OFF F-35 JET IN FARNBOROUGH

WASHINGTON: After years of delays, technical problems and massive cost overruns, the most expensive warplane in history is finally about to make its international public flying debut. The F-35 stealth fighter is set to roar through the skies over England next month, first at the Royal International Air Tattoo, then at the Farnborough International Airshow. The Pentagon hopes the displays will convince program partners and prospective buyers that the plane's many problems may at last be behind it.

First envisioned in the early 1990s, the F-35 will eventually form the backbone of America's fighter fleet. But the program has come with a ballooning price tag - now at almost \$400 billion - for the nearly 2,500 planes that will be produced in the coming decades. It was supposed to have flown at Farnborough - one of the world's top air shows - back in 2014, but the entire F-35 fleet was grounded when a plane's engine caught fire while training in the United States.

That incident was another in a string of blows

for the F-35, which has suffered so many setbacks that at times it has seemed jinxed. A Pentagon report in February said one version of the plane, the F-35A, remained dogged by problems, including software bugs and technical glitches. And issues with the eject system meant it could potentially kill pilots below a certain weight.

But industry watchers and Pentagon officials now say Lockheed Martin's Joint Strike Fighter, as it is also known, is progressing. Lieutenant General Chris Bogdan, who is overseeing the program for the Pentagon, said most of the work developing the F-35 will be done by 2018. The plane has actually already gone into service. A year ago, the US Marine Corps declared a batch of pared-down F-35Bs as operational, marking a major milestone.

The F-35 comes in three designs, with the F-35B capable of landing vertically and making short takeoffs. The F-35C is for use on aircraft carriers. The Air Force is expected to declare its first F-35As, which conduct standard takeoffs and landings, as operational by the end of the year.

360-Degree Helmet

Production levels are ramping up, and Bogdan said 53 aircraft should be delivered this year, compared to 45 in 2015. About 155 F-35s have been produced in all. The eight other countries participating in the F-35 program are starting to get their planes, including the Netherlands, which this year took delivery of two F-35As in Leeuwarden. "Technically, it has definitely seen the worst," said air industry expert Richard Aboulafia, vice president of analysis at the Teal Group.

Jerry Hendrix, the director of the strategies and assessments program at the Center for a New American Security, said the F-35 still has issues with its software and a sophisticated helmet that links to cameras and will give pilots a 360-degree view around the plane. But "the F-35 has turned the corner from a technological standpoint and is coming along very rapidly," said Hendrix, initially an F-35 skeptic. "The aircraft, with its engine, its wings, has come along and in fact is doing quite well right now." —AFP

GOLDFISH SUBS, MUSICAL CATS AT TOKYO TOY SHOW

NANO-DRONES FLY INTO FOCUS AT EXPO

TOKYO: Is your life lacking a mini-submarine for your goldfish tank? Or do you really need some musical cats to brighten your day? Never fear, Japan has just the thing. The Tokyo Toy Show offers a smorgasbord of high-tech frippery to bemuse, delight and entertain in equal measure. The annual event, which runs until tomorrow in the Japanese capital, brings together 160 firms from all over the world to showcase the best they have to offer to an expected 160,000 visitors.

Like a doll that has its own Twitter account, or a virtual reality headset that makes the wearer think they are flying through outer space or walking on the surface of a distant planet. Toy makers in rapidly-ageing Japan long ago branched out from targeting children only to aim their offerings also at adults. One such example of this superannuation strategy is "Licca-chan" - Japan's homegrown version of Barbie - whose maker Takara Tomy now

produces a much-in-demand adult version. Women in their 20s and 30s snapped up a limited edition version last year, priced at around \$100, in three days. But at the Tokyo Toy Show yesterday, but it was gadgets that you could only find in Japan that really caught the eye. Masayoshi Goto, a spokesman for Takara Tomy A.R.T.S, proudly showed off his company's set of musical felines. "When you press the back of these cats, they meow in a scale, so you can play music with them," he proudly explained.

Colorful nano-drones, described by designers as the world's smallest flying drone, also proved a big crowd puller. The smallest drone is 3.5 cm wide and weighed nine grams, although a heavier 11 gm version was equipped with a camera able to film four minutes of video in flight. The green, pink and blue remote controlled nano-drones cost between \$60 and \$100 and are light enough that they do not require a permit to fly in Japan. — Agencies



TOKYO: A staff member controls a submarine with a camera at the International Tokyo Toy Show yesterday.



Japan's toy company Takara Tomy displays its new toy products of Licca-chan dolls. — AP/AFP photos



A toy train or plarail Shinkansen (bottom) equipped with a camera shows off the view from its cockpit to a tablet during a demonstration by Japan's toy company Takara Tomy.



A model of toymaker Shine displays "Awa moko", a pen-like device that uses the froth of liquid hand soap to create small figures.

BILL GATES: CHICKENS, NOT COMPUTERS, CAN SOLVE POVERTY

WASHINGTON: Want to end extreme poverty? Technology hyper-billionaire Bill Gates says the answer is chickens. And that's not the name of new Microsoft software. Gates, the founder of the world's largest software company, says the best thing to improve the lives of the world's poorest is not computers or the Internet but raising a few roosters and hens. "It's pretty clear to me that just about anyone who's living in extreme poverty is better off if they have chickens," he said this week on his website GatesNotes.com.

The world's richest person, who made his \$75 billion fortune pushing for a Microsoft computer in every home, said his Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has

just partnered with the global development group Heifer International to donate some 100,000 chickens to families in sub-Saharan Africa living on less than \$2 a day. The goal, he said, is to get 30 percent of the rural families in the region to raise improved breeds of vaccinated chickens, compared with the current five percent.

The return is better than other solutions, he said: Chickens cost little to take care of, they multiply fast and eggs and chicken meat can boost family nutrition. They also empower women, he said. "Because chickens are small and typically stay close to home, many cultures regard them as a woman's animal, in contrast to larger livestock like goats or cows. Women

who sell chickens are likely to reinvest the profits in their families." — AFP



Bill Gates



CARACAS: Students take cover from tear gas grenades and rubber bullets fired by riot police at a march of students from the public Central University of Venezuela demanding a referendum on removing President Nicolas Maduro on Thursday. — AFP

VENEZUELA FOOD CRISIS TRIGGERS PROTESTS

CARACAS: Jose Salazar is waving a fistful of Venezuelan bolivars in the middle of a Caracas street. "What do I do with this money?" demands the angry retiree and grandfather, one of dozens of Venezuelans who blocked an avenue in the capital Wednesday in protest against the food shortages ravaging the troubled country. Similar scenes have broken out on an almost daily basis in towns and cities across Venezuela, a once-booming oil producer that has skidded to the brink of collapse as global crude prices have plunged.

Salazar said he was looking for food for his family, but there was none to be found in the supermarkets. So he joined a spontaneous protest with other residents of Petare, an impoverished neighborhood in eastern Caracas, who were all facing the same predicament and venting their anger against leftist President Nicolas Maduro. "Get out Nicolas Maduro," and "Referendum!" they shouted - a reference to the opposition's push to call a referendum on sacking the unpopular president. "We're hungry. We want food. Expensive, cheap, imported, whatever. It doesn't matter. But we need food," said protester Tairon Rincon.

Police soon broke them up with tear gas and rubber bullets. But hours later another protest broke out in the middle class neighborhood of Los Ruices. Similar ones had erupted in the previous 24 hours in cities across Venezuela, including Valera, San Juan de los Morros and Porlamar, according to press reports.

Buses with Bald Tyres

Sometimes the protests escalate into looting sprees. The Venezuelan Observatory for Social Conflict, a monitoring group, says 254 incidents of looting or attempted looting erupted in the first five months of the year. There were 2,779 protests over shortages or interrupted water and electricity supplies in the same period, the group says. Food, medicine and basic goods like toilet paper, deodorant and diapers are all in short supply, and a drought and electricity crisis have exacerbated Venezuelans' hardships. As the Petare protest flared, bus drivers were staging their own protest in front of the transportation ministry over the lack of spare parts for their vehicles. "Now we have problems getting batteries, tires, oil. The gasoline price has gone up. This business just isn't bringing in enough," said Alfonso Rangel. Drivers put signs outside the ministry asking "Where are the tires and batteries, Mr Minister?" "More than 70 percent of the fleet is off the road," said protester Jose Luis Montoya. "The buses' tires are all bald.... We're risking our passengers' lives and our own."

World's Highest Inflation

Maduro has long dismissed the center-right opposition as elitist, and their protests against his government as a capitalist conspiracy. But spontaneous protests like the ones by the bus drivers and the residents of Petare hit closer to home. Maduro himself is a former bus driver, and Petare is the kind of neighborhood that used to be bastions for the Socialist leader and his late predecessor, Hugo Chavez. But the crisis has badly damaged Maduro's popularity, which is in the 20s halfway into his six-year term. The scarcity of goods has sent prices soaring. Venezuela had the worst inflation in the world last year, 180.9 percent. The figure is on track to hit 700 percent this year, says the International Monetary Fund. — AFP

SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 2016

Kuwait Times Weekender

www.kuwaittimes.net



**Britain marks queen's official
90th birthday with gratitude**

SEE PAGE 26

A model wearing creations by Topman Design, part of the Topshop high-street fashion stable, which opened London's men fashion week. — AFP

Dolly Parton and Carl Dean have renewed their wedding vows after 50 years of marriage

The couple, who tied the knot on May 30, 1966, recently celebrated their Golden Anniversary with a vow renewal ceremony in Nashville, Tennessee and the fiercely private pair have decided to sell the pictures from the ceremony to raise money to benefit children's charities. Dolly, 70, who recently kicked off her 'Pure & Simple Tour', 'her largest North American tour in more than 25 years, said: "If I had it to do all over, I'd do it all over again, and we did. I'm dragging him kicking and screaming into the next 50 years. Wish us luck. In all honesty, the only way I was able to get Carl to do any of this in the first place was that it was a great opportunity for us to raise money for some very worthy causes." And although 73-year-old Carl - a businessman who ran an asphalt-laying company - has shunned the limelight despite being married to one of the biggest stars in the world, he agreed to do his first interview to go along with the pictures. Speaking about his reaction the first time he saw Dolly, Carl said: "My first thought was I'm gonna marry

that girl. My second thought was, Lord she's good lookin'. And that was the day my life began. I wouldn't trade the last 50 years for nothing on this earth." The couple tied the knot in 1966, after two years of dating, in a small ceremony in Ringgold, Georgia, in front of just Dolly's mother. The '9 to 5' hitmaker previously admitted her spouse prefers to live his life in private because he is a "loner". She said: "My husband is a loner. He doesn't particularly care about being around anybody but me. He's just always asked me to leave him out of all this. He does not like all the hula-laloo." However, Dolly has insisted Carl - who she met at the Wishy Washy Laundromat when she moved to Nashville in 1964 - is incredibly supportive of her. She said: "He's always been supportive. He's like a brother and a father and a friend and a husband and a lover - all of those things to me. I think he's kind of proud that we've been in it this long!"



Amber Heard's former partner insists the actress never assaulted her

In 2009 Amber, 30, was arrested at the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport when she allegedly grabbed and struck her then partner Tasya van Ree's arm but the artist/photographer has defended Amber after news of the incident was made public recently. She said in a statement: "In 2009, Amber was wrongfully

accused for an incident that was misinterpreted and over-sensationalized by two individuals in a power position. I recount hints of misogynistic attitudes toward us which later appeared to be homophobic when they found out we were domestic partners and not just 'friends'. Charges were quickly dropped and she was released moments later. It's disheartening that Amber's integrity and story are being questioned yet again. Amber is a brilliant, honest and beautiful woman and I have the utmost respect for her. We shared five wonderful years together and remain close to this day." Amber recently filed for divorce from Johnny Depp, 52, after 15 months of marriage and has alleged that he assaulted her numerous times during their marriage. And her close friend claims Johnny left the actress with a "busted lip and clumps of hair on the floor" after one "all-out assault". iO Tillett Wright, who called the police after Johnny allegedly attacked Amber last month, wrote an essay detailing the alleged abuse and claiming that it was an ongoing issue in their marriage. In a post for Refinery29, she wrote: "The reports of violence started with a kick on a private plane, then it was shoves and the occasional punch, until finally, in December, she described an all-out assault and she woke up with her pillow covered in blood. I know this because I went to their house. I saw the pillow with my own eyes. I saw the busted lip and the clumps of hair on the floor. I got the phone call immediately after it happened, her screaming and crying, a stoic woman reduced to sobs." Amber has filed for divorce and was granted a temporary restraining order against her estranged husband last month. Johnny has denied the allegations of abuse.



Ed Sheeran is being sued for \$20 million

The 25-year-old singer/songwriter has been hit with a lawsuit by Martin Harrington and Thomas Leonard who claim that his track 'Photograph' "note-for-note" copies their 2009 song 'Amazing', which was released by UK 'X Factor' winner Matt Cardle. Attorney Richard Busch, who recently represented the family of Marvin Gaye in the 'Blurred Lines' copyright case, filed a lawsuit on behalf of the pair in federal court in Los Angeles on Wednesday (08.06.16). The lawsuit states: "The chorus sections of 'Amazing' and the infringing 'Photograph' share 39 identical notes - meaning the notes are identical in pitch, rhythmic duration, and placement in the measure. "The songs' similarities reach the very essence of the work. The similarities go beyond substantial, which is itself sufficient to establish copyright infringement, and are in fact striking. The similarity of words, vocal style, vocal melody, melody, and rhythm are clear indicators, among other things, that 'Photograph' copies 'Amazing'." Ed's co-writer Johnny McDaid, publishers Sony/ATV

Songs and Polar Patrol Music, touring company Nathan Cable Touring and record label Warner Music Group have all been named in the lawsuit. Last year Robin Thicke and Pharrell Williams were ordered to pay \$7.3 million in copyright infringement due to similarities between their number one single 'Blurred Lines' and Gaye's 'Got To Give It Up'. However, both Robin and Pharrell denied any wrong-doing and insisted they would battle the decision. Their lawyer, Howard King, said at the time: "We owe it to songwriters around the world to make sure this verdict doesn't stand. "My clients know that they wrote the song 'Blurred Lines' from their hearts and souls and no other source. "We are going to exercise every post trial remedy we have to make sure this verdict does not stand. We look at it as being in the seventh inning of a game that could go into extra innings." The payout was reduced on appeal but the Marvin Gaye estate receives 50 per cent of publishing and songwriting revenues from 'Blurred Lines'.



Ellen DeGeneres is being sued for making a breast joke on her chat show



The 58-year-old presenter is the subject of a lawsuit from a business owner named Titi Pierce, whose company in Georgia, US, was named in a segment of the show titled 'What's Wrong With These Ads... and These Signs'. Titi, who is a real estate agent, says she was mocked in the piece on 'The Ellen DeGeneres Show' because the presenter changed the pronunciation of her name to "titty" - which means breasts. She says nobody has made the mistake in 35 years and she "suffered stress, emotional distress, embarrassment, humiliation, anger, and other mental pain and suffering" according to court papers obtained by TMZ. The documents submitted also state Titi's mobile number was flashed across the screen and this led to her receiving 'ridiculing and harassing phone

calls and voice mails' while she was at a funeral. Titi is suing for "defamation, false light invasion of privacy, misappropriation of likeness, and intentional infliction of emotional distress." Elsewhere, Ellen - who is married to Portia di Rossi - recently admitted she doesn't regret not having children because she doesn't think it would be fair to raise them in the spotlight. She said: "I think in this profession it can be really tough for children. It's hard for them to have to share their parents with the world." The former 'Ellen' star added it can be tough enough when she's out with her nieces as the girls find it frustrating having to share her with other people. She said: "When we're out in public and people want to talk to me they're like, 'Why does everybody want your time? Why aren't you just with me?'"

Justin Bieber has re-followed his ex-girlfriend Selena Gomez on Instagram

Several fans of the former couple, who call themselves Jelena believers, pointed out that on Sunday (05.06.16) the 'Company' hitmaker had hit the follow button on the 23-year-old pop beauty's page showing he is still interested in what she is up to. His decision to follow the 'Heart Wants What It Wants' singer shows relations between them must have improved because Justin previously unfollowed Selena in November 2014 after they split up. It's the first social media interaction concerning the ex-lovers since Justin, 22, - who had an on/off relationship with Selena from 2011 to 2014 - shared a throwback photo of them kissing on the photo-sharing app back in March, which led to Selena attending Justin's 'Purpose World Tour' show at the Staples Center in Los Angeles on March 23.

Justin's Instagram also shows he most recently followed Hailey Baldwin, who he's been romantically linked to, and model Bella Hadid. However, while they appear to have settled their differences, Selena recently admitted she's "so done" with all the speculation surrounding their romance. She said: "At first I didn't care. To me it was: I'm 18, I have a boyfriend, we look cute together, we like that. Then I got my heart broken and I cared. Because people had no idea what was going on, but everywhere it was a million different things. I was kind of in a corner, banging my head against the wall. I didn't know where to go. "I'm so exhausted. I honestly am so done. I care about his health and well-being. But I can't do it anymore." Selena is yet to follow her ex back.



DASH



A man attempted to burn down Dash in West Hollywood on Monday

The shop - owned by sisters Kourtney Kardashian, Kim Kardashian West, Khloe Kardashian, Kendall Jenner and Kylie Jenner - has been targeted by a man who has tried to set fire to the property at around midday. Witnesses say they saw a "lit object" being hurled through the window of the outlet, according to a police report obtained by the Los Angeles Times. Glass was shattered after the culprit threw the missile and when police arrived at the scene they discovered the "heavy object" was smoldering. What's more, they discovered a bottle of lighter fluid outside the property. However, the LAPD found no damage to stock or contents of the retail store. The culprit has since escaped and no arrests have been made though police are continuing to investigate the crime and are checking CCTV. Dash was one of the Kardashians' original businesses before the reality TV stars ventured into the world of TV, makeup and mobile apps and Khloe, 31, once revealed that promoting the shop was one of the

main reasons she agreed to appear on 'Keeping Up With The Kardashians'. And Kourtney, 37, was the one who told her sister Dash would help her get back on her feet after their father Robert Kardashian's death from cancer in 2003. She said: "(Kourtney told me) we're going to open a women's clothing store, and you're going to run it', Because I just needed structure. I needed something to do every day. She added: "Kim and my mom really wanted to do the TV show, and Kourtney and I were like, 'All we wanted to do was the kids store and Dash. [Show producer] Ryan Seacrest was like, 'Well, I only want you on if it's a family show.' (We said) 'well, if you film at the store, and it's our commercial, then we'll be on it.'" The original store opened in Calabasas, California, in 2006, but it was relocated to West Hollywood six years later.



Filmmaker claims **Beyoncé** stole his ideas to make 'Lemonade'

An independent filmmaker filed a federal lawsuit against Beyoncé on Wednesday alleging that ideas from his 2014 short film were used to create the trailer that accompanied her new visual album "Lemonade."

Matthew Fulks alleges in his lawsuit that his 2014 short film, "Palinoia," had been seen by members of the team working on the "Lemonade" video and that Beyoncé's video was created months later and was "visually similar." Fulks, who lives in Louisville, Kentucky, alleges that the pop singer, her management company, Parkwood Entertainment, Sony Music Entertainment and Columbia Recording Corporation, infringed on his copyright.

The lawsuit, filed in US District Court in Manhattan, points to nine instances - about 39 seconds of the 65-second trailer - that Fulks says are visually similar. It seeks unspecified monetary damages.

