



Ramadan-time:
Euro 2016 fever
sweeps the
Arab world



Eder fires
Azzurri
into
last 16

48



Second black
box recovered
from EgyptAir
crash site

8

Ramadan Timings

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



IRAQ SPECIAL FORCES TAKE FALLUJAH GOVT BUILDING

BREAKTHROUGH IN 4-WEEK OFFENSIVE AGAINST IS



Min 28°
Max 47°

Ramadan Kareem

WHEN GOD SPOKE

By Teresa Leshner

We often offer silent or audible prayers, asking for help from our Creator, for succor from our problems, for blessings on our loved ones, and for forgiveness for our mistakes. We also - unfortunately less often - thank Him for our sustenance and surroundings, our families and abilities. We communicate with God, and we may perceive the conversation as one-sided since we receive no spoken or written response. But what if the Almighty Creator of the heavens and earth did answer you - did send you a spoken or written response? What would He say? Would it be one word? A 20-minute speech? A letter? Or an entire book?

In the month of Ramadan, 1450 years ago, God sent us a message. It is the Quran, the Speech of God, revealed through the angel Gabriel (PBUH) to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), who dictated it so it could be transcribed for all of humanity. It is a direct message for you and me, and all humankind. In fact, many verses of the holy Quran are addressed to "O People!" or "O Mankind!" These are general verses for every living soul. While some verses are addressed particularly to believers, in fact, the whole holy Quran is a message for each of us. The holy Quran is the only divinely revealed scripture that has remained intact in its original language throughout the centuries, being widely available until today. It has also been translated in virtually every language across the globe.

So what did God say in this book to us from Him? Following are a few key verses:

"O mankind, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, that you may become righteous. [He] who made for you the earth a bed [spread out] and the sky a ceiling and sent down from the sky rain, and brought forth thereby fruits as provision for you. So do not attribute to Allah equals while you know [that there is nothing similar to Him]." (2:21-22)

"O People! Remember the favor of Allah upon you. Is there any creator other than Allah who provides for you from the Heaven and the Earth? There is no deity except Him, so how are they turned away? If they deny you (O Muhammad) so were messengers denied before you. To God all affairs are returned (for decision)." (35:3-4)

"O People! God's promise is true, so do not let the worldly life turn you away and do not let the devil deceive you. Indeed, Satan is an enemy to you; so take him as an enemy. He only invites his party to be among the companions of the Blaze." (35:5-6)

"This (Message) is a declaration to (all) people as well as a guidance and instruction for God-fearing people" (3:138).

Say, [O Muhammad], "If ye do love Allah, Follow me: Allah will love you and forgive you your sins: For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (3:31)

Continued on Page 13

BAGHDAD: Iraqi forces raised the national flag over the main government building in Fallujah yesterday, top commanders said, a breakthrough in the nearly four-week-old offensive against the Islamic State group's bastion.

They met limited resistance from IS fighters, who were fleeing the city, the commanders told AFP, leaving the organization on the brink of losing one of the most emblematic strongholds in its two-year-old "caliphate".

It is the latest setback for the jihadists who have also lost territory in neighboring Syria and in Libya in recent weeks, although US Central Intelligence Agency director John Brennan warned on Thursday that they remain a formidable force with global reach. "The counter-terrorism service and the rapid response forces have retaken the government compound in the centre of Fallujah," the operation's overall commander, Lieutenant General Abdulwahab Al-Saadi, told AFP.

Raed Shaker Jawdat, Iraq's federal police chief, confirmed the advance. "The liberation of the government compound, which is the main landmark in the city, symbolizes the restora-

tion of the state's authority" in Fallujah, he said.

Saadi said the Iraqi flag was raised above government buildings in the compound and claimed that "Iraqi forces have now liberated 70 percent of the city." In the deserted, recently re-conquered neighborhoods of the insurgent bastion known in Iraq as the "City of Mosques", elite forces were consolidating positions, stocking up on food and weapons.

Dozens of bodies of dead IS fighters were left to rot under blankets amid the rubble of homes destroyed by air strikes, rockets or controlled explosions of the hundreds of bombs the jihadists themselves laid across the city.

'Little resistance'

The government lost control of Fallujah in 2014, months before IS took second city Mosul and swept across large parts of the country. Fallujah, just 50 kilometres (30 miles) west of Baghdad, is one of IS's key historical bastions and its loss would leave Mosul as the only major Iraqi city under its control.

Continued on Page 13

TEARFUL VIGIL FOR SLAIN BRITISH MP

LONDON: Tearful mourners laid flowers outside the British parliament yesterday in memory of pro-EU lawmaker Jo Cox, hours after she was killed in a shock attack at a meeting with constituents.

Dozens of people gathered next to a large picture of the 41-year-old former charity worker, who had campaigned in favor of Britain's membership of the European Union ahead of next week's Brexit vote.

"What's happened is beyond appalling. We are here in silent memory of her loss," said Jeremy Corbyn, the leader of Cox's centre-left Labor party, as rain began to fall. "This is a shocking occasion and I hope everybody realizes hatred will never solve problems. Only people coming together will solve problems," he said. Corbyn was flanked by fellow members of the Labour party, many of them shaking and tearful, as they lit candles and one by one laid them beside the photograph of a smiling Cox.

"We are suspending all campaigning activities until the weekend as a mark of respect for her," Corbyn said, referring to the tense run-up to Britain's EU membership referendum on June 23.

Mourners left heaps of flowers in the lawmaker's memory, who was the first British MP to be killed in office since Ian Gow was killed by a car bomb planted by the Irish Republican Army in 1990.

She was left bleeding on the pave-



BIRSTALL: Flowers and tributes including a photograph of Labor MP Jo Cox outside 10 Downing Street are laid in remembrance of the slain MP in Birstall, northern England yesterday where she was killed the day before. — AFP (See Also Page 10)

ment after reportedly being shot and stabbed in the village of Birstall in northern England, according to witnesses quoted by media. Fatima Ibrahim, a 23-year-old campaigner with human rights group Avaaz, which helped organize the vigil, told AFP she was "devastated". "She was a fearless campaigner, and a voice for the voiceless. We feel shaken by her loss, but committed to meeting the hatred that killed her with love." "We feel

shaken by her loss," she said. Cox worked for charity group Oxfam before becoming a lawmaker in 2015, and several at the vigil recalled her tireless campaigning to help refugees from Syria. Mike, a 55-year-old who works in the charity sector who did not want to give his surname, described Cox as "Someone who was utterly dedicated to the ideals of peace, love, justice on a global scale as well as in the UK." — AFP



KUWAIT: Photo show a Bulbul bird picking seeds. — KUNA

EQUATE CONTINUES ITS PARTNERSHIP WITH ZAKAT HOUSE FOR IFTAR MEALS

KUWAIT: For the third consecutive year, EQUATE Petrochemical Company, Kuwait's first international joint-venture in this industry, has continued its partnership with Zakat House during the holy month of Ramadan. The partnership includes the daily distribution of both Ramadan iftar meals and water during evening prayers with the participation of the company employees. EQUATE Senior Executive for Corporate Communications & Government Affairs Abeer Al-Omar said, "This collaboration with Zakat House is a reflection of our sustainability-based approach for the benefit of all stakeholders. Supporting humanitarian initiatives, especially during this holy month, is a priority for EQUATE that believes in being 'Partners in Success' in every possible field."

Al-Omar expressed appreciation and gratitude to Zakat House for its overall efforts and role throughout the society. On his part, EQUATE Maintenance Activity Coordinator Abdullah Al-Mutawa, who is one of the volunteers



for these activities, "Throughout this month of giving and sharing, EQUATE wishes to display a culture of cooperation and unity. Through supporting various sustainable efforts, such a culture is

aimed at benefitting the society and its members, nationals and expats alike." EQUATE's participants in these activities included employees from different functions and departments.



News

i n b r i e f

Kuwait-Kurdistan festival, exhibition begins in Irbil

IRBIL: The Kuwait-Kurdistan marketing festival and exhibition began late Thursday in the capital of Iraq's Kurdistan Irbil under patronage of the Kuwaiti consulate. General Consul of Kuwait to Irbil Dr Omar Al-Kanderi said that the event saw the participation of some 20 Kuwaiti business entities and companies. He hoped that the event would contribute to the development of commercial and economic ties between Kuwait and the Kurdistan region. On his part, Governor of Irbil Nawzad Hadi welcomed the organizing of the Kuwait-Kurdistan marketing festival and exhibition, affirming that the Kurdistan region was in need of such events to be held. He thanked Kuwait for its continuous support to Iraq's Kurdistan and wished that more of such events were held to bolster ties on all possible levels.

GCC support security measures in Bahrain

RIYADH: The GCC member states have expressed their support for judicial measures taken by Bahrain aiming to maintain its security and stability, and to combat terrorism and any attempts trying to undermine the Kingdom's unity and peaceful co-existence. Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Abdullatif Al-Zayani stressed in a press statement that the GCC states are backing the Kingdom of Bahrain in measures taken against some organizations and groups that commit acts which run counter to the law and fuel sectarianism, sedition and violence. These groups and organizations are committing these acts to achieve the goals of some foreign powers seeking to undermine the stability and security of Bahrain, the statement added. Al-Zayani renewed GCC states' solidarity with Bahrain which enhances democracy and political action in the framework of the King's reform project away from any external interferences, or political references to maintain the national unity, and safeguard the stability and security of the Kingdom. He called on foreign organizations and countries to respect Bahrain's sovereignty, institution, law and judicial authority, and not interfere in its domestic affairs.

Ramadan, Eid exhibition kicks off, with large participation

KUWAIT: Activities and events of the Ramadan and Eid Exhibition began on Thursday, with the participation of about 110 foreign, local and Arab companies. The Kuwait International Fair Company (KIFC), the organizing company, said the exhibition offers different products and commodities from several countries, including Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, China, Thailand, Pakistan, India, Yemen and others. The exhibitors seek to attract a large number of visitors from different ages, genders and all walks of life, it added. The exhibition comes concurrently with summer travel season and the holiday of the Eid al-Fiter as well as supplying needs of the holy month of Ramadan, it noted. The company has been organizing professionally trade and market exhibitions since 1972, KIFC pointed out. The event runs until June 29 and meets needs of people. It has several pavilions which showcase several products of consumer sectors, including clothing, handicrafts, adornments, suitcases, perfumes, cosmetics, women's apparel, accessories of bedrooms, different bags, shoes and children's clothing.

ZAIN LAUNCHES CHARITABLE INITIATIVE

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, launched a new charitable initiative as part of its CSSR Campaign during the Holy Month of Ramadan. The company will donate 500 Fils to a charitable organization for every paid bill during the month of Ramadan. The launch of this initiative comes in line with Zain's Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy that seeks to contribute to the welfare of the society in several ways. Zain prides itself on its long track of records and contributions it has put in philanthropic areas. The company strongly believes that such initiatives help infuse a sense of responsibility into members of the society, to help support those who are in need of help.

As part of this initiative, Zain will donate 500 Fils

(half a KD) each time a customer pays their bill anytime during the Holy Month of Ramadan through one of Zain's electronic channels, including Zain's website, Zain's smartphone app, and any of Zain's Quick pay machines available throughout the country. The collected donations will be delivered to a charitable organization in Kuwait to support philanthropic projects as well as improve the living conditions of needy families. Ramadan presents a special occasion for Zain to communicate and interact with the Kuwaiti community through its extensive CSSR campaign. Zain's Ramadan contributions included the distribution of essential food supplies (Machla boxes) to multiple charitable organizations based in Kuwait as well as the Iftar Halls initiative which provides daily Iftar meals through two main halls.



MOI INAUGURATES NEW BUILDING IN AL-JAHRA

KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah said Thursday the security personnel are entrusted with protecting the safety of life and property of citizens and expatriates. "The plan to upgrade the facilities of the Ministry of Interior and build the capacity of the security personnel is well under-

way," he said in a speech during the inauguration ceremony of the new headquarters of Al-Jahra Security Directorate tonight. "The Ministry has recently made headway in implementing its strategy to cut down the rate of criminal offences thanks to the dedication and strenuous efforts of the security personnel," he affirmed. Sheikh

Mohammad conveyed to the leaders and staffers of the Security Directorate the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Meanwhile, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Lt-Gen Suleiman Al-Fahad reaffirmed the Ministry's commitment to upgrade and modernize its facilities according

to the set timetable. "The Ministry's plans in this regard take stock of the world's latest developments in terms of management and security," he added. On his part, Assistant Undersecretary for Support Services Maj.-Gen Eid Abu-Salib made a presentation on the new building. "The four-story building

covers has a total area of 20,000 sq. m. and is equipped with the state-of-the-art technologies," he noted. Governor of Al-Jahra Lt-Gen Rtd Fahad Al-Amir extolled the efforts being made by Sheikh Mohammad and the senior officers of the Ministry of Interior to protect the security of the country. — KUNA



INTERIOR MINISTRY CALLS FOR CAUTION DURING GERGEAN

KUWAIT: Ministry of Interior's Relations and Security Media Department yesterday congratulated Kuwaitis and expats as Kuwait celebrates Gergean. Ministry of Interior also warned against unlawful behaviors noting that some parents usually leave their children outside very late in the night and unaccompanied. The department also

warned all motorists to be very careful and to slow down in the streets. The department urged parents to be very careful to avoid losing children. It also urged mothers to avoid dressing their little girls with golden jewelry and leaving them alone on streets to celebrate the occasion - warning that this might make them easy targets for robbers.

MINISTER OF INTERIOR LAUNCHES NEW MUBARAK AL-KABEER TRAFFIC BUILDING

KUWAIT: Deputy PM and Minister of Interior Sheikh Mohammed Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabbah opened the new Mubarak Al-Kabeer Traffic department building on Thursday where he was received by Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governor Rt Lit General Ahmed Abdullatif Al-Rujaib, Mol undersecretary Lit General Suleiman Al-Fahad, Mol's Assistant Undersecretary for Financial and Administrative Affairs Maj General Sheikh Ahmed Al-Khalifa, Mol's Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs Maj General Abdullah Yousif Al-Muhanna and other top Mol officials.

Mol's Assistant Undersecretary for Backup Services Affairs Maj General Dr Eid Bo Saleeb briefed the Minister about the new building, noting that it lies over a total area of 5000 square meters and comprises of three floors. After touring the new building sections, Minister Al-Khaled said that traffic-related issues are major part of Mol's duties and that the Ministry spares no effort in anything that will help in saving motorists' lives. Al-Khaled also called for using all possible means to facilitate the services provided to both citizens and

expatriates - urging mutual respect when dealing with the public. "Make this department ideal through the ideal performance of the employees", Al-Kahled added, calling for equal law enforcement on everybody without any exceptions, especially in traffic violations.



SHUWAIKH PORT CHOSEN AS THE GCC LAUNCH PAD

GCC FINANCE MINISTERS TO MEET ON VAT, SELECTIVE TAX

JEDDAH: Shuwaikh Port has been designated to serve as a launch pad for the implementation of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Customs Union procedures, due to start by the end of the year, General Manager of Kuwait General Administration of Customs (KGAC) Khaled Al-Saif said yesterday. Al-Saif revealed that information in a statement to KUNA on the sidelines of participation in a meeting of GCC financial and economic delegations in the Saudi city of Jeddah.

Moreover, Al-Saif noted that Shuwaikh port has been deemed exemplary due to the fact that it has been found to be up to par with GCC Customs Union standards. He also added that all GCC nations have allocated one of their ports for which to implement the planned procedures. "The shortcomings found in the chosen ports have been very minimal and all of them are roughly 80 percent fit for the planned procedures to be implemented," Al-Saif said. "These procedures aim to eliminate any impediments to customs duties between GCC nations," he noted.

The General Manager of KGAC also said that the GCC Customs Union has made "significant strides," as he noted that the same procedures planned for sea ports will be implemented on aerial ports as well. The procedures implemented on the chosen ports will ensure tax free transport of goods, as any taxes levied would be left to governments' discretions. Meanwhile, Al-Saif said that no final decision has been made on the statuses of added value and selective taxes, noting that the issue will be addressed in a forthcoming meeting slated for October. He also pointed out that taxes issued on goods are dependent on whether the goods are imported or locally made.



General Manager of Kuwait General Administration of Customs (KGAC) Khaled Al-Saif

VAT, selective tax

In another development, Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Acting Oil Minister Anas Al-Saleh affirmed Thursday night that the 104th extraordinary meeting of the GCC Financial and Economic Cooperation Committee discussed and approved the two framework agreements on the value-added tax (VAT) and the selective tax. "The ministerial committee will hold a joint meeting with the GCC technical committee September or October to finalize the two agreements and lay the ground for their enforcement in the six members of the GCC," he told reporters following the meeting.

"The just-ended meeting reviewed the proposals of the technical committee, made up of undersecretaries of the ministries of finance, regarding the facilitation of the business atmosphere and the protection of consumer rights. "The remaining points relate to prevention of double taxation and prevention of any unjustifiable rise in prices," he revealed. The conferees agreed to ask the GCC Secretariat to designate an acclaimed consultancy office to review the provisions of the conventions in order to ensure the best possible practice, the minister added. — Agencies

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

<p>Kuwait Times Ramadan Quiz Answer & Win</p> <p>13. A helping hand in the sky to look after little ones with special kids packs and meals onboard Etihad Airways is the...</p> <p>Food and Beverage Manager</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>	<p>Kuwait Times Ramadan Quiz Answer & Win</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Civil ID.: _____</p> <p>Tel: _____</p> <p>Email: _____</p>
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RAMADAN-TIME EURO 2016 FEVER SWEEPS ARAB WORLD

GERMANY - THE MOST SUPPORTED TEAM IN KUWAIT

KUWAIT: From Dubai to Tunis, Euro 2016 football fever is sweeping the Arab world, filling cafes and restaurants and overshadowing the nightly television soap operas that normally dominate Ramadan viewing. Every year, during the Muslim fasting month, television audiences soar as families gather in front of their sets after breaking the daytime fast. Usually the ratings are dominated by the dozens of rival soaps that are aired by state and private channels. But this year, Ramadan coincides with the Euros which are another massive draw. "The Euro championship is a high season for us," said Mohammed Saeed, who runs a cafe in an upmarket area of Cairo. "We wait for it every four years to guarantee a full house." Cafes in the Egyptian capital have draped the flags of competing countries over their entrances to attract fans. Some games are played during the day, when devout Muslims are fasting, while others clash with the iftar meal which breaks the daily fast at sunset. In Tunisia, where most cafes are closed during daylight hours in Ramadan, the venue moves to people's homes.

Evening games begin a few minutes after Muslims break their fast, a time most Tunisians spend with their families watching television. "No doubt there will be disputes in homes between those wanting to watch the soaps and others who want to watch the Euro matches," said the head of a major television channel in Tunisia. Television viewing in the region peaks during Ramadan with ratings remaining high well into the night and advertisers devote large chunks of their budget to the small screen's high season. With most games showing on foreign satellite channels, the main Tunisian channels have scheduled daily analysis programs on the matches.

Passionate about football

Ramadan hasn't stopped people following the contest on big screens in the Gulf. In Kuwait, whose national team was banned by FIFA in October from taking part in World Cup qualifying matches because of alleged government interference in sports, fans take consolation in the Euros. "Kuwaitis are passionate about



KUWAIT: Kuwaitis watch the UEFA Euro 2016 football match at a traditional coffee shop in downtown Kuwait City. From Dubai to Tunis, Euro 2016 football fever is sweeping the Arab world, filling cafes and restaurants and overshadowing popular Ramadan soaps on television. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

football. It's their favorite sport. But with the local championship being dull, football fans are passionate about the Euros," said Salman Awad, former coach of the local Al-Salmiya team. Germany, the reigning world champions, are the most supported team in Kuwait and in many other Arab countries, exceeding defending European champions Spain. "Germany will win against Spain" in the final, was the prediction of Abbas Sistani as he sat in a restaurant in Kuwait City.

In Dubai, one restaurant has erected a huge tent on the beach

with big screens to show the games. Wafts of aromatic smoke fill the air as diners puff on flavored tobaccos from hookahs, the water pipes that are a popular social pastime across the region. In another restaurant, an excited Jamie, sporting a white England shirt, said the cosmopolitan city state was a great venue to follow the tournament. "I don't think we're going to win it. I don't think we're close to being favorites," he said. But "when it's a decent game, this place is jam-packed... you can't get that atmosphere at home... It's as good as it gets." — AFP

ARABS AGAINST NOMINATING ISRAEL FOR SENSITIVE UN POST

VIENNA: The Arab Group at the international organizations here has expressed regret for nominating Israel to fill the post of the second deputy chairman the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) for the 2018-2019 mandate. The Arab stance was expressed by Ali Al-Mohammadi, the group chief, also the Moroccan Ambassador to Austria and his nation's representative at the international organizations, during COPUOS' 59th session.

Al-Mohammadi said in his address at the session that Israel, which has a history full of grave breaches of the international laws, neglects resolutions of the UN Security Council and the General Assembly related to its occupation of Arab territory and aggression on the Palestinians. He warned that Israel, if elected to the post, might exploit this position to enhance further its military capabilities for further aggression on the Arab states. Israeli companies, specialized in outer space, focuses their work on the military sector; thus Tel Aviv cannot hold such an international post dedicated to address peaceful issues in this domain, he noted. The Arab Group emphasized keenness on safeguarding the peaceful nature of the international committee tasks. — KUNA



OOREDOO SUPPORTS 'KISWAT AL KHAIR' CAMPAIGN TO HELP PEOPLE IN NEED

KUWAIT: Ooredoo Kuwait, a member of international Ooredoo Group, has recently announced its collaboration with the 'Kiswat Al Khair' campaign to distribute clothes for needy families during the holy month. The objective of this campaign is to collect donated garments, sort and display them at the campaign's main location in Bayan area so that it's available for people who wish to have them.

Commenting on the campaign, Mijbil Alalyoub, Director of Corporate Communications at Ooredoo Kuwait, said: "Through Ooredoo volunteers program we aim at supporting all distinctive youth initiatives, specially the charitable ones that are taking place during Ramadan. We have always been keen to support initiatives and projects which local community would benefit from, a goal that we were able to achieve via collaborating with Spread

the Passion". This initiative is part of series of activities the company is undertaking during Ramadan, which come in line with the company's CSR strategy to support members of the local community.

Ooredoo has launched its volunteers program for the second consecutive year after the huge success achieved last year, all volunteers are involve in managing Ooredoo's iftar tent on daily bases. In addition to that, volunteers will also take part of visits to hospitals, nursing home and special needs institutions to celebrate Giregan. In 2015 Ooredoo Kuwait has received an award from the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs for its volunteers program, highlighting the company's effort in adopting a dedicated program to develop youth skills and connect them to other voluntary initiatives.



KFSD CONCLUDES WORKSHOP

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: KFSD's Human Resources Development sector and the Firemen Preparation Center recently concluded a four-day workshop as they prepare for the launching of the new fire-fighting engineering and sciences diploma program. The ceremony was attended by KFSD's Deputy Director for the Human Resources Development Sector Maj General Al-Terkait, German consultants in addition to specialized PAAET professors. Commenting on the workshop, Maj General Al-Terkait said that admission conditions to join the program would be announced soon to help improve firemen training levels. He also expressed hopes the new center would be the nuclei of founding Kuwait Academy for Firefighting Sciences.

Vehicle ravaged by fire

A vehicle caught fire along the Sixth Ring Road, security sources said, noting that firemen from Jleeb Fire Station rushed to the scene and managed to control the fire. No casualties were reported.



VIVA ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 'WIN BIG IN RAMADAN'

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announces first week's winners of the campaign "Win Big in Ramadan" that allows postpaid customers to win valuable cash prizes during the holy month of Ramadan. The names of daily draw's winners with prize KD 100 are: Mona Mohammad Abdullah Al-Manea, Anand Balan Balan, Faisal Saud Eid Al-Khaldi, Shaikhah Saud Mubarak Al-Saeedi, Ghanim Mohammad Abdulrahman Al-Marri, Reem Humoud Saleh Ghunaim.

VIVA gives the customers a wonderful opportunity to win amazing cash prizes this Ramadan - KD 100 daily, KD 500 fortnightly and KD 1000 at the end of the month, once they pay their VIVA bills through Direct Debit, VIVA website, VIVA App or by calling 102 during the holy month. To find out more about "Win Big in Ramadan" campaign, visit one of the 70 VIVA branches, or the VIVA website at www.viva.com.kw, or call VIVA's 24-hour call center on 102.

ALECSO WELCOMES DECISION TO TEACH ARABIC IN FRENCH SCHOOLS

TUNIS: The Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) welcomed the decision of French Minister of Education Najat Vallaud-Belkacem to officially introduce Arab language into the educational curriculum by 2017. Teaching Arabic to Arabs living in France is a great opportunity toward preserving the Arab identity and heritage for these people, said ALECSO's Director General Abdullah Hamad Muharib yesterday.

He noted that the organization will provide books, digital devices, training pro-

grams including those for people with special needs and experts in the field to achieve the Arabic language educational plan. Muharib also added that ALECSO will organize training courses for teachers following European educational principles. ALECSO and the French Ministry of Education are currently cooperating to issue a reference book on Arabic language for non-native speakers. The organization is also working on issuing a number of mono-lingual and bilingual Arabic dictionaries. — KUNA

KUWAIT, UKRAINE DISCUSS MUTUAL ISSUES



Kuwait's Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Mohammad Al-Khoder met with the Ukrainian Ambassador to Kuwait Vladimir Tolqatch. — KUNA

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Mohammad Al-Khoder and the Ukrainian Ambassador to Kuwait Vladimir Tolqatch discussed topics of mutual concern. Al-Khoder hailed the strong ties shared between Kuwait and Ukraine, adding that the two sides are exerting efforts to boost their cooperation, Defense Ministry's Directorate of Moral Guidance and Public Relations said in a press statement. The meeting was attended by Major-General Ahmad Abdulwahab Al-Omairi, the statement added. — KUNA



Crime

Report

'Wanted man' nabbed

KUWAIT: A citizen who had been on the wanted list for nine crimes, was recently arrested in Jahra when a police patrol stopped him, security sources said, noting that the man seemed confused and when security operatives ran a check on him, they found out that he was wanted for criminal offences.

Kuwaiti with whiskey

A citizen was recently arrested while walking around with a bottle of whiskey. Security sources said that detectives also found out that the man is wanted for other crimes. In another development, a citizen called the police - reporting that his elder brother is a drug addict and that he has been threatening everybody in the house - assaulting his mother and his younger siblings. A police force was dispatched to the house to arrest the suspect.

Smuggle attempt foiled

Custom inspectors at Shuwaikh port recently foiled an attempt smuggle in a fireworks shipment hidden inside a 40-foot container supposedly containing utensils.

Drug suspects arrested

A 39-year-old male citizen and a 41-year-old female citizen were recently arrested in Jabriya. The suspects had 30 illicit pills and five packs of heroin in their possession.

Egyptian killed

An Egyptian was instantly killed when he was run over by a speeding vehicle driven by a citizen along the Sixth Ring Road, said security sources.

International

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UK mourns Jo Cox as group says suspect had far-right ties 10

Hong Kong people 'petrified' over bookseller revelations 12

Obama embraces Orlando families, appeals for gun controls 13



DALLAS: Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump arrives on stage on Thursday at Gilley's. — AP

US SENATE TO VOTE ON GUN CONTROL

SIGNALING HOPE IN REDUCING GUN VIOLENCE

WASHINGTON: Democrats claimed victory Thursday after persuading the US Senate to hold a vote next week on legislation that would bar terror suspects from buying firearms.

The debate—with the potential to turn vicious in a contentious presidential election year—comes with Republican White House hopeful Donald Trump signaling he could back moves to prevent people on terror watch lists or no-fly lists from buying guns.

The possible breakthrough in the Republican-controlled Senate could end a years-long logjam on how to reduce US gun violence, following last weekend's massacre of 49 people at a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida—the deadliest mass shooting in US history.

Senate Democrats brought their pressure to bear by mounting a 15-hour marathon focused on reducing gun violence. With support from a small number of Republicans, Democrats have questioned how a man investigated for suspected extremist ties and who previously figured on an FBI watch list was able to commit mass murder with a legally purchased assault rifle.

They got a strong boost from President Barack Obama who met Thursday with relatives of the Orlando victims, and urged lawmakers to "rise to the moment and do the right thing." It will be a tall order: Republicans largely oppose legislation that would limit gun rights in any way. "We don't take away citizens' rights without due process," House Speaker Paul Ryan told reporters Thursday.

"And so if you have a quick idea in the heat of the

moment that says let's take away a person's rights without their due process, we're going to stand up and defend the Constitution."

The Democratic filibuster, which started Wednesday and ended early Thursday, was led by Senator Chris Murphy of Connecticut. "I'm going to remain on this floor until we get some signal, some sign that we can come together." Murphy and other went well past midnight discussing ways to reduce gun violence—a tactic that eventually prompted leaders to schedule a vote on gun measures.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's office said votes on Democratic and Republican amendments will begin Monday, including on Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein's "no-fly, no buy" amendment, under which people on US terror watch lists or no-fly lists would be barred from acquiring firearms.

Similar legislation failed last December, with all but one Senate Republican voting no. Also getting a vote are measures that would extend background checks to sales at gun shows and on the Internet.

Despite the broad support such measures enjoy from most Americans, they remain controversial in Congress, and passage is seen as being unlikely in the toxic 2016 election climate.