The "Lemonade" trailer is "substantially similar" to Fulks' film, including a similar mood, setting, pace and fonts, he says in the lawsuit.

The video, posted on YouTube on April 17, had received nearly 11 million views by Wednesday afternoon. Representatives for Beyoncé and the corporations did not immediately respond to requests for comment Thursday. — AP

Mathew Knowles has defended his relationship with his daughter Beyoncé



The 64-year-old talent manager insisted the 'Lemonade' hitmaker hasn't cut him out of her life, after he reportedly cheated on her mother Tina and was fired as her manager in 2011. Speaking about pictures published last month after he attended her Houston concert during her Formation World Tour - where he met up with the star and her four-year-old daughter Blue Ivy - he said: "Unfortunately the media got it wrong - they tried to portray it like it's the first time we've seen each other. They even got all the photos all messed up and confused. Some of those photos, like the one with Blue Ivy pulling Beyoncé's hair - that was six months ago. There was like photos from multiple times we've been together that somehow the media made [look like it was] all that was at the concert." Mathew says he sees more of his family than people seem to believe but he doesn't feel the need to alert the media every time they meet up because it is "nobody's business". He told RadarOnline.com: "Nobody's gonna call and say, 'Hey! Today I was with Beyoncé!' That wasn't my first time seeing Beyoncé in years. It's

nobody's business when I see my kids or my grandkids! "It's not different than any other times I've been with Beyoncé and Blue - it's a lot of fun. It's always good to see your kids." Meanwhile, the former Destiny's Child manager addressed the rumours that his daughter's latest visual album 'Lemonade' was about Jay Z's alleged affair with another woman. He said: "I'm not aware nor do I get involved in my daughter's business to know if her husband's cheating. I don't know the answer to that. We've been in the media for 25 years ... probably you guys have heard every rumor you could imagine." And he insisted the couple's marriage is still strong and he's seen many rumors blown out of proportion in the media during his career. He said: "It's annoying that over the 25 years, probably 25% [of rumours] are true [while] 75% are not - of 75%, probably 50% of them are so far left wrong. I'm in the industry, so if you were talking to a general population person, they get involved with this kind of stuff because they don't understand it - but I can't say right or wrong true or false about any of this stuff."



'Ghostbusters' selfie unites past and present casts

A selfie of past and present "ghostbusters" is making the rounds on social media. A photo tweeted by "Ghostbusters" director Paul Feig shows the cast of the new all-female ghostbusting team, Kristin Wiig, Melissa McCarthy, Kate McKinnon and Leslie Jones. They are shown side-by-side

with Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Ernie Hudson and Annie Potts, who starred in the 1984 original and its 1989 sequel.

Both casts appeared on ABC's "Jimmy Kimmel Live" on Wednesday night to mark "Ghostbusters Day." The original movie was released June 8, 1984. It returned to more than 800 theaters

nationwide for limited showings Wednesday night and will be shown again Sunday.

The new all-female "Ghostbusters" opens in theaters in July.



Bold stage drama? 'Frozen' onstage? Just get Liesl Tommy

Going from a harrowing stage play about sex slaves in a hut in a war-torn African country to the icy, lyrical Disney world of "Frozen" would be far too much of a stretch for most directors, but not Liesl Tommy.

The South African-born director has capped a remarkable season for nurturing "Eclipsed" on Broadway - and earning a directing Tony nod - while also opening a \$28 million musical on the West Coast featuring a multiracial Elsa and Anna. What attracted Tommy to each was simple: a good story.

"My wheelhouse is really visceral, intense storytelling," she said. "I want the audience to lean forward and forget that they are watching a play. I want them to feel like they have a window into actual real lives of people that they didn't have before they walked into the theater."

Tommy finds herself the only female among 10 candidates honored with Tony nominations for director in the drama or musical categories. The Tonys will be presented Sunday night.

"It's just so boring that we are still having this conversation," she said. "It comes down to people in positions of power. They just have to be more rigorous about their choices."

Tommy is making the most of hers, starting with "Eclipsed," the first Broadway play to feature a director, writer and cast that are all black and all women.

Tommy has been directing it in various incarnations since playwright Danai Gurira showed her a first draft in 2009. It currently stars Oscar-winner Lupita Nyong'o as a captive girl forced to decide her future - subjugation, war or peace.

The tale isn't typical Broadway fare, and before the show moved to its home at the Golden Theatre, Tommy loosened the thick Liberian accent in the first scene to acclimate the audience. She elevated the humor to create "a real roller coaster of emotion" and added 60 speakers throughout the theater so everyone could feel like they were in the compound.

Producing team Stephen C. Byrd and Alia Jones-Harvey, who push for diverse subjects and audiences onstage, called Tommy a genius. "She never let us see her sweat. For this to be her Broadway debut, she handled all of the obstacles that were put in her way," said Jones-Harvey.

Tommy, who moved to Massachusetts when she was 15, studied acting at a joint program at Brown University and Trinity Repertory Company. She started out as an actress, but grew impatient with the roles she was offered.

"I think I was born to direct and I didn't realize it," she said. "I felt really strongly that if I was going to make a life in the theater, I would have to have more political work," she said.

She has directed everything from "Hamlet" to a "Les Miserables" updated with handguns and business suits. It was the way she deftly handled the emotional intensity among women in a production of Lynn Nottage's "Ruined" at the La Jolla Playhouse in 2010 that got her the call from Disney.

She was asked to direct the musical "Frozen" at the 2,000-seat Hyperion Theater at Disneyland, which has up to five shows a day and can be seen by up to 10,000 people a day.

"When I first got that call, I thought, 'They have the wrong Liesl Tommy.' I thought maybe there was another person they meant to call. But they meant to call me," she said.

She began, as she always does, with an attempt to get into the heart and mind of the writer. Then she hired a top creative team that was also extremely diverse. She insisted on that diversity onstage as well, with actors of all racial backgrounds playing princes, princesses and villains.

"Disney is very strict about its character representation, but when you walk through the park and you see all of those different little children - no matter what their race is - wearing a little princess costume, you can see it doesn't matter to them," she said. "And so I felt like it shouldn't matter to us."

Tommy dug in her heels and to Disney's credit, it eventually agreed. So, a few months ago, as a young African-American actress sang "Let It Go," stage managers and crew members came up to her sobbing, reduced to blubbery tears. "They knew they were witnessing history," said Tommy. "The intensity of their support was very powerful. I realized that people really need ways to feel like they're on the right side of things." — AP

'CSI: Miami' star Adam Rodriguez joins 'Criminal Minds' cast

Former "CSI: Miami" star Adam Rodriguez is joining the CBS FBI drama, "Criminal Minds." Rodriguez and CBS announced the move Wednesday. In a Facebook video, Rodriguez says, "It's an honor and it's a pleasure" to join the cast. He adds that he's looking forward to seeing "where all of this leads over the next season."

CBS says Rodriguez will be playing a new special agent in the behavior analysis unit on the series. He played Eric Delko for 11 seasons on "CSI: Miami." Rodriguez steps in for Shemar Moore, who left "Criminal Minds" this year after its 11th season. — AP



MoMA plans Frank Lloyd Wright 150th anniversary exhibit

New York's Museum of Modern Art will celebrate Frank Lloyd Wright's birthday next year with a wide-ranging exhibit. June 8, 2017 marks the 150th anniversary of the American architect's birth. The show will run from June 12 to Oct. 1, 2017.

MoMA's exhibition will feature architectural drawings, models, building fragments, furniture, tableware, textiles and paintings. Museum-goers also will see films, television broadcasts,

print media, photos and scrapbooks. Some of the works have rarely or never been publicly exhibited. The exhibition will be divided into 12 sections. Each will investigate a key object or cluster of objects from the Frank Lloyd Wright Archive. The museum and Columbia University jointly acquired the archive in 2012. — AP



SAN FRANCISCO: A photography interpretive gallery is seen next to the Sightglass coffee bar during a preview of the newly expanded San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. — AP

Britain marks queen's official 90th birthday with gratitude



A handout portrait photograph released by Buckingham Palace on June 9, 2016 and taken by Annie Leibovitz to mark the Queen's 90th birthday shows Britain's Queen Elizabeth II (L) and Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh pictured at Windsor Castle just after Easter in 2016.

Britain celebrated Queen Elizabeth II's 90th birthday and her service to the country yesterday with solemn pomp, pageantry and prayer at St. Paul's Cathedral ahead of a weekend of festivities.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, set the tone by reminding Britain of the queen's long life and dedicated service. In essence, he said the nation was lucky because Elizabeth only became queen by chance.

"We look back on Your Majesty's 90 years in the life of our nation with deep wonder and profound gratitude," he said. "Through war and hardship, through turmoil and change, we have been fearfully and wonderfully sustained."

The celebration has been a lengthy affair, starting with her real birthday in April. The monarch's official birthday is traditionally celebrated in June when Britain's weather can be more favorable. The monarch, dressed in primrose yellow coat-dress and matching hat, and her husband Prince Philip attended a service of thanksgiving at St. Paul's Friday, on what is Philip's 95th birthday.

She turned to smile at a crowd of well-wishers singing "Happy Birthday" as she climbed the cathedral steps. Among those offering tribute was the popular naturalist and broadcaster David Attenborough, who read a short story by Paddington Bear creator Michael Bond. Both

men turned 90 this year and attended the service. Prince Charles and his wife Camilla, Prince William and his wife Kate, Prince Harry and dozens of other royals joined politicians and the wider community in a thundering rendition of "God Save the Queen."

The traditional Trooping the Color parade will be held Saturday, the queen's official birthday. The event is expected to draw throngs of Britons and visitors to Buckingham Palace for a possible balcony appearance by the senior royals. On Sunday, the Mall in front of the palace will host lunch for roughly 10,000 charity workers, patrons and members of the royal family. Street parties are planned in many locations, including some in Commonwealth countries and also in the United States. British newspapers have been filled with paeans to the queen, and editorials urging the public to show its gratitude for her long reign.

Philip, who has heart disease, missed an engagement recently due to health issues but is expected to participate throughout the weekend. After the three-day extravaganza, the queen is expected to turn her attention to the horse racing season and her lengthy summer holiday in Scotland. — AP



Britain's Prince Harry, right, Kate Duchess of Cambridge and Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge.



Mayor of London Sadiq Khan (L) and wife Saadiya Khan (R)



British former prime minister Tony Blair (L) and his wife Cherie Blair (R)



Leader of Britain's Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn, right, speaks with John Bercow, the Speaker of the House of Commons, as London Mayor Sadiq Khan stands chats behind them.



Britain's Princess Eugenie, left, and Princess Beatrice. — AP



Britain's Queen Elizabeth II waves to the crowds as she arrives.



A member of the military is helped after fainting on the steps ahead of a national service.

Men's fashion week opens with nod to British seaside

Suits worn over fishnet tops, tiny tailored shorts, loafers and sunburnt noses—Topman Design went to the British seaside for its latest collection yesterday, kicking off four days of men's fashion in London.

J.W. Anderson, Christopher Kane, Coach, Barbour and some of Saville Row's top tailors are among those showing at this season's London Collections: Men, the twice yearly celebration of masculine style in the British capital.

Topman Design, part of the Topshop high-street fashion stable, opened the event with a show featuring cropped sweaters in soft pinks or blues, washed denim jackets, boxy puffa jackets and jewelled white tracksuits.

Described as a "celebration of Britain and its glorious seaside towns", the clothes were adorned with emblems of anchors and skulls, while the models were made-up to look like they had spent a little too long in the sun.

Influences included casual fashion from the 1980s as well as Teddy Boys and the Mods, youth tribes from the 1950s and 1960s.

'Desperate for self-expression'

There was nostalgia for another lost tribe at the launch on Thursday evening of a book of punk photographs by Derek Ridgers, marked by an exhibition hosted by British designer Paul Smith at his Mayfair shop.

Smith said the black and white photos of fans and bands, taken in London in 1977, were a reminder of the importance of self-expression. "Punk was a great example of just people doing things because they wanted to be different. But not with lots and lots of money—just through doing it," he told AFP.

"I think the world is desperate for self-expression again. It's become so homogenised," he said. "So many young people are living life more like a business plan. It's very considered, there's

not so much self-expression." Smith is known for his idiosyncratic take on traditional styling, particularly suits. US bank JP Morgan made the headlines this week with the announcement that staff no longer had to wear suits, unless they were meeting clients.

Smith has no concerns about his core business. "We still sell a lot of suits. It depends how you wear it—I'm wearing a suit tonight but with trainers and red socks," he said. Suits or sportswear, men's fashion is increasingly big business, accounting for 25 percent of Britain's total clothing market, according to Mintel research cited by the British Fashion Council.

The market grew by 4.1 percent in 2015 to reach £14.1 billion, up from £13.5 billion in 2014 — compared to growth of 3.7 percent in womenswear in the same period. — AFP

Topman Design



Public School



GOOGLE CO-FOUNDER FUELS FLYING CAR LABS

SAN FRANCISCO: Google co-founder Larry Page has secretly poured more than \$100 million into building flying cars, Bloomberg reported Thursday. Page has backed Zee.Aero while striving to keep his involvement hidden, according to the report that cited unnamed sources described as having intimate knowledge of the flying car startup launched in 2010. "Based in the heart of Silicon Valley, Zee is developing a revolutionary new form of transportation," the startup said on its website, which invited people with engineering skills to apply for jobs. Zee is "working at the intersection of aerodynamics, advanced manufacturing, and electric propulsion," it said.

As part of a bid for secrecy, Zee.Aero employees referred to Page as "GUS", a play on "Guy UpStairs" since, for a time, the Google co-founder had a private hideaway on the second floor of their facility,

according to Bloomberg. It said Zee.Aero has nearly 150 employees and expanded operations to an airport hangar a little more than an hour's drive from Alphabet-owned Google's headquarters in the California city of Mountain View. Page has spent more than \$100 million on Zee.Aero, according to Bloomberg.

It also reported that Page was backing a second flying car startup, Kitty Hawk, that began operating last year not far from Zee.Aero and is taking a different design approach. Neither Zee.Aero nor Alphabet responded to AFP requests for comment. Page is pursuing a flying car dream on his own, not as part of Alphabet's investments in "moonshots" such as self-driving cars, Bloomberg said.

Google announced plans last month to open a Detroit-area technology center for its self-driving car

program. The new center in Novi, Michigan, will house engineers and others testing vehicles provided by Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, according to an Alphabet statement. Google added 100 new 2017 Chrysler Pacifica hybrid vehicles to its fleet of self-driving vehicles in a major expansion earlier in May.

The collaboration with Fiat Chrysler marked the first time the California-based Internet giant has worked directly with an automaker to build self-driving vehicles. Google has said it would not license its autonomous car technology nor sell the self-driving minivans. The tech titan began testing its autonomous driving technology in 2009 using a Toyota Prius equipped with Google equipment. It now has some 70 vehicles, including Lexus cars, adapted by Google in addition to its in-house designed cars unveiled in 2014. — AFP

BIDDERS OFFERING MORE THAN \$5BN FOR YAHOO

SAN FRANCISCO: Several suitors are bidding \$5 billion or more for the core business of struggling Internet pioneer Yahoo, CNBC reported on Thursday. CNBC, citing unnamed sources close to the situation, said Yahoo's board of directors will meet Friday to review offers ahead of a final round of bidding expected to lead to a decision by mid-July. US telecom titan Verizon was among low bidders, offering more than \$3.5 billion for Yahoo, according to CNBC. The pool of bidders is believed to include private equity firms.

California-based Yahoo declined to comment. Yahoo shares were up slightly more than a percent to \$37.42 as the close of trading neared on the Nasdaq exchange. Yahoo, which has been eclipsed by rivals such as Google and Facebook, is studying the possibility of a sale as it pursues efforts to revive growth, focusing on mobile users. Yahoo chief executive Marissa Mayer has failed to revive the company since taking the helm in 2012.

Mayer has been working to revive growth and made priorities of what she refers to as "Mavens" - mobile, video, native advertising and social media. In February, Yahoo announced it was cutting 15 percent of its workforce and narrowing its focus as it explored "strategic alternatives" that included selling itself after spinning off its multi-billion-dollar stake in Chinese Internet colossus Alibaba.

Yahoo's struggling Internet business took a hit in May with the loss of a long-time contract to manage the Internet portal and search for US telecommunication giant AT&T. Yahoo reported a loss in the first quarter of this year as it courted potential buyers and examined other strategic options. Yahoo averted a proxy battle for control of the company earlier this year with a compromise that added four new board members, including a hedge fund chief who has been critical of management.— AFP



SEOUL: Customers shop at Line Friends flagship store yesterday. — AP

MESSAGING APP LINE TO MAKE TRADING DEBUT IN TOKYO, NY

TOKYO: Messaging app Line said yesterday it will make its stock market debut in Tokyo and New York next month, as it looks to expand on booming popularity among smartphone users in Asia. The Japan-based firm won regulatory approval for the sale with the dual listing expected to raise as much as 113 billion yen (\$1.05 billion), including an option to sell more shares if demand is strong. The deal - likely to be among the biggest IPOs this year - would value Line at about \$5.5 billion, and was described by Bloomberg as this year's biggest tech offering globally.

Line, which is owned by South Korean Internet provider Naver, said it expected to list its stock on July 14 in New York and July 15 in Tokyo. It will offer 13 million new shares in Japan, with another 22 million in the US, according to documents filed with the Tokyo Stock Exchange. The indicative share price would be 2,800 yen apiece. "(Line) has made the decision to go public in both Japan and the United

States to further enhance its strong position in Asia and to continue a more active global expansion," the company said.

The sale comes two years after the firm initially announced plans to list in an IPO that was later shelved, reportedly due to disagreements over the sale between Line and its South Korean owner. The July offering would be the biggest in Tokyo since Japan Post made its long-awaited trading debut in November with a share sale that topped \$11.5 billion. The popular app lets users make free calls, send instant messages, and post photos or short videos, along with a host of other paid-services.

It combines attributes from Facebook, Skype and WhatsApp, with games and a mobile payment service also on offer. Line's messaging service launched in 2011 after the quake-tsunami tragedy damaged Japan's telecoms infrastructure nationwide, forcing people to use to online resources to communicate. It is best known for letting users send each

other cute cartoon "stickers", and is hugely popular in Japan, particularly among teenagers.

Line's sticker shop sells thousands of the emoticons - some are animated and noisy - from Hello Kitty and Super Mario to Manga and Disney characters. The app, which has about 218 million active monthly users, has a strong presence in Asian markets such as Thailand, Taiwan and Indonesia, as well as some Spanish-speaking areas, including Spain and Mexico. Line said it would use proceeds of the stock offering to help it expand in Asia, and tap the US and European markets where it's not a major player.

"We will continue mergers and acquisitions and other investment globally, but there is nothing decided at this point" in terms of a particular deal, the company said. Last year, Line posted revenue of 120 billion yen, up 40 percent from the year before, but a small overall loss, which it blamed on rising staff costs and other expenses. — AFP

HACKERS SELLING STOLEN TWITTER LOG-IN DATA

SAN FRANCISCO: Tens of millions of stolen Twitter credentials evidently lifted from web browser programs were put up for sale online, according to a search engine devoted to leaked data. Twitter on Thursday was adamant that its computer systems had not been broken into by hackers, and that it was not the source of any account information being hawked on the Internet. "We are confident that these usernames and credentials were not obtained by a Twitter data breach - our systems have not been breached," a Twitter spokesperson said in an email reply to an AFP inquiry. "In fact, we've been working to help keep accounts protected by checking our data against what's been shared from recent other password leaks."