Trump and NRA

Meanwhile Trump, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, made waves Wednesday when he tweeted

that he would meet with the National Rifle Association "about not allowing people on the terrorist watch list, or the no fly list, to buy guns."

The shift may put Trump on a collision course with the powerful NRA, which has said that restrictions "like bans on gun purchases by people on 'watch lists' are ineffective, unconstitutional or both."

But on Wednesday it said it would meet with Trump, and suggested in a statement it would be open to changes in the law to prevent certain gun purchases.

Trump's Democratic presidential rival Hillary Clinton said she supports the limits pushed by Murphy. "Surely we can agree, if the FBI is watching you for suspected terrorist links, you should not be able to buy a gun with no questions asked," Clinton said.

The renewed push comes after a US government report showed that known terror suspects have passed background checks for gun sales 91 percent of the time since 2004.

"I do think our filibuster made a difference," Murphy told CBS television. "Let's be honest. The Senate was not going to debate these measures, had no plans to talk about ending gun violence this week on the floor of the Senate," Murphy said. Among the Republicans who appear to be giving the measure support is Congressman Bob Dold, who is facing a tough re-election fight in Illinois. "Thoughts and prayers are not enough," Dold said this week on the House floor. "It's time for action." — AFP

US JUDGE REJECTS BAIL BID BY JAILED TURKISH BUSINESSMAN

NEW YORK: A Turkish businessman shouldn't be able to use his wealth to avoid having to remain behind bars while he awaits trial on charges he helped Iran evade US sanctions, a federal judge ruled on Thursday.

The ruling by US District Judge Richard Berman rejected a bid by Reza Zarrab to instead be confined to a Manhattan apartment with private security paid for by him.

Prosecutors had told the judge Zarrab should remain in jail because his wealth and overseas connections make him a flight risk. His lawyers countered by proposing a \$50 million bail package essentially making him a prisoner in his own home.

Under the defense proposal, the Zarrab would have paid for private, around-the-clock security,

including video cameras, an alarm system and armed guards. His lawyers said he would even sign a waiver saying the guards could shoot him if he tried to escape.

The judge, in his decision, called the defense's elaborate home detention proposal "unreasonable" because it raises too many liability issues. He also said it would foster unequal treatment for rich people. The judge cited an earlier ruling in a separate case that found such conditions would be "contrary to underlying principles of detention and release on bail that individuals otherwise ineligible for release should be able to buy their way out by constructing a private jail, policed by security guards not trained or ultimately accountable to the government, even if carefully selected."

Zarrab's attorney Benjamin Brafman said the defense team was "deeply disappointed" with the ruling and would consider an appeal.

He said lawyers were "intent on continuing to vigorously defend Mr. Zarrab, who we believe to be innocent." Zarrab, who was arrested earlier this year in Miami, has pleaded not guilty to US charges accusing him of aiding Iran in its deception of the United States and the international banking system from 2010 to 2015, enabling millions of dollars to get through.

Zarrab is well known in Turkey, partly because he's married to Turkish pop star and TV personality Ebru Gundes. In 2013, he was arrested in a Turkish government corruption case, but the charges were dropped. —AP

EXPLOSION IN TEHRAN SUBWAY KILLS 2 WORKERS

TEHRAN: Iran's semi-official Fars news agency is reporting that an explosion in a subway tunnel in the capital, Tehran, has killed two workers and damaged a gas pipeline. The report said that the explosion took place at 4:30 a.m. yesterday while digging took place on a subway tunnel in northwestern Tehran.

The official IRNA news agency also reported that the explosion damaged phone cables, water and gas pipelines but it did not report any casualties. In March, a heating gas capsule exploded injuring at least 12 people in a bazaar in the capital. Such explosions are occasionally reported in Iran, mainly because of poor safety measures. — AP

US SHOULD BOMB ASSAD: DISSIDENT DIPLOMAT CABLE

WASHINGTON: Dozens of US diplomats think America should launch military strikes against the Syrian government, according to a State Department document, breaking ranks with President Barack Obama's policy on the bloody civil war. The so-called "dissent channel" cable urges attacks against Bashar al-Assad's regime for its persistent violations of a shaky ceasefire aimed at bringing an end to the five-year conflict.

It emerged as Russian forces bombed US-backed militia in Syria, highlighting the tangle of alliances in a war where Moscow is working to prop up its chief regional partner.

The cable, signed by working-level diplomats, demands "a judicious use of stand-off and air weapons", according to the New York Times, and lays bare the divisions in Washington policy circles.

With only seven months left in office and a clear aversion to getting bogged down in Middle East conflicts, Obama has shown little appetite for such action. But the administration's alternative policy to work with Russia to secure a ceasefire in Syria's five-year civil war and talks on a political transition has made little headway.

That policy received a further blow when Assad's Russian allies launched raids in southern Syria, according to the Pentagon. "Today, Russian aircraft conducted a series of airstrikes near al-Tanf against Syrian Counter-ISIL forces that included individuals who have received US support," said a senior US defence official who requested anonymity. ISIL is an alternative name for the Islamic State Group. "Russia's latest actions raise serious concern about Russian intentions. We will seek an explanation from Russia on why it took this action and assurances this will not happen again."

Washington and Moscow have publicly vowed to work together to persuade Assad to negotiate a settlement with his opponents, but the US has frequently expressed exasperation about what it sees as Russia's less-than-fulsome commitment.

US policy on Syria has been criticized for ineffectiveness, after five years of brutal internecine fighting that has claimed hundreds of thousands of lives and sent many more fleeing.

American forces are engaged in Syria but are assisting local militias to fight the Islamic State jihadist group, not confronting Assad's Russian and Iranian-backed forces. The State Department cable says Assad's continued violation of a countrywide partial ceasefire—a cessation of hostilities—that was negotiated in February, meant a political settlement was untenable, the Times reported. — AFP

EGYPT PULLS SECOND BLACK BOX OF DOOMED PLANE OUT OF THE SEA

PULLED OUT OF THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA YESTERDAY

CAIRO: The second black box of the doomed EgyptAir plane that crashed last month killing all 66 people on board was pulled out of the Mediterranean Sea yesterday, a day after Egypt's investigation committee said the plane's cockpit voice recorder had been recovered.

The find significantly raises hopes that investigators will finally be able to determine what caused the crash of the EgyptAir Airbus A320. Both France and the United States are sending investigators to Cairo to help with the probe.

The recovery of the black boxes follows a breakthrough earlier in the week, when ships searching the part of the Mediterranean north of Egypt spotted the wreckage of the plane and started mapping its debris on the seabed. It's still not known what brought the plane down between the Greek island of Crete and the Egyptian coast - or whether the aircraft broke apart in the air, or stayed intact until it struck the water.

No militant claim

No militant group has said it downed the plane, which was flying to Cairo from Paris when it crashed on May 19. The wreckage was believed to be at a depth of about 3,000 meters (9,800 feet). Previously, search crews found only small floating pieces of debris and some human remains. Yesterday, a statement from the Egyptian committee said the vessel John Lethbridge, contracted by the Egyptian government to search for the wreckage, pulled the data recorder out of the sea in stages. It added that it managed to "successfully retrieve" the memory unit of the recorder, which is the "most important" component.

While the statement didn't elaborate on the condition of the recorder, it implied that the memory unit had been safely recovered. The two so-called black boxes were tucked into the plane's tail. The committee said later Friday it received both black boxes, which were brought to Cairo from the port city of Alexandria, where they were transferred to from the site of the crash. The data will be downloaded and analyzed in the coming days. "The analysis might take weeks," the committee said, adding that the timespan depends on the condition of the memory units in the recorders. If there is damage, the statement said the recorders may have to be taken outside of Egypt to be repaired.

France's Accident Investigating Bureau, or BEA, said Friday it's sending an investigator to Cairo "to lend our technical expertise to the reading of the two recordings." On Thursday, the U.S. National Transportation Safety Board also said it's sending an investigator and a recorder specialist to Cairo. Honeywell, the U.S. technology company that manufactured the cockpit voice recorder, is providing technical support as well.

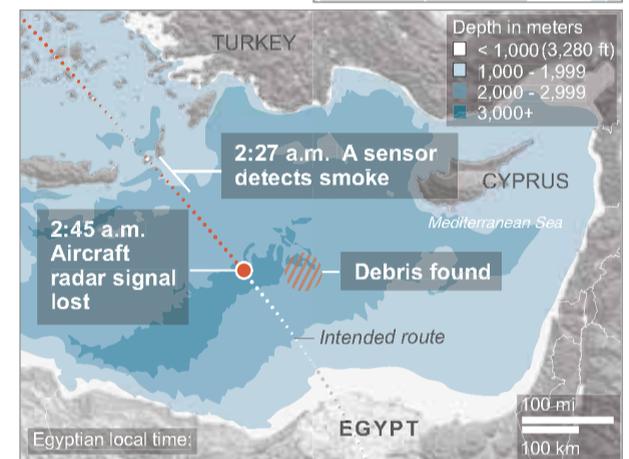
A top security official at the Cairo International Airport, Brig. Gen. Fahmi Megahed, ordered extra security measures at the civil aviation ministry headquarters and the investigation team offices, where the recorders will be analyzed. Both are adjacent to the airport.

The flight's movements

Flight 804 disappeared from radar about 2:45 a.m. local time, after it had entered Egyptian airspace. Radar data showed the

Black box found

Officials say they have found the cockpit voice recorder from the debris of EgyptAir that crashed into the sea on May 19. A second black box was recovered Friday.



aircraft had been cruising normally in clear skies before it turned 90 degrees left, then a full 360 degrees to the right as it plummeted from 38,000 feet (11,582 meters) to 15,000 feet (4,572 meters). It disappeared when it was at an altitude of about 10,000 feet (3,048 meters). Leaked flight data indicated a sensor had detected smoke in a lavatory and a fault in two of the plane's cockpit windows in the final moments of the flight.

"The plane clearly suffered an instant severe damage that left it uncontrollable," said Shaker Kelada, an EgyptAir official who was not involved in the search but has led other crash investigations for the national carrier. He said finding the black boxes was "a great success" but that "now time and patience is needed to analyze them."

Egypt's civil aviation minister, Sherif Fathi, has said terrorism is a more probable cause than equipment failure or some other catastrophic event. John Lethbridge, the vessel that found the wreckage, arrived on June 9 at the port of Alexandria, carrying highly specialized equipment of the Deep Ocean Search company. A statement from DOS said the search team eventually narrowed down the search to "a depth equal to 10 times the height of London Shard tower" a 3,000 meter, 95-storey skyscraper in London. Investigators said earlier that they had narrowed down search area to a five-kilometer (three-mile) radius of the Mediterranean.

Finding the black boxes was essential and could reveal whether a mechanical fault, a hijacking or a bomb caused the disaster. Investigators also hope the black boxes will offer clues as to why there was no distress call. — AP

PUTIN SAYS NEW ELECTIONS KEY FOR ENDING SYRIAN CRISIS

ST. PETERSBURG: The Syrian opposition should be encouraged to participate in government work to help a dialogue that can lead to new elections being held in the country, Russia's President Vladimir Putin said Friday.

Speaking to Russia's top economic forum, Putin said that creating a new government that will have the trust of most of Syria's population is key to ending the five-year conflict. He said that this goal can only be achieved through drafting a new constitution and holding new elections.

Putin said that Syrian President Bashar Assad, who visited Moscow last year, has pledged to help achieve that. "There is nothing more democratic than elections," Putin said. The Russian leader said he expects the US to work with its allies in the region to encourage the Syrian opposition to engage in a constructive dialogue with the government.

"It's necessary to think about incorporating some opposition representatives in the existing

government structures," he said. Earlier Friday, Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov strongly warned Washington against striking Assad's forces, saying it would fuel turmoil across the entire region.

An attempt to topple Assad's government "wouldn't help a successful fight against terrorism and could plunge the region into total chaos," Peskov said. He made the statement while asked to comment about an internal document in which dozens of US State Department employees called for military action against Assad's forces.

President Barack Obama called for regime change in Syria early on in the five-year conflict, but so far has only authorized strikes against the Islamic State group and other US-designated terror groups in Syria.

Russia has conducted an air campaign in Syria since last September, helping Assad's forces regain some ground. Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Igor Konashenkov said that the calls for a military action against Assad "can't but worry any



ST. PETERSBURG: Russian President Vladimir Putin speaks at a meeting with investors at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum on Thursday. — AP

reasonable person." "Who would bear responsibility for that?" he asked. "Or shall we see the same Hollywood-style smile as it happened already in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya?" — AP



JERUSALEM: A Palestinian Muslim worshipper takes a selfie near the Dome of the Rock mosque at the al-Aqsa mosque compound yesterday. — AP

ISRAEL LETS GAZANS INTO JERUSALEM FOR RAMADAN PRAYERS

JERUSALEM: Israel allowed hundreds of Palestinians from the Gaza Strip into Jerusalem for Ramadan prayers Friday, an official said, a week after revoking entry permits in response to a deadly attack. The 300 Palestinians are believed to be the first from the blockaded enclave to be granted entry to pray since Israel shut the border after Palestinian gunmen killed four Israelis at a Tel Aviv nightclub on June 8.

That measure came during the first week of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, when tens of thousands of Palestinians visit Al-Aqsa mosque compound in Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem.

The permits issued for Friday were the regular weekly quota for worshippers at Al-Aqsa, said a spokeswoman for COGAT, the Israeli defense ministry unit which manages civilian affairs for Palestinians in the West Bank and liaises with Gaza. "Larger numbers were supposed to enter for Ramadan. That has been cancelled," she said.

Israel imposed a tight air, sea and land blockade on Gaza in 2006, designed to prevent the Islamist Hamas movement that controls the territory from rearming. Around 53,000 Palestinians from the West Bank were also allowed into Jerusalem on Friday to pray at Al-Aqsa, the spokeswoman said.

Thousands of Palestinians from the West Bank had already been allowed to go there last week in an exception to the entry ban, she noted. The mosque compound, a frequent focal point of Palestinian-Israeli tensions, is revered by both Muslims and Jews, who refer to the site as the Temple Mount.

The Tel Aviv attack was the deadliest in a wave of violence that began in October. One of the two attackers was arrested, while the other was shot and underwent surgery. Further details have been placed under a gag order by the Israeli authorities while the investigation continues. — AFP

NEW TURKEY PM STRIKES NOTE OF RECONCILIATION TO REGIONAL FOES WANTS TIES WITH EGYPT

ISTANBUL: Turkey's new prime minister yesterday stretched out a cautious hand of reconciliation to Turkey's regional foes, saying he wanted no permanent tensions with Black Sea and Mediterranean neighbors after serious ruptures with Egypt, Israel, Russia and Syria.

Binali Yildirim, a close ally of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, took over the premiership in May from Ahmet Davutoglu who had spearheaded a policy of projecting Turkish power in the region.

Some analysts have suggested that Davutoglu made way for Yildirim to allow a more reconciliatory foreign policy that would allow Turkey to mend bridges with its enemies and return to its former dictum of "zero problems" with neighbors.

"Israel, Syria, Russia, Egypt... we cannot have permanent enmity with these countries which border the Black and Mediterranean Seas," Yildirim said in his first major interview with Turkish reporters, quoted by the Hurriyet daily.

'See big picture'

Relations with Russia tumbled to post Cold War lows when Turkey on November 24 shot down a Russian warplane over the Syrian border. Moscow then blocked the sale of tours to Turkey, wrecking tourism in the south of the country where the industry was hugely dependent on Russian tourists.

"We need to look at the big picture," said Yildirim. "There is no hostility between our peoples. It's possible to go back to the old days and take our relations even further."

His comments come after President Recep Tayyip Erdogan sent a letter this month to his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin congratulating him on Russia's national day, the first such high level contact since the plane crisis.

Russia has so far responded coolly, but pro-government daily Yeni Safak said Friday Turkey had prepared a nine step "roadmap" for normalising political and economic relations by September 1 and full ties by December 15.

Previously tight relations between key NATO member Turkey and Israel were



ANKARA: Turkey's Prime Minister Binali Yildirim addresses members of parliament from his ruling AK Party (AKP) during a meeting at the Turkish parliament on June 14, 2016. —AFP

downgraded over the 2010 deadly storming by Israeli commandos of a Turkish aid ship bound for Gaza, which left 10 Turkish activists dead.

Yildirim said Turkish diplomats were working on a solution for normalization, with the lifting of the Israeli blockade on Gaza the key condition. "I don't think the remaining period will be very long" until a result for normalization is achieved, he said. Turkish press reports have suggested a breakthrough may come soon, with Ankara keen to wrap up the issue before the Turkish foreign ministry's powerful pointman on Israel, Feridun Sinirlioglu, takes up a new job in New York as Turkey's representative to the United Nations.

'Turkey wants Egypt ties'

Relations with Egypt suffered a similar downturn after the 2013 ousting of Egyptian president Mohammed Morsi, a close Ankara ally, and Erdogan has denounced President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi as an "illegitimate tyrant".

Yildirim said Ankara would never accept the 2013 "coup" but said "this

should not be an obstacle in the commercial relations between our countries". "The development of relations is in the interest of the two peoples," he added. Reports have suggested that Turkey's increasingly close ally, fellow Sunni Muslim power Saudi Arabia, is keen to engineer a reconciliation between Cairo and Ankara.

On the Syria conflict, Turkey has always called for the ousting of President Bashar al-Assad and opposed attempts by Syrian Kurds to carve out an autonomous region. "The territorial integrity of Syria is important for us," Yildirim said. Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu Friday met US Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken in Ankara, telling him of Turkey's anxieties over the US support of Kurdish militias in Syria, foreign ministry sources said.

Turkey however has denied suggestions it may be prepared to soften its position that Assad must depart immediately for there to be a solution in Syria. "Would you (as a refugee) be convinced to return to Syria if Assad is to stay and kill your family again? It's not feasible," a senior Turkish official said this week. — AFP

A SPARE HEIR: LIFE AS A ROYAL NUMBER TWO

VERSAILLES, FRANCE: French President Francois Hollande vowed yesterday to improve the protection of a police force reeling from a terror attack and under pressure from violent protesters and football hooligans. "Police officers risk their lives. We owe them respect and gratitude," Hollande said at an emotional memorial service in Versailles near Paris for a policeman and his partner who were killed by a jihadist. Hollande said the couple were "everyday heroes who fell victim to a hate-filled terrorist." Police commander Jean-Baptiste Salvaing and his partner Jessica Schneider were knifed to death on Monday by a convicted extremist who had pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group.

Larossi Abballa, 25, was shot dead by police after he killed the pair at their home in the Paris suburb of Magnanville, in the presence of their three-year-old son Mathieu who was traumatised but unhurt. Investigators are looking into whether Abballa knew his victims. Hundreds of uniformed police officers and firefighters, many fighting back tears, took part in the ceremony, where the pair were decorated post-posthumously with the Legion of Honour-France's highest award.

The attack was the first of its kind in France since



VERSAILLES, FRANCE : French President Francois Hollande awards posthumously the Legion d'Honneur to Jean-Baptiste Salvaing who was killed by an extremist pledging allegiance to the Islamic State group, during a memorial ceremony yesterday. — AFP

November 2015, when 130 people were killed by IS gunmen and suicide bombers in Paris. France has since remained under a state of emergency, allowing officers to wear their weapons at all times-not only when they are

on duty. Hollande vowed that measures would be taken to guarantee the anonymity of police officers, and said the gun-carrying measure should be permanent. "Police and gendarmes must be given the means to defend themselves when they are not on duty. We must also avoid police and gendarmes being identified and targeted by criminals they have jailed, or their accomplices. "Measures will be taken to guarantee their anonymity and thus, their protection," Hollande said.

Dozens wounded

France's police force has been sorely tested by the high state of security, which has coincided with months of violent anti-government protests in which they have been a particular target of hatred and suffered dozens of injuries. Paris police chief Michel Cadot recently wrote a letter to the interior minister complaining that officers were overstretched and "exhausted" even before the start of the Euro football tournament on June 10. The European championship has seen running battles between police and football hooligans in several cities around the country. "Violence against representatives of public order will never go unpunished," Hollande said. — AFP

EX-AUSCHWITZ GUARD CONVICTED IN GERMAN TRIAL

BERLIN: A 94-year-old former Auschwitz guard was convicted yesterday of being an accessory to the murder of 170,000 people, according to the judge presiding over what could be one of Germany's last Holocaust trials.

Reinhold Hanning was sentenced to five years in prison for his role in facilitating the slaughter at the Auschwitz death camp in Nazi-occupied Poland. — Reuters

ROME'S NEXT MAYOR: FIVE KEY FACTS

ROME: Five key facts about the election of Rome's new mayor on Sunday:

A woman at last

Every king, consul, emperor and pope who has run Rome since it was founded two and a half millennia ago has been male: that looks set to change with Virginia Raggi the run-away favourite to be the next mayor.

Female mayors club

Raggi headed the first round with 35 percent of votes, well ahead of run-off rival Roberto Giachetti (24 percent). If she wins she will join a female club that includes the mayors of Barcelona, Cape Town, Madrid, Paris and Santiago, Chile.

Huge job

Running Italy's capital is a major challenge: the city is 12 billion euros (\$13.5 billion) in debt, 40 percent of its streets have potholes, transport and refuse services have been cut to the bone.

Corruption challenge

One of Raggi's biggest challenges, if elected, will be rooting out corruption from City Hall. Revelations in late 2014 indicated the administration had been infiltrated by organised crime.

Easy act to follow?

Rome's last mayor, Ignazio Marino, was forced to quit last October after being cut free by Prime Minister Matteo Renzi over a minor expenses issue. Whoever replaces him will have a honeymoon period but it may not last long. — AFP

UK MOURNS JO COX AS GROUP SAYS SUSPECT HAD FAR-RIGHT TIES 'HAD HISTORY OF MENTAL ILLNESS'

BIRSTALL, ENGLAND: Campaigning in Britain's European Union membership referendum remained suspended yesterday as the country absorbed the daylight slaying of lawmaker Jo Cox with shock, and worry that the political fury unleashed by the EU campaign was somehow connected to the killing.

A US civil rights group said the man suspected of the gun and knife attack had links to an American white supremacist organization. The Southern Poverty Law Center said it has records showing Thomas Mair was a supporter of the National Alliance. The center said Mair purchased a manual from the group in 1999 that included instructions on how to build a pistol. On its website, the center published copies of receipts showing that a Thomas Mair of West Yorkshire - the county where Cox and her suspected killer both lived - bought publications including "Chemistry of Powder and Explosives" and "Improvised Munitions Handbook."

The National Alliance was founded by William Pierce, whose book "The Turner Diaries" has been called a grisly blueprint for a bloody race war. Timothy McVeigh based the 1995 bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building, which killed 168 people, on a truck-bombing described in the book.

The suspect

A Thomas Mair of Batley - the town where the suspect lives - was also named as a former subscriber to pro-Apartheid publication SA Patriot. In 2006, the online newsletter of far-right group the Springbok Club said Mair was "one of the earliest subscribers and supporters of SA Patriot."

Mair, 52, was arrested Thursday on suspicion of killing Cox, who was shot and stabbed outside a library in her northern England constituency. The suspect's brother, Scott Mair, told reporters his brother had a history of mental illness, but was not violent.

Witnesses said Cox, a 41-year-old Labour Party legislator, was attacked by a man with a homemade or antique-looking gun. Clarke Rothwell, who runs a cafe near the scene of the slaying, said the assailant shouted "Britain first" or "put Britain first" several times.

Britain First is the name of a far-right group, which said it had no connection to the killing. Cox was a former aid worker who had championed the cause of Syrian refugees and campaigned for Britain to stay in the EU when it votes in a referendum on Thursday. The referendum has sparked an intense debate about immigration and Britain's place in the world. "Leave" cam-

paigners have said voters should quit the EU to take their country back from bureaucrats in Brussels and curb large-scale immigration from other EU nations.

Tributes

Both sides in the referendum have halted campaigning activity in the wake of Cox's death. It's not clear when the campaigns will resume. Politicians from all parties have paid tribute to Cox, and Buckingham Palace said Queen Elizabeth II had written to her husband, Brendan Cox. The couple had two young children. Rows of police combed the pavements around the site of the attack outside the library in the small town of Birstall, part of Batley, 200 miles (320 kilometers) north of London. Scores of residents left floral bouquets in a memorial at the foot of a nearby statue. Mothers walked their children to the town's primary school past the spot, some wiping away tears. Others stood talking quietly in small groups about the brutality of the killing, its exceptionally public nature - and whether anyone could have done more to stop the attacker.

Flowers also covered the houseboat on the River Thames where Cox and her family lived when they were in London. More mourners left flowers outside Parliament, and some linked the heated atmosphere of the referendum to the attack. "I didn't know her, but she stood for everything that this country should be standing for at the moment and I have two young children and I am just so angry," said teacher Joanna Chidgey, whose father is a former lawmaker.

"Well, angry is not the right word at the moment, but these people who are whipping up bigotry and racism and hatred and intolerance at the moment, they should hang their heads in shame." Violence against British politicians has been rare since Northern Ireland's peace deal two decades ago. Cox is the first serving lawmaker to be killed since Conservative politician Ian Gow was blown up by the Irish Republican Army in 1990. The killing has raised concerns about the safety of legislators. — AP



LONDON: An image and floral tributes for Jo Cox, the 41-year-old British Member of Parliament shot to death on Thursday in northern England, lie placed on Parliament Square outside the House of Parliament yesterday. — AP

PARENTS 'KILL PREGNANT WOMAN FOR HONOR' IN PAKISTAN

LAHORE, PAKISTAN: Relatives slit the throat of a young mother who was pregnant with her second child after she married against their will in eastern Pakistan, officials said yesterday, the latest in a spate of so-called "honor killings".

Muqaddas Bibi, 22, married Taufiq Ahmed three years ago in defiance of her family, who considered a marriage for love—rather than an arranged marriage—shameful, police investigator Mohammad Arshad told AFP.

Bibi's ties with her family were severed after the marriage, Arshad said,

but her mother and brother allegedly approached her at a clinic where she was having a check-up on Thursday and convinced her to come home, saying they accepted her decision.

Local police station chief Gohar Abbas said that when Bibi reached her parents' house, her father, brother and mother cut her throat with a knife and she died on the spot.

Bibi had a 10-month old daughter and was seven months pregnant when she was killed, he added. Abbas said that her family fled from their house after the murder in the village of

Buttaranwali, some 75 kilometers north of Punjab provincial capital Lahore.

Police are hunting for them and have already detained another relative for inciting the killing, he said. Hundreds of women are murdered by their relatives in conservative Muslim Pakistan each year on the pretext of defending what is seen as family honor.

Last week sixteen year-old Zeenat Bibi was killed in Lahore by her mother for marrying a man of her own choice in a case that sparked condemnation throughout the country.

It was swiftly followed by another killing, of a couple in Lahore who married without their family's consent. On Sunday a young girl was killed by her brother for insisting on marrying the man of her choice in the city of Sialkot, also in Punjab.

A film on honor killings in Pakistan won an Oscar for best documentary short in February. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif vowed to eradicate the "evil" amid publicity for the film, "A Girl in the River: The Price of Forgiveness", but as yet no fresh legislation has been tabled. —AFP

AFGHAN POLICE TELL FOREIGNERS IN KABUL TO STAY IN OR HIRE GUARDS

KABUL: Police in the Afghan capital have told foreigners living outside protected compounds to travel with guards, after the kidnapping of an Indian aid worker last week added to a growing sense of insecurity in Kabul.

The push is for the safety of residents, said Fraidoun Obaidi, chief of the Kabul police Criminal Investigation Department. "All foreign citizens and their offices in Afghanistan are terrorists' targets ... the kidnapping and criminal threat is very serious," he told Reuters. "This will be prevented only if they use security guards and escorts."

One document distributed by Obaidi's officers to private homes and organizations instructs residents to take a variety of security measures, including using armed police escorts if necessary. But national security officials have distanced themselves from the police efforts, after critics complained that the measures were counterproductive and did not reduce the threats facing residents.

In the past week, foreign workers have reported police and intelligence agents stopping their cars, being taken to police stations, questioned about personal information, filmed and photographed. The Interior Ministry was not involved in the decision to use such tactics, and plans to work with city police to change their security measures, said spokesman Sediq Sediqqi.

Although the capital has long faced threats, until a few years ago the war with Taliban insurgents was mostly waged in the countryside. Many aid workers and journalists lived in upscale Kabul neighborhoods and frequented restaurants and sports clubs.

But since 2014, when most international troops pulled out of Afghanistan and militants launched high-profile attacks on restaurants popular with foreigners, some have relocated into protected compounds.

The kidnapping of 40-year-old Judith D'Souza on June 9 in the heart of Kabul has prompted police to step up pressure on foreigners to adopt more extensive security measures. In some cases, the police tactics have prompted indignation from those they are designed to help. "Telling us we can't travel anywhere without armed guards is ridiculous," said Sri Lankan Nayela Wickramasuriya. "We may as well not have police then." — Reuters



KABUL: An Afghan protester carries his wounded colleague during clashes with Afghan riot police at a demonstration against Taliban militants and the kidnapping of civilians yesterday. — AFP



AHMEDABAD, INDIA: Indian relatives of one of those convicted over religious rioting react outside a court yesterday. —AFP

INDIAN COURT JAILS 11 FOR LIFE OVER GUJARAT MASSACRE 12 OTHERS TO SEVEN YEARS IN JAIL

AHMEDABAD, INDIA: An Indian court jailed 11 Hindus for life yesterday over the massacre of dozens of Muslims in Gujarat state 14 years ago, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi was chief minister.

The court sentenced 12 others to seven years in jail over the murder of 69 Muslims who were hacked and burnt to death in a residential complex in the city of Ahmedabad in Gujarat, among them women and children.

Another was given a 10-year term for rioting and arson. The massacre at the Gulbarg Society housing complex was one of the single worst losses of life in the week-long violence that left more than 1,000 people dead.

Several Muslim families had taken shelter in the complex when it was stormed by a mob of attackers angered by the deaths of Hindus in a train fire. Zakia Jafri, whose husband was killed in the massacre and who has campaigned for those responsible to be brought to justice, said the sentences were too lenient. "After all the horrible things they did to so many people, they still gave such flimsy sentences," Jaffri told reporters.

"I do not like this at all. The law has done grave injustice to me." Prosecutors had sought the death penalty, arguing that those targeted were all "innocent people". "We had pleaded before the court that if you are not convinced about giving the death penalty, at least give life term til the end of life to all the accused," said public prosecutor RC Kodekar after the sentencing.

"So (the judgement) is not at all satisfactory. It is lenient and inadequate." Judge PB Desai had earlier ruled the massacre at the

Gulbarg Society complex was a spontaneous attack, rejecting claims of a pre-planned conspiracy against Muslims.

Yesterday he described the religious violence as "one of the darkest days of civil society in Gujarat" and urged the government not to commute, shorten or otherwise alter the sentences.

No help came

More than 100 people have already been convicted over the riots, including one of Modi's former state ministers who was jailed for instigating some of the killings. Jafri has said her husband, a former opposition Congress party lawmaker, repeatedly called police for help, but none came. She is fighting a separate legal battle demanding that Modi and others be held responsible for failing to stop the riots.

The issue has long dogged Modi, who was accused of turning a blind eye to the violence as head of Gujarat state. He was cleared of any wrongdoing in 2012 by a Supreme Court-ordered investigation. The violence was triggered by the death of 59 Hindu pilgrims in a train fire on February 27, 2002 that was initially blamed on Muslims.

Hindus bent on revenge rampaged through Muslim neighborhoods in some of India's worst religious riots since independence from Britain and partition in 1947. More than 300 witnesses gave evidence during the years-long trial that began in 2009 but was delayed by legal challenges. Several of the original accused have since died. — AFP

JAPAN COURT UPHOLDS HALTING REACTORS IN BLOW TO NUCLEAR POWER INDUSTRY

TOKYO: A Japanese court yesterday upheld an order to keep two reactors at the Takahama nuclear plant closed, operator Kansai Electric Power said, leaving efforts to get a struggling nuclear industry up and running in limbo.

The court decision, upholding a petition from residents living near the plant concerned about safety, keeps the legal battle centre stage in a struggle by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's government to restore atomic power five years after the Fukushima disaster.

The Otsu District Court on March 9 ordered Kansai Electric, Japan's second-biggest utility, to shut down the reactors

in Fukui prefecture west of Tokyo, in the country's first injunction to halt an operating nuclear plant.

The nuclear industry has only recently started to get reactors in a nuclear sector, which used to supply about a third of the country's power, back online amid widespread public opposition after the melt downs at Fukushima in 2011.

Yesterday's decision denied the utility's attempt to temporarily halt the shutdown order. Kansai has separately requested that the court revoke the injunction, and a decision on that is expected to come sometime soon, possibly by July. "It is very regrettable that the

petition for stay of execution was not approved," Kansai Electric said in a statement, adding that it hoped that the court would cancel the injunction soon.

Should Kansai Electric lose this legal fight, it will be left with the option of appealing to a higher court. That could mean months, or possibly a year, of delays and extra purchases of oil, gas or coal to replace nuclear power generation.

Japanese lower courts sometimes hand down contentious verdicts that are then overturned by higher courts, where judges tend to be more attuned to political implications, judicial experts say. Amid mounting public scepticism over

nuclear safety, local residents have lodged injunctions against nuclear plants across Japan.

Japan has 42 operable reactors but Kyushu Electric Power is the only utility that has been generating nuclear power after it was cleared to restart two reactors in southwestern Japan. In this case, legal action by residents failed to prevent the restarts of those reactors.

A Kansai Electric spokesman said the losses from the shutdown of the two Takahama reactors amounted to 10 billion yen (\$96 million) per month because of higher fossil fuel consumption and other factors. — Reuters



HONG KONG: Democratic Party members hold up placards outside the Western District police station on their way to protest at the Chinese Liaison Office yesterday. — AP

HONG KONG PEOPLE 'PETRIFIED' OVER BOOKSELLER REVELATIONS

LAM WING-KEE BROKE HIS SILENCE

HONG KONG: Hong Kong lawmakers say residents have been left "petrified" by explosive revelations from a city bookseller about his detention in China and have slammed Beijing for violating freedoms.

In a surprise interview Lam Wing-kee broke his silence Thursday over how he had been detained on a visit to China and was interrogated for months with no access to a lawyer or his family. He vowed to break bail, refusing to return to the mainland.

Lam, 61, is one of five booksellers who published salacious titles about leading Chinese politicians and disappeared at the end of last year in a case that drew international condemnation and heightened fears Beijing was tightening its grip on semi-autonomous Hong Kong.

Pro-democracy lawmakers accused Hong Kong authorities of failing to help the booksellers and called on them to ensure Lam is now kept safe after his decision to speak out. Emily Lau of the Democratic Party said if Lam were harmed it would "shatter" Hong Kong. "Many

Hong Kong people are petrified," she told AFP. "It can happen to each and every one of us." The government says it is trying to speak to Lam and that residents' safety is paramount.

China's foreign ministry would not be drawn on the criticisms of its treatment of Lam, saying only that he had violated Chinese law. "Authorities here have the right to deal with the relevant case in accordance with the law," said spokeswoman Hua Chunying yesterday.

One pro-democracy lawmaker said Chinese authorities were acting like "thugs" and accused the Hong Kong government of being a puppet of Beijing. "Hong Kong is being pathetic," said Claudia Mo of the Civic Party. "It has to say something to regain people's confidence... but it is terrified to do anything that might embarrass Beijing." Some residents said they now questioned how safe they are in Hong Kong. "People feel scared," accountant Louis Chan, 28, told AFP. "Now the Chinese government want to have full control."

Protesters gather

A succession of political groups protested outside China's liaison office in Hong Kong Friday with more demonstrations expected Saturday. High-profile teenage activist Joshua Wong called Lam a hero. "Lam is the role model for Hong Kong people-facing the suppression of the communist regime," Wong said. Lam was kept in detention for eight months and returned to Hong Kong Tuesday. He was due to go back over the border Thursday but decided to speak out instead. Lam told how he recited a scripted confession about involvement in the illegal book trade on state television in fear of what would happen to him.

In harrowing detail he also explained how the toothbrush he was given in detention was tied by a thread which was held by a guard to prevent him from committing suicide by swallowing it.

Fellow booksellers Lui Por and Cheung Chi-ping returned to Hong Kong in March on bail, but both were reported to have quickly gone back to the mainland. — AFP

AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER REGRETS INVITING ANTI-GAY CLERIC

CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA: Australia's prime minister said yesterday that he would not have invited a senior imam to a multi-faith dinner if he had been aware of the Muslim cleric's anti-gay preaching.

Malcolm Turnbull on Thursday became the first Australian prime minister to host an iftar - the meal at which Muslims end their daily Ramadan fast at sunset. Among the 75 mostly Muslim guests at the prime minister's official Sydney residence was Sheikh Shady Alsuleiman, president of the Australian National Imams Council.

The Australian newspaper reported Alsuleiman had said in a sermon uploaded on to social media in 2013 that homosexual acts "are evil actions that bring upon evil outcomes to our society." Turnbull said he became aware of Alsuleiman's comments during the course of the dinner when a journalist from The Australian contacted the prime minister's media team. Turnbull said he then condemned those comments at the dinner and "encouraged" Alsuleiman "to reflect very deeply on his remarks."

"Had I known that the sheikh had made those remarks, he would not have been invited to the iftar," Turnbull told reporters. "I regard as unacceptable and I will always condemn any remarks which disrespect any part of our community, whether it is on the basis of their sexuality, their gender, their race, their religion," he added.

Alsuleiman later said in a statement he condemned the vilification and oppression of any group of people based on race, religion, gender, sexuality, or any other criteria. "Islam's position on the matter is clear like many other major religions, however, Islam espouses there is no compulsion in religion and diversity is the norm," his statement said. "As Australians we have and will always show mutual respect for one another."

The invitation was an embarrassment for the conservative government that is campaigning for re-election on July 2 and has been criticized for refusing to allow its own lawmakers vote to allow gay marriage.

It happened two days after British cleric Farrokh Sekaleshfar left Sydney shortly before his visa was cancelled over anti-gay comments including advocating capital punishment for homosexual acts in public. Turnbull said he would investigate why Sekaleshfar had not been placed on a watch list that would have alerted authorities to his visa application.

A weekend gun attack by an American-born Muslim on a gay nightclub in Florida that left 49 dead has focused Australia's election campaign on the threat of Islamic fundamentalism. — AP



CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA: Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull speaks to the media during a press conference at Parliament House yesterday. — AP

OBAMA EMBRACES FAMILIES, APPEALS FOR GUN CONTROLS

ORLANDO: Embracing grieving Orlando families and appealing anew for national action, President Barack Obama claimed a threat to all Americans' security Thursday as a strong reason to tighten US gun laws. Counter terror campaigns overseas, he declared, can never prevent all "lone wolf" attacks like the one that killed 49 people in Orlando. Speaking at a makeshift memorial to the victims, Obama said the massacre at a gay nightclub was evidence that "different steps" are needed to limit the damage a "deranged" person set on committing violence can do. He cheered on Democrats' push for new gun control measures, including a new ban on assault weapons and stricter background checks. Although he showed little hope the measures would find much support among most opponents, Obama seemed to be aiming for other lawmakers, perhaps Republican hawks eager to get behind counter terror campaigns but steadfastly opposed to gun restrictions.

Next stage of grief

Obama arrived as Orlando began the next stage of its grief - funerals all over town. A visitation for one victim, Javier Jorge-Reyes, on Wednesday night turned out a crowd of friends, family, drag queens and motorcyclists to pay their respects.

"We're just here to spread love and joy and try to put an end to all the hate," said Ezekiel Davis - or, as he's known to some, Sister Anesthesia Beaverhausen. Obama could not miss other signs of a community coming together in tragedy. Hundreds of people gathered in 95-degree heat outside the Amway Center stadium where he met with families. Brittany Woodrough came to honor her close friend, 19-year-old Jason Benjamin Josaphat. "I just pray for his family and I can't believe this happened," she said.

"Seeing President Obama here makes it real." Orlando's calls for solidarity stood in contrast to the sharp-edged political debate in Washington and the presidential campaign trail that continued during Obama's visit. Arizona Sen. John McCain, a Republican and frequent Obama critic, accused the president of being "directly responsible" for the shooting because, he said, Obama had allowed the growth of the Islamic State group on his watch. McCain quickly walked back those comments with a written statement saying he had misspoken and was referring to Obama's "national security decisions, not the president himself."

The gunman, Omar Mateen, had made calls during the attack saying he was an IS supporter. But CIA Director John Brennan said



ORLANDO: President Barack Obama with Vice President Joe Biden carry bouquets comprised of a total of 49 white roses, one in honor of each of the deceased victims, as they visit a memorial to the victims of the Pulse nightclub shooting on Thursday. — AP

Thursday the agency has found no connection between the gunman and any foreign terrorist organization. In Orlando, Obama noted the need for strong efforts to fight terrorists before they can get to America, but he said that's not enough. "It's going to take more than just our military," he said. "We will not be able to stop every tragedy. We can't wipe away hatred and evil from every heart in this world, but we can stop some tragedies. We can save some lives. "We can reduce the impact of a terrorist attack if we're smart," he said, a reference to a ban on assault-type weapons that can kill dozens of people in moments. Mateen had such a weapon, an AR-15 rifle.

Obama made his remarks in downtown Orlando during an afternoon visit to express condolences to this grieving city. The president spent roughly two hours talking privately with victims' families and survivors of the attack in a gay dance club. He told them he was inspired by their courage and felt their pain at the loss of so many young lives. "Our hearts are broken, too," he said. Elsewhere in the city and in Washington, investigators were working to reconstruct the movements of the 29-year-old shooter before he opened fire at the Pulse dance club, including what his wife may have known about the attack. — AP

WHEN GOD SPOKE

Continued from Page 1

"There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often." (33:21)

It is really miraculous that our Creator has answered our prayers with an entire book dedicated to us, and sent us a messenger to guide our way in applying its teachings. After such a grand gesture, it is only polite to take the time to read it! If we truly want God to answer hear our prayers and answer our call, we must also heed His words and answer His call.

If you would like a translation of the Quran, contact any branch of IPC or the TIES Center.

Courtesy of the TIES Center, whose mission is to empower Kuwait's expats through social and educational services that promote a positive and productive role in society, and to facilitate opportunities for intra- and interfaith interactions that promote social solidarity. For more information, please call 25231015/6 or e-mail: info@tiescenter.net.

IRAQ SPECIAL FORCES...

Continued from Page 1

The US-led coalition, which has carried out air strikes in support of the Fallujah operation, had initially favored focusing efforts on recapturing Mosul. Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi, who was facing huge political pressure over the reform of his own government when he declared the launch of the Fallujah operation, has vowed to defeat IS nationwide by the end of the year.

In the hours before the latest push into the heart of Fallujah, Iraqi forces retook several neighborhoods in quick succession. "This operation was done with little resistance from Daesh," Saadi said, using an Arabic acronym for IS. "They know, by experience, that a small number of IS fighters in urban terrain cannot stop an Iraqi security forces ground assault supported by coalition airstrikes," Patrick Martin, Iraq analyst at the Institute for the Study of War, said.

After months of military operations aimed at completely sealing off the city, IS had been expected to fight to the death in a protracted suicide holdout, but recent developments suggest the siege was porous. "There is a mass flight of Daesh to the west that explains this lack of resistance. There are only pockets of them left and we are hunting them down," Saadi said. Tens of thousands of civilians have been forced from their homes since the operation began last month. — AFP

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WILDFIRES IN CALIFORNIA, NEW MEXICO TRIGGER HUNDREDS OF EVACUATIONS

LOS ANGELES: Hundreds of people have evacuated to escape a wildfire in coastal Southern California and a larger blaze in rural New Mexico as hot weather feeds the flames, raising health concerns in other regions, officials said on Thursday.

Santa Barbara Sheriff Bill Brown told a news conference his deputies had asked occupants of 400 homes and businesses to evacuate structures in areas threatened by flames from the California fire. Campers and horses on ranches have also been forced out, officials said.

The blaze, which ignited on Wednesday in a wilderness area northwest of Santa Barbara, has consumed chaparral and tall grass in the Los Padres National Forest, blackening some 1,200 acres (490 hectares), according to the InciWeb fire information center.

About 500 firefighters were trying to

hold it from exploding out of control as airplane tankers and helicopters dropped water, officials said. "There isn't a lot of marine layer (ocean humidity) so not great conditions for firefighting," Diane Black, a joint incident command manager, said in a phone interview.

Winds drove the so-called Sherpa Fire toward the Pacific coast, leading authorities to evacuate two state beaches and some ranch land, according InciWeb and the Santa Barbara County website. The blaze also approached the 101 Freeway overnight, forcing authorities to close it until Thursday morning. In New Mexico, the so-called Dog Head Fire that broke out on Wednesday about 6 miles (10 km) northwest of the town of Tajique has forced evacuations and grown to more than 12,000 acres (4,900 hectares). Tajique is around 30 miles (50 km) southeast of Albuquerque. — Reuters



SHOW LOW, ARIZONA: Plumes of smoke from a wildfire are visible on Wednesday. — AP

SANDERS, YET TO CONCEDE, SAYS HE'LL WORK FOR TRUMP'S DEFEAT

RELATIONSHIP WITH CLINTON IN QUESTION

BURLINGTON, VERMONT: Pressing his "political revolution" to turn its attention to defeating Donald Trump, Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders said he will work with Hillary Clinton to transform the Democratic Party itself and "create the America that we know we can become."

Sanders spoke Thursday night in a livestream address to political supporters two days after the final primary election of the nomination race. The major task they now face is to "make certain" the presumptive Republican nominee loses in November, he said, adding that he plans to begin his role in that process "in a very short period of time."

"But defeating Donald Trump cannot be our only goal," Sanders said, pointing to his 1,900 delegates at next month's Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia. "We must continue our grassroots efforts to create the America that we know we can become."

Relationship with Clinton

Yesterday, Sanders campaign manager Jeff Weaver said a "tremendous burden" is falling on Clinton to demonstrate that she has heard the voices of the young people who powered Sanders' effort. Weaver said the Sanders team is in contact with the Clinton campaign daily as the two sides work to resolve differences.

Yet when asked on MSNBC whether Sanders is still running for president, Weaver said repeatedly, "Yes he is." Although Clinton has secured enough pledged delegates and super delegates to become the presumptive nominee, Sanders did not concede the race or refer to Clinton as the likely nominee, instead offering a lengthy list of policy proposals he hopes to see approved by the party.

The two rivals met Tuesday night at a Washington hotel to discuss policy goals and plans. Sanders said that while it is "no secret" that he and Clinton have "strong disagreements on some very important issues," it was "also true that



BURLINGTON, VERMONT: Presidential candidate, Bernie Sanders prepares to speak for a video to supporters at Polaris Mediaworks on Thursday. — AP

our views are quite close on others." He said he looked forward to additional talks between the two campaigns to ensure that his supporters' voices are heard and the convention adopts "the most progressive platform" in the party's history.

Sanders said he anticipated working with Clinton "to transform the Democratic Party so that it becomes a party of working people and young people, and not just wealthy campaign contributors."

The speech - it could be Sanders' final address before the summer convention - was viewed by more than 200,000 people, according to the campaign. It sought to shape his legacy as a one-time "fringe" candidate who generated a massive fol-

lowing through sprawling rallies and threatened Clinton for the nomination.

Looking ahead to the convention, Sanders said the party must support a \$15-an-hour federal minimum wage, pay equity for women, a ban on the sale and distribution of assault weapons and a defeat of the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal.

Sanders thanked his supporters for providing more than \$200 million in donations, most in increments of \$27, and rattled off what they had accomplished: 1.5 million people who attended his rallies and town meetings and more than 75 million phone calls from volunteers "urging their fellow citizens into action." — AP

NEBRASKA FAMILY 'DEVASTATED' BY FATAL GATOR ATTACK AT DISNEY

ORLANDO: The parents of a Nebraska toddler killed by an alligator at Walt Disney World say they're devastated by the loss of their son, whose death prompted the entertainment giant to add gator warnings at the resort.

A statement by Matt and Melissa Graves of Omaha, Nebraska, said words can't express the shock and grief their family is enduring. "We are devastated and ask for privacy during this extremely difficult time," said the statement, released by a family friend Thursday.

The brief statement also thanked authorities in Orlando, Florida, for their assistance after the gator grabbed 2-year-old Lane Graves from shallow water in a lake at a Disney hotel Tuesday. An animal described as being as long as 7 feet snatched the little boy as he waded in shallow water around nightfall Tuesday. The beach, located at Disney's Grand Floridian Resort and Spa across a lake from the Magic Kingdom, had "no swimming" signs but no warning about alligators.

The company said it will now add gator warnings. No time frame was announced immediately, and the resort's beaches remain closed. A statement by Disney spokeswoman Jacquie Wahler said the company also was conducting a "swift and thorough review of all of our processes and protocols."

While it's an unwritten rule for Florida residents to keep small children away from ponds and lakes in a state with an alligator population estimated at more than 1 million, many out-of-state visitors aren't aware of threat posed by the reptiles.

Kadie Whalen of Wynnewood, Pennsylvania, said her three young children and niece were playing on a resort beach at the water's edge four years ago when the beady eyes of a 7-foot gator appeared in a lake just a few feet away. She screamed and everyone scattered. No one was hurt, but after her experience, this week's fatal alligator attack didn't surprise her. "We knew that Disney was aware that this was a problem, and yet they encourage people to be there," Whalen said Thursday in a telephone interview. — AP



GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA: Alligators lie on grass near fresh water at Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park. — AP

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PHOENIX: A new home under construction in Phoenix. The Commerce Department Reported yesterday on US home construction in May. — AP

US HOME CONSTRUCTION PACE SLOWS IN MAY HOME BUILDING PERMITS RISE 0.7%, SINGLE-FAMILY STARTS UP 0.3%

WASHINGTON: US housing starts slipped in May as the construction of multi-family housing units dropped, but further gains in building permits suggested a rebound that would continue to support economic growth in the second quarter. Groundbreaking fell 0.3 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual pace of 1.16 million units, the Commerce Department said yesterday. May's decline followed a 4.9 percent surge in April. Housing remains a pillar of strength for the economy, with residential construction adding almost six-tenths of a percentage point to first-quarter gross domestic product, the biggest contribution in more than three years. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast housing starts falling to a 1.15 million-unit pace last month.

US Treasury prices pared losses after the data. Stock index futures were trading lower and the dollar was weaker against a basket

of currencies. Groundbreaking on single-family homes, the largest segment of the market, rose 0.3 percent to a 764,000-unit pace last month. Single-family starts in the South, where most home building takes place, rose 2.6 percent to their highest level since December 2007. Single-family starts in the Northeast surged 12.7 percent. In the West, groundbreaking on single-family housing projects rose 1.9 percent. But single-family starts in the Midwest tumbled 14.7 percent to a six-month low.

Further gains in single-family starts are likely after a survey on Thursday showed confidence among home builders rose to a five-month high in June amid optimism over sales and buyer traffic. But single-family home construction continues to run ahead of permits, which could limit gains in the near term. Housing starts for the volatile multi-family segment fell 1.2 percent to a

400,000-unit pace. The drop followed an 11.9 percent jump in April.

The multi-family segment of the market continues to be supported by strong demand for rental accommodation as some Americans remain wary of owning homes years after the housing market collapse. Multi-family home construction is also being aided by rising household formation as a fairly strong labor market increases employment opportunities for young adults.

Building permits rose 0.7 percent to a 1.14 million-unit rate last month. Permits for the construction of single-family homes fell 2.0 percent last month to a 726,000-unit rate. But single-family permits in the South rose 0.8 percent to a five-month high. Multi-family building permits increased 5.9 percent to a 412,000-unit pace in May. — Reuters

US UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FALL IN 16 STATES

WASHINGTON: Unemployment rates have fallen to very low levels in a third of US states, a trend that may push up wages in those states. The Labor Department says the unemployment rate is now significantly below the national figure of 4.7 percent in 16 states. It fell to 3.8 percent in Arkansas last month, the lowest on records from 1976.

Steady hiring has lowered unemployment rate in most states. But rates have also fallen for a bad reason: many of those out of work have stopped searching for jobs. The government doesn't count people as unemployed unless they are actively looking for work. Employers added a significant number of jobs in just three states last month, while four states lost jobs. Employment was essentially unchanged in 43 states. — AP

ZAIN LAUNCHES NEW POSTPAID PLANS WITH GREAT BENEFITS

'GENEROUS OFFERS DURING RAMADAN' STARTING AT KD 12 MONTHLY

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, launched exciting new postpaid plans that will entitle customers to a variety of great benefits as part of the company's latest promotional campaign "Generous offers during Ramadan with Zain".

The new plans are designed to offer postpaid customers a number of great benefits suitable for both their personal and professional needs. All of the new plans include a free smartphone, and the higher the package the more benefits the customer will enjoy.

The new postpaid plans start from the KD 12 monthly plan, which includes 500 local minutes, 6 GBs of Internet, and a free iPhone SE. The KD 18 monthly plan includes 500 local minutes, 50 GBs of Internet (instead of older capacity of 10 GBs), and a free iPhone SE. Additionally, customers who subscribe to the KD 21 monthly plan will enjoy 500 local minutes, 100 GBs of Internet (instead of older capacity of 50 GBs), and a free iPhone 6s.

The new KD 30 monthly plan (originally KD 38), includes 1,250 local minutes, 500 GBs of Internet, exciting entertainment services for 4 months, Internet sharing, free Zain Wi-Fi at the Avenues and Souk Sharq, a selection between an LTE Internet device or an Internet



device, as well as free tablet and iPhone 6s devices.

The highest monthly postpaid plan of KD 57 (originally KD 65), entitles customers to a comprehensive variety of benefits, including unlimited local minutes, 1 TB of Internet, 1 GB of Internet roaming, exciting entertainment services for 12 months, Internet sharing, free Zain Wi-Fi at the Avenues and Souk Sharq, device upgrade, a selection between an LTE Internet device or an Internet hotspot device, a selection between a tablet or a gaming console, free iPhone 6s, as well as Zain Beema, which offers a complete insurance service for smartphones for one year for free.

The new plans were specifically designed to complement the needs and aspirations of the largest family of subscribers in Kuwait. By launching the new postpaid plans, Zain aims at creating a new concept for the services it offers, as well as offering convenience with flexible and convenient plans that meet the different personal and professional needs of customers.

Through this launch, Zain continues to reinforce its leadership position and its pledge in offering the best services and offers to meet customers' practical and personal telecommunications needs.

hotspot device, and a free iPhone 6s.

Customer subscribing to the new KD 40 monthly plan (originally KD 48), will enjoy 2,500 local minutes, 750 GBs of Internet, 500 MB of Internet roaming, exciting entertainment services for 8 months, Internet sharing, free Zain Wi-Fi at the Avenues and Souk Sharq, device upgrade, a selection between an LTE Internet device or an Internet hotspot

INVESTORS SNATCH UP LAND PLOTS IN AL-SAJA'A INDUSTRIAL OASIS' STAGE 2

SHARJAH: Sharjah Asset Management (SAM), the investment arm of the Government of Sharjah has announced that just days after announcing their availability for sale, land plots for the Stage 2 area of Al-Saja'a Industrial Oasis have been eagerly snapped up by UAE, GCC, Arab residents and foreign nationals. All buyers being keen to take advantage of SAM's first freehold and 100-year leasehold (Usufruct Right) offering in this new industrial city.

According to SAM officials, there has been strong demand and sales for Stage 2's 114 plots, with the allocated industrial, mixed light use and retail land expected to attract even more interested parties, during this sales period.

With the sale of plots available to all nationalities, the attractiveness of freehold and Usufruct Right title deeds has played a significant part in maintaining Sharjah's leading status as an industrial hub for the region. Al-Saja'a Industrial Oasis is an industrial, mixed use and retail development comprising a total of 353 plots. 114 of these are allocated as part of the Stage 2 sales launch - or 32 per cent of the total land plots available. Plot sizes for Al-Saja'a Industrial Oasis range from 12,469sq. ft. to 112, 255 sq.ft.

Industry and manufacturing represents 16 per cent of Sharjah's overall GDP and it remains the leading destination for industrial activity in the UAE, as well as being one of the largest in the Middle East. This presents significant advantages to companies locating at Al-Saja'a Industrial Oasis, with access to



Sharjah's excellent infrastructure and logistics capabilities adding to the list of benefits.

Gregg Downer, Chief Real Estate Officer at Sharjah Asset Management said: "Al Saja'a Industrial Oasis has a clear competitive advantage for companies locating there, with Sharjah offering businesses an incredibly attractive investment environment. Sharjah also offers a competitively priced real estate market, a balanced diversification of industrial sectors, and the largest SME sector in the region - over 45,000 companies - as potential partners or customers." Located in close proximity to both Sharjah International Airport and Al-Hamriya Port, Al-Saja'a Industrial Oasis offers direct access to world-class logisti-

cal infrastructure, for companies to import, export or re-export goods and materials, both into and out of the UAE.

Guided by the vision of Dr Sheikh Sultan Bin Muhammad Al-Qasimi, Member of the UAE Supreme Council and the Ruler of Sharjah, to create a strong and diversified economy, Sharjah Asset Management follows a varied yet strategic approach to its investments.

Sectors that SAM invests in include finance and trade, logistics, technology, real estate, transportation, industrial and oil and gas.

Investors can visit the website at www.alsajaoasis.com for information on Al-Saja'a Industrial Oasis' development or contact our sales team on 06 597 2251 for further information.



FITCH REAFFIRMS KIB'S A+ RATINGS WITH STABLE OUTLOOK

KUWAIT: Fitch Ratings reaffirmed Kuwait International Bank's Long Term Issuer Default Rating "A+", Short Term Issuer Default Rating "F1" and Viability Rating (VR) at "b+" with a stable outlook.

KIB's Issuer Default Ratings (IDR) reflect an extremely high probability of support from the Kuwaiti authorities, if needed. Fitch Ratings assessment of support is based on the financial strength of Kuwait, in addition to the authorities' demonstrated willingness to support the domestic banking system.

According to Fitch, KIB's VR reflects the Bank's modest but improving franchise, its evolving strategy and relatively high concentration of financing to domestic real estate. On the other hand, NPL ratio fell to 1.1% at end of 2015 following write offs and recoveries. KIB's five-year strategy implemented in 2015 is based on building its retail and corporate franchise, and expanding the network. KIB now enters a new phase in its strategic plan, where stable growth is expected to be generated from the new product segments. Fitch had affirmed KIB's rating is Long-term IDR "A+", Short-term IDR "F1" and VR "b+" with stable outlook in November 2015.