According to LeakedSource.com, tens of millions of Twitter credentials are being traded on the "dark web", a section of the Internet accessed by special software. The data set reportedly contained more than 32 million Twitter records that could include information such as usernames, passwords, or email addresses. LeakedSource said in a blog post that it got a copy of the data set, and noted that it was Twitter users who were evidently hacked and not the San Francisco-based one-to-many messaging service.

It appeared that hackers got the information by using malicious code that steals data from web browsing programs. LeakedSource described itself as a search-engine capable of searching over 1.8 billion leaked records gathered "over a relatively short period of time through a combination of deep-web scavenging and rumor-chasing". — AFP

INSTAGRAM ATTRACTING MORE ADS THAN TWITTER

SAN FRANCISCO: Advertising agencies are for the first time turning to Instagram more frequently than Twitter for social media ad campaigns, a survey released Thursday showed, a further indication of weakness in an ad sales operation that has been one of the few bright spots for Twitter. The survey, from a unit of Comcast called Strata, came the same week Twitter Inc said its head of product, who took over the team in September, was leaving. The research firm eMarketer said earlier this month that Snapchat was on pace to surpass Twitter in US active users, highlighting the threat Twitter faces from faster-growing competitors.

Amid Twitter's ongoing struggles with stagnant user growth, management turmoil and a tumbling stock price, the advertising operations under chief operating officer Adam Bain had been a relative oasis of stability. Bain, who joined the company in 2010, helped build Twitter from scratch to more than \$1 billion revenue in just over three years.

But cracks in the ad business began to emerge in the company's first-quarter earnings report, in which it missed its numbers due to weaker-than-expected spending by big advertisers and provided

a weak revenue forecast. The stock has fallen 15 percent since the April earnings announcement and closed Wednesday at \$14.60 - far below its \$26 IPO price in November of 2013.

The Strata survey asked 83 advertising agencies which social platform their clients preferred for social media campaigns. Sixty-three percent of advertisers said they were most likely to use photo-sharing app Instagram, compared with 56 percent who said they would use social network Twitter. Facebook dominated, with 96 percent of advertisers saying they were likely to use it.

Twitter rejected the survey results, pointing to a 2015 study by Advertiser Perceptions that showed 37 percent of advertisers intended to buy ads on Twitter, compared with 28 percent on Instagram, which is owned by Facebook. The same study showed that 46 percent were considering buying ads on Twitter compared with 41 percent on Instagram. "The data presented in this survey couldn't be farther from the truth," a Twitter spokesperson said. "We have close relationships with our agency clients and continue to hear that Twitter offers the most powerful creative canvas."

Still, the survey shows the growing power of Instagram, which has the benefit of using Facebook's advertising technology and has been rolling out features that make it more useful for sharing news and activity updates that are the bread and butter of Twitter. Instagram has more than 200,000 advertisers compared with Twitter's 130,000. "We're seeing almost all of our clients shifting if not all of their budgets, then most of their budgets from Twitter to Instagram," said Chris Gilbert, senior social strategist at digital agency Kettle, which works mostly with fashion brands. "Marketers typically want to be where the audience is."

Some ad agencies said their clients are shifting more of their budgets to Instagram because it has more users - more than 400 million compared with 310 million on Twitter - and because Facebook's ad technology allows them to target highly specific audiences. "We've had more emphasis on Instagram for the last year," said Jason Peterson, chief creative officer at ad agency Havas Worldwide North America. Instagram declined to comment on the Strata survey. — Reuters

INDIA MINISTRY REJECTS GOOGLE STREET VIEW

NEW DELHI: Google's plans to introduce its popular "Street View" service in India have hit a roadblock after the interior ministry yesterday said it had rejected an application from the tech giant, although the government could yet approve it. The company applied several months ago to bring in the street-mapping feature showing 360-degree panoramic images of streets, monuments, mountains and rivers - a service it first introduced in the US in 2007.

An interior ministry spokesman told AFP that Google's proposal had been rejected but added that a final decision would likely be taken later in the year. "We have rejected the plan by Google to expand its maps feature," the spokesman said. "The final decision would come hopefully sometime this year," he said without elaborating further. A Google spokesperson told AFP the government had "not indicated to us that the application has been rejected".

Since its launch in 2007, Google Street View has captured some of the world's most far-flung and scenic destinations, including the Amazon rainforest, Antarctica and Canada's Arctic tundra. Street View is currently available in India at some tourist attractions, including the Taj Mahal in Agra and Delhi's Qutub Minar monument. The Hindu newspaper said permission for the feature was denied after the Indian defense ministry raised red flags. "The defense ministry said it was not possible to monitor the service once it was launched and it would be detrimental to national security," the paper quoted a senior government official as saying.

Some reports have suggested the delay is due to a controversial draft law, the Geospatial Information Regulation Bill, which proposes imposing strict new rules on the publication of maps. Maps are a highly sensitive issue in India, which has long-running border disputes with several of its neighbours, most famously over the divided Himalayan region of Kashmir. India is a vast yet challenging market for Google, with only a quarter of its 1.2 billion citizens online. Last year, Google's Indian-born chief executive Sundar Pichai visited the country and outlined plans to bring hundreds of millions of Indians online. — AFP

LENOVO UNVEILS PHONE THAT KNOWS WAY AROUND A ROOM

SAN FRANCISCO: A Lenovo smartphone unveiled Thursday will be clever enough to grasp your physical surroundings - such as the room's size and the presence of other people - and potentially transform how we interact with e-commerce, education and gaming. Today's smartphones track location through GPS and cell towers, but that does little more than tell apps where you are. Tapping Google's 3-year-old Project Tango, the new Phab2 Pro phone will use software and sensors to track motions and map building interiors, including the location of doors and windows.

That's a crucial step in the promising new frontier in "augmented reality," or the digital projection of lifelike images and data into a real-life environment. If Tango fulfills its promise, furniture shoppers will be able use the Phab2 Pro to download digital models of couches, chairs and coffee tables to see how they would look in their actual living rooms. Kids studying the Mesozoic Era would be able to place a virtual Tyrannosaurus or Velociraptor in their home or classroom - and even take selfies with one. The technology would even know when to display information about an artist or a scene depicted in a painting as you stroll through a museum.

Tango will be able to create internal maps of homes and offices on the fly. Google won't need to build a mapping database ahead of time, as it does with existing services like Google Maps and Street View. Nonetheless, Tango could raise fresh concerns about privacy if controls aren't stringent enough to prevent the on-the-fly maps from being shared with unauthorized apps or heisted by hackers. Lenovo says the Phab2 Pro will sell for \$500 when it begins shipping in the US in August. The device is expected to be available throughout the world by mid-September, in advance of Apple's anticipated release of the iPhone 7.

In another effort to put a new twist on smartphones, Lenovo also previewed the newest models in its Moto line, which it bought from Google two years ago. The Moto Z and Moto Z Force will both let people snap on additional equipment called



SAN FRANCISCO: The new Lenovo Phab2 Pro phone is on display at the Lenovo Tech World event on Thursday. — AP

"Mods" to the back of the phones. The initial Mods include a speaker to amplify music, a projector for displaying photos and video from the phone and a power pack that provides 22 hours of additional battery. The phones will be available exclusively in the US through Verizon this summer before a global release in the fall.

The new phones are coming out as phone sales are slowing. People have been holding off on upgrades, partly because they haven't gotten excited about the types of technological advances hitting the market during the past few years. Phones offering intriguing new technology such as Tango could help spur more sales. But Tango's room-mapping technology is probably still too abstract to gain mass appeal right away, says Ramon Llamas, an analyst at the IDC research group. "For most folks, this is still a couple steps ahead of what they can wrap their brains around, so I think there's going to be a long gestation period," Llamas says.

Other smartphones promising quantum leaps have flopped. Remember Amazon's Fire phone released with great fanfare two

years ago? That souped-up phone featured four front-facing cameras and a gyroscope so some images could be seen in three dimensions. The device also offered a tool called Firefly that could be used to identify objects and sounds. But the Fire fizzled, and Amazon no longer even sells the phone.

The Phab2 Pro also looks impressive, with a 6.4-inch display screen and four cameras to help perform its wizardry. Lenovo boasts the phone's sensors can capture about 250,000 measurements per second. Despite all the fancy hardware, the key to the Tango phone's success is likely to hinge on the breadth of compelling apps that people find useful in their everyday lives.

Google previously released experimental Tango devices designed for computer programmers, spurring them to build about 100 apps that should work with the Phab2 Pro. Home improvement retailer Lowe's is releasing an app that enables Phab2 Pro users to measure spaces with the phone and test how digital replicas of appliances and other decor would look around a house. — AP



04:45 The Beautiful Country
06:45 Hoosiers
08:40 Impromptu
10:25 The Bank Shot
11:50 Geronimo: An American Legend
13:45 Funny Thing Happened...Forum
15:25 Bound For Glory
17:50 Groundhog Day
19:35 It Runs In The Family
21:00 Night Manager
21:50 Breaking Bad
22:50 Steele Justice
00:25 Dead Men Can't Dance



03:25 Lion Man: One World African Safari
04:15 Gator Boys
05:02 Treehouse Masters
05:49 River Monsters
06:36 Call Of The Wildman
07:25 Treehouse Masters
11:00 Dog TV
11:55 Snake Crusader With Bruce George
12:50 Gangland Killers
13:45 Natural World
15:35 Animal Cops South Africa
16:30 Lion Man: One World African Safari
17:25 Gangland Killers

18:20 Backcountry Justice
19:15 Restoration Wild
20:10 Village Vets
21:05 Austin Stevens: Snakemaster
22:00 Backcountry Justice
22:55 Snake Crusader With Bruce George
23:20 Snake Crusader With Bruce George
23:50 Gator Boys
01:40 Gangland Killers



03:40 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Fast N' Loud
10:10 Gold Rush (Season 6 Specials)
11:00 Rebel Gold
11:50 Outback Truckers
12:40 Storage Wars Canada
14:45 Property Wars
16:50 Alaskan Bush People
17:40 The Last Alaskans
18:30 You Have Been Warned
19:20 The Carbonaro Effect
20:10 What Happened Next?
21:00 Alaskan Bush People
21:50 The Last Alaskans
22:40 Hell Road Russia
23:30 What Happened Next?
00:45 Running Wild With Bear Grylls



03:00 Untamed & Uncut
03:50 Marooned With Ed Stafford
04:40 How It's Made
05:30 Morgan Freeman's Through

The Wormhole
06:20 Mythbusters
07:00 Doki
07:50 Kids vs Film
08:40 Too Cute!
12:50 Strangest Weather On Earth
15:20 Eco-Tech
17:00 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
17:50 Ed Stafford: Naked And Marooned
18:40 Wildest Africa
19:30 Dynamo: Magician Impossible
20:20 Lost & Found With Mike & Jesse
21:10 NASA's Greatest Missions
22:00 Untamed & Uncut
00:30 Strangest Weather On Earth



03:00 Shadow Of Doubt
03:48 Breaking Point
04:36 Deadly Affairs
05:24 California Investigator
06:12 Tabloid
07:00 Dr G: Medical Examiner
07:50 Deadly Affairs
12:00 On The Case With Paula Zahn
16:10 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
17:00 California Investigator
17:50 Southern Fried Homicide
18:40 Murder Comes To Town
19:30 Deadly Devotion
20:20 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
21:10 Suspicion
22:00 I'd Kill For You
22:50 Paranormal Lockdown

23:40 The Haunted
00:30 Breaking Point



03:00 Mighty Ships
03:48 How The Universe Works
04:36 Mythbusters
05:24 How It's Made
06:12 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
07:00 How It's Made
11:10 How Do They Do It?
12:00 Food Factory USA
15:20 Mythbusters
17:00 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
21:10 How The Universe Works
22:00 How Do They Do It?
22:50 Strangest Weather On Earth
23:40 Food Factory USA



03:15 The Hive
03:20 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
08:05 Shake It Up
08:30 Shake It Up
08:55 Hannah Montana
09:45 Wizards Of Waverly Place
10:35 Cars
12:35 The 7D
12:45 Girl Meets World
13:10 Best Friends Whenever
13:35 Jessie
15:15 Descendants Wicked World
15:20 Jessie
17:50 The 7D
18:00 Zapped
19:45 The 7D
19:55 Evermoor Chronicles
20:20 Mako Mermaids
20:45 Good Luck Charlie
21:10 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
00:45 The Hive
00:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch



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

11:50 Miles From Tomorrow
12:15 Henry Hugglemonster
12:30 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
12:55 Unbungalievable
13:00 Sofia The First
13:25 Goldie & Bear
13:50 Miles From Tomorrow
14:15 The Lion Guard
14:40 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
15:10 Doc McStuffins
15:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
16:00 Sofia The First
16:25 Jungle Cubs
16:50 Aladdin
17:15 The Lion Guard
17:40 Goldie & Bear
18:05 Miles From Tomorrow
18:30 Sofia The First
19:00 PJ Masks
19:25 Unbungalievable
19:30 The Lion Guard
20:00 Goldie & Bear
20:30 Sofia The First
21:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
21:25 PJ Masks
21:50 Jungle Cubs
22:20 Aladdin
22:45 Minnie's Bow-Toons
22:50 Zou
23:05 Henry Hugglemonster



06:00 Boyster
06:10 Super Matrak
06:35 Super Matrak
07:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
07:25 K.C. Undercover
07:50 Supa Strikas
08:15 Annedroids
08:40 Lab Rats
09:10 Kirby Buckets
09:35 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
10:00 Supa Strikas
13:00 Brother Bear 2
14:20 Phineas And Ferb
14:45 Kickin' It
15:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
15:15 Rocket Monkeys
15:40 Guardians Of The Galaxy
16:55 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
17:25 K.C. Undercover
17:50 Supa Strikas
18:15 Lab Rats
18:40 K.C. Undercover
19:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
19:10 Annedroids
19:35 Star Wars Rebels
20:00 Kirby Buckets
20:25 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
20:55 K.C. Undercover
21:20 Supa Strikas
21:45 Lab Rats
22:10 Mighty Med
22:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA



03:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
04:00 Man Fire Food
05:00 Chopped
06:00 Guy's Grocery Games
07:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
08:00 Chopped
09:00 Amazing Wedding Cakes
10:00 The Kitchen
11:00 Siba's Table
11:30 Siba's Table
12:00 The Pioneer Woman
13:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
15:00 Chopped
16:00 Man Fire Food
17:00 Guy's Big Bite
18:00 Siba's Table
19:00 Kids Baking Championships
20:00 Chopped
21:00 All Star Academy
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
23:00 Kids Baking Championships
00:00 Chopped



03:40 Swamp People
04:30 American Restoration
05:00 Battle 360

06:00 Banger Boys
06:50 Alaska Off-Road Warriors
07:40 Duck Dynasty
08:05 Duck Dynasty
08:30 Counting Cars
08:55 Swamp People
09:45 Fifth Gear
10:35 Ultimate Wheels
11:25 Banger Boys
12:15 Search For The Lost Giants
13:05 American Pickers
13:55 Duck Dynasty
14:20 Duck Dynasty
14:45 Lost Worlds
15:35 American Restoration
16:00 Banger Boys
16:50 Fifth Gear
17:40 Shipping Wars
18:05 Shipping Wars
18:30 Pawn Stars
18:55 Pawn Stars South Africa
19:20 American Restoration
20:10 Pirate Treasure Of The Knights Templar
21:00 Hunting Hitler
21:50 Forged In Fire
22:40 Lost Worlds
23:30 Pirate Treasure Of The Knights Templar
00:20 Forged In Fire
01:10 Hunting Hitler
02:00 Banger Boys



03:05 Maverick Chef
03:30 Eat Street
03:55 Eat Street
04:20 Poh & Co.
04:45 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen
05:10 John Torode's Malaysian Adventure
05:35 John Torode's Malaysian Adventure
06:00 Bangkok Airport
06:50 Bangkok Airport
07:40 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
08:30 American Food Battle
08:55 Places We Go
09:20 Dream Cruises
10:10 City Chase Marrakech
11:00 Testing The Menu With Nic Watt
11:25 Top Tables, Top Cities
11:50 David Rocco's Dolce India
12:15 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
12:40 Glamour Puds
13:05 Home Strange Home
14:00 Meat v Veg
14:30 American Food Battle
14:55 Maverick Chef
15:25 Eat Street
15:50 Eat Street
16:20 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
16:45 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen
17:15 John Torode's Malaysian Adventure
17:40 John Torode's Malaysian Adventure
18:10 Cruise Ship Diaries
19:05 Maverick Chef
19:30 Eat Street
20:00 Eat Street
20:25 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
20:50 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen
21:15 John Torode's Malaysian Adventure
21:40 John Torode's Malaysian Adventure
22:05 Cruise Ship Diaries
22:55 Glamour Puds
23:20 Home Strange Home
00:10 Meat v Veg
00:35 American Food Battle
01:00 A Marriage Of Flavours
01:25 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia
01:50 Testing The Menu With Nic Watt
02:15 Meat v Veg



03:45 Revenge Of The Lioness
04:40 Bandit Patrol
05:35 Going Wild
06:30 Monster Fish
07:25 Alaska Fish Wars
08:20 How Human Are You?
09:15 Natural Born Monsters
10:10 Animal Superpowers
11:05 Fish Tank Kings
12:00 Shark Eden



ANT-MAN ON OSN MOVIES HD

SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 2016

- 12:55 Dangerous Encounters
- 13:50 Natural Born Monsters
- 14:45 Legends Of Lemur Island
- 15:40 Real Angry Birds
- 16:35 World's Deadliest Animals
- 17:30 Secret Life Of Predators
- 18:25 1000 Days For The Planet
- 19:20 Legends Of Lemur Island
- 20:10 Real Angry Birds
- 21:00 World's Deadliest Animals
- 21:50 Secret Life Of Predators
- 22:40 1000 Days For The Planet
- 23:30 Shark Eden
- 00:20 Dangerous Encounters
- 01:10 Natural Born Monsters
- 02:00 Animals Gone Wild
- 02:50 Croc Labyrinth



- 03:50 Nazi Underworld
- 04:45 Cameramen Who Dare
- 05:40 Wicked Tuna
- 06:35 Dirty Rotten Survival
- 07:30 Outsiders: Living Off The Edge
- 08:25 Cesar To The Rescue
- 09:20 Cesar To The Rescue
- 10:15 Test Your Brain
- 11:10 Seconds From Disaster
- 12:05 Taste Of The Tropic: Taiwan
- 13:00 Engineering Connections
- 14:00 The Story Of God With Morgan Freeman
- 15:00 Nazi Megastructures
- 16:00 Megastructures
- 17:00 X: The Generation That Changed The World
- 18:00 Underworld, Inc.
- 19:00 Outsiders: Living Off The Edge
- 20:00 Megastructures
- 20:50 X: The Generation That Changed The World
- 21:40 Underworld, Inc.
- 22:30 Outsiders: Living Off The Edge
- 23:20 Megastructures
- 00:10 Building Wild
- 01:00 X: The Generation That Changed The World
- 02:00 Science Of Stupid
- 02:25 Science Of Stupid
- 02:55 Street Genius