DOW TO GET FIRST LICENSE UNDER EASED SAUDI RULES

RIYADH: US chemicals giant Dow has said it is the first company to get a license under new Saudi rules allowing 100 percent foreign ownership in the trade sector. The kingdom's powerful Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who is on a visit to the United States, presented the license to Dow chairman Andrew Liveris in Washington, the company said in a statement published yesterday.

Prince Mohammed is the driving force behind Vision 2030, an economic diversification plan which he released in April. It aims to wean the kingdom off oil, which remains its main revenue source even though global prices have fallen by around half since 2014. Vision 2030 and the National Transformation Program, which sets targets for implementing it, seek to boost non-oil revenues and employ more Saudis. In line with the Vision, ministers on Monday approved rules for foreign companies to invest in the wholesale and retail trade sector with 100 percent ownership, up from 75 percent.

Dow said the trading license advances its ability to deliver products in the areas of sustainable development, energy efficiency, oil and gas, alternative energy and water.

After Prince Mohammed met Treasury Secretary Jack Lew and other top US economic policymakers on Wednesday, the White House "underscored the United States' desire to be a key partner in helping Saudi Arabia implement its ambitious economic reform program." Dow calls itself Saudi Arabia's largest foreign investor. Its stakes include Sadara Chemical Co, a joint venture with Saudi oil giant Aramco. — AFP

CYPRUS SETS TOURIST ARRIVALS RECORD

NICOSIA: Bailed-out Cyprus has recorded its best ever tourist arrivals figures for the month of May, tourism officials said yesterday. The state-run Cyprus Tourism Organization said on a statement the 364,943 tourists who arrived on the eastern Mediterranean island in May were the "highest ever recorded" for that month.

In May there was an 18.7 percent hike in arrivals compared with the

same month in 2015 when 307,449 arrived, indicating that the economy is on an upward curve, official data showed.

Tourists from Britain—the island's largest holiday market—increased 4.5 percent to 129,765, while from second largest market Russia there was a jump of 51.4 percent to 107,730.

On the downside, tourism from Norway dipped 20.5 percent in May. For the first five months, arrivals rose

20.5 percent to 842,126 from 698,932 last year. Tourist arrivals hit a 14-year high in 2015 with 2.65 million, but this year industry officials are expecting an even higher total. Cyprus is seen as a safe family destination in a turbulent region.

Last year, arrivals rose 8.9 percent from 2.44 million in 2014, the best since the previous record of 2.69 in 2001. There was also a 4.4 percent hike in tourism revenue in 2015, the

best since 2001. Following a 10-billion-euro international rescue package to save a crumbling economy and insolvent banks in March 2013, Cyprus returned to growth in 2015 after nearly four years of recession.

Tourism income accounts for around 12 percent of the EU state's GDP and is credited with ensuring that Nicosia did not suffer double-digit recession post-bailout as initially feared. — AFP

MORE PROTESTS ON WAY, FRENCH UNION SAYS

PARIS: The French government yesterday held its first meeting in three months with a union staging protests against plans to reform the labor law but neither side suggested a breakthrough.

CGT union chief Philippe Martinez said the talks did nothing to alter plans for street demonstrations next Thursday that the government says could be banned. "The CGT and the government disagree on fundamental issues. Today, we confirmed those disagreements," Martinez said after a 90-minute meeting with Labour Minister Myriam El Khomri.

He said the bill containing the contested changes to labour regulations should be suspended and talks opened on CGT proposals for a rewrite of key elements. "The ball is in the government's court," Martinez said. The minister called the meeting constructive but said the Socialist government was determined to press on with a reform that would see work conditions set more extensively at company level. The government says the reforms are necessary to help curb high unemployment.

She said she was happy to have renewed contact but told reporters: "We did not reach a consensus. There are disagreements and they are not new."

Tension between the government and the CGT, one of France's two largest unions, rose sharply after an escalation in violence during a street march in Paris this week. Prime Minister Manuel Valls accused the CGT of turning a blind eye to gangs of masked youths who engaged in running battles with police, ransacked shops, daubed slogans on buildings and smashed the windows of a children's hospital. President Francois Hollande has threatened to ban marches for security reasons in a country where emergency rule applies after Islamist attackers killed 130 people last November. France is also hosting the Euro 2016 soccer tournament. — Reuters

POLAND RECEIVES FIRST MIDEAST LNG DELIVERY

WARSAW: Poland yesterday received its first-ever commercial LNG delivery from the Middle East at its brand new Baltic sea terminal, a key step in easing dependence on Russian gas and becoming a regional distributor. Poland now relies on Russia for about forty percent of its gas, with a third coming from domestic sources and 20 percent from central Asia.

But as tensions with the Kremlin have flared since its 2014 annexation of the Crimean peninsula from Ukraine, Warsaw believes that easing its energy reliance on Moscow is key to its national security. The Swinoujscie terminal has an initial annual capacity of five billion cubic metres of natural gas, but this could soon grow to 7.5 billion cubic metres—or a whopping fifty percent of Poland's current gas consumption.

Named after Poland's late president Lech Kaczynski, who died in 2010 in a jet crash in Russia, the facility cost 720 million euros (\$809 million). The facility is a key part of what Warsaw has variously dubbed its "Northern Gateway" or "Northern Corridor" plan to pump expanded LNG deliveries across Central Europe. Chartered by Qatargas, the massive Al Nuaman LNG tanker arrived at the Swinoujscie terminal on Poland's Baltic coast with supplies for the PGNiG Polish state gas monopoly. — AFP



SHANGHAI: Performers take to the stage during the opening ceremony for the Disney Resort in Shanghai, China, Thursday. — AP

SHANGHAI DISNEYLAND OPENS WITH HOPES CASH WILL POUR IN

SHANGHAI: Walt Disney Co opened Shanghai Disneyland, its first theme park in mainland China, with a lavish celebration Thursday featuring Communist Party leaders, a children's choir, Sleeping Beauty and other Disney characters.

A vice premier joined Disney CEO Bob Iger in cutting the grand opening's red ribbon, showing the ruling party's support for the \$5.5 billion investment in promoting tourism at a time of slowing economic growth. They read letters of congratulations from the Chinese and American presidents, Xi Jinping and Barack Obama. "This is one of the proudest and most exciting moments in the history of the Walt Disney Co," Iger said after the choir sang. Later, actors dressed as Sleeping Beauty, Donald Duck and other Disney characters danced on stage.

The festive sentiment was tempered by news from Florida that an alligator killed a 2-year-old boy at Disney's flagship Walt Disney World. The boy drowned after the animal dragged him into a lagoon on Tuesday. The company hopes Shanghai Disneyland will burnish the brand behind "Frozen" in the world's most populous film market and help revive Disney's struggling international theme park business. Analysts expect Shanghai Disneyland to become the world's most-visited theme park, attracting at least 15 million and as many as 50 million guests a year. By contrast, Walt Disney World drew 19.3 million people in 2014.

Speaking as a light rain fell, Vice Premier Wang Yang quipped, "I would like to call this a rain of US dollars or of renminbi," the Chinese currency. Wang, a member of the ruling party's Politburo, described the park as an example of Sino-US "practical cooperation" and "people to people exchanges." Despite slower growth, China's economy still is one of the world's best-performing and tourism spending is rising.

Shanghai represents a market of 300 million people living within three hours of the park by car or train in one of China's most

affluent regions. China's bullet train network can draw in areas further afield. YouGov, a market research firm, said 44 percent of people it surveyed in China in May said they plan to visit Shanghai Disneyland within a year. It said 80 percent plan to take family members.

"I think it's really lively here and every girl can realize her dream of becoming a princess," said Gong Haiyan, a visitor from western China's Sichuan province.

Wang Lei, 34, said she liked the park, despite long waits for some things. "I'm sure I will go again, maybe again and again," said Wang, a buyer for a Shanghai food chain. "I'll bring my kids and relatives from my hometown." Chinese are not cutting back on tourism despite the weak economy, said Shaun Rein, managing director of China Market Research in Shanghai.

"They are still spending on experiences and on their kids," Rein said. "It's going to be a huge success. Everybody in China who has a kid or a grandkid is going to want to go to Shanghai Disney." Disney's opening follows a decade of negotiations, five years of construction and weeks of testing. Iger said more than 1 million visitors already have tried out its rides, shops, restaurants and two hotels.

Global brands like Disney are rushing to create products for Chinese tastes. The company added China-themed elements and put the emphasis on popular characters at the Shanghai park, while downplaying its American identity. At the entrance, instead of "Main Street USA," it's "Mickey Avenue."

Near its iconic Storybook Castle, Disney created a "Garden of the Twelve Friends" using characters such as Remy from "Ratatouille" and Tigger from "Winnie the Pooh" as animals of the Chinese Zodiac. Disney says the Wandering Moon Teahouse, modeled on a building in eastern China, is the only Chinese-style structure in any of its parks.

LAGARDE WISHES 'FELLOW EUROPEAN' BRITS BON COURAGE IN EU VOTE

VIENNA: IMF chief Christine Lagarde urged British voters yesterday to have the "courage" to vote the right way in next week's referendum on whether to leave the European Union. Without explicitly urging Britons to vote "Remain", she said there was a clear case by most economists against Brexit.

"It has been said that 'it takes great courage to see the world in all its tainted glory, and still to love it.' So I wish bon courage to our fellow Europeans from the United Kingdom!" Lagarde said in a speech in Vienna. The International Monetary Fund delayed a report on Britain's economy, due on Thursday, for 24 hours due to the murder of Labour member of parliament and "Remain" campaigner Jo Cox. Referendum campaigning in Britain remains suspended.

Lagarde said the IMF was "neutral" in Britain's highly charged political debate, but that the facts spoke for themselves. "I certainly hope that from our neutral position we can at least shed some light on the economic value of one choice or the other," Lagarde said, adding that most British people had benefited from EU membership.

"We have reached our determination and certainly concluded that the economic risks of leaving are firmly to the downside," she said, later declining to elaborate in a panel discussion with Austrian Finance Minister Hans Joerg Schelling. — Reuters

EU REACHES DEAL ON WATERED-DOWN RULES AGAINST TAX-DODGING

LUXEMBOURG: European Union states reached preliminary agreement yesterday on new rules to counter corporations' tax avoidance, but it watered down some proposals after lobbying by smaller countries, such as Belgium and Austria.

Ministers were under pressure to approve new rules proposed by the European Commission in January, after revelations in the so-called Panama Papers and Luxleaks cases. After months of wrangling, EU finance ministers in a regular meeting in Luxembourg backed an amended version of the Commission proposals, excluding some controversial measures and delaying others. The deal is suspended until Monday. If no country raises objections by then, the agreement will take effect. The Belgian and Czech finance ministers asked for the extra time to sort out pending technical issues.

"I am confident that what we have is still a good step forward in the fight against tax avoidance," Jeroen Dijsselbloem, the chair of the talks and Dutch Finance Minister, told a news conference after the meeting. Corporate tax practices cost EU states an estimated 70 billion euros (\$76.10 billion) a year in lost revenues, according to an EU Parliament report. But the plan to curtail them is less ambitious than what was originally planned.

A proposal known as switch-over clause was dropped because some finance ministers said it could cause double taxation of European corporations, making them less competitive.

The clause would have taxed dividends and capital gains that European companies pay to companies they control in low-tax or tax-free countries, which are then returned to the parent company. In theory, the money was liable to tax by the tax haven country - even though little or no tax was imposed - so on its return it is not subject to tax, to avoid duplicate taxation.

The European Parliament, which in tax matters has only a consulting role, had urged states to tighten the original switch-over clause. Measures to reduce multinationals' artificial shift of profits to subsidiaries in tax havens were also changed, granting states leeway on how to apply the new rules.

The original proposal said that states should automatically tax profits shifted to countries with tax rates 40 percent below theirs. The ministers eliminated the rate threshold, although officials said the substance of the proposal remained unchanged.

Ministers were also stuck on when to apply proposed rules to reduce tax deductions of interest payments. Some companies use those deductions to cut their taxes by arranging artificial loans from subsidiaries in low-tax countries. Belgium, Austria, Malta, Slovenia and Lithuania asked for the new rules on limitation of interest deductions to be delayed. They want them to become effective only after an agreement is reached at international level by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. —Reuters

SPECTRE OF BREXIT SPOOKS INVESTORS IN LIVERPOOL

'WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF BRITAIN LEAVES THE EU?'

LIVERPOOL: A single question was on the lips of the thousands of investors gathered in the city of Liverpool in northwest England this week: What will happen if Britain leaves the EU? From a small English milk producer to a large Indian employer, no fewer than 30,000 businessmen and women gathered for the International Festival for Business, the largest meeting of its kind in Britain.

The UK will go to the polls on June 23 to settle the debate on its continued EU membership. The campaigns for and against were this week thrown into disarray after the killing of lawmaker Jo Cox just seven days before the vote. Polls have indicated growing support for leaving, days ahead of the referendum with markets reacting nervously.

"The European referendum is clearly bringing a degree of uncertainty to business markets," said Ian McCarthy, director of the International Festival for Business. "Let's hope that when there is a decisive result toward the end of June, business can get back to what it does best which is developing products and services," he said. The vast exhibition hall on the banks of the River Mersey was buzzing with product presentations, conferences and private meetings, where organizers expect contracts worth £265 million (\$374 million, 334 million euros) to be inked.

But in every spare moment, talk turned to the potential fallout of an exit: whether Prime Minister David Cameron's gamble in calling the vote could imperil

his political future; and whether a break with Brussels bureaucracy could be positive. "In case of a Brexit we would have the biggest recession in a generation, but we would survive," said Will Butler-Adams, CEO of Brompton Bicycle, the maker of iconic folding bikes. "For my business I prefer to be in Europe but we would survive anyway, we would adapt." Anyone making predictions about what would happen however, is wasting time, he added.

"You can't make figures in advance about the consequences because a Brexit would not happen overnight." International organizations, including the International Monetary Fund, have warned that Britain's economy will suffer if it leaves.

'Alone and isolated'

Proudly showing off his antique sewing machine, master leather craftsman Keith Hanshaw said he was not afraid. From his studio in Huyton, in the suburbs of Liverpool, his small company The Leather Satchel exports bags as far as Japan and Australia.

"In the short term, nothing good would come from a Brexit. But on a medium to long term, it could help to sign free-trade agreements," said Hanshaw, an affable company executive director with a neatly trimmed beard. Leaving the bloc would allow Britain to negotiate trade deals without having to take into account the diverse interests of the EU's

27 other members, he believes.

Hanshaw is planning to vote in favour of Brexit, but admits that many of his employees are happy with the status quo. The economic redevelopment of Liverpool and much of post-industrial Britain is vulnerable to shocks.

From the opening of the port city's first docks in 1715 to 1960 the city enjoyed two and a half centuries of prosperity. It was the starting point of goods destined for export around the British Empire, and a departure point for emigrants from Ireland and around Europe seeking a better life in the United States.

The city experienced a steep decline after 1960, but has experienced a burgeoning revival in the last two decades. Its docks, once the foundation of the city's wealth that fell into obsolescence, have been regenerated as a cultural and tourist hub thanks to a share of the £1.5 billion in European funds that the city has received, according to local authorities. Work is underway to develop a new port, capable of accommodating the latest generation of container ships, due to open this year.

"The Brexiters who demand that we should leave Europe quite simply tell you that the grass is greener on the other side," said Joe Anderson, mayor of Liverpool and a member of the centre-left Labor party. "My belief is that there would be desert on the other side and a lonely path for the UK left alone and isolated." — AFP

SINGAPORE EXPORTS SURGE IN MAY ON STRONG GOLD TRADE

SINGAPORE: Singapore exports surged in May on increased pharmaceutical and gold shipments as traders seek a safe haven from market turmoil but analysts warned yesterday the surprise jump did not indicate a wider economic recovery. Non-oil domestic exports soared 11.6 percent year-on-year for the month, led by prefabricated buildings, pharmaceuticals and gold, trade promotion body International Enterprise (IE) Singapore said.

While Singapore does not have a large domestic market for the precious metal, it is a big regional player in the trade. Uncertainty in global markets - ranging from a slowdown in the Chinese economy to plunging crude prices - has pushed gold prices 20 percent higher in the last year. "The increase in exports to Taiwan and India is also helped by a boost in gold trade. The global demand for gold is high as investors are seeking safe havens from the financial unrest in stocks and commodity markets," said Song Seng Wun, an economist with CIMB Private Banking.

It was also the trade-reliant city-state's best export performance since a 18.5 percent year-on-year jump in March 2015. IE Singapore said non-electronics shipments, including pharmaceuticals and petrochemicals, expanded by 19.0 percent, reversing the previous month's 8.1 percent decline.



SINGAPORE: A truck (bottom) carrying containers drives along the pier at the terminal port in Singapore yesterday. Singapore exports rebounded sharply in May after months of sustained decline, official data showed yesterday, confounding analysts forecasts for slower economic growth this year. — AFP

There was a notable surge in demand from the United States and Taiwan, both major markets for Singapore. Exports to the US grew 9.1 percent while those to Taiwan leaped 11.2 percent in May.

But analysts said May's figures could be an abnormality as there was little indication of a real turnaround in global economic fortunes. "We hesitate to jump for joy and call for a turnaround in the exports

outlook as this out-performance was really based on a few narrow segments, in particular gold," UOB wrote in a research note.

Song said the improved US figures came from an unusual boost in pharmaceutical shipments while Taiwan received a bulk of Singapore's pre-fabricated buildings in a one-time deal. Meanwhile, there was a notable dip in demand from the European Union and China. — AFP

KOREAN CARMAKERS BATTLE AVTOVAZ FOR POLE POSITION IN RUSSIA

MOSCOW/SEOUL: South Korea's Hyundai Motor and its affiliate Kia Motors are using the decline of Russia's car industry to boost market share, turning the screw on Renault-Nissan's beleaguered Russian venture Avtovaz. They are maintaining production levels and keeping prices low during Russia's economic downturn, which has seen car sales fall by half from their peak of almost 3 million a year in 2012-13, seeking to reap rewards when sales pick up. Their strategy has been helped by the struggles of Avtovaz, the once-dominant player in Russia. It has been hit harder by the market decline and failed to shake the stigma of its Soviet-era Lada brand, still viewed by many Russians as a cut below foreign cars.

"I'm biased against the domestic car industry," said Victoria Andreeva, a 28-year-old PR manager in Moscow who bought a Hyundai Solaris last year. "I still remember the car I learnt to drive on, after turning the wheel there were calluses on my palms." This persistent stigma, and the strong challenge from Hyundai and Kia, have piled pressure on France's Renault. It sunk \$1 billion into Avtovaz in 2008 for an initial 25 percent stake, hoping to replicate its success with Dacia in Romania and transform Lada into a big budget European brand. It has since written down its

investment by 70 percent. Hyundai holds a 34 percent stake in Kia Motors, which it acquired at the height of the Asian financial crisis in 1998, while Renault is now the majority owner of Avtovaz with its Japanese alliance partner Nissan. Battered by an economic crisis fuelled by lower oil prices and Western sanctions over Ukraine, car sales in Russia fell 36 percent last year as cash-strapped consumers held back from expensive purchases. But Hyundai and Kia sales only fell 10 and 16 percent respectively, according to the Association of European Businesses (AEB) industry group. Their combined market share has doubled since 2012 to about 20 percent. By contrast, the combined market share of Avtovaz and Renault-Nissan has held at around 30 percent since 2012. Gains by Renault-Nissan have been offset by sliding Avtovaz sales, which plunged 31 percent last year. A spokesman for Hyundai Motor said it planned to launch new products and increase production in Russia to protect profits while expanding its market share. Hyundai Vice President Zayong Koo said in late April the carmaker would "try to gain the upper hand in Russia when the market recovers by continuously carrying out a strategy of expanding market share".

Renault and Avtovaz declined to comment.

'CONTRARIAN STRATEGY'

The South Korean carmakers' strategy of using an economic downturn to expand market share and emerge as winners when sales pick up has worked before, notably in the United States. Hyundai was the only major carmaker that increased US sales during a 2009 market slump. It emerged with a company record market share of 5.1 percent in 2011 when sales recovered. "During the economic downturn, Hyundai attracted dealers from struggling rival Ford Motor, which helped them strengthen," said Ko Tae-bong, an auto analyst at Seoul-based HI Investment & Securities. "Hyundai's contrarian management strategy is the major reason behind its global success so far," he said. The two carmakers are now well placed to do the same in Russia having invested in local production and won a reputation with consumers for providing cheap, reliable cars. They have trumped other foreign carmakers, helped by Hyundai's plant in Russia which produces all of the country's best-selling Hyundai Solaris cars and Kia Rio models. This has helped the Korean companies undercut rivals such as German car giant Volkswagen, whose reliance on costly imported parts has forced them to hike prices to offset the devaluation of the rouble. —Reuters

PUTIN MAKES PITCH FOR BETTER EU TIES AS ECONOMY SUFFERS

'WEST WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR BAD BLOOD'

SAINT PETERSBURG: Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday said he was willing to reach out to Europe to mend relations shattered by the Ukraine crisis but insisted the West was responsible for the bad blood. Putin was making a pitch at Russia's major annual economic forum in Saint Petersburg to improve business ties with Europe as Moscow desperately tries to breathe life into its recession-hit economy battered by Western sanctions.

"European business wants and is ready to work with our country. European politicians need to reach out to business, to show wisdom, far-sightedness and flexibility," Putin said.

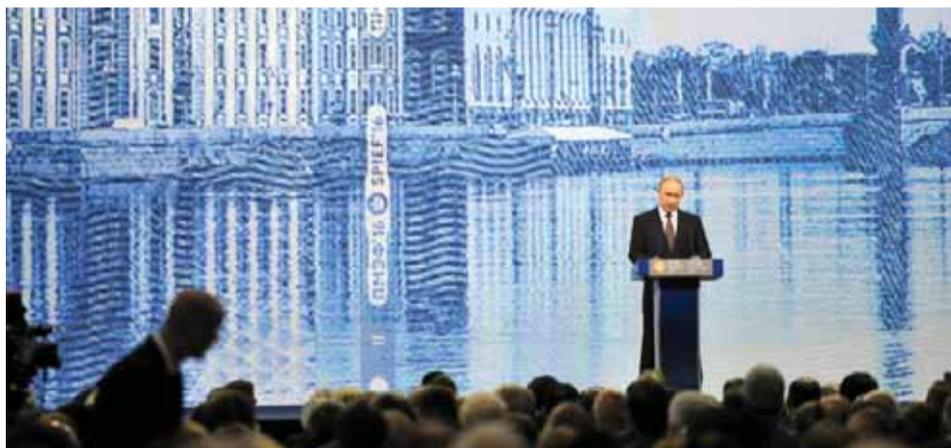
"We remember how all this started. Russia did not initiate today's collapse," he said. "We hold no grudge and are willing to reach out to our European partners but obviously this can't be a one-sided game." Russia's energy-driven economy is locked in its longest slump since Putin came to power over 16 years ago, caused by both Western sanctions and a slump in the oil price.

As Putin was talking news emerged that the European Union had rolled over for another year sanctions adopted in response to Moscow's March 2014 annexation of Crimea, which prohibit the EU from doing business on the peninsula. Sources in Brussels say that broader economic sanctions over a pro-Russian uprising in east Ukraine that have hit Russia's financial sector could be extended by the EU as early as next week ahead of their expiration at the end of July.

Speaking Thursday in Saint Petersburg the head of the EU commission Jean-Claude Juncker warned Russia that the economic sanctions would not be dropped until Russia fully implemented a peace deal to end the conflict in east Ukraine that the West blames on Moscow.

"The next step is clear: full implementation of the agreement—no more, no less," Juncker told Russia's main economic forum ahead of a meeting with Putin. "This is the only way to begin our conversation and the only way to lift the economic sanctions that have been imposed."

The Juncker-Putin meeting—their first in Russia since the EU slapped sanctions on Moscow over Ukraine in 2014 — had sparked Kremlin hopes it might signal the start of a return to business-as-usual with the bloc.



ST PETERSBURG: Russian President Vladimir Putin speaks at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum in St. Petersburg yesterday. — AP

Russia's gross domestic product fell some 3.7 percent last year and the IMF predicts its economy will shrink by 1.5 percent this year before experiencing modest growth in 2017.

Putin, who has previously insisted that the worst of Russia's economic crisis is over, said that he was targeting a return to growth rates of "no lower than four percent". — AFP

GOLD SET FOR THIRD WEEK OF GAINS, HELPED BY BREXIT TALK

LONDON: Gold rose yesterday, supported by a softer dollar, and was heading for a third week of gains following a cautious note from the Federal Reserve on interest rates and uncertainty ahead of Britain's vote on European Union membership. The metal, often seen as an insurance in times of financial and economic uncertainty, peaked at \$1,315.55 on Thursday, its strongest since August 2014.

Gold then slid 1 percent as financial markets reacted to the suspension of campaigning for June 23's British referendum after a lawmaker was shot dead. Spot gold rose 0.8 percent to \$1,288.33 an ounce at 1157 GMT. Bullion has risen 1.1 percent so far this week.

US gold for August delivery fell 0.5 percent to \$1,291.80 an ounce. "Gold is reverting to its safe-haven role, in a situation where euro zone government bonds are in negative yield territory and investors have fewer safe assets to choose from," Mitsubishi Corp strategist Jonathan Butler said.

"The other major piece of news this week has been the Fed's downgrade of GDP growth and its unchanged inflation expectations ... all of these factors are supportive of rates remaining low and ... favorable to gold." Gold is highly sensitive to rising interest rates, which lift the opportunity cost of holding the precious metal. Sterling-denominated gold rose to a three-year high on Thursday, while the metal priced in euros reached its highest since April 2013, due to the weakening of both currencies against the dollar ahead of the referendum. The Bank of England escalated its warnings about fallout from the vote, saying it could harm the global economy and that sterling looked increasingly likely to weaken further if "Leave" wins. "Leading into the Brexit vote, we expect gold to remain around current levels between the \$1,270-\$1,300 range. But after then all bets are off as everything depends on the results of the referendum," ANZ commodity strategist Daniel Hynes said.—Reuters

CRUDE OIL PRICES RISE FOR FIRST TIME IN SEVEN DAYS

LONDON: Crude oil prices rose yesterday for the first time in seven days, but trading remains volatile less than a week before Britain goes to the polls over its EU membership. Brent crude futures were up \$1.11 at \$48.30 a barrel by 1142 GMT, having dropped 3.6 percent in the previous session. US West Texas Intermediate crude futures rose 81 cents to \$47.02 after falling by 3.8 percent in the previous session. Both contracts are on track for a more than 4 percent decline for the week. "It's mainly Brexit at the moment, at least until next Thursday, before people start to look at the more fundamental oil/commodity drivers again," ABN Amro senior energy economist Hans van Cleef said.

Analysts said that investors had closed some short positions after a week of volatile trading, which helped to bring about some correction in oil prices yesterday.

"I suspect markets will be very volatile overnight on Thursday and on Friday," Julian Jessop, chief economist and head of commodities research at Capital Economics, told Reuters Global Oil Forum.

Jessop said he would expect a sharp sell-off in oil if Britain votes to leave the EU, possibly sending prices as low as \$40 for Brent before a rally sets in. He forecast Brent and WTI crude would be around \$45 a barrel at the end of 2016 and around \$60 at the end of 2017.

The British pound rose from a two-month low after campaigning for June 23's so-called Brexit vote was suspended following the murder on Thursday of UK member of parliament Jo Cox, a vocal advocate for Britain to stay in the EU. Britain's top share index, the FTSE 100, rose from a four-month low as stocks that have been hardest hit by Brexit concerns rebounded after the shooting.

Global oil majors Chevron and Royal Dutch Shell are putting small refineries up for auction as they look to trim lower-margin assets in the face of rising crude oil prices.

Chevron, the second-largest US oil company, is soliciting interest in its Burnaby refinery in British Columbia and gasoline stations, the company told Reuters. Shell is looking for buyers for its Martinez refinery in California, two people familiar with the matter told Reuters. Shell declined to comment. — Reuters



TOKYO: People are reflected in the window of a securities company showing stock prices on the Tokyo Stock Exchange in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP

JAPAN FM DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT YEN RISE, VOWS ACTION

ASO SEES NO DEBATE ON CONTINGENCY PLAN

TOKYO: Japanese Finance Minister Taro Aso yesterday fired off a warning shot against a recent rise in the yen, saying he was deeply concerned about "one-sided, rapid and speculative" currency moves and would respond urgently if necessary - a hint at possible yen-selling market intervention. The latest jawboning - official comment intended to influence markets - comes as the yen surged across the board after the Bank of Japan (BOJ) left monetary policy unchanged on Thursday, despite market fears of global turmoil if Britain votes to exit the European Union in the June 23 referendum.

Senior officials from the Ministry of Finance (MOF), the BOJ and the

Financial Services Agency (FSA) later held a regular meeting to discuss financial markets. They did not debate contingency plans to counter a market rout in the event of Brexit.

Masatsugu Asakawa, Japan's top currency official, told reporters after the meeting that the officials agreed that volatility in the currency market was increasing and they should liaise closely.

In Japan the MOF has jurisdiction over currency policy and intervention. The BOJ conducts intervention under instructions from the ministry. "Stability in currencies is extremely important. We'll closely coordinate with other countries on this issue," Aso said earlier, adding that he was watching the market

with a sense of urgency to prevent speculative moves from persisting. "We will respond more than ever when necessary. I believe such response is in line with G7 and G20 agreements." Japan has stayed out from the market since it last intervened in November 2011.

Aso declined to comment when asked if the MOF and FSA have any contingency plans to avoid financial market turmoil in case of Brexit. "It is desirable for Britain to stay in a strong EU," he said. Asakawa would not be drawn on Brexit contingency measures either. "It is up to Britain whether a Brexit will happen. We did not necessarily discuss concrete responses on the basis of hypothetical situations." — Reuters

SELL-OFF ABATES AS BREXIT OPINION SEEN SHIFTING

LONDON: Shares, oil and bond yields rose yesterday after a tumultuous week and as campaigning for Britain's EU membership referendum next week was suspended after the killing of a pro-"Remain" politician. European bourses climbed more than 1 percent at the end of a third straight week of losses and benchmark 10-year German bond yields clawed back up to the zero mark as investors' risk averseness eased.

Wall Street was expected to start flat however, having snapped a 5-day losing streak on Thursday and with housing data and Canadian inflation figures due to be released. Campaigning for Britain's June 23 EU referendum, which overshadowed this week's US and Japanese central bank meetings, was put on hold after British lawmaker, Jo Cox, was murdered on Thursday. The recently volatile pound rose 0.5 percent to \$1.4277 with analysts noting that Cox's death could generate sentiment in favor of remaining in the EU. "There was this incredible melt down in risk sentiment (yesterday) where everything seemed to be aligning and then this terrible incident in England seemed to be the root of everything reversing," said Saxo Bank's head of FX strategy John Hardy.

"I think everyone is still in a state of shock as to what this means. Does it tilt the odds on a vote next week? It's hard to know but it certainly disrupted what the market was doing."

Oil, which has been a major driver of the sharp swings in global markets this year, also helped shift the mood as it rose for the first time in seven sessions. That decline has pushed prices down by 10 percent. Eurozone banking stocks rebounded almost 4 percent having hit a four-year low - with all-time lows for banks including Deutsche Bank and Credit Suisse - on Brexit worries and sub-zero interest rates, which are eating into earnings. Gold also advanced, rising 0.4 percent to \$1,283 an ounce after wild swings overnight. It had surged to a near-two-year high of more than \$1,315, only to slump 2.8 percent by the end of the session. It was on track for a third week of gains. "Leading into the Brexit vote, we expect gold to remain around current levels between the \$1,270-\$1,300 range. But after then all bets are off as everything depends on the results of the referendum," ANZ commodity strategist Daniel Hynes said.

DIGGING FOR TREASURIES

Ten year US government bond yields were hovering at 1.60 percent ahead of US trading, tumbling from 1.86 percent at the beginning of June as investors made a dash for safe-haven assets. They had touched close to 1.50 percent on Thursday, the lowest for four-years and that has dovetailed with 10-year yields going sub-zero in Germany, 15-year yields doing the same in Japan and even 30-year yields in Switzerland.

"This is latest chapter of a long running theme that is going to continue to play out," Hermes chief economist Neil Williams said. "We are going to live in this world until the major central banks start turning the taps off, but my question is how they are going to do it." Overnight, Asia's main stock markets saw modest gains although that was little consolation after a difficult week that saw both weak Chinese data and the Bank of Japan hold off on more stimulus but talk loudly about currency intervention. — Reuters

CLEAN ENERGY FOR POOREST STARVED OF INVESTMENT

BARCELONA: Only a tiny fraction of climate change funding is going into small-scale solar, biogas and other off-grid systems that may be the best way to get power to the world's poorest, researchers say. That problem, evident in new figures from the London-based International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), points to a challenge for the main international organisation promoting access to clean energy for everyone on the planet, which this week adopted a strategy to achieve that goal earlier than a 2030 deadline.

Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) head Rachel Kyte said its new five-year plan aimed to help "leaders to go further, faster" by supporting them to make good energy policy, setting up partnerships and unlocking finance. "This will help us

secure an energy transition that is clean, affordable and just, because no one must be left behind," she said in a statement.

There are still around 1 billion people in the world without access to electricity, and nearly 3 billion who cook using smoky fuels such as wood, kerosene and dung. The new Sustainable Development Goals, which took effect this year, include a target to ensure universal access to "affordable, reliable and modern energy" by 2030. Estimates of how much is needed to provide everyone in the world with electric power and clean cooking facilities range from \$40 billion to \$100 billion per year. In 2011, the International Energy Agency said \$23 billion was required annually for decentralized energy as part of that push, on top of existing funding, the new IIED report noted. It calculated

that, of the \$14.1 billion approved by governments in international climate finance between 2003 and 2015, around 40 percent, or \$5.6 billion, was earmarked for energy programs, but only 3.5 percent was specifically allocated for decentralized energy projects.

While it did not determine specific figures for wider development aid used to tackle climate change, the IIED said total public climate finance for small-scale, off-grid energy likely amounted to little more than 5 percent of what is needed. Rita Poppe, an advocacy officer with Hivos, a Netherlands-based development organization that commissioned the report, said more government money should flow into small-scale renewable energy - such as solar home systems, mini-grids and clean cookstoves - because that was the

best way to get energy to the poorest quickly. "They see the (power) lines above their heads, but they are not connected, so you really need a decentralised solution," she said. The IIED paper said most public climate finance is going to large-scale energy projects in high and middle-income countries. IIED researcher Neha Rai said bigger energy projects offered more easily measurable benefits to funders in terms of reducing planet-warming emissions, while the costs of putting smaller schemes in place were higher, a deterrent to investment. But the paper noted how some countries like Bangladesh and Nepal have set up national agencies that bundle small projects together so they are more attractive and cheaper to fund. The agencies then channel money to the local level. — Reuters

SATURDAY, JUNE 18, 2016

Kuwait Times Weekender

www.kuwaittimes.net



An Afghan boy studies the Quran during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan at a mosque in Herat. Muslims throughout the world are marking the month of Ramadan, the holiest month in the Islamic calendar during which devotees fast from dawn till dusk.— AFP

Tale of Brazil slum orchestra has audiences in tears

It's what modern fairytales are made of. A classical violinist wracked with self-doubt takes a job teaching children in one of Brazil's most crime-ridden favelas, and ends up creating an orchestra with young delinquents and teenage mothers. Except the story behind "The Violin Teacher", a film which has been moving audiences to tears, is true. And the Latin American movements it is based on, which teach poor children how to play instruments after school, have been hailed as the future of classical music.

Having seen his young actors drawn from a tough Sao Paulo slum learn to play Bach as he shot the film, director Sergio Machado is now evangelical about the city's Baccarelli Institute. "It is magical. What they do is fantastic," he told AFP in an interview by phone from Brazil. Machado's own 11-year-old son was so impressed by what he saw happening on set that he took up the violin himself. The institute, set up by musician Silvio Baccarelli in 1996 in the sprawling favela of Heliopolis, is "one of the most important cultural projects in Brazil", Machado said.

'Playing themselves'

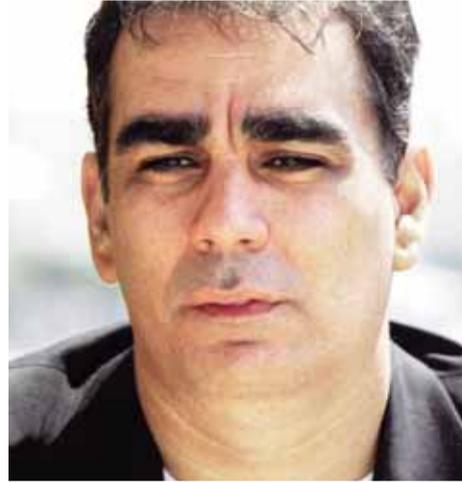
Inspired to some degree by Venezuela's El Sistema movement—which has produced a long

line of classical music prodigies from equally humble backgrounds including Gustavo Dudamel, now head of the Los Angeles Philharmonic it aims to give children a refuge from often chaotic and dangerous lives. Three thousand children a year pass through the institute, which has been championed by the Indian-born star conductor Zubin Mehta. Machado was initially sceptical about the method before being utterly won over.

"The great conductor, Italian Claudio Abbado said that because of this and what El Sistema is doing, Latin America is the future of classical music. And he is right." The director said he didn't set out to make a sugary tearjerker that just played on the emotions but wanted to reflect the true reality of people's lives. "Yet there is hope. I wanted to do a film about people who are trying to change this really dark reality," he added. "All of the kids in the film are non-actors. They all came from that community and brought their own experience into the film and they are playing themselves. "There is one scene where a girl starts screaming about her life. That is real, she is talking about herself," he said.

Begged for a part

At first Machado wanted to cast a white actor



This file photo shows Brazilian director Sergio Machado posing during the 58th edition of the Cannes International Film Festival, southern France. — AFP

as their inspirational teacher "because I was kind of thinking of myself". But Lazaro Ramos, one of Brazil's biggest stars, begged him to play the violinist, a gifted soloist who cracks during an audition for the Sao Paulo Symphony Orchestra. "He wanted it so much. I have never begged for

a part in my life', he told me. 'I need to do this, because it's my life. I come from places like this and this happened to me.' Just as in the film, a brilliant teacher spotted Ramos's talent and helped save him from the streets.

Ramos "comes from a very, very tough situation", Machado said. "His mother died when he was very small, he has known hunger and the worst kind of problems and yet he became a star." That helped to bond him to the favela kids in the orchestra, Machado said. "He is what all these kids want to be. He understands them. They are what he was. We became very close." And with the exception of the final concert, when the institute's orchestra took up the relay, all the music in the film from rap to Strauss is played by the actors.

"In a normal city the musicians come from the middle classes. Here they come from the common people, really the common people," said Brazil's most revered conductor Isaac Karabtchevsky, who loves to work at the institute. "I find it amazing that you can play Mahler with these children. I believe that God is there." "The Violin Teacher" is on release across much of Europe and Asia this summer. — AFP



Presenter Kate Beckinsale, fourth from left, poses with the recipients of the Crystal Award for Excellence in Film at the Women in Film 2016 Crystal + Lucy Awards at the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, Calif. From left are producers Lynda Obst, Jane Rosenthal, Lauren Shuler Donner, Lianne Halfon, Denise Di Novi and Lucy Fisher. — AP photos



Actress Cate Blanchett addresses the audience.



Actress Taraji P Henson accepts the Lucy Award for Excellence in Television.



Actress Cate Blanchett addresses the audience.



Actress Natalie Dormer accepts the Women in Film Max Mara Face of the Future award.

Women in Film awards celebrate excellence behind the camera

Women in Film is going behind the scenes to recognize 10 behind-the-camera talents with its annual Crystal + Lucy Awards. Eight female producers, an agent and a director accepted prizes alongside actresses Taraji P Henson and Natalie Dormer at a dinner ceremony Wednesday night at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. All called for gender parity in Hollywood and sisterhood among women working in the industry. "We're all we got, ladies," a spirited Henson said as she claimed the award for excellence in television. "We're fighting for what we deserve."

Women in Film helped fund studies that inspired the American Civil Liberties Union to demand federal inquiry last year into whether discrimination is to blame for the dearth of female directors in Hollywood. Research shows women have represented around four percent of directors of top films for the past 15 years. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is now investigating.

Agent Hylda Queally, "Homeland" director Lesli Linka Glatter and the producers behind such films as "Interstellar," "Juno," and the "X-Men" franchise discussed the challenges they faced as women and mothers in male-dominated Hollywood. Queally, who accepted her award from longtime client Cate Blanchett, said she used to lie and say she was having car trouble rather than admit she needed time to attend her child's school performance.

Producer Lucy Fisher said that when she realized "The Fugitive" premiere was scheduled for the same night as her daughter's kindergarten sleepover, Fisher called star Harrison Ford and asked him to say he was unavailable so the premiere would have to be rescheduled. Glatter, whose directing credits also include "Mad Men," "The West Wing," and "The Walking Dead," said she never expected that after 25 years in the business that there would still be so few women behind the camera. "It's not easy for anyone to be a director," Glatter said after accepting the directors award from Claire Danes. "But it shouldn't be harder for our daughters than it is for our sons."

People in hiring positions have to be willing to "open the door" for women, she said. Producer Lauren Shuler Donner said she had worked with nearly all of her fellow honorees, having mentored some and been mentored by others. Besides Fisher and Donner, the other producers recognized were Denise Di Novi, Liane Halfon, Lynda Obst, Jane Rosenthal, Paula Wagner and Paula Weinstein. The Crystal + Lucy Awards is a fundraiser to support Women in Film's programs, including a new three-year campaign to support additional gender studies and provide unconscious-bias training to Hollywood workers. — AP



This file photo taken on May 11, 2013 shows US singer Marvin Lee Aday, aka Meat Loaf, performing on stage in Zwolle.— AFP

American rocker Meat Loaf collapses on stage in Canada

American rock singer Meat Loaf collapsed on stage while performing in Canada on Thursday, videos posted online showed, days after he postponed a show due to illness. The 68-year-old dropped his microphone and fell to the floor in the middle of his 1993 hit "I'd Do Anything for Love (But I Won't Do That)". Stage hands and band members rushed to his aid as he lay on the stage. "I didn't know if it was real. All of the band stopped playing instantly," fan Lotta Shandalla told the Edmonton Journal newspaper after concertgoers were ushered out of the Jubilee Auditorium in the city in Alberta province.

Emergency personnel responded at the scene, the newspaper said. His condition was not known and authorities in Edmonton were not available for comment. Meat Loaf postponed a show in Calgary on Monday due to illness. With a huge voice and a body to match, the "Bat Out of Hell" singer, born Marvin Lee Aday in Dallas, Texas, had slimmed down in recent years but suffered from frequent health problems and told Reuters in 2013 he would stop touring. "I outweigh (Mick) Jagger by about 100 pounds (45 kgs) and that counts for something. He hasn't seen the wear and tear," he said at the time. — Reuters

ZEPPELIN'S PAGE LIKENS 'STAIRWAY' TO 'MARY POPPINS' SONG

Led Zeppelin's Jimmy Page on Thursday denied claims that he plagiarized "Stairway to Heaven," insisting the iconic anthem sounds more like a "Mary Poppins" song than the track he is accused of copying. The 72-year-old guitarist and band mate Robert Plant, 67, are being tried at a civil court in Los Angeles over accusations they poached the rock epic's opening bars from "Taurus," by long-defunct rock band Spirit. Page, who wore a black suit and his white hair in a ponytail, said his chord progression probably had more in common with "Chim Chim Cher-ee" from the 1964 film musical "Mary Poppins" than anything else.

He told the eight-member jury that "Stairway" and the Disney number shared the same descending musical pattern, adding that the "chord sequence has been around forever." LA band Spirit, who enjoyed a niche following but never attained the superstardom of Zeppelin,

have long claimed the melancholic guitar that opens "Stairway" was taken from the riff that builds after the first 45 seconds of "Taurus." Guitarist Randy Wolfe—who went by the nickname Randy California—never took legal action and drowned in Hawaii in 1997, but a lawsuit was filed by his trustee and friend Michael Skidmore.

Zeppelin argue that the opening of "Stairway"—a descending sequence mostly in A-minor—has been used in music for centuries and that the lawsuit ignores the rest of the song. But expert witness Kevin Hanson said the opening chords of "Taurus" and the picked arpeggio intro to "Stairway" are a departure from the norm because the sequence resolves in the same unexpected way in both cases. "The rhythm is slightly different," the musician said, but added that the first five chords of both tunes were exactly the same. — AFP



This Oct 9, 2012 file photo shows, from left, Jason Bonham, son of the late Led Zeppelin drummer John Bonham; singer Robert Plant; bassist John Paul Jones; and guitarist Jimmy Page at the "Led Zeppelin: Celebration Day" premiere in New York. — AP

Judi Dench to star in Stephen Frears' 'Victoria and Abdul' for working title



Judi Dench will star as Queen Victoria and Stephen Frears will direct Working Title Films' "Victoria and Abdul," to which Focus Features will hold worldwide rights. The movie is slated to go into production this year for a 2017 release. Focus will release the movie in the US and Universal Pictures Intl. will distribute the film around the world. "Victoria and Abdul" is being co-financed by Focus in association with BBC Films.

The screenplay is by Lee Hall, based on Shrabani Basu's book "Victoria & Abdul: The True Story of the Queen's Closet Confidant." Hall was Oscar nominated for "Billy Elliot." "Victoria and Abdul" was developed by Beeban Kidron and Hall at Cross Street Films with BBC Films, and is being produced by Kidron, Tracey Seaward ("The Queen"), and Working Title's co-chairs Tim Bevan and Eric Fellner. Bevan and Fellner have produced several Working Title movies for Focus release, including the best picture Oscar nominees "Atonement" and "The Theory of Everything." — Reuters



Hearing in Amber Heard restraining order against Johnny Depp called off

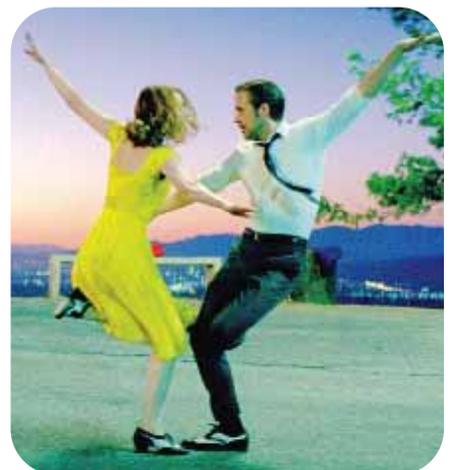
A hearing on the restraining order obtained by Amber Heard against Johnny Depp, in a divorce between the celebrity couple in which Heard has accused Depp of abuse, was called off on Thursday, a day before it was set to occur, court officials said. Heard was expected to testify at the hearing related to the restraining order in Los Angeles Superior Court, according to E! News and other media outlets.

Instead, the next hearing in the divorce filed by Heard against Depp last month will occur on Aug 2, court officials said in a statement. The restraining order is part of the divorce case. The delay allows Depp to gather more witnesses to defend himself against abuse allegations, while for Heard it allows the restraining order to remain in effect at least until the next hearing, said attorney Christopher Melcher, who previously served as chair of the state bar of California family law section, in a phone interview.

It was not immediately clear which side moved to vacate the hearing set for today. Attorneys for Depp and Heard did not immediately return calls. There have been conflicting reports in the media about whether the two sides are moving toward a settlement in the divorce case. Depp's legal team had filed court papers seeking to prevent witnesses from testifying on behalf of Heard at the hearing today, on grounds that the actress' legal team had not provided the names of those witnesses, according to a report on the website of People magazine. — Reuters

Damien Chazelle's 'La La Land' to open Venice Film Festival in competition

US director Damien Chazelle's "La La Land," starring Emma Stone, Ryan Gosling, John Legend and JK Simmons, will be the opening film of the 73rd Venice Film Festival. "La La Land," which is a tribute to the Golden Age of American musicals, will world premiere in competition from Venice on August 31. Chazelle's "Whiplash" won three Oscars in 2015, including a Best Supporting Actor statuette for JK Simmons. Ryan Gosling plays a jazz pianist while Emma Stone plays an aspiring actress in the story, in which the duo fall in love but face difficulties as they become more successful. Chazelle directed from his own script. The film is produced by Lionsgate in partnership with Black Label Media, Gilbert Films, Impostor Pictures, Marc Platt Productions. — Reuters





Famed artist Christo invites public to walk on water

Renowned artist Christo Vladimirov Javacheff can walk on water. And thanks to him so can you. Wearing dark wellington boots, a red and black all-weather coat, jeans and a smart striped shirt, Christo—as he is universally known—crossed his hands while standing in the middle of Lake Iseo in northern Italy. All that separated him and the vast body of water was 200,000 floating orange cubes that create a three kilometer-long (1.9 miles) runway that connects the village of Sulzano to the small island of Monte Isola on the lake. “It’s a very physical project, you need to go there (to understand it),” he said Thursday of the project called “The Floating Piers” which will open to the public from June 18 to July 3.

“It’s not a painting, it’s not a sculpture. You need to walk on it... feel it with the sun, with the rain, with the wind. It’s physical, not virtual.” First conceived in 1970 for the River Plate delta in Argentina, the Christo-like project that Christo, 81, devised with his late wife Jeanne-Claude has finally been resurrected. Despite the long delay in realizing his vision Christo said the project, his first since 2005, “stayed in our hearts”. Forced to abandon the aquatic walkways in Argentina, then again in Japan due to permit troubles, the piers exhibition got the go-ahead in just two years in Italy, thanks to the

enthusiasm of local officials and nearby residents.

Made of 200,000 recyclable polyethylene cubes linked by 200,000 giant screws, the piers are covered with a dahlia-yellow fabric made of tightly woven nylon designed to change tone as the sun sets and become an intense red when wet. This is not Christo’s first artistic outing in Italy. Christo and Jeanne-Claude, both born June 13, 1935, brought three projects to the country in the 1960s and 1970s, including an installation on Milan’s Cathedral square in which they wrapped a monument to King Vittorio Emanuele. The couple first rose to fame for their eye-catching packaging of famous landmarks like the Pont Neuf across the Seine in Paris in 1985 and Berlin’s Reichstag in 1995 — a project which took almost a quarter of a century of bureaucratic wrangling to get off the ground.

‘Artists do not retire, they die’

Describing his passion for reimagining objects with audacious wrapping and packaging, Christo said: “I don’t like to talk on the telephone, I don’t know how to drive cars... I’m interested (in the



real thing.” “The Floating Piers” cost 15 million euros (\$16.7 million) to create but will be free to the public and is expected to attract 500,000 visitors by the time it closes. It was funded as is typical for Christo’s works by the sale of his blueprints and design models. Local businesses are already hoping to cash-in on the cultural phenomenon described by The New York Times as one of the “musts” of the year. — AFP

Rockland, Maine: Coastal scenery, the arts and good food

Every town in mid-coast Maine has its unique charms and attractions. Freeport is the place for shopping at outlet stores and the legendary LL Bean. For beautiful beaches, there’s Reid State Park in Georgetown or Popham Beach in Phippsburg. For a view of the water from up high, hike (or drive) up Mount Battie in Camden. A poem by Maine native Edna St Vincent Millay is engraved on a plaque at the summit.

But for scenery, the arts and great food all in one spot, there’s no destination in Maine quite like Rockland, located on picturesque

Penobscot Bay. A day in Rockland might include a visit to the Farnsworth Art Museum, dining at one of many excellent local restaurants and a walk on the Rockland Breakwater, a man-made granite jetty that stretches nearly a mile into the sea. And in the tiny nearby town of Cushing, Maine, you can tour the Olson House, a National Historic Landmark that was depicted in Andrew Wyeth’s iconic painting “Christina’s World.” Here are some tips for a visit to Rockland.

Rockland breakwater

It almost feels like you’re walking on water as you make your way along this unusual granite walkway leading to a lighthouse nearly a mile offshore. Completed in 1899, the breakwater took 18 years and more than 700,000 tons of granite to build. In 1902, a manned lighthouse replaced a beacon light here, and the lighthouse was automated in 1965.

The view as you walk on the Breakwater out into Penobscot Bay looks like a classic painting of the Maine coast: a band of green trees on the horizon separating the blues of water and sky; the harbor dotted with sailboats and ferries. The waterfront Samoset Resort, which offers luxury lodging and a golf course, is located on the other side of the Breakwater in neighboring Rockport.

A word of caution: The Breakwater surface is uneven with gaps between stones. Wear sturdy shoes and mind small children. Beware bad weather: The stones are slippery when wet, and people have been struck by lightning there. — AP





A Coptic Egyptian pilgrim checking his new tattoo depicting Jesus Christ crucified on a cross, done by Christian Palestinian tattoo artist Walid Ayash at his studio, in the West Bank town of Bethlehem. — AFP photos



A Coptic Egyptian pilgrim (left) checking his new tattoo depicting Jesus Christ crucified on a cross, done by Christian Palestinian tattoo artist Walid Ayash at his studio.



A Coptic Egyptian pilgrim checking his new tattoo depicting Jesus Christ crucified on a cross, done by Christian Palestinian tattoo artist Walid Ayash at his studio.

For Bethlehem tattoo artist, religion is more than skin deep

Pilgrims to Bethlehem often return home with candles or rosaries, but for those who see religion as more than skin-deep, tattoo artist Walid Ayash is there to help. The 39-year-old Palestinian specializes in Christian themes. His repertoire includes around 100 models, from simple or elaborate crosses to images of Jesus Christ or a veiled Virgin Mary. His studio sits near the Church of the Nativity, built on the spot where Christians believe Jesus was born—and which happens to also be tattooed on the chest of Ayash, himself a devout Catholic. He took up tattooing about 12 years ago, having previously helped out at his father's barber shop, located downstairs from his current studio.

He started by teaching himself with the help of the Internet, before perfecting his art in Israel since "there is no tattoo school in Palestine". "Everybody laughed and told me: 'What do you think you're doing?'" said the Bethlehem native and father of four who is always quick with a smile. He wears aviator glasses and his beard and moustache are carefully trimmed. On a leather chair, Florentino Sayeh, 13, was readying his mobile phone to record the inside of his right wrist being tattooed with a cross and, in Arabic, the words "Thy will be done"—from The Lord's Prayer. As Ayash worked, the teenager's mother watched, half-anxious, half-amused and

grimacing as the needle moved over reddened skin.

"Until 1 in the morning, me and his father tried to talk him out of it, but he insisted, so there you go," she said. "This tattoo will pull me back whenever I do something wrong," was what the Palestinian teenager had to say.

Proof of pilgrimage

For Ayash, the high season is over now. Easter has passed and the pilgrims who come to the Holy Land—Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and everything in between—have gone home. Visitors take the small, stone staircase that leads to his studio, where crucifixes, bottles of alcohol and religious drawings sit on a sound system playing house music. He shows videos of pilgrims being tattooed, sometimes while singing hymns or reciting prayers in Arabic—or even in Aramaic, the ancient language spoken in the time of Jesus. "Most are Egyptian Coptic Christians, Syrians, Lebanese, Iraqis, sometimes Armenians," he said.

"They want a cross and the date of their visit. It's part of the pilgrimage, proof that they came here and received the blessing." While Judaism and Islam forbid permanent body markings, tattoos have for centuries been traditional for Holy Land pilgrims of Eastern rites. The pilgrimage has been off-limits for

some Christians. The late Egyptian Coptic pope banned visits over Israel's occupation of the West Bank, where Bethlehem is located, but a new Coptic pope, Tawadros II, has relaxed the rule. Although Syria and Lebanon bar their nationals from visiting Israel, which controls the borders leading to the West Bank, they can visit if they have a second passport.

Hidden faith

Ayash has noticed other changes afoot. With Christians in the Middle East facing growing threats from jihadists, emphasizing one's religion can be life-threatening. "I recently tattooed a cross on the head of a Syrian," said Ayash. "When she lets her hair fall, the cross can't be seen. She was adamant about the tattoo, but she couldn't do it in a visible area of her skin because she wants to return to Syria." Ayash is a faithful man, but he also feels that, when it comes to business, religion alone will only take him so far. Teaming up with a colleague from Jerusalem, he is to open a new studio, not in a religious city like Bethlehem, but in secular Ramallah, the Palestinian political capital, to meet demand from its hip young people. — AFP

China axes Taiwanese children's choir trip

China has axed a visit by a popular Taiwanese children's choir after they sang the national anthem at the inauguration of the island's new president, as ties between the rivals grow increasingly frosty. The choir is the latest casualty since Beijing-sceptic Tsai Ing-wen won the presidency in January, bringing an end to an eight-year rapprochement with China. Her inauguration in May centred around Taiwan's unique history and culture a theme likely to have irked Beijing which still sees the self-ruling island as part of its territory. The aboriginal Puzangalan Choir made a name for itself island-wide after singing a moving rendition of the national anthem on stage during the celebrations. But Chinese authorities seem to have been less impressed.

Choir organizers say city officials have cancelled their performance at a children's choral festival in Zhongshan, in the southern province of Guangdong, due to take place in July. "The invitation from the mainland is gone," said a post on the choir's Facebook page. "The kids

can hardly understand how this happened." Choir executive Tsai Yi-fang confirmed the concert had been cancelled. "This has badly hurt our children," he told AFP.

The choir had been hoping to raise funds through the Guangdong performance to travel to a singing competition in Hungary in August.

President Tsai pledged Tw\$500,000 (\$15,430) to their cause after learning of the cancellation. "This is the voice of Taiwan. Together, we will let the children sing to the whole world," she said in a statement on her Facebook page. Local media reported choir leaders as saying they had been told by city officials that the cancellation was due to political "sensitivities". Comments posted on the choir's Facebook page pledged help and support. "Every one of us on the island who think he or she is Taiwanese would feel proud of you. You represent the roots of Taiwan culture," said one post.—AFP



This picture shows the Aboriginal Puzangalan Choir singing the national anthem during new Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen's inauguration ceremony in Taipei. — AFP



Photo shows one of the volcanoes at Lake Atitlan in Guatemala's Western Highlands. — AP photos



Photo shows a street in San Juan La Laguna, Guatemala.



Mayan women wearing traditional dress converse with men in Santa Catarina Palopo, Guatemala.