OUT OF THE DARK ON OSN MOVIES PREMIERE HD



MORE

- 03:00 Game Of Thrones
- 04:00 After The Thrones
- 04:30 Curb Your Enthusiasm
- 05:00 Wit
- 06:45 Bette Midler: The Showgirl Must Go On
- 08:00 On Freddie Roach
- 08:30 Top Ten Monks
- 09:00 Veep
- 09:30 Angel Rodriguez
- 11:00 Mike Tyson: Undisputed Truth
- 13:00 Hard Times: Lost On Long Island
- 14:00 On Freddie Roach
- 14:30 A Child's Garden Of Poetry
- 15:00 Veep
- 15:30 Subway Stories
- 17:00 Mike Tyson: Undisputed Truth
- 19:00 Secrets And Lies
- 20:00 The Sopranos
- 21:00 True Detective
- 23:00 The Wire
- 00:00 Secrets And Lies
- 01:00 The Sopranos
- 02:00 True Detective



- 03:00 Sleepy Hollow
- 04:00 Good Morning America
- 06:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 07:00 Chicago Fire
- 08:00 Prison Break
- 09:00 Royal Pains
- 10:00 Shark Tank
- 11:00 Chicago Fire
- 12:00 Prison Break
- 13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 14:00 Shark Tank
- 15:00 Live Good Morning America
- 16:00 The Night Shift
- 17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 18:00 Prison Break
- 19:00 Downton Abbey
- 20:00 Unforgettable
- 21:00 Criminal Minds
- 22:00 Graceland
- 23:00 Agent X
- 00:00 Chicago Fire
- 01:00 Criminal Minds



COMEDY

- 04:00 My Girl 2
- 06:00 My Father The Hero
- 08:00 What About Bob?
- 10:00 Three Men And A Little Lady
- 12:00 My Father The Hero
- 14:00 Romy And Michelle's High School Reunion
- 16:00 What About Bob?
- 18:00 Encino Man
- 20:00 Blended
- 22:00 Wild Hogs
- 00:00 Romy And Michelle's High School Reunion



FAMILY

- 03:00 Pirates Of The Caribbean 2: Dead Man's Chest
- 05:30 Dinosaur Island
- 07:00 Pocahontas
- 09:00 Freaky Friday
- 11:00 Camp Nowhere
- 13:00 Wall-E
- 15:00 G-Force
- 17:00 Herbie Fully Loaded
- 19:00 The Pacifier
- 21:00 Mighty Joe Young
- 23:00 G-Force
- 01:00 The Pacifier



FESTIVAL

- 03:00 The Sixth Sense
- 05:00 Merchants Of Doubt
- 07:00 Paradise
- 09:00 Powder
- 11:00 Merchants Of Doubt
- 13:00 Prefontaine
- 15:00 Hitting The Apex
- 17:30 Powder
- 19:30 Breathe In
- 21:15 Philomena
- 23:00 Nixon
- 02:30 Hitting The Apex



KIDS

- 04:00 Penguins Of Madagascar
- 06:00 Madoff Part 1
- 07:30 Madoff Part 2
- 09:00 Hot Pursuit
- 11:00 Big Eyes
- 13:00 The Grand Seduction
- 15:00 The Love Punch
- 17:00 Annie
- 19:00 Pitch Perfect 2
- 21:00 Avengers: Age Of Ultron
- 23:30 Ant-Man
- 01:30 Kidnapping Mr. Heineken



KIDS

- 04:30 Bamse And The City Of Thieves
- 06:00 Gladiators Of Rome
- 08:00 Hatching
- 09:45 Rugrats In Paris: The Movie
- 11:15 The Adventurer: The Curse Of The Midas Box
- 13:00 Blue Elephant 2
- 14:45 Marco Macaco
- 16:15 Space Warriors
- 18:00 Rugrats In Paris: The Movie
- 20:00 Evolution Man
- 22:00 Marco Macaco
- 23:30 Space Warriors
- 01:15 Hatching
- 02:45 Evolution Man



PREMIERE

- 03:30 The Theory Of Everything
- 05:45 Diana
- 08:00 Superfast
- 10:00 Next Goal Wins
- 12:00 The Giver
- 14:00 Trigger Point
- 16:00 Superfast
- 18:00 The Age Of Adaline
- 20:00 The Two Faces Of January
- 22:00 Out Of The Dark
- 00:00 Trigger Point
- 02:00 The Age Of Adaline



- 03:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 03:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 03:48 Henry Danger
- 04:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 04:36 The Haunted Hathaways
- 05:00 Max & Shred
- 05:24 Henry Danger
- 05:48 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 06:36 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 07:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 07:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 07:48 Winx Club
- 08:12 Winx Club
- 08:36 Get Blake
- 09:00 Get Blake
- 09:24 Rabbids Invasion
- 09:48 Henry Danger
- 10:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 10:36 The Haunted Hathaways
- 11:00 Winx Club
- 11:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 11:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 12:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 12:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 13:00 Harvey Beaks
- 13:24 The Loud House
- 13:48 Get Blake
- 14:12 Rabbids Invasion
- 14:36 100 Things To Do Before High School
- 15:00 Game Shakers
- 15:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 15:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 16:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 16:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 17:00 Get Blake
- 17:24 Harvey Beaks
- 17:48 The Loud House
- 18:12 Henry Danger
- 18:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 19:00 100 Things To Do Before High School
- 19:24 Game Shakers
- 19:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 20:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 20:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 21:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 21:24 Breadwinners
- 21:48 Breadwinners

- 22:12 Sanjay And Craig
- 22:36 Sanjay And Craig
- 23:00 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 23:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 23:48 Henry Danger
- 00:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 00:36 Max & Shred
- 01:00 The Haunted Hathaways
- 01:24 Sanjay And Craig
- 02:12 SpongeBob SquarePants



- 03:45 Kate And Leopold
- 05:45 The Last Shot
- 07:15 Kinky Boots
- 09:00 Nearing Grace
- 10:45 Dawn Of The Dead
- 12:30 Gone In Sixty Seconds
- 14:30 Hard Cash
- 16:15 Crazy On The Outside
- 18:00 Shanghai Knights
- 20:00 The No Sit List
- 21:30 Raising Helen
- 23:45 The Joneses
- 01:45 Monsters University



- 03:00 Desperate Housewives
- 04:00 Fit For Fashion
- 05:00 Melissa & Joey
- 05:30 Melissa & Joey
- 06:00 Cougar Town
- 06:30 Cougar Town
- 07:00 Making Mr.Right
- 08:00 Grey's Anatomy
- 09:00 Grey's Anatomy
- 10:00 Desperate Housewives
- 11:00 Desperate Housewives
- 12:00 Fit For Fashion
- 13:00 Melissa & Joey
- 13:30 Cougar Town
- 14:00 The Secret Life Of The American Teenager
- 15:00 The Bridge
- 16:00 Lost
- 17:00 How I Met Your Mother



- 17:30 Happy Endings
- 18:00 The Listener
- 19:00 The Listener
- 20:00 The Listener
- 21:00 How I Met Your Mother
- 21:30 Happy Endings
- 22:00 Private Practice
- 23:00 Private Practice
- 00:00 Making Mr.Right
- 01:00 Lost
- 02:00 The Walking Dead

- 03:30 Two In A Million: A Face Like Mine
- 04:20 World's Worst Mum
- 05:10 World's Worst Mum
- 06:00 Say Yes To The Dress ,Ai Bridesmaids
- 06:25 Say Yes To The Dress ,Ai Bridesmaids
- 06:49 Cake Boss
- 07:12 Cake Boss
- 07:35 Love At First Swipe
- 07:59 Love At First Swipe
- 08:22 The Undateables
- 09:10 Food Hospital
- 09:57 Two In A Million: A Face Like Mine
- 10:45 Fat Chance
- 11:35 Something Borrowed, Something New
- 13:35 Our Little Family
- 14:25 Ask Oprah's All Stars
- 15:15 Cake Boss

- 17:17 Two In A Million: A Face Like Mine
- 18:05 Oprah: Where Are They Now?
- 18:55 Cake Boss
- 19:20 Fat Chance
- 20:10 Single Dad Seeking...
- 21:00 Oprah Prime
- 21:50 Oprah: Where Are They Now?
- 22:40 Monsters Inside Me
- 23:30 My Weight Is Killing Me
- 00:20 My Extreme Excess Skin
- 01:07 90 Days To Wed
- 01:55 Extreme Cheapskates



Kuwait National English School Year 6 Graduation

The Primary Department of Kuwait National English School held its annual Year 6 Graduation Ceremony recently at the Symphony Style Hotel in Salmiya which was once again a resounding success. The one and a half hour program gave the assemblage of proud parents, fellow pupils and public a chance to sample some of the work undertaken over the past months by our pupils and teaching staff. The awarding ceremony was very well organized with the students parading onto the stage with professionalism and dignity and pupils were praised by the school Director, Madame Chantal Al-Gharabally, who awarded the graduating students with their diplomas and achievement awards. Rania Umer Sundal walked away with the highest honor of the day by being awarded Student of the Year and she shared the Citizenship Award with Maya Ammar Mohammed. The choir started off the event by entertaining those in attendance with a few songs and the event ended with a trio performance by Year 6 girls and the finale graduation songs "Building our own future" and 'Friends Forever' by all the graduates. The schools director, Madame Gharabally, proudly highlighted the achievements of the Year 6 pupils over the years and thanked parents, staff and management team for their loyalty and effort to make this success possible.



ACK uses 3D printing technology in its engineering curriculum

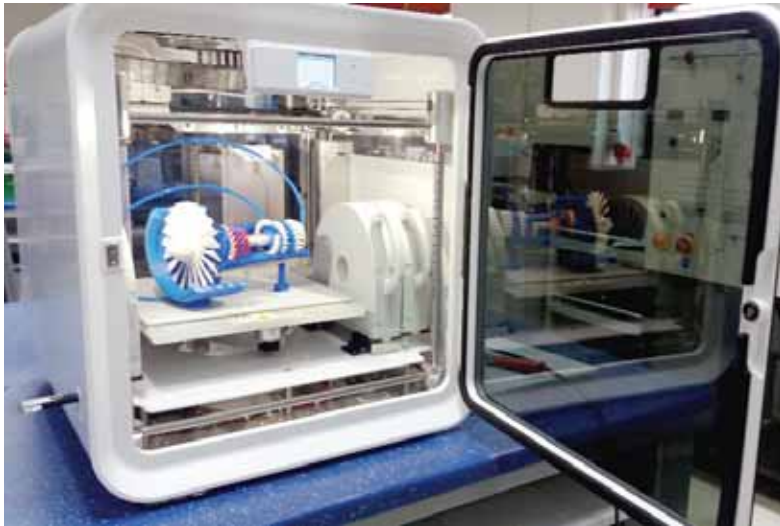
The Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) has brought 3D Printing Technology to its classrooms. The College has incorporated the technology into its first Project- Based Learning unit, Engineering Skills, whereby students used the 3D printers to produce integral and detailed parts for their "Roller Coaster" project. ACK's curriculum requires students to think, to problem-solve and to design. Having this technology enables ACK students to test the aesthetic, ergonomic and

functional properties of their designs with a solid model, rather than through just a virtual model. Moreover, the final year students from ACK's Mechanical Engineering program utilized 3D printing technology in their graduation projects.

3D printing technology is driving a revolution in many industries and a wide variety of applications such as aerospace, automotive, medical and consumer products. This technology enables designers, architects, engineers, inventors,

doctors and more to translate digital designs to physical objects significantly improving design and production times, increasing accuracy, and reducing costs across the board.

Bringing 3D printing into the classroom exposes ACK students to the same cutting-edge technologies they'll encounter in their careers. It gives them a jump-start on tomorrow's engineering challenges and equips them with the necessary skills to utilize this rapidly moving technology.



'Spring is in the air' celebrated at IISM

India International School, Mangaf celebrated 'Spring is in the air' this year for the first time in the history of Kindergarten section. It was a vibrant and colorful day under the auspicious presence of KG Head Nilofar Qazi and her dedicated team of teachers.

The whole kindergarten campus was attired in a floral decoration in tune with the theme. Back in the classrooms, the teachers and tiny tots engaged in various creative activities such as Head gear.

Palatable tropical fruit punch was served to quench the thirst. The spring based dance signifying the aspect of nature performed graciously by tiny bobbies amazingly enchanted the audience.

The remarkable day was graced by the presence of Director Malayil Moosa Koya, Principal F M Basheer Ahmed, Vice Principal Narinder Kaur and Vice Principals who congratulated Nilofar Qazi and the teachers for their dedicated efforts.



JAPAN'S 'NAKED RESTAURANT' TO BAN OVERWEIGHT DINERS

TOKYO: Japan's first "naked restaurant" opens in Tokyo next month with draconian rules of entry: prospective diners will be weighed and ejected if found to be too fat. Following the lead of establishments in London and Melbourne, "The Amrita" Sanskrit for 'immortality'-also has strict age restrictions, with only patrons between 18 and 60 allowed in, after they check in their clothes and put on paper underwear provided by the restaurant.

"If you are more than 15 kilos above the average weight for your height, we ask you refrain from mak-

ing a reservation," a list of rules posted on the restaurant's website states, explaining that patrons could be weighed if they do not appear to be within the correct weight range. Guests found to be "overweight" will be refused entry to the restaurant, which opens on July 29, and will not be entitled to a refund, its website points out. All payments must be made in advance on an online booking page.

The list of rules asks visitors not to "cause a nuisance to other guests" by touching or talking to fellow diners. Tattooed customers are barred from

entry. Those who meet the restaurant's entry requirements will be asked to lock away mobile phones and cameras in a table-top box. The restaurant owners were not immediately available for comment when contacted by AFP. Guests will fork out up to 80,000 yen (\$750) for tickets entitling them to eat food served by muscle-bound men wearing g-strings and watch a dance show featuring male models. Meal tickets, not including a show, will cost from 14,000 to 28,000 yen depending on choice of menu. — AFP



PARIS: In this June 4, 2016, file photo, a woman, at right, takes photos of the flooded banks of the Seine river. — AP

EXPERTS FIND CLIMATE CHANGE'S FINGERPRINTS IN FRENCH FLOODS

WASHINGTON: An international team of scientists has found that man-made climate change nearly doubled the likelihood of last month's devastating French flooding. In a quick but not peer-reviewed analysis, the World Weather Attribution team of climate scientists used past rainfall data and computer simulations to look for global warming's fingerprints in the heavy downpours in France and Germany.

A senior climate researcher at the Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute, Geert Jan van Oldenborgh, says the team's calculations found that global warming increased the chances for the Loire river basin flooding by 90 percent and the Seine river basin by 80 percent. That's compared to a world with no man-made climate change. Parts of France got three months of rain in just one month, much of it in just three days. The Seine, which runs

through Paris, rose to 20 feet above its normal height.

'Very weird weather'

"It was very weird weather," van Oldenborgh said. "It was made more likely due to climate change." The researchers couldn't find a link with the German rain. The team, which also included American, British and French scientists coordinated by Climate Central in Princeton, New Jersey, is trying something relatively new: real-time scientifically valid studies to see if extreme weather events are natural or more likely to happen because of heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere from the burning of fossil fuel.

The 80 and 90 percent increase in likelihood of heavy rain is higher than the 40 percent chance they found for the storm Desmond that hit the United Kingdom last winter, van Oldenborgh

said. Two outside scientists - Adam Sobel of Columbia University and John Walsh of the University of Alaska - say the team used scientifically sound methods. Both Sobel and Walsh were co-authors of a National Academy of Sciences report that looked at the scientific accuracy of studies that look for global warming's fingerprints. They looked at studies that are usually done over months and published in peer-reviewed journals.

This one was done in five days and will eventually be sent to a peer-reviewed journal. But that is not so much a worry because these are well-known and qualified scientists, Sobel said. Walsh said the methods and conclusions "are state-of-the-art" and "the results highlight the role of human-caused climate change while the event is still fresh in the public's minds." — AP

STUDY PLACES AIR POLLUTION AMONG TOP 10 STROKE RISKS

PARIS: Air pollution was fingered for the first time as a major contributor to death and disability caused by stroke, especially in developing nations, in a health review published yesterday. Air pollution, both inside from cooking fires and outside from traffic fumes, ranked among the top ten causes of stroke, along with better known risks such as smoking, high blood pressure and obesity.

An international research team analysed data from a swathe of other studies, reports and official statistics to create a mathematical model estimating stroke risk for 188 countries from 1990 to 2013. "A striking finding of our study is the unexpectedly high proportion of stroke burden attributable to environmental air pollution, especially in developing countries," said study co-author Valery Feigin of New Zealand's Auckland University of Technology. The authors said theirs was the first study to quantify the world's stroke burden in terms of healthy years lost due to people becoming sick, disabled, or dying because of stroke. About 15 million people worldwide suffer strokes every year, of which nearly six million die and five million are left disabled-including loss of vision or speech, paralysis and confusion.

Globally, though with huge differences between countries and regions, the top risk factors were high blood pressure, a diet low in fruit, being overweight, eating too much salt, smoking, and not eating enough vegetables, said the team. Ambient pollution came in seventh place and household air pollution from solid fuels in eighth.

A diet low in whole grains and high blood sugar complete the top ten. The researchers found that 90.5 percent of the stroke burden was attributable to "modifiable factors"-mainly behaviours such as smoking, eating too much sugar and not exercising enough, as well as the associated health problems, such as diabetes and heart disease, these choices result in. Controlling lifestyle factors, which played a much larger role in rich countries than poor ones, "could prevent about three-quarters of strokes worldwide," said Feigin.

Sugar up, smoking down

The study also listed air pollution as a "modifiable factor", meaning that people or governments can do something to change it. "These findings are important for education campaigns, evidence-based planning, priority setting and resource allocation in stroke prevention," the team wrote in *The Lancet Neurology*.

"Air pollution has emerged as a significant contributor to global stroke burden, especially in low-income and middle-income countries, and therefore reducing exposure to air pollution should be one of the main priorities to reduce stroke burden in these countries." In low- and middle-income nations in Asia and Africa, almost a fifth of stroke burden was attributed to household air pollution, while a similar percentage was blamed on ambient air pollution in China and India.

Air pollution may boost stroke risk by raising blood pressure, hardening blood vessels or causing them to become blocked. The risk factor whose contribution shrank most between 1990 and 2013 was second-hand tobacco smoke, said the team, especially in developed countries. The fastest-growing stroke risk was consumption of sugar-sweetened soft drinks. — AFP

DELAYING PREGNANCY AN OPTION IN ZIKA AREAS

AVOIDING THE VIRUS' DEVASTATING BIRTH DEFECTS

WASHINGTON: The World Health Organization says women who live in areas where Zika is spreading should consider delaying pregnancy, since there's no other sure way to avoid the virus' devastating birth defects. The WHO stopped short of recommending that couples put pregnancy on hold.

"It's not saying they should delay. They should be given the information about it and offered that as an option," WHO spokeswoman Nyka Alexander said Thursday. Zika is rapidly spreading through Latin America and the Caribbean, and health officials in several affected countries have made similar recommendations. But the WHO's guidelines, updated last week, could affect millions of couples who live in outbreak areas.

Zika causes only a mild and brief illness, at worst, in most people. But it can cause fetal death and severe brain defects in the children of women infected during pregnancy. There is no vaccine. In outbreak areas, the main defense is to avoid mosquito bites. But Zika also can be spread through unprotected sex with a man who was infected.

Possible exposure

Around the world, health officials have advised pregnant women not to travel to areas where Zika is spreading. And the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has additional advice for non-pregnant travelers: Women should wait at least eight weeks after a Zika illness, or possible exposure to the virus, before trying to conceive. Men who had symptoms should wait at least six months before trying, the CDC recommends.