Learn about Mayan culture in Guatemala's Lake Atitlan region

The boat zips across the water starting early in the morning, picking up local villagers and dropping them off at various points around the lake. A few passengers wear traditional Mayan dress in a kaleidoscope of colors, heading to the town of Panajachel in hopes of selling their handmade crafts to tourists. Located in Guatemala's Western Highlands, Lake Atitlan is a tourist-friendly area rich in the Mayan culture. There are more than 20 Mayan ethnic groups in Guatemala, and the Lake Atitlan area is home to a handful of them, most notably the Tz'utujil and Kaqchikel people.

Each of the towns and villages surrounding the lake is known for something different - for example, textiles, ceramics or holistic therapies. The area is also known for Spanish language schools, with options for students to live with local families. Panajachel is the main town and where many visitors start their trip. Several other towns and villages surround the lake and are accessible by foot, tuk-tuk or lanchas (public boats) across the lake.

Yoga and meditation

Panajachel, known as Pana, is home to several restaurants featuring local and international cuisine, coffee shops, street food vendors and more. The town's main street, Calle Santander, is where visitors can shop for textiles and artisanal pieces handmade by indigenous people from around the lake. During the day, the street is lined with vendors who set up shop, selling bags, wallets, scarves, coffee, jewelry and other items.

Across the lake, the town of San Marcos La Laguna is known for its laid-back vibe and attracts tourists interested in spiritual and holistic therapies, including massage, yoga and meditation. Visitors can sign up for classes of varying lengths at studios and retreats run by expats throughout the town. Vegetarian, vegan and locally produced dining options also abound in San Marcos. The entire town is walkable, though there are tuk-tuk drivers offering services as well. San Juan La Laguna, meanwhile, is an up-and-coming town known for women's cooperatives and textiles created using natural dyes. One of the best-known cooperatives is called Lema. Started by Rosalinda Tay, indigenous women in the cooperative use dying and weaving techniques handed down from past generations. The natural dyes are made from various plants grown in the area.

Community project

Visitors to the cooperative can learn firsthand how to weave and create the natural dyes during classes or purchase a scarf, bag or other handmade item created by the women. Just down the road, a community project in San Juan, the Utz'itil Eco-Centro, is being developed as a cultural exchange hub for the community, featuring a hostel, tea room, gardens, music stage and area for artisans. The goal of the project is to share the Mayan traditions of locals who are Tz'utujil as well as to promote environmentally sustainable practices.

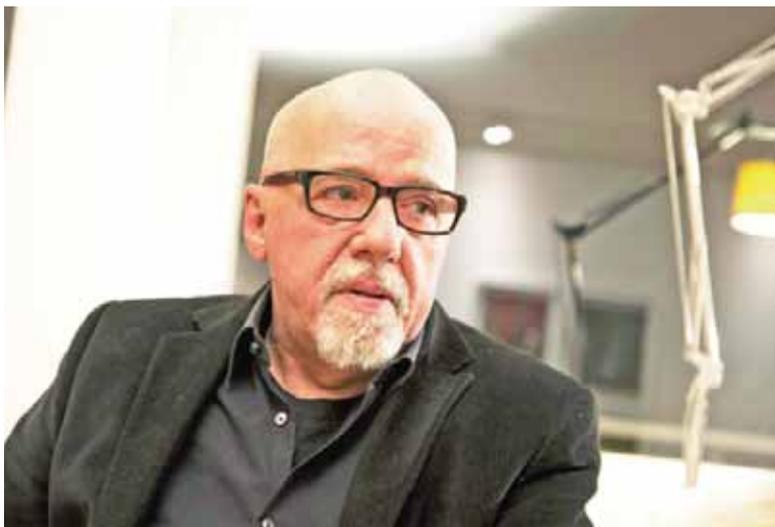
Another town along the lake, San Antonio Palopo, draws visitors because of its ceramics. Cooperatives create a variety of intricate pot-

tery pieces in different designs. Though Spanish is often the second language for many of the indigenous people in the area, visitors can study Spanish at one of the schools in the region that offer one-on-one sessions and the option of a homestay or on-site accommodation. I spent my mornings taking two hours of Spanish classes each day at a local school in Panajachel for four weeks. My teacher was a young indigenous woman who lived with her family in the nearby village of Santa Catarina Palopo, so I was able to practice the language with her while also learning more about the Mayan culture and way of life. The lake area offers accommodations for any budget - from the luxurious Casa Palopo in the village of Santa Catarina Palopo that features breathtaking views of the lake and volcanoes, to hostels and funky bed-and-breakfasts in San Marcos catering to yoga and massage enthusiasts.

If you go...

Lake Atitlan, Guatemala: The Lake Atitlan region is located about 70 miles from Guatemala City, home to the nearest major airport. Visitors can rent cars or take a bus from Guatemala City to Lake Atitlan. Small public boats known as lanchas transport people to the different villages around the lake for anywhere from 10 to 25 quetzales, which is equivalent to about USD \$1.30 to \$3.25. Note that Guatemala is in the region affected by the mosquito-borne Zika virus. — AP

Next Paulo Coelho novel imagines life of Mata Hari

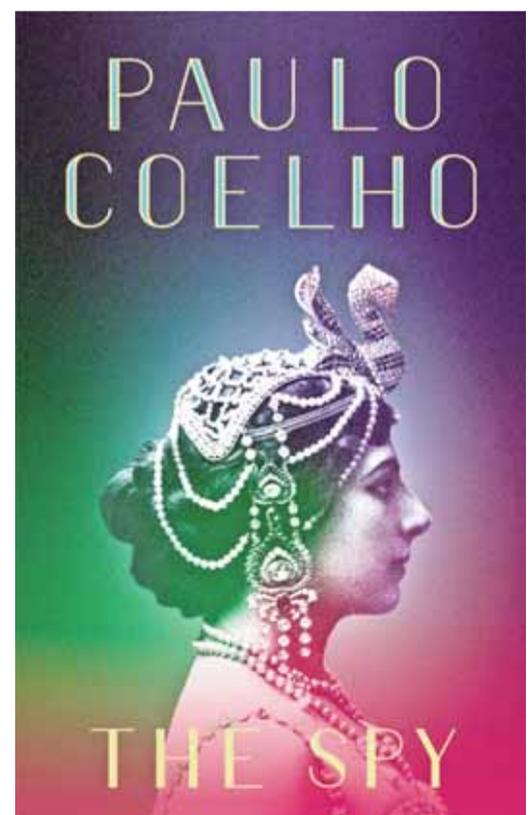


In this file photo, Brazilian author Paulo Coelho appears during an interview at his apartment, in Geneva, Switzerland.

Paulo Coelho's next novel is the imagined inner life of one of history's most famous and provocative women, Mata Hari. Alfred A Knopf announced Thursday that Coelho's "The Spy," a first-person narrative about the Dutch-born dancer and courtesan, will come out Nov 22. The book's starting point is a letter she wrote in 1917, a week before being executed in Paris for alleged espionage during World War I. Coelho will also draw upon archival material released over the past 20 years.

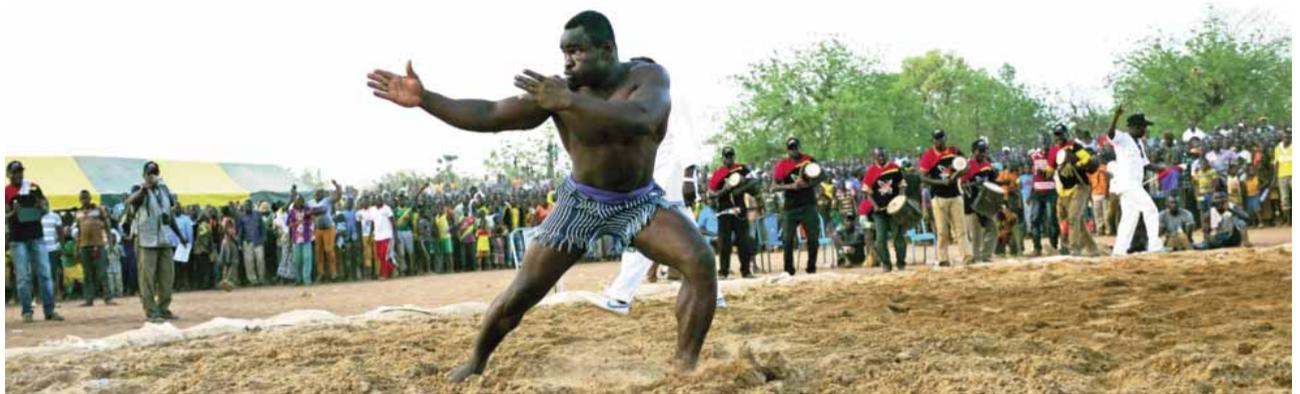
Said Coelho: "Mata Hari was one of our first feminists, defying male expectations of that time and choosing instead an independent, unconventional life." Coelho, whose books have sold more than 200 million copies worldwide, is best known for the novel "The Alchemist." — AP

This book cover image released by Alfred A. Knopf shows, 'The Spy,' by Paulo Coelho. The book, about one of history's most famous and provocative women, Mata Hari, will be released on Nov 22. — AP photos





Wrestlers competing in the National Wrestling championship in Tougan. — AFP photos



A wrestler gesturing to impress his opponent before a fight, during the National Wrestling championship in Tougan.

Sweat, sorcery and family honor in traditional Burkina sport

Fortified by a diet of goat meat and millet beer, Idrissa and Eloi train hard all year long to help maintain Burkina Faso's colorful and age-old traditional wrestling. But the two 25-year-olds, both over 80 kilos (176 pounds) and boasting impressive physiques, believe that rigorous physical preparation is not enough to win tournaments: sorcery, mysticism and the power of their ancestors also play a part. "It is the only sport that has not been imported like football or karate," said Pierre Badiel, 52, president of the country's wrestling federation and a former wrestler himself.

"When I was a child, the wrestlers were venerated, they were our heroes." "We even used wrestling to decide conflicts between two people. It's part of our heritage." In northwest Burkina, in the Boucle du Mouhoun region, the wrestlers are the pride of their families and their villages. "In the bush at the end of the harvest, people celebrate Odizon, the arrival of the new millet," said Badiel. "They organize fights in each village. The winner gains honor-and it's a lot of honor".

The annual national championship is a huge event. In late April in the northwestern town of Tougan the stands are jam-packed with around 3,000 fans, some coming from far away. Before each fight, children pour buckets of water on the scorching sand of the arena that has been erected that morning. A dozen 'griots'-traveling poets and musicians who maintain a regional tradition of oral history-tell stories of the best wrestlers of the past. The burly fighters appear bare-foot and bare-chested, wearing shorts. Around their waists they wear a belt from which hang colorful strips of traditional cloth. From another belt, made of goatskin, hang bells which they shake to try and put their opponents off as they grapple with each other to cheers from the crowd.

A family affair

The fight between Eloi and Idrissa lasts only a few seconds: Eloi grabs Idrissa and hoists him into the air before slamming him to the ground. "I didn't win, I won't return to the 'marabout'" or holy man, said Idrissa, visibly disappointed. Before the tournament, Idrissa traveled by motorcycle-won in a previous tournament-to Tissi, a village near the Malian border, about 20 kilometers (12

miles) from his home. There, he waited his turn in the courtyard of the local marabout, Losseni Konati, "to obtain his blessing." About 60 years old, dressed in a traditional long robe, a rosary in his hand, the marabout handed Idrissa a woven box containing a secret combination of small cubes of soap that smell of plants.

Idrissa was told to wash with the amulets morning and evening before a match. But this time, the charm, as well as prayers to his ancestors, was not enough. In Burkina Faso, wrestling has been a family affair "since the dawn of time", said Adama Zon, Idrissa's father and a former wrestler himself. The family is descended from blacksmiths. Father and son now repair telephones, but the craft of their forebears means the family are believed to hold mystical powers. "If an opponent tied up someone with invisible string, I could see it, untie it and cast another spell," he said. "We also treat sterile women."

'I wrestle for my ancestors'

Eloi, a Christian from the ethnic Samo tribe known for their brave wrestlers, said he learnt how to fight before he could walk. An orange crest on his head, a knife in one hand and a live chicken in the other, he crouches in the courtyard of his house in Diere, a village about 35 kilometers from Toma, in the northwest of the country. He slits the bird's throat-and talks about his ancestors. "I ask them to help me. It's for them that I wrestle, so that we will remember our family." Each of the seven finalists at a tournament takes home 60,000 CFA francs (about 90 euros), a good sum in a poor country. "Today, we win money and motorbikes. In my time, the best wrestler won a lot of women!" said Adama. "They would come to see us in the evening in our box and leave their pagnes (a traditional African garment) to let us know that they had chosen us." — AFP



Wrestlers entering the arena during the National Wrestling championship in Tougan.



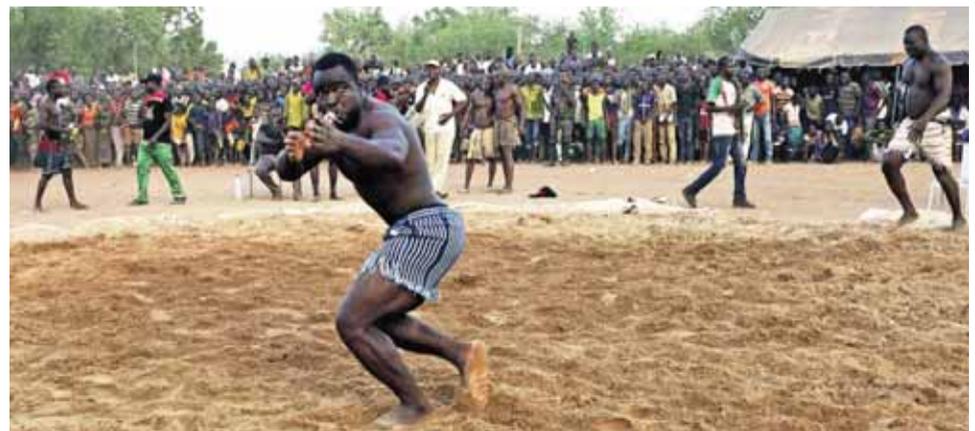
Wrestlers competing in the National Wrestling championship.



Wrestlers entering the arena during the National Wrestling championship.



Wrestlers competing in the National Wrestling championship.



A wrestler gesturing to impress his opponent before a fight, during the National Wrestling championship.



The artwork "Accumulation: Searching for Destination" (2014-2016) by Japanese artist Chiharu Shiota is on display at the show Unlimited in the context of the international art show Art Basel, in Basel, Switzerland. — AP/AFP photos



The artwork "Gli" (Wall) (2010) by Ghanaian artist El Anatsui.

Angst and deep pockets show state of art market in Basel

Hundreds of suitcases hang eerily from the ceiling, old publications depict colonial scenes of dark "savages" committing horrific acts of violence, and an anti-protestor gun blasts into life... with rounds of birdsong. A common theme of angst at a world in political turmoil, beset by a migration crisis and dread of terrorism unites many of the works at this year's Art Basel, the world's biggest contemporary art fair. "As anyone knows who reads the papers, these are very dynamic times," Art Basel director Marc Spiegler told AFP ahead of the show's public opening.

"We have major political elections coming up, we have major referenda coming up, we have mass migration in Europe, we have economic uncertainties," he said, pointing out that "from an artistic standpoint (this) creates a lot of material for artists to work with." "Interesting times make for interesting art," he insisted. Japanese artist Chiharu Shiota's 120-square-metre (1,300-square-foot) installation "Accumulation: Searching for Destination", for instance appears to speak to the large numbers of people on the move. Suspended from the ceiling by red yarn, the vintage suitcases slope gently towards the floor, some bobbing and twitching in the air, perhaps uncertain of where their journey will lead them. Elsewhere, Hong Kong artist Samson Young has mounted a sound cannon usually used to violently disperse crowds of protesters to shoot melodic birdsongs across

the vast hall.

And French artist Kader Attia's installation "The Culture of Fear: An invention of Evil", with its 19th and early 20th century newspaper and book covers displaying horrific images of "wild men" murdering and raping whites, examines the conceptual construction of Western fears of "harmful Otherness" that continues to colour our anxieties in an age of terrorism.

Spectacular sales

The angst infusing politics and economies around the world does not meanwhile appear to have rubbed off on the deep-pocketed collectors amassing at Art Basel. Elegantly dressed art enthusiasts braved the rain to throng to the advance VIP opening of the show on Tuesday to check out what the 286 galleries on site had to offer. "I think we've sold about half the things in the booth so far... I'm ready to go to bed," Marc Glimcher, president of Pace Gallery, told AFP with a laugh just a few hours after the doors opened.

In the show's Unlimited section, dedicated to 88 large-scale installations including Shiota, Young and Attia's works, the Hauser & Wirth gallery sold a Paul McCarthy installation called "Tomato Head" for \$4.75 million. Sean Kelly, founder and owner of the gallery bearing his name, said in fact, the art "market is as strong as I have ever seen it."



The artwork "Gli" (Wall) (2010) by Ghanaian artist El Anatsui.



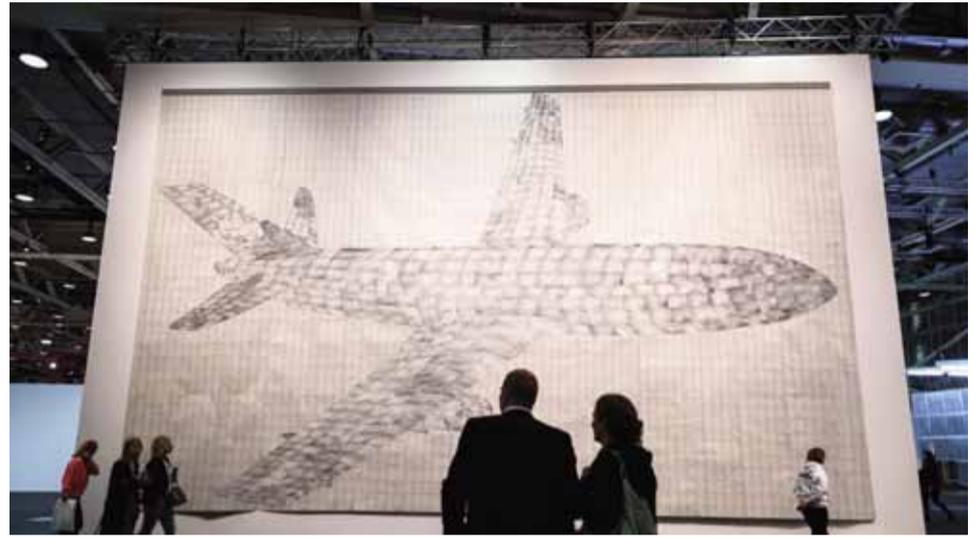
A visitor looks at an art installation by Belgian artist Hans Op de Beeck entitled "The Collector's House".



A visitor looks at an art installation by US artist Tony Oursler entitled "template/variant /friend/stranger".



Visitors look at the media installation by Rafael Lozano-Hemmer and Krzysztof Wodiczko entitled "Zoom Pavilion".



Visitors look at the art installation by German artist Thomas Bayrle entitled "Flugzeug (Airplane)".

He explained that while the world is clearly "a complicated place at the moment, the art world ... is somewhere that you go to escape those everyday pressures."

'Addressing the one percent'

"There's a lot of money in the world, there's a lot of people interested in art, and this is where a lot of that money is concentrated and being spent," he said, acknowledging: "We're really addressing the one percent." Joseph Kosuth, the 71-year-old legendary US concept-

al artist, dispaired at the growing sway the super wealthy hold over the art world. "The problem is that a busy billionaire doesn't have time to study art," he told AFP at the show, pointing out that many rich collectors determine which pieces are important by the price being paid for them rather than the ideas behind them. "But the thing is that you can't compare art to a handbag," he said.

Art Basel meanwhile also has much to offer to art enthusiasts with less padded wallets. As part of the Parcours section, 19 installations have been sprinkled through the center of Basel, in public squares,

museums, but also in usually closed-off public buildings, where visitors can see them for free. Among the works on display is a week-long performance by South African artist Tracey Rose. On the first night on Monday, she sat on the steps of Basel's Civil Registry in a bridal dress, laughing in the rain, as her partner Dan Gunn, wearing a skin-coloured body suit, ran screaming into the gate separating him from a handful of spectators. Taking shelter from the downpour at a nearby installation, Corinne Erni, 54, said she loved the idea of Parcours. "It's a nice way to introduce both art and the city," she said. — AFP



A visitor walks past an artwork by US artist Peter Halley entitled "Weak Force".



"Pandemonia" stands in front of the artwork "Four New Clear Women" (1982) by American artist James Rosenquist.



Visitors look at an artwork by Ai Weiwei entitled "White House" 2015.



An artwork American artist Brain Calvin.



The reflection of a visitor walking is seen through a ball of glasses of Ai Weiwei's White House next to a painting by Frank Stella entitled "Damascus Gate (Stretch Variation I)".



The artwork "Tornado" (2016) by French artist Jean-Michel Othoniel.



MOUNTAIN VIEW: In this Wednesday, May 18, 2016, file photo, David Singleton, Google vice president of engineering, talks about updates to Android Wear during the keynote address of the Google I/O conference. — AP

SMARTWATCHES GET SMARTER THOUGH NOT QUICKLY ENOUGH

A LOOK AT THE LATEST APPLE AND ANDROID GEAR

NEW YORK: Apple and Android smartwatches are getting better as their makers sand off the rough edges that have frustrated many early adopters. But the improvements are just small steps in a long journey to convince people they need a computer on their wrist.

The Apple Watch, for instance, promises faster app launching and a one-button 911 call. Android Wear watches will soon let you track gym workouts such as weight training. Both systems will let you swipe-write texts with your finger. All are nifty features - just nothing likely to turn a smartwatch into the day-to-day necessity a smartphone has become.

That's not too surprising. Smartphones didn't get intelligent overnight, either. In the meantime, current smartwatch enthusiasts have a fair bit to look forward to as Apple and Google push out free software updates in the coming months.

Apple Watch

FASTER: With the upcoming watchOS 3 software, your favorite apps will launch automatically and load data in the background. You no longer have to wait several seconds for the app to start up and retrieve data from the phone. This could address a major frustration today: It's often faster just to pull out the phone from your pocket.

EASIER NAVIGATION: Apple Watch currently offers favorite apps through Glance, but it gives you limited information and works only from the watch face. The Glance replacement, called Dock, gets you full apps from any screen with a press of the side button. Meanwhile, swiping up will soon get you frequently used settings, and message replies will be possible without first hitting "reply."

BEYOND VOICE: Entering text on a small screen is challenging, but voice dictation isn't always the right answer. It might be noisy, or you might want privacy. With Scribble, you'll use your finger to

write characters on the screen one at a time. The watch translates them into computerized text. You'll still have the current options for voice or pre-configured replies like "yes" and "no."

CATCHING UP: You'll be able to skip the password screen on Macs when wearing your Apple Watch. Android watches can already unlock Android phones and tablets automatically. Apple Watch will also let you challenge friends on fitness, something Fitbit and other fitness devices already offer.

NEW FEATURES: With SOS, you can hold the side button for a few seconds to call 911 - or the equivalent when traveling abroad. The watch will also message your emergency contact and display key information such as your allergies on the screen. A new watch app will also guide you through breathing exercises to help reduce stress.

BOTTOM LINE: Apple Watch has come a long way in just 14 months, and its starting price just dropped to \$300. But it's still tough to explain to friends and family why they need one. The SOS feature could be popular among those with known health issues. But it's not something many people will believe they'll need - at least not soon enough to buy a watch right away. Longer battery life and GPS tracking for workouts will require better hardware down the road. Even then, Apple Watch isn't likely to work with Android phones anytime soon; you'll need an iPhone.

Android Wear

FASTER: The upcoming Android Wear 2.0 software will let apps run directly on the watch, so they can communicate directly with remote servers through the watch's Wi-Fi or cellular connection, if it has one. Information might arrive faster because it doesn't need to go through the phone first. Apps need to be updated to take advantage of this stand-alone capability.

EASIER NAVIGATION: Currently, you swipe up and down for notifications, but left and right for actions like replies. The update will eliminate the zig-zagging and present everything in one vertical feed. Message notifications will also turn into mini-chat apps. Currently, your chat notification disappears after you reply, even if you have more to say. With the update, the notification becomes an ongoing conversation stream until you dismiss it.

BEYOND VOICE: The watch will now have a full keyboard with predictive texting, similar to phones. It will also support handwriting similar to Apple's Scribble. More apps will get pre-configured replies that you can select, and choices will vary based on context. Voice dictation remains an option.

CATCHING UP: Android joins Apple Watch in getting complications on watch faces. These are little bits of customizable data, such as weather info or stock quotes. And Apple Watch already supports stand-alone apps. Android Watch apps will also have darker backgrounds, as Apple Watch apps do now, to make the watch less annoying in dark settings like movie theaters.

NEW FEATURES: Fitness trackers tend to focus on motion activities rather than strength training. Android Wear will soon support weight lifting, squats and push-ups. And the watch's redesigned app launcher will make fuller use of circular screens.

BOTTOM LINE: The 2-year-old Android Wear system has introduced significant improvements along the way, including the ability to work with iPhones, not just Android phones. But with iPhones, you're mostly limited to notifications and fitness - there's no turn-by-turn navigation on the watch, for instance. The stand-alone capability should change that, giving iPhone users a viable alternative to Apple Watch. — AP

VR GIVING TOOLS TO LET YOU DECORATE FROM YOUR COUCH

NEW YORK: Stop moving around the new sofa to try to figure out where it fits. Forget about trying to judge a paint color from tiny samples against the wall. New tools like virtual reality measuring apps and online mood boards are trying to help consumers find easier and quicker ways to decorate homes and apartments.

The expanded services and online tools come as traditional retailers like J.C. Penney and Target are focusing more on home improvement - bringing back major appliances, creating in-store home vignettes. The interest is happening in the wake of improving technology and increased consumer spending on the home fueled by a strong real estate market. But those creating the new tools say the future of home decor is in ways to let people envision new wall colors, furniture and curtains without having to take them home.

At a new technology lab in Boston, online home retailer Wayfair.com is digitizing its catalog and testing augmented reality and virtual reality apps as well as 3D models of its products. It's a move toward "constantly raising the bar to create the best possible shopping experience for the home, adapted to how consumers shop today and in the future," says Steve Conine, the company's co-chairman and co-founder.

The all-in-one site Houzz.com not only helps shoppers get inspiration and narrow their choices down from its more than five million products from over 10,000 sellers, it also helps people find local professionals to install the curtains they just bought. And Houzz.com just launched an augmented reality app called "View in My Room" that allows shoppers to experiment with home decor options by virtually placing products from its online store into their home before you buy. It seems to be converting browsers into buyers. Fifty percent of users who made purchases in the latest version of the Houzz app used "View in My Room" to preview the product in their home, the company says.

Above all, though, says Allyson Rees, a senior editor at global forecast firm WGSN, shoppers should do their homework. "Have a game plan, and set a budget. And decide how hands on you want to be," says Rees. She also notes, "Know the key items you want." Here are three ways to redecorate from your current couch.

GET INSPIRED: Great ideas can still be found by flipping through home decor magazines or store catalogs, or by scrolling around on Pinterest and making mood boards, an arrangement of images to convey the design style you want to achieve. OlioBoard.com lets people create two- and three-dimensional designs using products from their favorite brands, which then link to retailers' sites for purchase. It says it also offers a community of home decor experts. Also, check out stores' mobile apps. Two years ago, TJX Co.'s HomeGoods launched a mobile app called The Goods for smartphones. It helps customers see photos of new items that just arrived at their local HomeGoods stores.

EMBRACE NEW TECHNOLOGY: More apps and online tools are using augmented reality and virtual reality technology, which Rees expects to become even more widespread. That means no more buying extra paint for samples or paying return fees on a chair that turns out to be too big for the room. Wayfair is set to release in September an augmented reality app for Google Tango, which uses software and sensors to track motions and size up the contours of rooms. The Wayfair tool lets people see how pieces of furniture and decor will look and fit in their homes through the display on a smartphone. In Wayfair's virtual reality experience, shoppers use headgear like an Oculus Rift that allows them to customize a room by setting the model, material and layout of the furnishings. Right now, the items for the virtual reality app are limited to patio furniture but that will be expanded eventually. — AP



This May 2016 photo provided by Wayfair demonstrates the company's augmented reality app, WayfairView, which allows shoppers to visualize furniture and decor in their homes at full-scale before they make a purchase. This image shows a screen grab taken with the app of an end table that has been selected to visualize in the space. — AP

MICROSOFT PUTS CLOUD INTO CANNABIS STARTUP

WASHINGTON: Microsoft yesterday teamed up with a California startup on technology to track sales of cannabis seeds to local governments, a sign of growing acceptance of marijuana. The deal with Kind Financial provides tracking technology for cannabis seeds to help keep products out of illegal markets. Microsoft selected Kind to participate in its newly created "Microsoft Health and Human Services Pod for Managed Service Providers," according to a statement.

Kimberly Nelson, executive director of state and local government solutions from Microsoft, said the deal recognizes that Microsoft's Azure "is the only cloud platform designed to meet government standards for the closely regulated cannabis compliance programs and we look forward to working together to help our government customers launch successful regulatory programs." Kind's "Seed to Sale for Government" platform is used by governments and regulatory agencies to regulate and monitor all aspects of cannabis compliance.