In response to the WHO's new guidelines, the CDC said health care providers should discuss Zika's risks and how to prevent infection, and provide information about contraception. "As part of their pregnancy planning



RECIFE: In this Jan 27, 2016, file photo, an *Aedes aegypti* mosquito is photographed through a microscope at the Fiocruz institute. — AP

and counseling with their health care providers, some women and their partners residing in areas with active Zika virus transmission might decide to delay pregnancy," the agency said in a statement.

Zika also can be a hazard to the scientists studying it. The University of Pittsburgh said Thursday one of its researchers accidentally stuck herself with a needle during a Zika

experiment and went on to develop symptoms. Pitt officials said the lab accident occurred last month and the researcher has recovered and returned to work.

700 infections

Nearly 700 infections have been reported in US states. All were people who had traveled abroad, or who had sex with someone

who did. The virus is spreading in Puerto Rico and health officials say clusters of illnesses are likely in the mainland US as mosquito season heats up. On Thursday, CDC Director Tom Frieden made another plea for Congress to quickly provide funding needed to battle Zika.

"Give us the money so we can work with American women and children and families to monitor the effects of Zika, so we can do a better job at killing mosquitoes to protect American women, and so we can develop better tools to diagnose Zika, to control mosquitoes and ultimately, with NIH in the lead, to find a vaccine to protect women," Frieden said.

The White House on Thursday hosted a video teleconference involving administration officials, the CDC and Southern governors such as Rick Scott of Florida to go over Zika response planning as the likelihood of Zika cases is increasing with the summer heat. "We are likely to see single cases of transmission and we could certainly see clusters in some at-risk communities, and we want to make sure we do everything possible to get ahead of them," Frieden told reporters later.

Frieden said a key element of the federal response is CDC rapid response teams when cases arise. The Obama administration requested \$1.9 billion in February, to allow officials to continue Zika prevention efforts and begin studying long-term effects of people infected by the disease.

In Congress, the House and Senate each passed Zika bills that would provide funding at levels lower than the administration's request. The Senate voted late Wednesday to begin talks with the House on compromise legislation. The Senate proposal includes \$1.1 billion without spending cuts to offset the expense, while the House has backed a \$622 million measure with cuts elsewhere. — AP

CLINIC
PAGE



Kuwait Times
THE LEADING INDEPENDENT DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St. 1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B - Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368



KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (09/06/2016 TO 15/06/2016)

SHARQIA-1 TE3N (Hindi) WARCRAFT	9:30 PM 12:15 AM	TE3N (Hindi) GO WITH ME	10:00 PM 12:45 AM
SHARQIA-2 THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE HASAN WA BOQLOZ	9:30 PM 11:45 PM	AVENUES-9 THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE HASAN WA BOQLOZ	10:30 PM 12:30 AM
SHARQIA-3 THE ASIAN CONNECTION THE ASIAN CONNECTION	10:00 PM 12:05 AM	AVENUES-10 Ely Ekhtashou Matou UN HOMME A LA HAUTEUR	9:45 PM 12:05 AM
MUHALAB-1 TE3N (Hindi) Hepta	9:45 PM 12:30 AM	AVENUES-11 WARCRAFT (Atmos 2D) WARCRAFT (Atmos 2D)	10:00 PM 12:30 AM
MUHALAB-2 THE ASIAN CONNECTION THE ASIAN CONNECTION	10:15 PM 12:15 AM	360° 1 CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR NO THU GO WITH ME NO THU	9:30 PM 12:30 AM
MUHALAB-3 THE JUNGLE BOOK WARCRAFT	9:30 PM 11:45 PM	360° 2 THE CODE OF CAIN NO WED PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND NO WED	10:00 PM 12:15 AM
FANAR-1 THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE X-MEN: Apocalypse	9:30 PM 11:45 PM	360° 3 THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE HASAN WA BOQLOZ	9:45 PM 11:45 PM
FANAR-2 THE JUNGLE BOOK Hepta	9:45 PM 12:05 AM	360° 4 UN HOMME A LA HAUTEUR UN HOMME A LA HAUTEUR	10:45 PM 12:45 AM
FANAR-3 TE3N (Hindi) THE ASIAN CONNECTION	10:00 PM 1:00 AM	AL-KOUT.1 WARCRAFT WARCRAFT	9:30 PM 12:05 AM
FANAR-4 HASAN WA BOQLOZ WARCRAFT	9:45 PM 11:45 PM	AL-KOUT.2 THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE GO WITH ME	10:00 PM 12:15 AM
FANAR-5 HOUSEFULL 3 (Hindi) THE ASIAN CONNECTION	9:30 PM 12:15 AM	AL-KOUT.3 THE ASIAN CONNECTION THE ASIAN CONNECTION	10:30 PM 12:30 AM
MARINA-1 THE ASIAN CONNECTION UN HOMME A LA HAUTEUR	10:00 PM 12:05 AM	AL-KOUT.4 Hepta X-MEN: Apocalypse	9:45 PM 12:05 AM
MARINA-2 WARCRAFT CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR	9:30 PM 12:05 AM	BAIRAQ-1 THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE NO MON WARCRAFT NO MON	9:30 PM 11:45 PM
MARINA-3 THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE Hepta	9:45 PM 12:15 AM	BAIRAQ-2 THE JUNGLE BOOK NO TUE Hepta	10:00 PM 12:15 AM
AVENUES-1 PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND THE CODE OF CAIN	10:00 PM 12:15 AM	BAIRAQ-3 TE3N (Hindi) THE JUNGLE BOOK	9:45 PM 12:30 AM
AVENUES-3 THE JUNGLE BOOK TE3N (Hindi)	9:30 PM 11:45 PM	PLAZA IRAIVI (Tamil) THU+FRI+MON TE3N (Hindi) SAT+SUN+TUE+WED THE ASIAN CONNECTION	9:30 PM 9:30 PM 12:30 AM
AVENUES-4 THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE THE ASIAN CONNECTION	10:00 PM 12:05 AM	LAILA THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE WARCRAFT	9:45 PM 12:05 AM
AVENUES-5 WARCRAFT WARCRAFT	9:45 PM 12:15 AM	AJIAL.1 IRAIVI (Tamil) THE ASIAN CONNECTION	9:45 PM 12:45 AM
AVENUES-6 Hepta CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR	9:30 PM 12:05 AM		
AVENUES-7 THE ASIAN CONNECTION THE ASIAN CONNECTION	9:45 PM 11:45 PM		
AVENUES-8			

SITUATION VACANT

A lady maid is needed to help in cooking and cleaning. Location Salmiya. Working hours - 12.30 pm - 6.30 pm / daily for six days/week. Salary KD 200/month. Contact 66417504. (C 5183) 11-6-2016

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 Narasimhulu, 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** Narasimhulu (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

EMERGENCY



Prayer timings



Fajr:	03:13
Shorook	04:48
Duhr:	11:47
Asr:	15:21
Maghrib:	18:47
Isha:	20:19



Flight Schedule

DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

In case you are not travelling, your proper cancellation of bookings will help other passengers use seats

Arrival Flights on Saturday 11/6/2016

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
MSC	501	Alexandria	00:05	QTR	1080	Doha	17:55	KAC	501	Beirut	11:00	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10	SVA	500	Jeddah	17:55	KAC	561	Amman	11:20	KNE	532	Jeddah	17:25
MSC	415	Sohag	00:10	KAC	176	Geneva/Frankfurt	18:20	KAC	165	Rome/Paris	11:25	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	KAC	502	Beirut	18:35	KAC	679	Muscat	11:25	NIA	252	Alexandria	17:50
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55	KAC	786	Jeddah	18:35	SYR	342	Damascus	11:30	IRA	666	Esfahan	18:10
KKK	6506	Istanbul	00:55	KAC	774	Riyadh	18:35	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
DLH	635	Doha	01:00	FDB	8061	Dubai	18:50	JZR	356	Mashhad	11:40	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15	KAC	742	Dammam	18:50	KAC	541	Cairo	12:05	JZR	184	Dubai	18:20
JZR	539	Cairo	01:20	CLX	856	Luxembourg	18:50	UAE	874	Dubai	12:10	JZR	538	Cairo	18:30
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30	KAC	618	Doha	18:55	RBG	554	Alexandria	12:10	QTR	1081	Doha	19:05
JZR	125	Bahrain	01:40	KAC	542	Cairo	18:55	JZR	776	Jeddah	12:15	SVA	505	Jeddah	19:25
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:40	KAC	104	London	19:00	IRM	1189	Mashhad	12:20	FDB	8062	Dubai	19:30
RJA	642	Amman	01:45	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05	IRC	6512	ABD	12:40	KAC	285	Dhaka	19:40
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45	UAE	875	Dubai	19:05	JZR	534	Cairo	12:40	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
JZR	553	Alexandria	01:50	FDB	063	Dubai	19:10	IAW	158	Al Najaf	12:55	FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	KAC	614	Bahrain	19:10	KAC	785	Jeddah	13:00	ABY	124	Sharjah	19:55
UAE	853	Dubai	02:25	ABY	123	Sharjah	19:15	KAC	791	Madinah	13:00	CLX	361	Colombo	19:55
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	JZR	535	Cairo	19:30	FDB	076	Dubai	13:10	JZR	266	Beirut	20:20
FDB	067	Dubai	03:15	JAI	572	Mumbai	19:35	NIA	152	Cairo	13:20	FDB	060	Dubai	20:30
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:15	KAC	674	Dubai	19:45	JZR	786	Riyadh	13:20	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	FDB	059	Dubai	19:50	MSC	402	Alexandria	13:30	JAI	571	Mumbai	20:35
QTR	1076	Doha	03:25	JZR	177	Dubai	19:50	SAW	702	Damascus	13:35	JZR	124	Bahrain	20:35
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:30	DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:05	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00	KAC	331	Trivandrum	20:45
KAC	544	Cairo	03:40	KNE	381	Taif	20:10	FDB	8054	Dubai	14:05	DLH	634	Doha	20:50
KAC	514	Tehran	03:50	ABY	121	Sharjah	20:10	THY	767	Istanbul	14:10	ABY	122	Sharjah	20:50
QTR	8301	Doha	04:10	MEA	402	Beirut	20:15	IRC	527	Mashhad	14:35	KAC	353	BLR	20:55
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	OMA	647	Muscat	20:20	TBM	6314	Mashhad	14:40	KAC	543	Cairo	21:00
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	MSR	618	Alexandria	20:30	PAL	669	Dubai/Manila	14:45	KAC	351	Kochi	21:00
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	06:25	QTR	1088	Doha	20:35	KNE	382	Taif	14:55	KNE	232	Riyadh	21:10
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	06:30	FDB	5053	Dubai	20:55	MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	15:00	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
BAW	157	London	06:40	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:05	KAC	773	Riyadh	15:00	OMA	648	Muscat	21:15
JZR	529	Asyut	06:55	UAE	859	Dubai	21:15	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:05	ABY	128	Sharjah	21:15
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15	ALK	229	Colombo	21:20	FDB	058	Bahrain	15:05	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
JZR	503	Luxor	07:25	KLM	415	Amsterdam	21:25	KAC	673	Dubai	15:05	KAC	563	Amman	16:30
KAC	382	Delhi	07:30	KAC	676	Dubai	21:35	FBA	832	Al Najaf	15:10	RJA	641	Amman	16:55
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	07:35	JZR	189	Dubai	21:45	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15	FDB	052	Dubai	17:00
KAC	206	Islamabad	07:40	QTR	1082	Doha	21:55	KAC	617	Doha	15:15	KAC	675	Dubai	17:00
KAC	204	Lahore	07:40	GFA	219	Bahrain	22:00	JZR	176	Dubai	15:15	JZR	188	Dubai	17:10
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	KAC	564	Amman	22:05	KAC	741	Dammam	15:30	JZR	512	Sharm el-Sheikh	17:15
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:10	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:15	AIC	987	Chennai/Hyderabad	22:25	KNE	684	Madinah	16:00	KNE	532	Jeddah	17:25
KAC	344	Chennai	08:15	ABY	129	Sharjah	22:30	KAC	613	Bahrain	16:00	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
KAC	362	Colombo	08:20	KNE	533	Jeddah	22:45	BON	102	Sarajevo	16:05	NIA	252	Alexandria	17:50
KAC	352	Kochi	08:20	JZR	185	Dubai	22:55	OMA	646	Muscat	16:10	IRA	666	Esfahan	18:10
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	THY	764	Istanbul	22:55	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:00	MSC	403	Asyut	23:10	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	JAI	574	Mumbai	23:20	KAC	563	Amman	16:30	JZR	184	Dubai	18:20
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	JZR	125	Bahrain	23:25	RJA	641	Amman	16:55	JZR	538	Cairo	18:30
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20	JZR	513	Sharm el-Sheikh	23:30	FDB	052	Dubai	17:00	QTR	1081	Doha	19:05
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	MSR	614	Cairo	23:30	KAC	675	Dubai	17:00	SVA	505	Jeddah	19:25
SYR	341	Damascus	10:30	FDB	071	Dubai	23:35	JZR	188	Dubai	17:10	FDB	8062	Dubai	19:30
UAE	873	Dubai	10:40	JAD	301	Amman	23:45	JZR	512	Sharm el-Sheikh	17:15	KAC	285	Dhaka	19:40
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40					QTR	1073	Doha	17:25	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
JZR	359	Mashhad	10:50					KNE	532	Jeddah	17:25	FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
IRM	1188	Mashhad	11:10					UAE	858	Dubai	17:40	ABY	124	Sharjah	19:55
JZR	325	Al Najaf	11:20	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	NIA	252	Alexandria	17:50	KAC	361	Colombo	19:55
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:30	AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05	IRA	666	Esfahan	18:10	JZR	266	Beirut	20:20
IRC	6511	ABD	11:40	BBC	044	Dhaka	00:10	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15	FDB	060	Dubai	20:30
JZR	165	Dubai	11:50	JZR	528	Asyut	00:10	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
IAW	157	Al Najaf	11:55	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:25	JZR	184	Dubai	18:20	JAI	571	Mumbai	20:35
NIA	151	Cairo	12:20	MSR	615	Cairo	00:30	JZR	538	Cairo	18:30	JZR	124	Bahrain	20:35
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25	FDB	072	Dubai	00:30	QTR	1081	Doha	19:05	KAC	331	Trivandrum	20:45
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30	PIA	240	Sialkot	00:40	SVA	505	Jeddah	19:25	DLH	634	Doha	20:50
JZR	241	Amman	12:30	KLM	413	Amsterdam	00:55	FDB	8062	Dubai	19:30	ABY	122	Sharjah	20:50
SAW	701	Damascus	12:35	MSC	502	Alexandria	01:05	KAC	285	Dhaka	19:40	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
MSR	610	Cairo	12:35	MSC	416	Sohag	01:05	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50	JAI	571	Mumbai	20:35
THY	766	Istanbul	13:10	JZR	502	Luxor	01:15	FDB	064	Dubai	19:50	JZR	124	Bahrain	20:35
FDB	8053	Dubai	13:25	THY	773	Istanbul	01:40	ABY	124	Sharjah	19:55	KAC	331	Trivandrum	20:45
IRC	526	Mashhad	13:35	DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:00	KAC	361	Colombo	19:55	DLH	634	Doha	20:50
TBM	6313	Mashhad	13:45	SAI	442	Lahore	02:30	CLX	856	Hong Kong	20:20	ABY	122	Sharjah	20:50
FBA	831	Al Najaf	13:50	THY	765	Istanbul	02:45	JZR	266	Beirut	20:20	FDB	060	Dubai	20:30
BON	101	Sarajevo	13:55	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	02:45	FDB	060	Dubai	20:30	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
KNE	231	Riyadh	14:00	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:55	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35	JAI	571	Mumbai	20:35
KAC	672	Dubai	14:00	UAE	854	Dubai	03:45	JAI	571	Mumbai	20:35	JZR	124	Bahrain	20:35
QTR	1078	Doha	14:05	OMA	644	Muscat	04:00	JZR	124	Bahrain	20:35	KAC	331	Trivandrum	20:45
MSR	575	Sharm el-Sheikh	14:15	KKK	6505	Istanbul	04:05	KAC	331	Trivandrum	20:45	KAC	331	Trivandrum	20:45
FDB	057	Dubai	14:20	FDB	068	Dubai	04:05	DLH	634	Doha	20:50	DLH	634	Doha	20:50
GFA	221	Bahrain	14:20	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:10	ABY	122	Sharjah	20:50	ABY	122	Sharjah	20:50
JZR	779	Jeddah	14:20	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15	KAC	353	BLR	20:55	KAC	543	Cairo	21:00
KAC	512	Mashhad	14:25	PGT	861	Istanbul	04:30	KAC	543	Cairo	21:00	KAC	351	Kochi	21:00
KAC	540	Sharm el-Sheikh	14:30	QTR	1077	Doha	04:35	KAC	351	Kochi	21:00	KNE	232	Riyadh	21:10
KAC	788	Jeddah	14:50	JZR	358	Mashhad	05:00	KAC	351	Kochi	21:00	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
KNE	529	Jeddah	15:00	QTR	8302	Doha	06:10	KNE	232	Riyadh	21:10	OMA	648	Muscat	21:15
KNE	683	Madinah	15:05	RJA	643	Amman	06:25	OMA	648	Muscat	21:15	MSR	607	Luxor	21:30
OMA	645	Muscat	15:05	QTR	1087	Doha	06:30	QTR	1089	Doha	21:45	QTR	1089	Doha	21:45
ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:10	THY	771	Istanbul	06:45	QTR	1089	Doha	21:45	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
ABY	127	Sharjah	15:10	GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50	FDB	5054	Dubai	21:55
UAE	857	Dubai	15:35	JZR	240	Amman	06:55	FDB	5054	Dubai	21:55	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	21:55
RJA	640	Amman	15:45	FDB	070	Dubai	07:05	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	21:55	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
FDB	051	Dubai	16:00	JZR	164	Dubai	07:15	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20	UAE	860	Dubai	22:25
QTR	1072	Doha	16:15	JZR	5062	Dubai	07:55	UAE	860	Dubai	22:25	KLM	415	Dammam/Amsterdam	

Word Search Puzzles

80's Songs 5 - Word Search

Find the words hidden in the grid of letters.

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

- ALWAYS
- LA BAMBA
- SAILING
- BROKEN WINGS
- LETS DANCE
- SATISFIED
- CHERISH
- LONGER
- THE FLAME
- CRUISIN
- MONY MONY
- TOO SHY
- FAITHFULLY
- MR ROBOTO
- URGENT
- GUILTY
- PASSION
- WE BELONG
- HEARTBREAKER
- PATIENCE
- YOUR LOVE
- HUNGRY HEART
- PURPLE RAIN

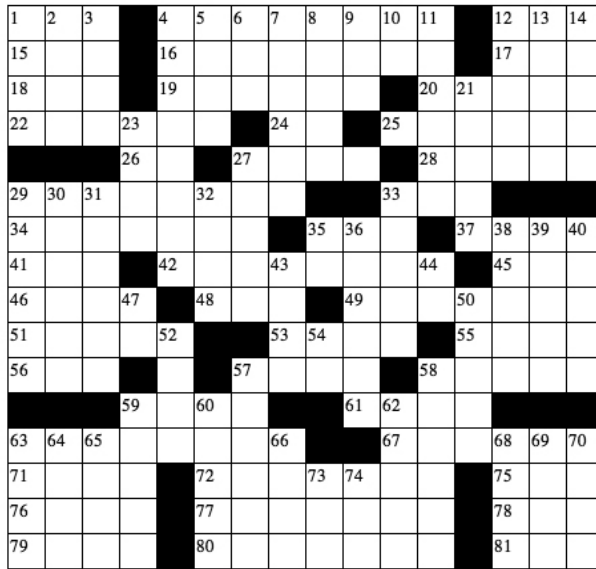
Yesterday's Solution

Large Print Word Search Puzzles
 80's Songs 4 - Solution

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

- BATDANCE
- FAST CAR
- NASTY
- AMANDA
- FUNKY TOWN
- NIGHTSHIFT
- BILLIE JEAN
- HEARTLIGHT
- ROCK ON
- COME DANCING
- HOLD ME
- SLEDGEHAMMER
- CONTROL
- HUMAN
- SMALL TOWN
- DANGER ZONE
- JESSE
- VOICES CARRY
- DESIRE
- KISS
- YOU ARE
- FAITH
- LUKA

CROSSWORD 1281



ACROSS

1. Rare (usually fatal) brain disease (usually in middle age) caused by an unidentified slow virus.
4. Of or relating to or containing balsam.
12. Considerate and solicitous care.
15. Step on it.
16. A room equipped with toilet facilities.
17. The fatty flesh of eel.
18. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
19. Bristlelike process near the tip of the antenna of certain flies.
20. Comb-plate or locomotor organ consisting of a row of strong cilia whose bases are fused.
22. Mar or spoil the appearance of.
24. An expression of greeting.
25. Type genus of the Blattidae.
26. A state in northwestern North America.
28. (Greek mythology) The rarified fluid said to flow in the veins of the Gods.
29. By a small margin.
34. Any of a group of proteases that mediate apoptosis.
37. Report or maintain.
41. (prefix) Opposite or opposing or neutralizing.
42. A person who passes by casually or by chance.
45. American prizefighter who won the world heavyweight championship three times (born in 1942).
46. A lyric poet.
48. North American republic containing 50 states - 48 conterminous states in North America plus Alaska in northwest North America and the Hawaiian Islands in the Pacific Ocean.
49. A long-acting crystalline barbiturate (trade name Mebaral) used as a sedative and as an anticonvulsant in the treatment of epilepsy.
51. (Norse mythology) God of poetry and music.
53. Divulge information or secrets.
55. A narrow way or road.
56. A branch of the Tai languages.
61. (botany) Of or relating to the axil.
63. Synthetic narcotic drug similar to morphine but less habit-forming.
67. The largest city in Kazakhstan and the capital until 1998.
71. Small buffalo of the Celebes having small straight horns.
72. A bitter yellow powder used to treat skin diseases.
75. The cry made by sheep.
76. Capital and largest city of the Ukraine.
77. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
78. Bulky grayish-brown eagle with a short wedge-shaped white tail.

79. Tropical starchy tuberous root.
80. Low spreading tropical American shrub with long slender leaves used to make a mildly stimulating drink resembling tea.
81. A nucleic acid consisting of large molecules shaped like a double helix.

DOWN

1. Of or relating to or characteristic of the Republic of Chad or its people or language.
2. An aggressive remark directed at a person like a missile and intended to have a telling effect.
3. Lacking or deprive of the sense of hearing wholly or in part.
4. Raspberry native to eastern North America having black thimble-shaped fruit.
5. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
6. Being six more than fifty.
7. A square dance figure.
8. Of or relating to Attica or its inhabitants or to the dialect spoken in Athens in classical times.
9. Extinct flightless bird of New Zealand.
10. A heavy brittle metallic element of the platinum group.
11. (thermodynamics) Conforming to the Carnot cycle.
12. The kind and number and arrangement of teeth (collectively) in a person or animal.
13. (of tempo) Slow adv.
14. Clear to the mind.
21. Genus of tropical plants with creeping rootstocks and small umbellate flowers.
23. An association of people to promote the welfare of senior citizens.
27. Give a benediction to.
30. A historical region of southwestern India on the west coast.
31. Away from the right path or direction.
32. (Old Testament) The eldest son of Isaac who would have inherited the Covenant that God made with Abraham and that Abraham passed on to Isaac.
33. Spicy fruit of the cubeb vine.
35. A brittle silver-white metalloid element that is related to selenium and sulfur.
36. A large fleet.
38. Any of various large tropical carnivorous lizards of Africa Asia and Australia.
39. Either of two large African antelopes of the genus Taurotragus having short spirally twisted horns in both sexes.
40. United States poet (1849-1916).
43. A island in the Netherlands Antilles that is the top of an extinct volcano.
44. A soft silvery metallic element.
47. 1/10 gram.
50. Fear resulting from the awareness of danger.
52. The content of cognition.
54. A gonadotropic hormone that is secreted by the anterior pituitary.
57. British pathologist who isolated and purified penicillin, which had been discovered in 1928 by Sir Alexander Fleming (1898-1968).
58. West Indian tree having racemes of fragrant white flowers and yielding a durable timber and resinous juice.
59. An Indian tree of the family Combretaceae that is a source of timber and gum.
60. (Babylonian) A demigod or first man.
62. Hungarian choreographer who developed Labanotation (1879-1958).
64. A town in north central Oklahoma.
65. Having a toe or toes of a specified kind.
66. A quantity of no importance.
68. In bed.
69. A mountain lake (especially one formed by glaciers).
70. A member of an extinct North American Indian people who lived in the Pit river valley in northern California.
73. A dissolute man in fashionable society.
74. South American wood sorrel cultivated for its edible tubers.

Daily SuDoku

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

easy

Yesterday's Solution

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

very hard

Yesterday's Solution

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

ORIOLES OVERCOME BLUE JAYS 6-5

TORONTO: Chris Davis homered and hit a tiebreaking sacrifice fly in the ninth inning, Pedro Alvarez also connected and the Baltimore Orioles beat the Toronto Blue Jays 6-5 Thursday night for their fifth straight win. Hyun Soo Kim doubled against Roberto Osuna (2-1) to begin the ninth and was replaced by pinch runner Joey Rickard. After Manny Machado's groundout advanced Rickard to third, Davis followed with a sacrifice fly to center, with Rickard sliding home easily as Kevin Pillar's throw was wide. Davis went 1 for 3 with three RBIs for the AL East leaders. Machado remained in the lineup, hours after being suspended four games by Major League Baseball for charging the mound and punching Kansas City pitcher Yordano Ventura after being hit by a fastball this week. Ventura was penalized nine games - both players have appealed, and remain eligible until the process is complete. Dylan Bundy (2-1) pitched 2 1-3 innings for the win and Zach Britton finished for his AL-leading 19th save.

RANGERS 5, ASTROS 3

Prince Fielder homered for the first time since briefly getting benched, Jurickson Profar got two more hits and Texas beat Houston. Astros shortstop Carlos Correa sprained his left ankle when he stumbled over the first base bag running out a grounder in the fifth inning. Rougned Odor also homered as the Rangers clinched a franchise-record 10th straight home series victory. They took the finale of a four-game set a day after the Astros snapped a 12-game losing streak in Arlington with their first win of the season against their in-state rivals. Martin Perez (5-4) won his fourth straight start as AL West-leading Texas finished 6-1 on a homestand against its top two challengers in the division. Matt Bush struck out the side in the eighth. Lefty Jake Diekmann coaxed a double play for his first career save. Fielder led off the fourth inning with a line drive down the line in right off Collin McHugh (5-5).

CARDINALS 3, REDS 2

Yadier Molina's bases-loaded single snapped an eighth-inning tie, and St. Louis reached a season high by beating Cincinnati, taking yet another series in their lopsided NL Central rivalry. Molina's third hit of the game sent St. Louis to its fourth victory in five games. The Cardinals (32-28) are a season-high four games over .500, tied with the Pirates for second place, 10 games behind the Cubs. St. Louis took two of three and has won 18 of its past 22 series with Cincinnati. The Cardinal who gets booed the loudest in Cincinnati was in the middle of another comeback. His one-out single off Ross Ohlendorf (4-5) put St. Louis up 3-2 and drew jeers. Molina has been booed regularly at Great American Ball Park since a brawl that started between him and Brandon Phillips in 2010. Seung Hwan Oh (2-0) pitched one inning in relief of Adam Wainwright, who allowed only two hits over the first six. Trevor Rosenthal retired the side in the ninth for his 11th save in 12 chances.

WHITE SOX 3, NATIONALS 1

Melky Cabrera doubled twice and drove in two runs, Miguel Gonzalez pitched six strong innings after securing a rotation spot and Chicago beat Washington to snap a five-game skid. Gonzalez (1-1) won his first game



TORONTO: Toronto Blue Jays third baseman Josh Donaldson (right) collides with Baltimore Orioles third baseman Ryan Flaherty after hitting an RBI triple during the fourth inning of a baseball game on Thursday, June 9, 2016. —AP

with Chicago after losing seven straight decisions dating to last season with Baltimore. The right-hander retired the first 12 batters he faced, giving up three hits and a run. The White Sox gave Gonzalez the No 5 starting spot after designating Mat Latos for assignment before the game. Brett Lawrie added an RBI double in a three-run first off Gio Gonzalez (3-5), who struck out 10 in 6 2/3 innings. Daniel Murphy hit a solo homer in the fifth for the Nationals, whose three-game winning streak was snapped. David Robertson worked around two hits in the ninth for his 14th save in 16 tries.

YANKEES 6, ANGELS 3

Carlos Beltran hit a tiebreaking, two-run double in a five-run fifth inning, and New York beat Los Angeles to complete a four-game sweep and reach .500 for only the second time since mid-April. A night after homering twice in his first Yankees start, Chris Parmelee hit a tying single. But he needed to be helped off the field in the seventh after injuring his right hamstring while stretching into a split to grab Didi Gregorius' throw on an inning-ending groundout. Ivan Nova (5-3) won his second straight start, allowing three runs and six hits in 6 1/3 innings. Dellin Betances, Andrew Miller and Aroldis Chapman combined for two-hit relief, with Chapman getting three outs for his 11th save in 12 chances. The Yankees are 8-0 when all three pitch. Jhoulys Chacin (1-2) lost his command against the Yankees' left-handed hit-

ters in the fifth and wound up allowing five runs and seven hits in 5 1/3 innings.

METS 5, BREWERS 2

Bartolo Colon pitched seven strong innings and Curtis Granderson had a leadoff home run and New York defeated Milwaukee. Colon (5-3) allowed eight hits and one run. Granderson led off the game with a homer off Milwaukee's Jimmy Nelson (5-5). Granderson doubled leading off the third and scored on a single by Yoenis Cespedes. Jeury's Familia earned his 20th save in 20 opportunities.

MARLINS 10, TWINS 3

Marcell Ozuna had four hits and three RBIs, and Miami broke open the game with a seven-run seventh inning to beat Minnesota. Chris Johnson hit a pinch-hit, two-run homer in the seventh and the Marlins bounced back after dropping the first two games of the series to the Twins. Tom Koehler (4-6) gave up two runs and four hits and struck out six in six innings. Ervin Santana (1-6) gave up five runs and nine hits in 6 1/3 innings and Minnesota's bullpen struggled in the seventh.

ROCKIES 11, PIRATES 5

DJ LeMahieu homered, doubled and drove in three runs, reliever Jorge De La Rosa settled down a slugfest with four perfect innings and Colorado beat Pittsburgh. The game was a makeup of the April 28 contest that was postponed by weather.

Ryan Raburn, Charlie Blackmon and Nolan Arenado each drove in two runs as Colorado snapped an eight-game skid to the Pirates at Coors Field. De La Rosa (2-4) retired all 12 batters he faced after starter Chad Bettis struggled. De La Rosa also brought in a run with a bunt. Jeff Locke (5-4) had his four-game winning streak halted. He surrendered 11 runs and saw his ERA soar from 4.28 to 5.38.

INDIANS 5, MARINERS 3

Tyler Naquin golfed a two-run home run off reliever Joaquin Benoit in the eighth inning to lift Cleveland. Naquin managed to coax just enough carry out of a low change-up to carry the ball in right field and give the Indians a 4-2 lead. Dan Otero (1-0) picked up the victory in relief of starter Josh Tomlin. Cody Allen worked out of two jams to earn his 13th save of the season. Benoit (1-1) walked Rajai Davis with one out in the eighth inning before Naquin's blast gave Cleveland the lead. A throwing error by Benoit allowed Chris Gimenez to reach base and ultimately score on a single by Jason Kipnis to increase the lead to 5-2. Robinson Cano's second solo homer of the game - this one off Bryan Shaw - closed the gap to 5-3 in the bottom half of the inning. Kyle Seager singled and Lind walked to force Cleveland to bring Allen in early, but he forced Ketel Marte to ground out to end the inning. Norichika Aoki and Seth Smith singled off Allen with two outs but Allen got Cano to strike out to seal the victory. —AP

EVERGREEN SMITH RETURNS TO AUSTRALIA WITH REDS

BRISBANE: Wallabies great George Smith will continue playing top class rugby until at least the age of 38 after signing a two-year deal to return to Australia with the Queensland Reds Super Rugby team yesterday. The 111-cap flanker, who turns 36 next month, will join the Brisbane-based side for the 2017 and 2018 seasons while also playing for Suntory Sungoliath in Japan's Top League. Smith's capture will fill the hole left by openside Liam Gill, who has decided to leave Australia for French club Toulon at the end of the season. It is a major coup for the Reds, who have endured a miserable few seasons since they won the

Super Rugby title for the first time in 2011. Australia captain Stephen Moore has also signed up to move to Brisbane from the ACT Brumbies next season and was delighted to hear the news.

"Well at least I won't be the oldest bloke in the squad next year," the 33-year-old joked a news conference on the eve of today's test against England. "It's great, he's a legend of Australian rugby and you've seen even this year how well he's played for Wasps in England. "He continues to amaze with how well how he can play year after year. He's a great addition not only for what he can do on

the field but off the field with the young players." Evergreen Smith enjoyed a stellar 2015-16 season with English Premiership side Wasps and was named the Players' Player of the Year in England last month. "The body feels great and the experience in England has been outstanding," Smith said. "I'm really looking forward to playing Super Rugby again."

Reds executive Daniel Herbert later suggested that former Wallabies flyhalf Quade Cooper would be welcomed back with open arms if he decided to leave Toulon and return to Australia. "There's room if the desire's there," he said. "We don't like to

comment until things have been solidifying but there's room. "I'm an unashamed fan of Quade, have been for a long time..." Cooper is a cult hero in Queensland because of the role he played in that 2011 triumph but he clearly has one significant fan in New South Wales as well. Wallabies coach Michael Cheika said Cooper was one of a string of players he had been working to try and persuade to return from Europe. "I've been doing more than endorsing it, I've been out there trying to get him back," he said in a crowd-pleasing comment at a Reds function in Brisbane yesterday. —Reuters



BRISBANE: England's players run onto the ground during the captain's run in Brisbane yesterday ahead of the first rugby Test match against Australia today. —AFP

NEW ERA DAWNS FOR SPRINGBOKS

CAPE TOWN: A new era dawns for the South African Springboks today when they tackle weakened Ireland in Cape Town in the first of three Tests. The country that won the World Cup twice will have a new coach, a new captain, a new scrum-half, a new racial outlook and probably a new playing style. Allister Coetzee, the second black coach after Peter de Villiers to coach the green and gold, was chosen two months ago to succeed Heyneke Meyer.

A disastrous final season of his four-year contract sealed the fate of Meyer with five losses including a sensational 2015 World Cup beating by minnows Japan. He stubbornly refused to accept racial transformation either after decades of white-dominated teams, consistently starting with no more than three black players. Ninety percent of South Africans are black and the government and the national rugby body agree

that half the 2019 Springboks World Cup side must be black. The exit of Meyer leaves former Western Stormers Super Rugby coach Coetzee with two major tasks—restore a winning culture and give black stars a chance.

He chose five black starters, including veteran loosehead prop Tendai 'The Beast' Mtawarira to face Johnny Sexton-less Ireland at Newlands stadium. Another four black players, among them uncapped hooker Bongsi Mbonambi, are among the eight replacements. "We are starting afresh and I have rewarded Super Rugby form," stressed Coetzee after his first team announcement. The composition was predictable with scrum-half Faf de Klerk rewarded for a string of outstanding displays with the Golden Lions. "I do not want Faf to just be seen as a link, I want him to play his game and ask questions of the Irish defense," said Coetzee. —AFP

COACH O'SHEA SETS OUT TO MAKE ITALY POWERFUL

SANTA FE: Irish coach Conor O'Shea begins his mission to create "the best Italy team ever" with a one-off Test against Argentina in Santa Fe today. But the 45-year-old successor to Frenchman Jacques Brunel must face the 2015 Rugby World Cup semi-finalists without several key players. Captain Sergio Parisse, Alessandro Zanni and Francesco Minto, the back row when the Azzurri crumbled 67-14 to Wales last March, are rested. Only four starters in Cardiff—wingers Leonardo Sarto and David Odiete, prop Andrea Lovotti and lock Quintin Geldenhuys—begin against the Pumas. Star 117-cap tighthead prop Martin Castrogianni has been omitted for one-off Tests in Argentina, the United States and Canada.

He was banned by French club Racing 92 for partying in Las Vegas instead of attending a European Champions Cup semi-final in England. Although former Ireland full-back O'Shea has named only one new cap, centre Tommaso Boni, seven starters have 10 or less caps. O'Shea has a bold plan to transform Italy

from perennial Six Nations Championship whipping boys into formidable opponents at the highest level. "I want this to be the best Italian team ever. I played against a fantastic Italian team in the 1990s and I think we can become even better than that team."

Fitness is a key issue for the man capped 35 times at full-back by Ireland, who joined Italy after coaching roles with London Irish and Harlequins. "Italy always start fast but as the match progresses they get slower and slower. We have to change that and identify the players who can help us. "I love my teams to play with the ball in hand, but you cannot do that, for example, if you cannot make your tackles," said O'Shea. Argentina coach Daniel Hourcade starts with only four of the team beaten by South Africa in the 2015 Rugby World Cup third-place play-off in London. Winger Santiago Cordero, centre Matias Moroni, fly-half and leading 2015 World Cup points scorer Nicolas Sanchez and lock Matias Alemanno survive. —AFP

NHL

SHARKS STUN PENGUINS TO KEEP SERIES ALIVE

PITTSBURGH: The San Jose Sharks used a first period scoring frenzy to claim a 4-2 win and keep the Pittsburgh Penguins from clinching the Stanley Cup on Thursday to send the series back to the West Coast for Game Six. Trailing 1-3 in the series and facing elimination, the Sharks got first period goals 1:49 apart from Brent Burns and Logan Couture and another from Melker Karlsson, then turned to goaltender Martin Jones and an air-tight defense to seal a 'do-or-die' victory.

"We needed some big-game performances from guys. Jonesy was one of those guys in a tough environment," praised San Jose coach Peter DeBoer. "We found a way to stay alive and bring it back to San Jose." The best-of-seven series shifts back to San Jose for Game Six on Sunday with the Sharks still facing a daunting task. Since the Stanley Cup final went to the best-of-seven format in 1939, teams that have taken a 3-1 series lead have gone on to capture the championship 31 of 32 times.