"No one can predict the future of cannabis legalization, however, it is clear that legalized cannabis will always be subject to strict oversight and regulations similar to alcohol and tobacco; and, Kind is proud to offer governments and regulatory agencies the tools and technology to monitor cannabis compliance," said chief executive David Dinenberg. "I am delighted that Microsoft supports Kind's mission to build the backbone for cannabis compliance." — AFP

ESPORTS LIVING ON A PIXELATED PITCH

WOLFSBURG: With Euro 2016 in full swing, many football fans will be taking to their computer consoles to play out their team's fortunes in France. But those among the world's elite gamers are now even making a living from playing digital football online in what computer-game and football fans alike would regard as a dream job.

The gaming industry is booming and David Bytheway is a professional gamer signed up to represent Bundesliga side VfL Wolfsburg, the first German club to invest in eSports. "We recognize eSports as important and we want to be among the leading Bundesliga clubs in this area," explained Wolfsburg's director of sport Klaus Allofs. "Our goal is to make the connection between real and digital football."

Success on the pixelated pitch is being transformed into real-life signings. England's Sean Allen, who lost this year's FIFA Interactive World Cup final in New York, was signed by Premier League side West Ham last month. And Wolfsburg's Bundesliga rivals Schalke 04 announced in May that they have signed a five-strong team of gamers, complete with a coach and analyst, to represent them in eSports.

Bytheway is of the few Englishmen who have played in a World Cup final, albeit on the EA Sports' online game FIFA. The 22-year-old, who still lives in Wolverhampton in central England, announced himself as one of the world's best by reaching the final of the 2014 FIFA interactive World Cup held in Brazil alongside the real thing. Bytheway fought his way up from among 1.9 million gamers who competed online to become one of the 20 finalists in Brazil. But his run ended when he lost 3-1 to Denmark's August Rosenmeier in the final.

'Thumbs, fingers and wrists'

"People keep telling me I'm living the dream, but I just want to keep enjoying it," he told AFP. "I have been playing competitively since I was 16. 'I'd travelled the world on my own, but flying to Rio to play at an Interactive World Cup was nerve-wracking."

"If someone had told me a few years before that I'd be doing that, I'd have laughed. "The 2014 final was the day before my 21st birthday, so it wasn't the best present. I'd have rather won it." But his appearance in the Brazil final put Bytheway on the gaming map and he was signed up by eSports agency Stark, who put him in touch with Wolfsburg. Having dropped out of university after a year of studying computer science, Bytheway is now the envy of most student gamers by drawing a salary from playing the EA Sports computer game FIFA.

"My training depends on what's coming up," he explained. "Some people will play 20 games per day, but I don't like doing that. "I have two players from Canada and Malta, who I play regularly. "I try to keep my sleeping pattern under control, because most gamers are night owls and it's not always easy. "I go to the gym every day, I'm vegetarian and try to eat as healthily as possible-healthy body, healthy mind. "I avoid all energy drinks, a glass of water does me fine while playing." Leg injuries are a footballer's curse, while for a gamer, keeping the thumbs, fingers and wrists healthy is a must. "If you break a wrist, you're out. The biggest risk of injury is through frustration, banging your hand against a table," said Bytheway.

"I smashed a few control pads when I was an angry teenager, but now I'm a lot calmer and see it as £50 (\$73, 65 Euros) down the drain." While a typical footballer's career is over at 35, the sky's the limit on the digital pitch. "Unless I get arthritis in my fingers, I can keep playing on," said Bytheway. "It will get to the point where reactions will slow, but it's not something I have given too much thought to yet." — AFP



LOS ANGELES: Gaming fans sample Samsung's Gear VR powered by Oculus Los Angeles Convention Center on June 16, 2016. — AFP

E3 HERALDS SOCIAL, VIRTUAL FUTURE FOR VIDEO GAMES

'REFINING ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE WORLD'

LOS ANGELES: As the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) video game gathering wrapped Thursday, it was easy to envision a future of social play in virtual worlds with celebrity gamers broadcasting action. While blockbuster titles tailored for consoles or personal computers remained stars of the annual show, an evolving face of play and its growing reach into Internet lifestyles were evident.

"The advancements in technology unveiled at E3 will redefine entertainment for the world," said Michael Gallagher, chief executive of the Entertainment Software Association (ESA) trade group behind E3. "The innovation and creativity on display will propel our industry to new heights." Virtual reality games got very real at E3 this year as studios showed off titles tailored for Oculus Rift, HTC Vive, PlayStation VR and Galaxy Gear VR headsets. "It feels like VR is everywhere and dominating the industry right now," Oculus chief executive Brendan Iribe told AFP. "It is the up-and-coming, fun new experience." Developers who have devoted their careers to building immersive fantasy worlds seized the chance to finally put players inside their games. There are already 70 games for play on Rift virtual reality gear, and 30 more to be released when Oculus

Touch controllers hit the market later this year, head of content Jason Rubin said.

Sony Interactive Entertainment's keenly awaited PlayStation virtual reality headset will make its debut on October 13 at a price of \$399. Sony promised that more than 50 games will be available for the PlayStation VR within months of its launch, including zombie-shooter "Resident Evil," and games based on the "Star Wars" franchise and the "Batman" series. PlayStation VR headsets will work with PS4 consoles, more than 40 million of which have been sold.

PS4 prevails

PS4 has dominated the console market, and was seen as an unofficial champion at E3 due in large part to playing to the audience by spotlighting big, beautiful games. Rival Microsoft announced a new, lean Xbox One model along with games. When it came to chatter on Facebook during E3, Sony was the most talked-about game publisher, capturing more than 30 percent of the conversation, according to the leading social network.

"We have generated good excitement around content for PS4," Sony Interactive Entertainment president Andrew House told AFP at E3. House saw potential for

PlayStation VR to go beyond gaming to becoming "a full-fledged brand new medium" bridging to the Japanese entertainment giant's film and television offerings. There may even be opportunity for Sony to make cameras tailored to the technology. "It has tremendous potential not just in games, but with a multitude of applications," House said of virtual reality.

Celebrity players

E3 was also a showcase for the soaring popularity of Twitch, YouTube Gaming and other online stages for video game play and commentary, along with the rise of the celebrity player. The appetite for play video, commentary, trailers and more seems insatiable, industry insiders said. "There are hundreds of millions of users watching gaming content every month," YouTube global head of gaming content Ryan Wyatt told AFP at E3. Fans are watching billions of hours of content on YouTube Gaming each month and that number is rising, Wyatt said. YouTube has made a priority of "empowering content creators," personalities who captivate online audiences with play, comedy, wit, commentary or combinations thereof. "They are superstars in their own right," Wyatt said. — AFP



04:50 Crimes And Misdemeanors
06:35 Return Of The Seven
08:10 Lords Of Dogtown
09:50 What Did You Do In The War Daddy?
11:45 Sharks' Treasure
13:20 The Watsons Go To Birmingham
14:50 Troll (Epic)
16:15 Return Of The Seven
17:50 The Real Howard Spitz
19:35 Manchu Eagle Murder Caper Mystery
21:00 Night Manager
21:50 Breaking Bad
22:50 Cabin Fever
00:25 Groundhog Day
02:10 Go Tell The Spartans



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
12:20 Snake Crusader With Bruce George
12:50 Cheetah: Race To Rule
13:45 Natural World

14:40 Natural World
15:35 Into The Pride
16:30 Lion Man: One World African Safari
17:25 Cheetah: Race To Rule
18:20 Wild Capture School
19:15 Restoration Wild
20:10 Village Vets
21:05 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner
22:00 Wild Capture School
22:55 Snake Crusader With Bruce George
23:50 Gator Boys



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 Siberian Cut
23:30 What Happened Next?
00:45 Free Ride



03:00 Untamed & Uncut
03:50 Marooned With Ed Stafford
04:40 How It's Made

05:05 How It's Made
05:30 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
06:20 Mythbusters
07:00 Doki
07:25 Adventure 8: Zoo Games
07:50 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild
08:40 Too Cute!
15:20 Ecopolis
17:00 Marooned With Ed Stafford
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 Eco-Tech



03:00 Shadow Of Doubt
03:48 Breaking Point
04:36 Deadly Affairs
05:24 The Perfect Murder
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 Web Of Lies
22:00 I'd Kill For You
22:50 Paranormal Lockdown
23:40 The Haunted
00:30 Breaking Point
02:10 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
00:05 How The Universe Works
01:45 How It's Made
02:10 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman



03:15 The Hive
03:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
03:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
04:10 Hank Zipzer
04:35 Binny And The Ghost
05:00 Violetta
05:45 The Hive
05:50 Mouk
06:00 Hank Zipzer
06:25 Sofia The First
06:50 Gravity Falls
07:15 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
07:40 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
08:05 Shake It Up
08:55 Hannah Montana
09:45 Wizards Of Waverly Place
10:35 Good Luck Charlie The Road Trip Movie
12:05 The 7D
12:15 Disney Mickey Mouse
12:20 Austin & Ally
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 Gotta Kick It Up
19:30 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
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 The Lion Guard
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
23:20 Calimero
23:35 Zou
23:50 Loopdidoo
00:05 Art Attack
00:30 Henry Hugglemonster
00:45 Calimero
01:00 Zou
01:15 Loopdidoo
01:30 Art Attack
02:05 Calimero
02:20 Zou
02:30 Loopdidoo
02:45 Art Attack



03:40 Swamp People
04:30 American Restoration
05:00 Battle 360
06:00 Banger Boys
06:50 Mountain Men - Closest Calls
07:40 Duck Dynasty
08:05 Duck Dynasty
08:30 Counting Cars: Best Of
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 American Pickers
22:40 Time Team
23:30 Pirate Treasure Of The Knights Templar
00:20 American Pickers
01:10 Hunting Hitler
02:00 Banger Boys
02:50 American Restoration



03:05 Maverick Chef
03:30 Eat Street
03:55 Eat Street
04:20 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
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 Dog Whisperer
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 Fearless Chef
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 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
17:15 John Torode's Malaysian Adventure
17:40 John Torode's Malaysian Adventure
18:10 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen
18:35 Great Escapes
19:05 Maverick Chef
19:30 Eat Street
20:00 Eat Street
20:25 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
21:15 John Torode's Malaysian Adventure
21:40 John Torode's Malaysian Adventure
22:05 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen
22:30 Great Escapes
22:55 Glamour Puds
23:20 Home Strange Home



06:00 Booster
06:10 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 Becoming
10:00 Supa Strikas
13:00 Teen Beach 2
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
22:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
23:00 Kids Baking Championships
00:00 Chopped
01:00 All Star Academy
02:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives



03:45 Legends Of Lemur Island
04:40 Bandit Patrol
05:35 World's Wildest Encounters
06:30 Monster Fish
07:25 Alaska Fish Wars
08:20 Killer Shots
09:15 Natural Born Monsters
10:10 Animal Superpowers
11:05 Fish Tank Kings
12:00 Global Whale Shark Mystery
12:55 Dangerous Encounters
13:50 Natural Born Monsters
14:45 Cuba's Secret Reef
15:40 Man V. Monster
16:35 World's Deadliest Animals
17:30 Secret Life Of Predators



THE LAST DAYS ON MARS OSN MOVIES PREMIERE HD

SATURDAY, JUNE 18, 2016

- 18:25 1000 Days For The Planet
- 19:20 Cuba's Secret Reef
- 20:10 Man V. Monster
- 21:00 World's Deadliest Animals
- 21:50 Secret Life Of Predators
- 22:40 1000 Days For The Planet
- 23:30 Global Whale Shark Mystery
- 00:20 Dangerous Encounters
- 01:10 Natural Born Monsters
- 02:00 Animals Gone Wild
- 02:50 Man-Eater Of The Congo



- 03:50 Nazi Underworld
- 04:45 Dangerous Encounters
- 05:40 Wicked Tuna
- 06:35 The Great Human Race
- 07:30 Outsiders: Living Off The Edge
- 08:25 Cesar To The Rescue
- 09:20 Cesar To The Rescue
- 10:15 Brain Games
- 10:40 Brain Games
- 11:10 Monster Fish
- 12:05 Beast Hunter
- 13:00 I Wouldn't Go In There
- 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 Test Your Brain



- 05:15 Biker Boyz
- 07:15 The Fugitive
- 09:45 The Bourne Legacy
- 12:00 Toxin
- 13:30 Safe House
- 15:30 The Fugitive
- 18:00 The Bourne Legacy
- 20:15 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 22:00 Crimson Tide
- 00:00 Inside
- 01:45 The Bourne Legacy



- 06:00 Bad Parents
- 08:00 Hope Springs
- 10:00 Bad Parents
- 12:00 At Middleton
- 14:00 Father Hood
- 16:00 Hope Springs
- 18:00 Grosse Pointe Blank
- 20:00 Laggies
- 22:00 50 First Dates
- 00:00 Hope Springs
- 02:00 Laggies



- 03:00 Goodbye World
- 05:00 Shanghai Calling
- 07:00 Half Of A Yellow Sun
- 09:00 Mood Indigo
- 11:15 Shanghai Calling
- 13:00 Memorial Day (2011)
- 15:00 Sunshine On Leith
- 16:45 Mood Indigo
- 19:00 Two Night Stand
- 21:00 Scenic Route
- 23:00 Go For Sisters
- 01:15 Mood Indigo



- 03:30 Pirates Of The Caribbean: At World's End
- 06:15 Tinker Bell And The Legend Of The NeverBeast
- 07:30 Aladdin
- 09:00 Toy Story 2
- 11:00 Dinosaur
- 13:00 Muppets Most Wanted
- 15:00 Night At The Museum: Secret



TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

- Of The Tomb
- 17:00 Ice Princess
- 19:00 Eight Below
- 21:00 The Rookie
- 23:15 Night At The Museum: Secret Of The Tomb
- 01:15 Eight Below



- 03:30 The Guardian
- 06:00 Blackfish
- 07:30 Where Angels Fear To Tread
- 09:30 Second Coming
- 11:30 Blackfish
- 13:00 The Guardian
- 15:15 Belle
- 17:00 Second Coming
- 19:00 Fearless
- 21:15 Thank You For Smoking
- 23:00 About Time
- 01:00 United Passions



- 05:15 Streetdance: All Stars
- 07:00 Make Your Move
- 09:00 The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel
- 11:00 Divergent
- 13:45 Peter Pan Live!
- 16:15 Jurassic World
- 18:30 Insurgent
- 21:00 Cinderella
- 23:00 Accidental Love
- 01:00 The Last Of Robin Hood
- 02:45 Cinderella



- 04:30 The Adventures Of Don Quixote
- 06:00 Tom And Jerry: Spy Quest
- 08:00 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure
- 10:00 Zarafa
- 11:30 Echo Planet

- 13:00 Baby Geniuses And The Space Baby
- 14:30 Justice League vs. Bizarro League
- 16:00 Delhi Safari
- 18:00 Zarafa
- 20:00 Baby Geniuses And The Treasures Of Egypt
- 22:00 Justice League vs. Bizarro League
- 23:30 Delhi Safari
- 01:15 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure



- 04:15 Love, Rosie
- 06:15 Dragonheart 3: The Sorcerer's Curse
- 08:00 The Last Days On Mars
- 10:00 Louder Than Words
- 11:45 Jupiter Ascending
- 14:00 I Am Ali
- 16:00 The Last Days On Mars
- 17:45 Into The Woods
- 20:00 Lullaby
- 22:00 Love & Mercy
- 00:00 Malavita
- 02:00 Into The Woods



- 03:00 Game Of Thrones
- 04:00 After The Thrones
- 04:30 Curb Your Enthusiasm
- 05:00 Nightingale
- 07:00 In Tahrir Square
- 08:00 On Freddie Roach
- 08:30 In The Gloaming
- 09:30 Primo
- 11:00 White Mile
- 13:00 Lackawanna Blues
- 15:00 An American Girl: Chrissa Stands Strong
- 17:00 White Mile
- 19:00 Secrets And Lies

- 20:00 The Sopranos
- 21:00 Grace
- 22:00 Ballers
- 22:30 Funny Or Die Presents
- 23:00 The Wire
- 00:00 Secrets And Lies
- 01:00 The Sopranos
- 02:00 Grace



- 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 Supergirl
- 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
- 02:00 Graceland



- 03:00 Ghar Dwaar
- 03:15 Chain Kulii Ki Main Kulii
- 05:00 Jeet
- 07:50 Dastak
- 10:15 Action Replayy
- 12:35 Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham
- 16:20 Paa
- 19:00 Drishyam
- 21:55 Golmaal 3
- 00:20 Jigar Kaleja



- 03:15 Reign Of Fire
- 05:00 The Stone Council
- 06:45 Sister Act
- 08:30 The Good Shepherd
- 10:59 02:22
- 13:00 Monsters University
- 15:00 Arthur Newman
- 16:45 Mrs. Miracle
- 18:30 Amphibious
- 20:00 You Again
- 21:45 The Eagle
- 23:45 Crazy On The Outside
- 01:30 Boys And Girls



- 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 Game Shakers
- 10:12 Game Shakers
- 10:36 Game Shakers
- 11:00 Game Shakers
- 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
- 16:12 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
- 21:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 21:24 Breadwinners
- 21:48
- 22:12 Sanjay And Craig
- 23:00 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 23:48 Henry Danger
- 00:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 00:36 Max & Shred
- 01:00 The Haunted Hathaways
- 01:24 Sanjay And Craig
- 01:48 Sanjay And Craig
- 02:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 02:36 SpongeBob SquarePants



- 03:00 Sharea Al Hob
- 05:00 Indama Yuzher Al Khareef
- 06:00 Sharea Al Hob
- 07:00 Al Ishq Al Aswad
- 08:00 Al Waswas
- 10:00 Awrak Al Hob
- 11:00 Ha'erat
- 13:00 Al Waswas
- 14:00 Al Ishq Al Aswad
- 15:00 Awrak Al Hob
- 16:00 Ha'erat
- 17:00 Indama Yuzher Al Khareef
- 18:00 Al Waswas
- 19:00 Ha'erat
- 20:00 Awrak Al Hob
- 23:00 Al Ishq Al Aswad
- 00:00 Awrak Al Hob
- 02:00 Al Ishq Al Aswad
- OSN Ya Hala! HD
- 03:00 Kosem Sultan
- 04:00 Ta'er Al Hob
- 05:00 Al Khanka
- 06:00 Al Meyzan
- 07:00 Madrasat Al Hob
- 08:00 Ba'eat Al Nakhy
- 09:00 Kosem Sultan



It was a memorable moment at Sam's Egaila residence on Thursday as family, friends and well-wishers celebrate Engr Collins Nwabuogor's birthday. 'May God continue to bless, guide and protect you your family Amen.' Greetings from friends and well-wishers.

PAKISTAN QIRRAAT & NAAT COUNCIL ORGANIZES RAMADAN CONFERENCE

On the occasion of holy month of Ramadan Al Mubarak, Pakistan Qirrat & Naat Council Kuwait organizes Istaqbaal e Ramadan Conference last week to mark the significant of this sacred month. People from all works of life participated in this graceful event. Event was held under patronage of Shamshad Khan Tanoli and was presided by Muhammad Irfan Adil.

The conference started with recitation of Holy Quran by Hafiz Dawood, Muhammad Ali Hassan, Hafiz Usman, Hafiz Sana Ullah and Qari Sohaib Anjum. Nasheed was presented by Haji Muhammad Ayub, Haji Muhammad Nawaz, Rana Irfan, Muhammad Hanif, Sarwar Hussain Naqshbandi, Hafiz Abdul Waheed Rabbani and Muhammad Faisal Naqshbandi. The event was conducted by Abdul Rehman, Hafiz Waheed Chishti and Muhammad Zaman Chishti.

Addressing to the audience, Qari Talat Sharif Naqshbandi Vice President of Pakistan Qirrat & Naat Council Kuwait, stated that fasting in the month of Ramadan is an obligation and a great worship. It is among the best acts of obedience. In fasting there is great reward. "O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may guard against evil." (The Holy Quran, 2:183)

Fasting helps to develop and strengthen Muslims' powers of self-control so that they can resist wrongful desires and bad habits, and therefore guard against evil. By refraining from the natural human desire to satisfy one's appetite, we are exercising our ability of self-restraint, so that we can then apply it to our everyday life to bring about self-improvement. Fasting in Islam does not just consist of refraining from eating and drinking, but from every kind of selfish desire and wrong-doing. The fast is not merely of the body, but essentially that of the spirit as well. The physical fast is a symbol and outward expression of the real, inner fast.

One of the doors of Paradise, named Ar-Rayyan, is specified for those Muslims who used to fast in this world. On the Day of

Judgment it will be opened, and those who used to fast in obedience to Allah will be called to enter through that door. The Quran Al-Karim descended in this blessed month of Ramadan. The Night of 'Qadr' is in this month. In the holy month of Ramadan, it is an act of 'sunnah' to have the 'iftar' early and to have the 'sahur' (pre-dawn meal) late. The Messenger of Allah was careful about performing these two 'sunnahs'.

Allama Muhammad Mushtaq Qadri delivered key note speech in this great conference and said Allah (SWT) has always shown his love, kindness and mercy toward his creatures but there are some special months, days and times which are told above from rest, Ramadan is also one of those special months in which Allah showers his countless blessings. Ramadan is a month in which the Mercy and Blessings of Allah Ta'ala descend upon us continuously. The whole Quran was sent down to the first sky from "LawheMahfooz".

There is the night of Qadr, which is better than 1000 months. The thawaab of good deed is equal to the fardh of another month. The first ten days are of mercy, second ten days are of forgiveness and the last ten days are of being freed from Hell. The month of Ramadan is one of the greatest blessings of Allah (SWT) upon the Ummah of his beloved Prophet (SAW).

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Muslim calendar and is also when the Holy Qur'an was sent down from heaven to guide the Muslims. In the Qur'an it is stated 'Ramadan is the month in which was sent down the Qur'an as a guide to mankind, also Clear Signs for guidance and judgment between right and wrong.' (Suratul Baqara, 2:185). This is especially an important month for Muslims across the world; in era when we are constantly struggling with the idea of up keeping the Remembrance of Allah due to complications of modern day life.





A HISTORICAL SEASON FOR AUK'S FEMALE SPORTS TEAMS



On the 18th of May 2016 Noha Abu Omar played the winning serve of the final game between AUK and the American University of the Middle East (AUM) to crown the AUK Women's Volleyball team champions of the Universities Athletic Association of Kuwait (UAAK) league. With that victory AUK female athletes completed a historical season winning all competitions in all female sports. AUK female athletes dominated this season winning the Women's Basketball, Table Tennis, Squash, Soccer, and Volleyball UAAK league 2015-2016. This is the first time in the history of the UAAK and the Universities Championship Cup (UCC) where one university dominates all competitions in any gender. AUK competed in the UAAK versus teams from Australian College of Kuwait (ACK), Gulf Institute of Science and Technology (GUST), American University of the Middle East (AUM), and Arab Open University (AOU). The Women's Basketball, Table Tennis, Squash, and Soccer all won this season without a single loss.

remarkable and historical season and for their hard work, dedication, and winning spirit. The Women's Soccer Coach; Hannah Farmer also expressed her joy and pride "I am so proud of the

ladies this season they worked so hard and truly deserve to be winners, congratulations". Congratulations again to all AUK female student-athletes on an extraordinary season!



AUK's athletics coaches and administration sang the praises of their triumphant student-athletes, the AUK Sports Coordinator; Omar Mehdi thanked all of the female student-athletes for a



PHILADELPHIA BECOMES FIRST BIG US CITY TO TAX SODA

NEW YORK: Philadelphia on Thursday became the first major US city to vote to tax sugary drinks, fighting off a multi-million dollar challenge from the beverage industry. At about 50 cents a liter, the tax will apply to sweetened drinks, including those with artificial sweetener. It covers not only sodas but also sports drinks, flavored water, energy drinks and presweetened coffee and tea, the mayor's office said. The only exceptions are for drinks comprised of at least 50 percent milk, fresh fruit or fresh vegetables.

Berkeley, California, with a population of about 120,000 residents, is the only other city in America to tax soft drinks. Philadelphia's city council approved the tax by 13 to four votes on Thursday, after months of deliberation. It is set to go into effect in January. Supporters say the measure will improve the health of the 1.5 million people who live in Philadelphia, America's fifth-largest city.

More than 68 percent of the city's adults and 41 percent of children are overweight or obese. Opponents predict it will spell catastrophe for small businesses, forcing some to go under if their customers leave town to stock up elsewhere. Dozens of attempts to pass similar legislation in other US cities have failed and it was the third attempt to get the tax imposed in Philadelphia, where city council members threw it out twice under pressure from the drinks industry.

Democratic Mayor Jim Kenney this time sought to win support by saying the tax would raise \$91 million a year to help fund prekindergarten education, community schools and recreation centers. "Today was a big win," Kenney tweeted after the vote. "It'll be an even bigger victory for our kids who get pre-K, community schools and rebuilt parks, rec centers and libraries," he added. There was a lively debate before the City

Council voted in favor of the measure. Several people complained about the financial burden on poorer families in a city where 26.7 percent of the population live below the poverty line.

The tax would "create the worst black market for non-alcoholic beverages since prohibition" in the 1920s and 1930s, said a man identified by the local ABC television channel as Coca-Cola employee Chris Hunter. But cardiologist Ken Margulies praised the council's courage, saying they were doing the right thing to help reduce diabetes, heart disease and obesity. "You are acting boldly to deal with very real concerns and needs of Philadelphians and our country as a whole. Thank you," he said. The soft drink industry spent millions of dollars in a bid to head off the legislation. "Discriminatory taxes send the wrong message to consumers," said the American Beverage Association, which includes Coca-Cola and PepsiCo. — AFP

URUGUAYANS DEFEND NATIONAL DRINK AFTER CANCER WARNING

'EVERYTHING IS BETTER WITH MATE'

MONTEVIDEO: It was potentially devastating news for Uruguayans: A warning that their national drink, mate, could cause cancer if consumed hot. But the plucky South American country, already grumpy after being knocked out of the Copa America football tournament, found a silver lining as they faced an affront to their cultural identity. News came from the World Health Organization on Wednesday that drinking very hot liquids poses a cancer risk.

That was hard to swallow for a country where in every park and square folk sit slurping mate, an herbal infusion brewed with hot water. "Everything is better with mate," said student Valentina Nunez, 24,

sitting with her gourd and a flask of hot water on a university campus in Montevideo. "It's like a companion," said her friend, Jessica Aliz. But the WHO report also brought salvation for lovers of the ground green leaves, whose champions include Argentine-born Pope Francis and Uruguayan football icon Luis Suarez. Along with the hot-drink warning, the WHO removed mate from a blacklist of drinks whose contents were thought to cause cancer.

The WHO in 1991 said coffee and mate-pronounced something like "mattay" were thought to have carcinogenic qualities. Now it says it is the heat, not the contents,

that poses the tumor risk. In the case of mate, "its components actually lessen the damage from the temperature," stopping cells from mutating into tumors, said Nelson Bracesco, a biologist researching mate at Uruguay's state medicine faculty. "That has been proved in a test tube. It remains to be tested on humans or animals," he said. "It would help to explain why in Uruguay imports of mate leaves have increased strongly and the type of esophageal cancer in question has been decreasing in recent years."

Drink of champions

With three million inhabitants, Uruguay is tiny compared to its mate-rich neighbors Argentina and Brazil. But in mate-drinking terms, it is a giant. Argentina and Brazil are the region's biggest mate producers, but Uruguay consumes more per head than any of these countries, according to industry estimates. Walking in the street, sitting in the park or standing on the bus, Uruguayans can be seen everywhere cradling their mate gourd with a thermos under their arm. The gourd, a hollowed-out pumpkin, is filled nearly to the brim with mate leaves. The water is added in small doses, sometimes over a period of hours. The infusion is consumed by sucking on a metal straw called a bombilla.

"It's not like a quick coffee," said Aliz. "It is always there. It lasts longer, you top it off. To drink mate, you have to take time out." Bracesco says his research shows that mate boosts the drinker's concentration and physical well being. "It is part of our culture," said Jorge Vera, 72, who sells mate gourds and bombillas in central Montevideo. "It is expanding outside our region—even more so now that the pope is an Argentine who drinks mate."

Francis has been photographed in his white papal robes with a gourd in hand. So has Suarez, the striker with Spanish football champions Barcelona, arguably the best-known Uruguayan abroad right now. "The first thing I do in the morning is make mate," says Rossimary Baron, 33, a Brazilian living in Montevideo. She moved to the Uruguayan capital four years ago from Rio Grande do Sul, a Brazilian state where mate is drunk from giant gourds. She says the drink makes her feel "at home." — AFP



MONTEVIDEO: Calabash gourds used to drink "mate" -traditional herbal infusion- are displayed for sale in downtown Montevideo. — AFP

SOUTH AFRICAN 'VIRGIN BURSARIES' SCHEME RULED UNCONSTITUTIONAL

JOHANNESBURG: A controversial scheme offering university scholarships to young South African women who remain virgins is unconstitutional, the Commission for Gender Equality ruled yesterday. The "maiden's bursaries" offered by a local mayor sparked a nationwide debate in January, with critics slamming the scheme's emphasis on virginity as outdated while traditionalists said it would help preserve African culture. Yesterday, the gender commission said the program discriminated against women because male students were not subjected to the same tests.