The Sharks had found themselves in 3-1 hole in a large part because their top scorers Joe Pavelski, Joe Thornton, Burns and Couture had not previously scored in the finals. But the Sharks' big guns came out firing in Game Five, Burns and Couture tallying within the first three minutes to grab a 2-0 lead and stun an arena record crowd of 18,860. For the first time in the finals, the Sharks drew first blood, Burns swinging out from behind the Penguins net and picking shortside on rookie Matt Murray just 64 seconds after the opening faceoff. The mugging seemed to jolt the Penguins who hit back in devastating style as Evgeni Malkin and Carl Hagelin answered 22 seconds apart to put the Consol Energy Center back in full party mode.

Shifted into overdrive

By now it was the Penguins in a frenzy and not the Sharks as a relentless Pittsburgh attack shifted into overdrive, hitting the post twice. San Jose, however, would weather that storm and escape with a 3-2 first period lead when Karlsson converted a nifty tic-tac-toe passing play, before Pavelski added an insurance marker in the third.



PITTSBURGH: San Jose Sharks' Joe Pavelski (8) scores an empty-net goal past Pittsburgh Penguins' Brian Dumoulin (8) and Kris Letang (58) during the third period in Game 5 of the NHL hockey Stanley Cup Finals on Thursday, June 9, 2016. — AP

The opening period of Game Five produced the most electrifying hockey of the finals with five goals equaling the total of any of the previous games. Defenses and netminders then took over as Jones frustrated the Penguins attack with a string of spectacular saves before finishing the night by stopping 44 of 46 shots. "We know we haven't scored many goals, or any, in this series," said Couture. "It's one of the reasons why we're down 3-1. We wanted to come. We didn't want the season to end tonight.

"Obviously it's tough. You get a two-goal lead, it's gone in a matter of a minute, minute and a half. "But be calm, get back out

there, get another good shift. We were able to score again. Melker gave us the lead again. Jonesy did the rest." A record crowd at Consol Energy Center and thousands more gathered outside to watch the game on a giant screen, some having camped out overnight to secure a prime spot, came ready to watch Lord Stanley's famous mug hoisted on home ice for the first time to go along with three Cups won on the road (1991, 1992 and 2009). The Sharks job was to play the role of party poopers and played it perfectly particularly in a spellbinding opening period that produced the best 20 minutes of hockey of the finals. — Reuters

MOTOR RACING

HEINEKEN, F1 SEAL MULTI-YEAR DEAL

MONTREAL: Heineken and Formula One announced a multi-year global partnership on Thursday that the Dutch brewer said would rank alongside its long-standing sponsorship of European soccer's Champions League. No financial details were given for the deal, which was announced at the Canadian Grand Prix and starts in September with title sponsorship of the Italian Grand Prix at Monza. "F1 is going to be one of our biggest ever partnerships.

The world is going to notice that we are in F1," Gianluca Di Tondo, Senior Director, Global Heineken Brand said. Heineken will be Formula One's official beer partner. From 2017, the brand will be title sponsor of three grands prix with significant signage at six others. The branding will not be on any cars. Thursday's announcement comes after Red Bull's Max Verstappen last month became, at 18, the youngest Formula One race winner and first Dutch driver to top the podium. Di Tondo said discussions between the world's third largest brewer and Bernie Ecclestone's Formula One Management had been ongoing for some time. "It is the right moment to do this partnership. We expect it to be a long-term one," he said. "We estimate Formula One can give us the extra 200 million people on top of the other global consumers we have and F1 is looking for spectators to turn into F1 fans. Together we can both reach our goal. "Champions League football and Formula One are going to be our yearly platforms." Heineken's sponsorship of European soccer's premier club competition runs to 2018 and is worth in excess of \$70 million a year, according to sports marketing research group IMR.

Keep Monza

Although the Formula One partnership starts in Italy, Monza has yet to agree a contract with Ecclestone beyond 2016. Di Tondo said Heineken would not be involved in those discussions but, as an Italian, he would "do everything I can to push Bernie into keeping the Italian GP." Di Tondo mentioned Monaco, Formula One's showcase race, as well as China and Mexico as races in strategic markets. Heineken is the top-selling lager in Europe and the world's leading international export brand. The brewer has sold beer in Africa for decades, while acquisitions in the past six years have seen it add Mexico and Brazil and greater access to Vietnam and southeast Asia. Di Tondo said Heineken would also develop significantly the use of social media. "We know how to reach people. Our twitter program for the Champions League this year reached 2.5 billion people." The partnership will also promote a 'responsibility' message and Heineken's "If You Drive, Never Drink" campaign. — Reuters

ATHLETICS

SCHIPPERS SHINES, KIPROP HIGH FIVES

OSLO: Flying Dutchwoman Dafne Schippers fired a warning shot at potential Olympic rivals with a crushing win in the 200m at the Diamond League meeting in Oslo on Thursday. The world champion ran a fast bend and hit the back straight ahead of in-form Jamaican Elaine Thompson, in her outside lane, in chilly conditions at Bislett Stadium. Schippers, the 2014 European double sprint champion, clocked 21.93 seconds, with world silver medallist Thompson second in 22.64sec. "To run under 22 seconds in these conditions is very special for me," said the Dutchwoman who set the Beijing world championships alight last year with victory in a third-fastest time ever of 21.63sec. "The curve here is excellent, but I must admit that the last 50 metres were very tough.

"After all the Diamond Leagues I need to rest and train a little bit before the (July 6-10) European Championships in my country. No more races until then." Canada's Andre De Grasse was almost handed a shock in the 100m by 40-year-old Kim Collins, who blasted out of the blocks and was leading through 60 metres before pulling up in agony with a left hamstring injury. De Grasse, world bronze medallist last year in Beijing, powered past the stranded St Kitts and Nevis veteran to win in 10.07sec ahead of Americans Michael Rodgers (10.09) and Dentarius Locke (10.12). "I'm pretty happy with the race," said the Canadian, 21. "I ran my season best as I wanted."

Collins later tweeted: "Really sorry for the disappointment. Terrible cramp in my left groin. #recovery thanks to all." Asbel Kiprop, triple world champion, 2008 Olympic champion and current world lead in the 1500m, produced the goods to kick out on his own to win a fifth fabled Dream Mile title in 3:51.48. Kiprop, who was awarded the Olympic gold for the 1500m after the original winner, Moroccan-born Bahraini Rashid Ramzi, tested positive for doping, finished ahead of current world number two and world silver medallist, fellow countryman, Elijah Motonei Manangoi, while current Olympic 1500m champion Taoufik Makhloufi of Algeria rounded out the podium.

"I wanted to run fast but the weather changed. It became too chilly, but I tried my best!" said Kiprop. "I'm very satisfied with the season so far and my plan continues... we now head to Olympic trials and then the Games." There was also a fourth meeting win for French pole vaulter Renaud Lavillenie, whose 5.80m trumped the 5.73 effort of Canada's world champion Shawn Barber. "It was very



OSLO: Dafne Schippers of Netherlands celebrates after winning the women's 200 meter during the 2016 IAAF Oslo Diamond League athletics meeting at the Bislett Stadium in Oslo, Norway on June 9, 2016. — AFP

tough in these conditions, but I'm pretty satisfied - it's a win," said the Olympic champion. American Briana Rollins, world champion in 2013, won the women's 100m hurdles in 12.56sec ahead of compatriots Dawn Harper-Nelson and Jasmin Stowers.

Australia's reigning Olympic champion Sally Pearson struggled home in last place (13.14). Two-time world medallist Hagos Gebrhiwet claimed the 5000m in 13:07.70 in an Ethiopian podium sweep which could well send shivers down the spine of two-time defending Olympic champion and three-time world champ Mo Farah. "I beat all other candidates for Olympics in our team today but the time was not good," said Gebrhiwet, who won world silver in 2013 and bronze last year. "In Ethiopia we don't have trials but go by times, so I'll go to Stockholm next week to try to confirm my Olympic selection." — AFP

KUWAIT DISABLED SPORTS CLUB KICKS OFF ITS 8TH TOURNAMENT



Shafi Al-Hajiri

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Kuwait Disabled Sports Club kicks off its 8th Ramadan tournament today at the club's hall. Activities include; wheelchair basketball, table tennis and fencing. A large number of athletes will participate in the 3-day event. The first day of competition will feature Basketball between the teams of Kuwait and Ittihad; Flores fencing for juniors and general categories and Table Tennis for the Individual Standing and Sitting categories.

Club's chairman Shafi Al-Hajiri congratulated HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Kuwaitis on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan. Al-Hajiri said the club is keen on holding this kind of tournament for the eighth consecutive year - aimed at creating beautiful sports atmosphere during the nights of Ramadan. He said the tournament has gained special importance - through which many promising skilled players have been discovered.



Information Minister Sheikh
Salman Sabah Al-Salem
Al-Humoud Al-Sabah



Fuhaid Al-Ajmi

MINISTER CONGRATULATES THE WINTER GAMES CLUB

KUWAIT: Information Minister, State Minister for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah has congratulated the Winter Games Club as Kuwait's ice hockey team win the Bahrain Open tournament which was held in Manama. Sheikh Salman said in a letter to the Club's Chairman of the board Fuhaid Al-Ajmi that he wishes the Club's athletes a continued success, which adds to the development of Kuwait sports under the wise leadership which supports athletes in all fields. Al-Ajmi appreciated the support of Sheikh Salman and the Public Sports Authority to his club in both domestic and international events.

IAAF BOARD SUSPENDS 3 ATHLETICS OFFICIALS OVER PAYOFF ALLEGATIONS

MARSEILLE: Three senior athletics officials have been provisionally suspended by the IAAF's Ethics Board pending an investigation into their alleged involvement in a suspected cover-up of Russian doping cases, the sport's governing body said yesterday. Nick Davies, who was chief-of-staff to International Association of Athletics Federations President Seb Coe, was suspended along with his wife Jane Boulter-Davies and IAAF medical manager Pierre-Yves Garnier. Davies stood down from his role six months ago pending the investigation into a "potential breach of the IAAF's code of ethics", and at the time denied any wrongdoing. Davies, his wife, an IAAF education official, and Garnier did not immediately respond to email requests for comment. The IAAF said it had not received a response to the suspensions from any of the trio.

The Ethics Board said the suspensions had been imposed to protect the integrity of the sport "but do not prejudice the outcome of the investigations". It said the case related to an email reportedly sent by former IAAF consultant Papa Massata Diack to his father and then-IAAF president Lamine Diack in July 2013. The email, reported by the French daily Le Monde, allegedly showed that the three were in receipt of, or had knowledge of, a cash payment to withhold details of attempted cover-ups of Russian doping cases.

Other emails leaked by Le Monde showed Davies had discussed with Papa Diack developing a media strategy to limit the news impact of a series of positive tests by Russian athletes ahead of 2013 the Moscow world athletics championships. Davies said that the mail was merely "brainstorming for a media strategy" and that he had done nothing wrong. Papa Diack has denied any involvement in bribery or corruption and says his father Lamine is also innocent. French authorities are investigating the elder Diack, who Coe replaced as IAAF president in August, on charges of corruption and money laundering.

'Case to answer'

IAAF Ethics Board Chairman Michael Beloff said yesterday's suspensions were decided after the board determined that there was a prima facie case to answer that warranted investigation. The Ethics Board statement said Davies, a former IAAF general secretary and head of communications, received an undisclosed cash payment in 2013 from Papa Massata Diack, "the circumstances and concealment of which call into question whether the payment was intended to have and/or in fact produced any manipulative effect." Boulter-Davies allegedly received, or knew about, a payment to Davies. Garnier allegedly received an undisclosed cash payment at the direction of Lamine Diack and "retained some part of the sum even when aware of its apparent impropriety".

The Ethics Board is also investigating whether Davies and Boulter-Davies misled the Board during its previous investigation into the matter. Reuters emailed all three IAAF staffers seeking comment on the suspensions and the allegations contained in the Ethics Board statement but did not immediately receive a response. In December, Davies stepped aside from his role with Coe in a move he said aimed to demonstrate his willingness to have all allegations of unethical behavior by him properly and fairly investigated.

He said he had referred to the IAAF Ethics Board all of his 2013 emails to Papa Massata Diack, his statements and the circumstances of the emails. In a separate statement, the world athletics body said the suspended trio would enjoy "the presumption of innocence until the outcome of the investigation and the determination of disciplinary charges, if any, brought against them". Russia is currently banned from all athletics following revelations of widespread state-sponsored doping and next Friday the IAAF Council meets in Vienna to decide whether to lift that ban and allow its track and field athletes to compete at the Rio Olympics in August. —Reuters

RACING SWEATING OVER CARTER FITNESS FOR TOULOUSE CLASH

PARIS: Racing 92 will be hoping to welcome back Dan Carter for their Top 14 play-off clash at home to Toulouse today. The New Zealand legend has been missing from the pitch since limping out of the European Champions Cup final three weeks ago with a calf problem. Carter has been resting ever since and missed Racing's final three regular season league matches, including last weekend's 40-25 victory over Montpellier that secured a home play-off tie. The 34-year-old returned to training just before the Montpellier clash but trained alone.

He is likely to be called upon this weekend where he should line up opposite compatriot and fellow All Black international Luke McAlister. Racing come up against a Toulouse side in fine form and on a six-match winning run, during which time they beat the top two-Clermont and Toulon-as well as Racing. Only Toulon scored more tries during the regular season than Toulouse. McAlister was rested against Grenoble last weekend when a youthful Toulouse romped to a crushing 53-14 victory. —AFP

TOUGHEST COURSE AWAITS THE TOUGHEST TEST IN GOLF

NEW YORK: US Open courses have a way of getting into a player's head before the tournament even starts. Chambers Bay was a mystery last year. The links-styled course built from a sand-and-gravel pit off Puget Sound had only been open for nine years, and no one knew what to expect. Curiosity gives way to grave concern this year at Oakmont. It is as tough as Pittsburgh steel, host of more US Opens than any course, equal parts fabled and feared. It is a club deeply proud of its reputation as the hardest championship course in America.

Jim Furyk didn't need a reminder when he played Oakmont two weeks ago to prepare for the 116th US Open. He watched someone hit a ball that landed in the rough just 20 feet from where he was standing. Furyk walked over to a "foot-by-foot circle" where it went in. And he couldn't find it. When asked if he was looking forward to going back to Oakmont, Furyk stroked his chin and searched for the right answer. "I look forward to playing probably my last major in my home state," said Furyk. "As far as looking forward to Oakmont? I don't know if anyone

looks forward to Oakmont. It's penal. It's tough.

The layout is as hard as I've ever seen, and then you add US Open conditions to it. You can play well and shoot 76. So I look forward to going. But I'm cautiously guarded about how tough it is." Tommy Armour is the last US Open champion who failed to break 300 over 72 holes. That was at Oakmont in 1927. The putting surfaces are so fast that it inspired Edward Stimpson, a Harvard-educated engineer who was in the gallery for the 1935 US Open, to create a device to measure green speed. It's called the "Stimpometer" and is still widely used.

At the most recent US Open at Oakmont in 2007, Angel Cabrera won with a score of 5-over 285. "I really think it's the hardest golf course we've ever played," Phil Mickelson said. Mickelson missed the cut in 2007, though that was understandable. During a scouting trip Oakmont, he injured his wrist chipping out of the rough. That's not to suggest Oakmont is impossible. In one of the greatest rounds ever played, Johnny Miller became the first player to shoot 63 at a major, making nine

birdies on the final day in 1973 to rally for his only US Open title.

Even so, the best in the world are bracing for the worst when Oakmont hosts its ninth US Open starting Thursday. Jordan Spieth is the defending champion and will try to become the first back-to-back winner of the US Open since Curtis Strange in 1989, four years before Spieth was born. He had just graduated the eighth grade the last time a US Open was at Oakmont, so he had never seen it until a trip to Pittsburgh last month. It made such an impression that he told his caddie, "The best player will come out on top."

"You will have no crazy circumstance or bounces or this or that," Spieth said. "The person who is full control of their entire game will win this US Open." As usual, the list of suspects - victims might be more apt at Oakmont - is long and deep. Spieth, Jason Day and Rory McIlroy figure to be the favorites because they have dominated golf over the last two years by winning majors and trading time at the top of the world ranking, a spot that now belongs to Day.—AP

ARGENTINA'S ASSASSIN MESSI COULD BE UNSTOPPABLE

SANTA CLARA: No amount of preparation is enough to snuff out the threat of Argentina's "assassin" Lionel Messi, Panama coach Hernan Dario Gomez said ahead of Friday's Copa America clash between the teams. Messi was an unused substitute in Argentina's 2-1 win over holders Chile in their opening Group D match in Santa Clara, California on Monday after a back injury but will reappear when they face Panama in Chicago. "Leo trained normally, he will play," coach Gerardo Martino told a news conference on Thursday.

Both sides have three points after Panama marked their first appearance in the world's oldest international tournament with a surprise 2-1 win over Bolivia, who face Chile in Foxborough on Friday. "You can work a lot to build a team, but against Messi there's nothing you can do. If Messi's inspired he can kill anyone," Colombian Gomez told reporters. "One works on tactics and has a team but individuals are above that in football. Messi is a man who is above everyone," he said of the Argentina captain, a five times winner

of the world player of the year award. Gomez said his players were enjoying facing world class teams as they build towards the final stages of the CONCACAF 2018 World Cup qualifiers. Panama face Chile in Philadelphia on Tuesday.

Messi is keen to get some game time before the knockout phase of the centenary tournament begins. "Before the match against Chile, Messi had not practiced with the ball," Martino said. "But from yesterday (Wednesday) he has been training without any pain.

"He is very motivated and was enthused by the performance of his team mates against Chile." It was the first time he had stayed on the bench for a whole game in 10 years, since Argentina's 2006 World Cup quarter-final loss to Germany when he was a teenager. Messi, who turns 29 two days before the final in East Rutherford on June 26, has said he is determined to win the tournament after finishing on the losing side in the 2014 World Cup final in Brazil and the 2007 and 2015 Copa America finals. — Reuters

PELE'S MEMORABILIA NETS \$5 MILLION FORTUNE AT AUCTION

LONDON: The three-day sale of memorabilia belonging to world football icon Pele ended in London on Thursday with the artefacts sold for the princely total of £3.4million (\$5million, 4.4million euros). The final day of the sale-held in London but under the banner of Los Angeles based auction house Julien's-was lit up by the sale of the 75-year-old Brazilian's third and final World Cup winners medal from 1970 which fetched £346,000. To put that price into context, the ones from 1958, when he was just a teenager, and 1962 had sold collectively on Wednesday for £340,000.

"It was a white glove auction where 100% of all the lots sold," Darren Julien, Chief Executive of Julien's auctions told AFP. Julien's had extra reason to be happy as they had placed an original total estimate of £3million on the memorabilia. Another Pele item to make big money on Thursday was his 1000th game crown which eventually went for £162,000. Wednesday's auction had seen the most money shelled out on a replica of the Jules Rimet trophy made for Pele after his third World Cup success which fetched £395,000. That was bought by Swiss watchmaking giant Hublot.

For those with shallower pockets there were things to be had. Pele's football boots that he sported in the film *Escape To Victory*-which featured actors of the calibre of Michael Caine mixed in with footballers like England's World Cup winning skipper Bobby Moore-went for just over £8000. A portion of the proceeds from the sale will go to help Pequeno Principe, the largest children's hospital in Brazil, which Pele said was close to his heart. Born Edson Arantes do Nascimento, Pele is held by many as being the greatest footballer in history. He scored 1,281 goals in 1,363 matches, appeared 91 times for Brazil between 1957 and 1971 and played his club football for Brazil's FC Santos as well as the New York Cosmos. — AFP

GUARDIOLA WON'T HAVE IT EASY IN ENGLAND: PEDRO

MADRID: Chelsea forward Pedro fears Pep Guardiola, his former coach at Barcelona, could be in for a rude awakening at Manchester City next season. Guardiola, 45, was appointed to succeed Manuel Pellegrini as City coach after spending three years as Bayern Munich boss. "Although we know he is a great coach, Pep is not going to have it easy," Pedro, who played under Guardiola at Barcelona for four seasons before the coach's departure in 2012, told Marca. "It's a difficult league, complicated. I don't think he will be able to express his football." Guardiola's coaching trademark has been an emphasis on ball possession, short passing and clever movement. He has enjoyed remarkable success, winning 14 trophies in his four years at Barca before leading Bayern to three straight Bundesliga titles and two German Cups.

"He is faithful to his ideas and he can convince his players to change the philosophy of direct play by playing more elaborate football," said Pedro, who is currently with the Spain squad preparing for Euro 2016. "We shall see how his first year goes." Pedro, however, expects Jose Mourinho to be a hit at Manchester United. Mourinho, sacked by Chelsea in December after his team plummeted down the Premier League table, was unveiled last month as United's new manager following the dismissal of Louis van Gaal. "One thing is certain, he will bring a lot of intensity," Pedro said. "It's going to be a very strong team and consistent at the back. He has a lot of character and very clear ideas." — Reuters

URUGUAY TUMBLE OUT AS MEXICO AND VENEZUELA REACH QUARTERS

PHILADELPHIA: Uruguay were sent crashing out of the Copa America Centenario on Thursday as Venezuela and Mexico marched into the quarter-finals. Uruguay, the record 15-time Copa America champions, were eliminated in the group phase for the first time since 1997 after slumping to a shock 1-0 loss to Venezuela in Philadelphia. That result combined with Mexico's 2-0 Group C win over Jamaica in Pasadena left the 2011 champions struggling to digest a humiliating early exit.

"We never found the game we wanted and that cost us," Uruguay's revered coach Oscar Tabarez said, adding that the ill-fated campaign should serve as a warning to his team as they now look ahead to the resumption of 2018 World Cup qualifiers. "It's been a very different Copa America. I've never experienced something like this before. We knew it was going to be difficult but this should be a wake-up call before the World Cup qualifiers," Tabarez added.

Uruguay's defeat also capped a miserable tournament for Barcelona superstar Luis Suarez. Suarez, nursing a hamstring injury when he joined up with the squad, has so far not played a single minute. Suarez appeared in the dugout and looked visibly frustrated at his failure to get on the pitch, at one point appearing to punch the dugout wall. Tabarez defended his decision not to name Suarez in the matchday squad. "The player is not fit to play. It's a matter of numbers. I will not select a player who is not 100 percent. Was he angry? I am not aware. To me he told me nothing," Tabarez said.

Venezuela's winner came on 36 minutes, when midfielder Alejandro Guerra cleverly spotted Uruguay goalkeeper Fernando Muslera off his line. Guerra unleashed a long-range effort from near the halfway line which the back-peddalling Muslera could only parry onto the bar before Salomon Rondon bundled in the rebound. Venezuela's advance to the last eight is the biggest shock of the tournament so far. The Venezuelans are currently bottom of South America's 10-team round robin qualifying competition for the 2018 World Cup; Uruguay are on top of the standings.

Beating 'the maestro'

"To beat the 'Maestro' Tabarez is a privilege," Venezuela coach Rafael Dudamel said. "For me it means a lot. He's one of the best coaches in the world, in history. This win will motivate us to keep winning and



PHILADELPHIA: Venezuela's Tomas Rincon (8) kicks the ball over Uruguay's Nicolas Lodeiro (14) during the second half of a Copa America Group C soccer match on Thursday, June 9, 2016, in Philadelphia. Venezuela won 1-0. — AP

growing as a team," he added. Venezuela will now face Mexico in their final first round game to determine who finishes top of Group C. Mexico, who had beaten Uruguay 3-1 in their opening game, meanwhile proved too powerful for Caribbean minnows Jamaica in front of an 83,263 crowd at the Pasadena Rose Bowl.

With California's large population of Mexican-Americans making it a virtual home game for 'El Tri', Mexico took the lead on 18 minutes when former Manchester United and Real Madrid striker Javier Hernandez nodded in his 45th international goal. Jamaica were denied what looked like a clear-cut penalty in the second half after striker Clayton Donaldson appeared to have been fouled in the area.

The drama came in the 60th minute when Donaldson rounded his marker before being cut down by Yasser Corona. Replays showed the defender didn't get a touch on the ball. Jamaica's misery was sealed when Mexico's Hirving Lozano picked out Hector Herrera in the area and the midfielder nudged the ball on for substitute Oribe Peralta to stroke the ball first time inside the right hand upright on the 81st minute. "It's a tough loss of a game I believe we dominated at times but we failed to take our chances," Jamaica's assistant coach Miguel Coley said, refusing to be drawn on whether he felt the overwhelming Mexican support had influenced the penalty decision. "I don't want to go there the referee's decision is final." — AFP



PARIS: Photo shows a general view of the Bordeaux' fan zone after its opening. Up to 90,000 police and private security guards will protect players and supporters, just seven months after coordinated Islamic State attacks in Paris killed 130 people. — AFP

DIVIDED LOYALTIES AS SWITZERLAND FACE ALBANIA

XHAKA BROTHERS ON OPPOSING TEAMS

LENS: Switzerland may get a taste of their own medicine today when they meet an Albania side featuring several players who benefited from the highly-acclaimed Swiss youth set-up. Loyalties will be divided in a fascinating Group A clash which, for the first time in the European Championship, will have brothers on opposing sides in Granit and Taulant Xhaka. Both are of Albanian heritage and were born in Basel but Granit will line up for Switzerland and older brother Taulant, provided he recovers from a thigh injury, for their opponents.

In all, nine members of Albania's 23-man squad had the right to play for Switzerland, and six members of the Swiss squad could have opted for Albania. Switzerland accepted tens of thousands of Kosovar Albanians who fled the Balkan wars in the 1990s following the breakup of the former Yugoslavia. The Swiss football federation (SFV) actively tapped into the potential offered by the second-generation immigrants, recruiting them to its widely-acclaimed youth development programs. The policy paid dividends as the Swiss uncovered talents such as Xherdan Shaqiri, Ricardo Rodriguez and Breel Embolo, all from immigrant backgrounds. The flip side was that they unwittingly coached players for other countries' national teams.

Past cases

Past cases included Frank Feltscher, who chose to play for Venezuela, and

Mladen Petric, who opted for Croatia, while seven players in Albania's squad in France-Arlind Ajeti, Frederic Veseli, Naser Aliji, Migjen Basha, Armir Abrashi, Shkelzen Gashi and Taulant Xhaka-have played for Switzerland's youth teams. Former Switzerland coach Ottmar Hitzfeld called for a change in the rules to prevent changes of allegiance, pointing out that the SFV had invested some 30,000 Swiss francs (\$31,120.33) in coaching each player. For the players themselves, it is often a difficult choice. When Switzerland played Albania in a World Cup qualifier at Euro 2012, Granit Xhaka faced hostility and criticism from both sides.

Albania fans jeered him while a Swiss television commentator implied that he had deliberately missed an easy chance when his side were already 2-0 ahead. "Presumably Xhaka was not unhappy at not having scored against Albania," said Sacha Ruefer, who was heavily criticised for the remark and later said he regretted it. None of this bothers the Xhakas' parents who in the space of three days last year watched Switzerland qualify for the European Championship with a victory over San Marino and then Albania win away to Armenia to book their place. "We would have been very unhappy if both teams hadn't made it," said their father Ragip Xhaka. "One son for Switzerland and one for Albania-it's the perfect reflection of our family." — Reuters

GERMANY HOPING HUMMELS COULD FACE EURO CAMPAIGN

EVIAN: Germany are hoping centre-back Mats Hummels could be fit to face Ukraine when the world champions open their Euro 2016 campaign tomorrow. Hummels has been out since tearing his calf in the German Cup final on May 21, playing for former club Borussia Dortmund against new employers Bayern Munich, but his recovery at the Germans' base in Evian has gone well.

Germany's assistant coach Thomas Schneider says a decision on whether Hummels is fit to fly to Lille with 'die Mannschaft' for Sunday's match has yet to be made. But Hummels' inclusion, even off the bench, would ease Germany's woes in defense after Antonio Ruediger was ruled out of the European championship finals on Tuesday with a knee injury. "Things look good for Mats, he trained for an hour on his own yesterday and he can take part in full team training now," said Schneider in Friday's press conference. "He will talk to (head coach) Joachim Loew and then a decision will be made whether he comes to the game or he stays back and works here."

Hummels, 27, has won 46 caps for Germany and was a key member of the side

which won the 2014 World Cup in Brazil. Germany captain Bastian Schweinsteiger is set to only start on the bench against Ukraine, having played just 23 minutes of football since the end of March after tearing a knee ligament. The Manchester United star came off the bench at the end of Germany's warm-up friendly win over Hungary last Saturday, but Schneider says their 31-year-old midfielder general is fit. "In any case, Basti is fit," said the Germany coach. "As a bloke, he is extremely important for us and is on a very good path."

Should Schweinsteiger miss out, goalkeeper Manuel Neuer and midfielder Sami Khedira are the main candidates to captain the world champions. Ruediger's withdrawal means Loew has had to reshuffle his defense and Schneider revealed the Germans were considering playing with a back four or a three-man defense. "We have made a decision, but I won't say which formation it will be and the starting team has already been decided," he added. Germany also face Poland next Thursday at the Stade de France, then Northern Ireland in Paris on June 21 in Group C. — AFP



CHANTILLY: England's players gather during a training session in Chantilly, France. England will face Russia in a Euro 2016 Group B soccer match in Marseille today. — AP

TEMPTATION OF DRAW MIGHT STYMIE ENGLAND, RUSSIA GROUP B FAVORITES COULD PLAY IT CAGEY IN OPENER

MARSEILLE: England and Russia are the big beasts of Group B and, though each would love a winning start when they meet today, the fear of losing could well become all-pervading and lead to a cagey encounter. With games against Wales and Slovakia to come, and the potential for three teams to qualify with two guaranteed, a point at the Velodrome might look a very useful result in a couple of weeks.

England, on the back of winning all 10 qualifiers, not to mention a rare victory in Germany in a friendly, start favorites and will expect to make the running in front of a 60,000 crowd that will be predominantly behind them. However, despite that great run of form, England are anything but a settled side as Roy Hodgson struggles with the question of how to shoe-horn his form players into an established system. Strikers Jamie Vardy, fresh from leading Leicester City to the most unlikely Premier League

title, and Harry Kane, the Premier League's top scorer, seemingly demand selection. But Hodgson is adamant Wayne Rooney, the captain and most experienced squad member, should get a starting berth, leaving the coach experimenting with his attacking options right up to the last minute. At least he is picking from strength in that regard as his, and England's more pressing concern is in central defense where any combination of Gary Cahill, Chris Smalling and John Stones has looked vulnerable and remains England's Achilles heel.

Impressive statistics

England have not lost in 90 or 120 minutes in 22 Euro matches in finals and qualifiers, going back to a 3-2 defeat by Croatia in November 2007. The impressive statistics are skewed, however, as they lost on penalties to Italy in the 2012 quarter-finals

and failed to qualify in 2008. Russia reached the semi-finals that year with a side full of passion and pace but they were disappointing in 2012 and in the 2014 World Cup and the current crop are not a group to have fans on the edge of their seats.

They are, however, a well-organized and technically adept squad and coach Leonid Slutsky has quickly developed a strong team spirit since taking over from Fabio Capello last August. He has, however, been forced to change his plans somewhat after injuries ruled midfielders Alan Dzagoev and, after last week's 1-1 draw with Serbia, Igor Denisov out of the tournament. With that to deal with and winnable games on the horizon, Russia are unlikely to take too many risks today, leaving it up to England to decide whether to open up in all-out pursuit of victory or indulge in 90 minutes of cautious chess. — Reuters

BALE, HAMSIK DRAW THEIR SWORDS FOR EURO CLASH

BORDEAUX: Distinctive haircut? Check. Multiple national player of the year awards? Check. Feared attacker with a vicious shot and the freedom to roam all over the pitch? Check, check, check. Gareth Bale and Marek Hamsik would be able to reflect upon the many things they have in common were they not lining up against each other for Wales and Slovakia in Saturday's Euro 2016 opener in Bordeaux.

The two players-topknot-sporting Bale, 26, and mohican-crested Hamsik, 28 — inspired their respective countries to qualify for a European Championship finals for the first time and the outcome of the match may boil down to which of the two players comes out on top. Rafael Benitez, the only man to have coached both players, remarked during his time at Napoli that if Bale was worth 100 million euros (\$113.6 million) — the fee it cost Real Madrid to sign him-Hamsik was "priceless".

Two years later he was the Madrid coach and had revised his evaluation of Bale sufficiently to put the

Welshman at the forefront of his plans, granting him a central role that briefly threatened to put even Cristiano Ronaldo in the shade. Today's game brings Bale's international career full circle. It was against Slovakia that he scored his first Wales goal-an arcing free-kick in an otherwise bleak 5-1 mauling in Cardiff in October 2006 that made him, at 17 years and 35 days, his country's youngest goal-scorer.

Back then he was a floppy-haired left-back learning his trade with Southampton, but after blossoming into a free-scoring attacker at Tottenham Hotspur, his move to Madrid turned him into a two-time Champions League winner and global star. "To have a chance to play at such a young age was a little bit of a surprise, I suppose, but something I really wanted to do," Bale told the UEFA website this week. "It was an unforgettable experience. Now I'm trying to do my best for Wales. "I obviously understand that I am a role model for young people, but I try to take it in my stride, act normally, as I am."

Warrior spirit

Elected Welsh Player of the Year a record five times, Bale scored seven and created two of the 11 goals that Chris Coleman's Wales registered in their historic qualifying campaign, netting vital winners against Andorra, Belgium and Cyprus. His entrance as a substitute could not prevent Wales from losing 3-0 to Sweden in their final warm-up game, but with Bale and his 19 international goals in the team, Welsh fans believe that anything is possible. Similarly precocious, Hamsik moved to Italy to join Brescia from Slovan Bratislava aged 17 in 2004 and began his love affair with Napoli three years later. He has helped the southern Italian side to two Coppa Italia triumphs and, unlike Bale, has already graced a major tournament, starring as Slovakia reached the last 16 at the 2010 World Cup. The Napoli captain, a snarling playmaker with a warrior spirit, does not possess Bale's awesome physical attributes, but his eye for goal is every bit as keen and with 18 goals, he is Slovakia's third-highest all-time scorer. — AFP

Live Match on TV
(Local Timing)

UEFA EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP

Albania v Switzerland	16:00
beIN MAX 2 HD	
beIN MAX 3 HD EN	
beIN MAX 1 HD	
beIN MAX 4 HD FR	
Wales v Slovakia	19:00
beIN MAX 2 HD	
beIN MAX 3 HD EN	
beIN MAX 1 HD	
beIN MAX 4 HD FR	
England v Russia	22:00
beIN MAX 2 HD	
beIN MAX 3 HD EN	
beIN MAX 1 HD	
beIN MAX 4 HD FR	

COPA AMERICA CENTENARIO

Chile v Bolivia	2:00
beIN SPORTS 1 HD	
beIN MAX 2 HD	
beIN MAX 3 HD EN	
beIN MAX 4 HD FR	
Argentina v Panama	4:30
beIN SPORTS 1 HD	
beIN MAX 2 HD	
beIN MAX 3 HD EN	
beIN MAX 4 HD FR	

Tomorrow

USA v Paraguay	2:00
beIN MAX 3 HD EN	
Colombia v Costa Rica	4:00
beIN MAX 2 HD	
beIN MAX 3 HD EN	

SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 2016

Kuwait Times

Sports



Uruguay tumble out as Mexico and Venezuela reach quarters **45**



PARIS: Fans attend a concert in the soccer fan zone as part of the upcoming Euro 2016 Soccer Championship in Paris. —AP

EURO 2016 KICKS OFF DESPITE STRIKES, THREATS SMELLY BINS, PICKETS PLAGUE FRANCE

PARIS: The Euro 2016 football championships kicked off in France yesterday under unprecedented security and with President Francois Hollande vowing to take decisive action to stop strikes hitting the showpiece event. The action on the pitch starts when France face Romania in the Stade de France in Paris at 1900 GMT, but the buildup has been blighted by industrial unrest over labor reforms and fears the tournament will be the target of a terrorist attack. As bags of uncollected rubbish piled up in the streets of the capital and train drivers threatened to disrupt services to the stadium, Hollande said he would take "all necessary measures" to ensure the smooth running of the championships.

"I will be paying close attention... and if decisions need to be made, they will be made," Hollande said. "Public services will be provided... The whole of Europe will be

watching." Up to 90,000 police and private security guards will protect players and supporters, just seven months after coordinated Islamic State attacks in Paris killed 130 people. The stringent security measures got their first real test on Thursday when superstar French DJ David Guetta gave a free performance in the fan zone at the foot of the Eiffel Tower where some 80,000 spectators had to pass through two checkpoints.

The government is eager to make sure the championship goes off without a hitch, but weeks of protests and industrial action have provided a sombre prelude to Europe's four-yearly football extravaganza. As hundreds of thousands of fans began pouring into the capital ahead of the football action, a train strike rumbled into its ninth day on Thursday, while bags of rubbish piled up on the streets. Rail workers

have threatened fresh disruption yesterday on the lines serving the Stade de France.

'France's pride is at stake'

Environment Minister Segolene Royal appealed to unions to end their strike disruption, warning they were endangering the image of France, which is bidding to host the 2024 Olympics. She told iTele it was "not right for a modern country to continue being permanently disrupted". "France's pride is at stake," Royal said. Hollande has refused to back down on the unions' demands to withdraw the labor reforms, arguing the measures are necessary to cut stubbornly high unemployment.

Nearly 3,000 tons of waste have gone uncollected in Paris, according to the authorities, with nearly a third of refuse-collecting drivers on strike and unions

blockading incineration plants. Zahier, a waiter in a restaurant in the Latin Quarter where rubbish spilled out of bins into the narrow, cobbled streets, said the pile-up was affecting business. "Customers are looking out at the dustbins, so obviously it's making them lose their appetite."

Unseen mounds of waste were also building up in the southern city of Marseille, which will host four Euro 2016 matches, including England's high-profile clash with Russia today. In another headache for organisers, Air France pilots have called for a four-day strike starting today, when an estimated two million foreign fans will begin arriving in earnest. The latest round of negotiations broke down on Thursday. But Air France chief executive Frederic Gagey promised that between 70 percent and 80 percent of flights would operate today. As the France team arrived

in Paris from their training base, authorities were taking no chances with security.

France remains a top target for the Islamic State group and warnings from the United States and Britain that the tournament could be a target have only added to the sense of nervousness. After Thursday's successful concert, the security focus will shift yesterday to the Stade de France, where three jihadists blew themselves up in the November 13 carnage, which also targeted a concert hall and several cafes and restaurants. Among a host of extra security measures, a new perimeter fence has been added around the venue to allow more security searches of spectators. Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said Wednesday 300 people had been barred from serving in the private security teams after vetting showed they had been radicalized. —AFP