"Any funding by an organ of state based on a woman's sexuality perpetuates patriarchy and inequality in South Africa," it said in a statement. Rights groups applauded the ruling. "It is not the cultural practice that is the problem here; it is the allocation of state funds on the basis of girls' sexuality that violates the constitutional protection to equality, dignity and privacy," said Sanja Bornman, an attorney with Lawyers for Human Rights.

Recipients of the scholarships, which were offered only to women, were required to undergo virginity testing each time they returned home for holidays, and could lose their scholarships if it was determined that they had engaged in sexual activity. Dudu Mazibuko, the mayor who initiated the programme, said in January it would help reduce teenage pregnancy and the spread of HIV/Aids as well as widening job opportunities for women in her small municipality in KwaZulu Natal province.

Mazibuko, a member of the ruling African National Congress, argued that there was already a strong culture of virginity testing in the poor eastern coastal province. But gender activists and some political parties condemned the practice, with the Economic Freedom Fighters opposition party describing it as "patriarchal and anti-women". — Reuters



KOSOVO: Yoga students participate in an outdoor yoga session held at the National Park of Germia in the Kosovo capital Pristina. — AP



PARANAL, Chile: A handout photo taken on April 24, 2012 in Paranal, Chile, and released by the European Southern Observatory shows ESO's Very Large Telescope (VLT)'s four Unit Telescopes named after celestial objects in Mapuche, which is an ancient native language of the indigenous people of Chile and Argentina (from L) Antu (UT1; the Sun), Kueyen (UT2; the Moon), Melipal (UT3; the Southern Cross) and Yepun (UT4; Venus). — AFP photos

DESERT TELESCOPE STAKES OUT SUPERMASSIVE BLACK HOLE

PARIS: First postulated more than 230 years ago, black holes have been extensively researched, frequently depicted, even featured in sci-fi films. We've all seen the artists' impressions and read of their ravenous star-gobbling feasts. But here's the thing... science is still not 100 percent sure what they look like, how they behave or even that they exist. Telescopes have never seen a black hole, and the world's brightest minds are unable to reconcile their core characteristics with some of the bedrock laws of nature. Seeking answers, scientists have trained a massive telescope, named Gravity, in Chile on a point some 24,000 light years away where a supermassive black hole is thought to lurk at the center of our Milky Way galaxy.

The enormous eye will look for minuscule but telltale deviations in the movement of gas and stars swirling around the monster hole. "The goal of Gravity is to finally prove the existence of a black hole at the center of our galaxy," project member Guy Perrin, an astronomer from the Paris Observatory, told AFP. But finding something unexpected would in some ways be an even bigger breakthrough as it may offer clues to our imperfect understanding of physics.

Sharper than ever

Gravity's theorized target, Sagittarius A, is

four million times more massive than our Sun, packed into an area smaller than the Solar System. To observe it up close, astronomers have combined the power of Europe's four largest telescopes, based in the Atacama desert, to create the most powerful instrument of its kind ever built. The images will be "about 10-20 times sharper than what we had before," said project leader Frank Eisenhauer of the Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics.

With a combined diameter of about 130 meters (427 feet), the device will allow astronomers to observe more detail, closer to the black hole, than ever before. "We will check whether our physical understanding is correct to conclude it is a black hole," Eisenhauer told AFP by telephone from Atacama, where the telescope is being put through its paces before starting full-scale observations, probably next year. "If you see the motion of matter so close to a black hole, it would be very difficult to find any other explanation."

Black holes are regions in space-time where mass is collapsed into such a small area that gravity takes over completely, and nothing can escape its pull. Eighteenth century amateur clergyman and scientist John Michell is credited with conceptualising black holes in 1783. They were also predicted in Albert Einstein's theory of

general relativity, published in 1915. There are two types: "stellar mass" black holes that form when a monster star implodes, and the "supermassive" variety which lie at the center of large

galaxies. Ubiquitous as they are believed to be—millions in the Milky Way galaxy alone—black holes are invisible because they absorb light, along with everything else.

Was Einstein wrong?

Their existence is inferred from the behavior of objects nearby, including stars swirling around them as planets orbit our Sun. Some scientists, including physicist Stephen Hawking, have suggested black holes—if they exist at all—may not fit the general relativity mold. In February, evidence for stellar mass black holes emerged when scientists observed a gravitational wave—a ripple theorized to move through space-time when two of these beasts collide. Each black hole, in Einstein's world, should have an "event horizon," a point of no return beyond which gravity takes over.

But a major problem in science today is that general relativity does not gel with quantum mechanics, the other pillar of modern physics. Quantum physics perfectly describes phenomena on the minuscule, subatomic level, but gravity does not seem to work on that scale. When it comes to black holes, general relativity predicts that nothing can escape them. Quantum theory, however, posits that no information from the Universe can ever just disappear. — AFP



IN SPACE: (FILES) This handout photo released by the European Southern Observatory and taken on June 7, 2016 shows deep in the heart of the Abell 2597 Brightest Cluster Galaxy, a small cluster of giant gas clouds raining in on the central black hole.

CLINIC

PAGE

Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
فهد علي المخيزيم

Consultant Pediatrician استشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM

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



KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (16/06/2016 TO 22/06/2016)

SHARQIA-1		PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND	12:15 AM
THE CALL UP	9:30 PM		
THE CALL UP	11:30 PM		
SHARQIA-2		AVENUES-3	
THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE	9:45 PM	KAMMATTI PAADAM- Malayalam	9:45 PM
WARCRAFT	11:45 PM	THE CALL UP	1:00 AM
SHARQIA-3		AVENUES-4	
HASAN WA BOQLOZ	10:00 PM	THE CALL UP	10:30 PM
THE ASIAN CONNECTION	12:05 AM	THE CALL UP	12:30 AM
MUHALAB-1		AVENUES-5	
THE CALL UP	10:00 PM	ROAD GAMES	9:45 PM
THE CALL UP	12:05 AM	WARCRAFT	11:45 PM
MUHALAB-2		AVENUES-6	
CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR	9:45 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	9:30 PM
GENTLEMAN - Telugu	9:45 PM	MIN DAHAR RAGEL - Arabic	11:45 PM
THE ASIAN CONNECTION	12:45 AM		
MUHALAB-3		AVENUES-7	
THE JUNGLE BOOK	9:30 PM	ROAD GAMES	10:15 PM
WARCRAFT	11:45 PM	ROAD GAMES	12:15 AM
FANAR-1		AVENUES-8	
THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE	9:30 PM	NAVY SEALS VS. ZOMBIES	10:00 PM
THE JUNGLE BOOK	11:30 PM	NO SAT	
FANAR-2		NAVY SEALS VS. ZOMBIES	12:05 AM
THE CALL UP	10:15 PM	NO SAT	
THE CALL UP	12:15 AM	AVENUES-9	
FANAR-3		THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE	10:30 PM
TE3N (Hindi)	9:45 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	12:30 AM
ROAD GAMES	12:45 AM	AVENUES-10	
FANAR-4		THE CALL UP	9:45 PM
ROAD GAMES	10:00 PM	THE CALL UP	11:45 PM
WARCRAFT	12:05 AM		
FANAR-5		AVENUES-11	
ELLY JAY AHSAN (Arabic)	10:30 PM	WARCRAFT (Atmos 2D)	9:30 PM
NAVY SEALS VS. ZOMBIES	12:30 AM	THU+FRI+SAT	
MARINA-1		CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR (Atmos 2D)	12:05 AM
THE CALL UP	9:45 PM	THU+FRI+SAT	
THE CALL UP	12:05 AM	360°- 1	
MARINA-2		THE CALL UP	10:30 PM
THE JUNGLE BOOK	10:00 PM	THE CALL UP	12:30 AM
WARCRAFT	12:15 AM	360°- 2	
MARINA-3		PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND	10:00 PM
THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE	9:30 PM	THE ASIAN CONNECTION	12:15 AM
HASAN WA BOQLOZ	11:45 PM	360°- 3	
AVENUES-1		THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE	9:45 PM
ELLY JAY AHSAN (Arabic)	10:00 PM	CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR	11:45 PM
		AL-KOUT.1	
		WARCRAFT	9:30 PM
		NAVY SEALS VS. ZOMBIES	12:05 AM
		AL-KOUT.2	
		THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE	10:00 PM
		ROAD GAMES	12:15 AM

ABSCONDING



ALATHLA TRAVELS CO
WOULD LIKE TO INFORM THAT
DONY KOSHY MANGALATHU,
INDIAN NATIONAL,
IS ABSCONDING AND NO MORE A
STAFF OF OUR COMPANY, WE WILL
NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY
DEALING
HE MIGHT HAVE ENTERED INTO OR
WILL BE DOING IN FUTURE WITH
ANY ONE

CHANGE OF NAME

I have changed my name from Ali Asgar holding passport no. G7737051 to Ali Asgar Khedawala. In future to be known by new name R/o New Masjid Saify Mohalla Salumber Udaipur Rajasthan India. (C 5186) 15-6-2016

I, Makbull Chandsaheb Bepari, holder of Indian Passport No: K2625123, address: Devarahippargi TQ Sindgi, Bijapur - 586115, Karnataka, India, hereby change my name to Nabirasool Bepari S/o Chandsaheb Bepari. (C 5185) 14-6-2016

I, Iqbal Hatimbhai Bhinderwala, holder of Indian Passport No: Z1847106, address: 6/8, Taj Mansion, 3rd floor R.N. 33, 1st Sankli Street, Byculla, Mumbai, 400008, hereby change my name Mufaddal Hatimbhai Bhinderwala. (C 5184) 13-6-2016

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)

Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381



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 18/6/2016

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

Word Search Puzzles

Movie Actresses 1 - Word Search

Find the words hidden in the grid of letters.

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

- | | | |
|------------|----------|-------------|
| BECKINSALE | LOHAN | THURMAN |
| BULLOCK | MACLAINE | TOMEI |
| CRUZ | PFEIFFER | WATTS |
| DUNST | PORTMAN | WEAVER |
| HAYEK | RYDER | WINSLET |
| JOHANSSON | SARANDON | WITHERSPOON |
| KIDMAN | SPACEK | ZELLWEGER |
| KNIGHTLEY | STREEP | |

Yesterday's Solution

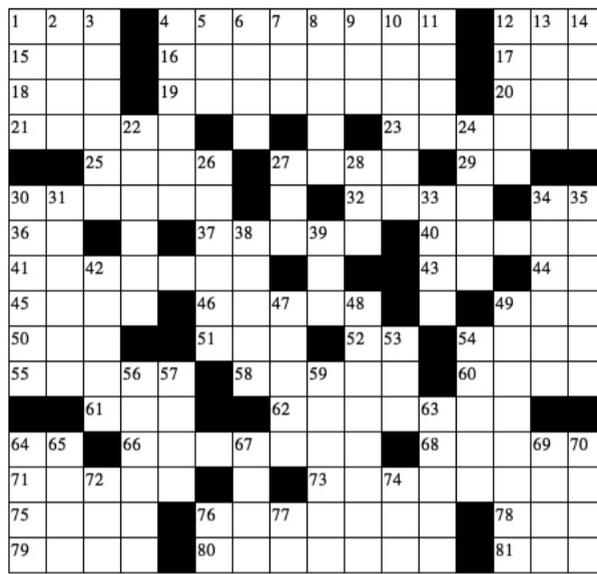
Large Print Word Search Puzzles

90's Songs 8 - Solution

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

- | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|
| ADIA | FINALLY | SAY IT |
| ANYTHING | JUMP AROUND | SLIDE |
| ANYWHERE | MASTERPIECE | SUKIYAKI |
| CRAZY | MISSING | TIME |
| DEAR MAMA | NO DIGGITY | UNBELIEVABLE |
| DISAPPEAR | NOBODY KNOWS | WANNABE |
| DISARM | NOT TONIGHT | |
| EVERLONG | RUN-AROUND | |
| EVERYTHING | | |

CROSSWORD 1288



ACROSS

- Apparent power to perceive things that are not present to the senses.
- Hinder or prevent the progress or accomplishment of.
- A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
- The syllable naming the first (tonic) note of any major scale in solmization.
- Inflammation of the vertebral column.
- An informal term for a father.
- A metric unit of volume or capacity equal to 10 liters.
- Often cultivated for the decorative foliage.
- A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
- Large African forest tree yielding a strong hard yellow to golden brown lumber.
- Covered with or as if with clothes or a wrap or cloak.
- One-hundredth of a right angle.
- A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
- In a weak and unconvincing manner.
- An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
- Before noon.
- A wealthy man (who made his fortune in the Orient).
- Brilliantly colored south Asian pheasant.
- A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
- A highly unstable radioactive element (the heaviest of the halogen series).
- Being one more than fifty.
- A small carriage in which a baby or child is pushed around.
- A dark region of considerable extent on the surface of the moon.
- A federal agency that supervises carriers that transport goods and people between states.
- South American wood sorrel cultivated for its edible tubers.
- A ductile gray metallic element of the lanthanide series.
- Of or like a cecum.
- Fishtail palm of India to Malay Peninsula.
- Toward the mouth or oral region.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- British philologist and writer (born in South Africa) (1892-1973).
- (chemistry) P(otential of) H(ydrogen).
- Take or catch as if in a snare or trap.
- A deep opening in the earth's surface.

- Medication (trade name Lipid) used to lower the levels of triglyceride in the blood.
- Low stingless nettle of Central and South America having velvety brownish-green toothed leaves and clusters of small green flowers.
- Any place of complete bliss and delight and peace.
- The Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the Dali region of Yunnan.
- (informal) Exceptionally good.
- To that.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

- Edible starchy tuberous root of taro plants.
- A cleansing agent made from the salts of vegetable or animal fats.
- Apathy demonstrated by an absence of emotional reactions.
- A severe or trying experience.
- A room or establishment where alcoholic drinks are served over a counter.
- Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.
- Psychoactive substance present in marijuana.
- A long noosed rope used to catch animals.
- A member of the Shoshonean people of Utah and Colorado and New Mexico.
- A fragment of incombustible matter left after a wood or coal or charcoal fire.
- A male monarch or emperor (especially of Russia prior to 1917).
- (Babylonian) A demigod or first man.
- A rapid series of short loud sounds (as might be heard with a stethoscope in some types of respiratory disorders).
- (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
- A minor match preceding the main event.
- The superior of an abbey of monks.
- Generator consisting of a coil (the armature) that rotates between the poles of an electromagnet (the field magnet) causing a current to flow in the armature.
- A young woman making her debut into society.
- A compartment in front of a motor vehicle where driver sits.
- Punish with an arbitrary penalty.
- A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
- West Indian tree having racemes of fragrant white flowers and yielding a durable timber and resinous juice.
- Surveying instrument consisting of the upper movable part of a theodolite including the telescope and its attachments.
- Having the wind against the forward side of the sails.
- A religious belief of African origin involving witchcraft and sorcery.
- The capital and largest city of Bangladesh.
- An Indian side dish of yogurt and chopped cucumbers and spices.
- Having or resembling a stinger or barb.
- A river in northeastern Brazil that flows generally northward to the Atlantic Ocean.
- Large northern deer with enormous flattened antlers in the male.
- German mystic and theosophist who founded modern theosophy.
- Growing old.
- Relating to or characteristic of or occurring on land.
- A state of motor and mental inactivity with a partial suspension of sensibility.
- Small tropical American tree bearing edible plumlike fruit.
- A blind god.
- The Hebrew patriarch who saved himself and his family and the animals by building an ark in which they survived 40 days and 40 nights of rain.
- Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
- Type genus of the Majidae.
- Seed of a pea plant.
- Remaining after all deductions.
- A state in New England.
- A toxic nonmetallic element related to sulfur and tellurium.

Daily SuDoku

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

very hard

Yesterday's Solution

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

hard

Yesterday's Solution

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

LEWIS LOSES NO-HIT BID IN RANGERS VICTORY

OAKLAND: Colby Lewis lost his no-hit bid for Texas in the ninth inning when Max Muncy opened with a double that glanced off right fielder Nomar Mazara's glove Thursday in the Rangers' 5-1 victory over the Oakland Athletics. Lewis was perfect until walking Yonder Alonso with two outs in the eighth. Two batters after Muncy's hit, Lewis (6-0) lost his shutout when left fielder Ryan Rua couldn't make a diving catch on a blooper by Coco Crisp that went for an RBI double. Lewis walked one and struck out four in a two-hitter, matching the low-hit complete game of his big league career. Daniel Mengden (0-2) allowed two runs - one earned - and four hits in 6 1/3 innings. He retired 15 straight batters before Ian Desmond homered leading off the seventh.

TIGERS 10, ROYALS 4

Victor Martinez matched a career-best with three home runs as Detroit pounded six as a team in a win over Kansas City. Martinez hit a pair of solo shots and Nick Castellanos went deep before James McCann homered off Royals reliever Luke Hochevar (1-1) leading off the seventh to knot the game 4-all. Cabrera followed moments later with a two-run shot that gave the Tigers their first lead of the game.

Detroit added three more runs in the eighth before Martinez hit his third homer in the ninth. The veteran designated hitter's other three-homer game came on July 16, 2004, at Seattle. Justin Verlander (7-5) allowed four runs on eight hits over seven innings, continuing his mastery of the Royals at Kauffman Stadium. Verlander improved to 13-5 in 22 starts in the ballpark.

ORIOLES 5, RED SOX 1

Tyler Wilson allowed three hits over eight innings, Adam Jones added a home run and three RBIs, and Baltimore got its second series win against Boston this season. Baltimore scored three runs in the first four innings, then added two in fifth. The Orioles have hit 33 home runs in their last 13 games. Wilson (3-5) was strong throughout striking out six. Pitching on an extra day of rest, he held Boston to one hit through six innings. Eduardo Rodriguez (1-2) took the loss, lasting just 4 1/3 innings and giving up eight hits and five runs in his fourth start of the season.

METS 6, PIRATES 4

Neil Walker and Michael Conforto gave the Mets an immediate jolt in their return from nagging injuries, and Bartolo Colon pitched New York past Pittsburgh. Curtis Granderson set a Mets record for leadoff homers, while Walker also went deep and had three RBIs against his former team after missing the previous three games with a sore lower back. Conforto, who hadn't started since Saturday, landed right on his ailing left wrist when he saved a run with a sensational diving catch in the first inning. Showing no ill effects, the left fielder followed Walker's two-run shot in the third inning with a home run of his own to end a 5-for-54 slump. Colon (6-3) doubled and scored earlier in the inning on Yoenis Cespedes' deep sacrifice fly. All three Mets homers came off Juan Nicasio (5-6), who gave up six runs and seven hits in 4 1/3 innings.

BLUE JAYS 13, PHILLIES 2

JA Happ allowed three hits and an unearned run in seven innings and Toronto hit five home runs in a victory over Philadelphia. Happ (8-3) struck out five in improving to 4-0 against his former team. It was the Blue Jays' third straight win over the Phillies and they have outscored them 31-7 in



OAKLAND: Texas Rangers' Ian Desmond, right, celebrates with Elvis Andrus (1) after hitting a home run against the Oakland Athletics in the seventh inning of a baseball game. — AP

those game. Kevin Pillar hit two homers and Edwin Encarnacion, Michael Saunders and Devon Travis added one apiece for the Blue Jays, who set season marks with the five homers and 17 hits. Encarnacion hit his sixth homer in as many games and his 18th of the season in the first inning against Phillies starter Aaron Nola (5-6). Encarnacion has eight home runs and 21 RBIs in June.

YANKEES 4, TWINS 1

Didi Gregorius hit a tiebreaking three-run homer in the seventh inning, CC Sabathia had another strong start and New York stopped a four-game losing streak. Fernando Abad relieved Twins starter Kyle Gibson (0-5) with one out in the seventh to face the left-handed Gregorius, after an infield single and a walk to start the inning. Abad, who had yet to allow a homer all season and took a 0.79 ERA into the game, threw a first-pitch fastball to Gregorius that landed in the right-field seats. Gregorius is 6 for 11 with seven RBIs in his last three games. Lefties are batting just .125 (4 for 32) against Abad. Sabathia (5-4) needing 116 pitches to complete six innings, but he struck out seven and retired the last five batters he faced. Aroldis Chapman pitched the ninth for his 12th save in 13 attempts.

MARINERS 6, RAYS 4

Dae-Ho Lee drove in three runs, James Paxton (1-2) gave up three runs and seven hits in six innings and Seattle avoided a three-game sweep. Lee had an RBI single in a three-run first and drove in two with a double during the fourth. Blake Snell, a 23-year-old Seattle native, was recalled from Triple-A Durham before the game and started for the Rays. Snell (0-1) allowed five runs - one earned - and eight hits over 3 1/3 innings.

BRAVES 7, REDS 2

Matt Wisler (3-7) allowed two runs and eight hits in 6 2/3 innings in his first win since

May 20 at Philadelphia, ending a streak of four straight losing decisions. A day after becoming the first major leaguer this year to hit for the cycle, Freddie Freeman had three hits, including a two-run homer. Dan Straily (4-3) allowed a season-high six runs, seven hits and three walks in 4 1/3 innings.

NATIONALS 8, PADRES 5

Bryce Harper and Wilson Ramos hit back-to-back homers and Anthony Rendon added a solo shot as Washington won for the ninth time in 11 games. Tanner Roark (6-4), who won his third straight against the Padres, worked six innings, surrendering four runs and seven hits. He walked two and struck out five. Shawn Kelley pitched the ninth for his second save in as many chances. Erik Johnson (0-2), who was acquired from the Chicago White Sox on June 4 in the deal for James

Shields, struggled again. He was charged with five runs, seven hits and two walks over six innings. He struck out two in his second start with the Padres.

BREWERS 8, DODGERS 6

Jonathan Villar hit a tiebreaking two-run home run in the top off the ninth inning to lift Milwaukee to the victory. Villar launched the first pitch he saw from Pedro Baez (0-2) an estimated 420 feet to straightaway center field for his sixth home run and first career game-winner in the ninth. Tyler Thornburg (3-1) earned the win with a scoreless eighth inning. Jeremy Jeffress struck out Corey Seager with the bases loaded and two outs in the bottom of the ninth to preserve the win for his 19th save. Aaron Hill and Chris Carter also homered for the Brewers, who ended a three-game losing streak. — AP

MLB results/standings

Atlanta 7, Cincinnati 2; Seattle 6, Tampa Bay 4; Texas 5, Oakland 1; Toronto 13, Philadelphia 2; Baltimore 5, Boston 1; NY Mets 6, Pittsburgh 4; NY Yankees 4, Minnesota 1; Detroit 10, Kansas City 4; Milwaukee 8, LA Dodgers 6; Washington 8, San Diego 5.

American League				National League					
Eastern Division				Eastern Division					
	W	L	PCT	GB		W	L	PCT	GB
Baltimore	38	27	.585	-	Washington	42	25	.627	-
Boston	37	28	.569	1	NY Mets	36	29	.554	5
Toronto	38	31	.551	2	Miami	34	32	.515	7.5
NY Yankees	32	34	.485	6.5	Philadelphia	30	37	.448	12
Tampa Bay	31	33	.484	6.5	Atlanta	20	46	.303	21.5
Central Division				Central Division					
Cleveland	35	30	.538	-	Chicago Cubs	44	20	.688	-
Kansas City	35	31	.530	0.5	St. Louis	35	30	.538	9.5
Detroit	34	32	.515	1.5	Pittsburgh	33	33	.500	12
Chicago White Sox	33	33	.500	2.5	Milwaukee	31	36	.463	14.5
Minnesota	20	46	.303	15.5	Cincinnati	26	41	.388	19.5
Western Division				Western Division					
Texas	42	25	.627	-	San Francisco	41	26	.612	-
Seattle	35	31	.530	6.5	LA Dodgers	35	33	.515	6.5
Houston	32	35	.478	10	Colorado	32	33	.492	8
LA Angels	29	37	.439	12.5	Arizona	29	39	.426	12.5
Oakland	27	39	.409	14.5	San Diego	27	41	.397	14.5

LANDRY LEADS BY THREE IN RAIN-HIT US OPEN

OAKMONT: Unheralded Andrew Landry rolled in a 10-foot birdie putt to cap a first-round 66 yesterday, taking a three-stroke clubhouse lead as the rain delayed US Open went into overdrive. The 28-year-old Texan, ranked 624th in the world, had six birdies in his four-under effort, the lowest first round score in the nine US Open championships held at Oakmont.

He had been left with that one putt at the par-four ninth to finish off the round when play was halted for the third time on Thursday because of thunderstorms, but said there was little angst involved despite a wait of some 15

hours. "It was a pretty easy putt to make," said Landry, who found himself three strokes clear of the field after New Zealand's Danny Lee bogeyed 16 to fall into a group at one-under.

Two-time Masters champion Bubba Watson, who was tied with Lee at two-under when play was halted on Thursday, also returned with a bogey at 16. England's Lee Westwood, Ireland's Shane Lowry and Americans Harris English and Kevin Streelman were also on the course at one-under — while amateur Scottie Scheffler made it into the clubhouse on Thursday with a one-under 69.

Scheffler was one of just nine players

to complete the first round on Thursday, and scheduled afternoon starters including world number one Jason Day, five-time major winner Phil Mickelson and world number six Dustin Johnson never made it to the first tee. The delays have the tournament shaping up as an endurance test on an Oakmont course still showing plenty of teeth, despite being softened by rain.

Round one resumed at 7:30am (1130 GMT), and the first wave of round two was to begin around 1:45pm (1745 GMT) with organizers targeting a mid-day finish on Saturday-to be followed promptly by the start of round three. "You've just got

to do one shot at a time," Streelman said of the upheaval. "You say it all the time, but it's really true, especially in this circumstance."

Flexibility will be key, Streelman said, as players cope with the changing face of Oakmont, where the rain made greens and fairways slightly more receptive, but only made the rough more difficult.

"It's a different golf course now," Streelman said. "I don't think it's necessarily easier or harder. It's going to take someone who is a chameleon to be able to adjust and there's going to be some birdies to be made, but the trouble's still out there." — AFP



LONDON: In this July 27, 2012 file photo Russia's Maria Sharapova carries the flag during the Opening Ceremony at the 2012 Summer Olympics. — AP

IOC'S COATES SLAMS 'ROTTEN' RUSSIA, RIO DECISION LOOMS

MELBOURNE: Russia's anti-doping agency and athletics body "were rotten to the core", IOC vice-president John Coates said yesterday ahead of a decision on whether their track and field team can compete in Rio. Coates slammed a "massive injustice" as he belatedly awarded a London 2012 Olympics gold medal to Australia's Jared Tallent, who was promoted from silver after a Russian doping case.

The strong comments from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) vice-president come as athletics' world body, the IAAF, prepares to decide whether to end Russia's suspension ahead of the Brazil Olympics. Russia's track and field organization was suspended in November over explosive doping and corruption allegations, which were compounded by a fresh bombshell report this week.

Among a string of Russian athletes to fail drugs tests was Sergey Kiryapkin, who took 50km walk gold in London ahead of Tallent, only to be stripped of his title this year. "Presenting an Olympic medal is always an honor," Coates, who is also president of the Australian Olympic Committee, said at a ceremony in Melbourne.

"But more so on this occasion to be part of rectifying, in some way, the massive injustice perpetrated on Jared by a doping cheat and aided by a Russian Anti-Doping Agency and Russian Athletics Federation that were rotten to the core." The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) ruled in March to strip six Russian track and field stars-including Kiryapkin-of their titles and medals from a period ranging from 2009 to 2013. The decision came after CAS upheld an appeal by world athletics body the IAAF, which had criticized Russia's "selective" disqualification of these athletes' results, accusing the country of annulling them only for minor competitions.

'Nail in the coffin'

The IAAF suspended Russia in November after a World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) special commission said there was state-sponsored doping and mass corruption in Russian athletics. On Wednesday, a new WADA report said hundreds of attempts to carry out drug tests on Russian athletes this year have been thwarted. Drug testers had faced intimidation and threats from armed Russian security forces,

while athletes continued to evade doping control officers with a variety of techniques, the WADA report said. As the IAAF decision looms, Athletics Australia chief Phil Jones said he would be stunned if the scandal-hit nation was allowed to compete in Brazil.

"I think it would be shocking (if Russia took part) given the WADA revelations (this week), and not only that but the systemic nature of the doping that was originally revealed by WADA," he told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. "But I really do think this seems to be the nail in the coffin. I think when you've got athletes refusing to be tested, there are clearly implications just from that." With more details of systemic doping emerging, there have been calls for a centralized anti-doping system to replace the current series of local agencies, a move that Jones said made sense. "I think the idea of a local agency testing their own athletes is simply not going to stand the test of time. We've seen with Russia, not only in athletics but in other sports," he said. "The challenge then becomes, if you're having an international agency looking after the whole program, the costs become enormous, exponentially higher than they are now." — AFP

LAST CHANCE FOR SYRIAN SWIMMER

GHENT, Belgium: Rami Anis braved the bombs of Aleppo, then was forced to leave his Syrian home for Turkey five years ago - all the while refusing to give up on an elusive dream of swimming in the Olympics. He trained at the prestigious Galatasaray sports club in Istanbul, putting in lap after lap after lap, month after month. But soon, frustration set in because he was a refugee. That short window when a good athlete can truly become elite was closing fast. And he knew it.

"I could not swim for the club. I was just training without taking part. All the while, the war was lasting longer. And I was losing my best years as an athlete," he said in an interview with the Associated Press. So last year, at age 24 already, he took a different dive into the water, and crossed on a rubber boat from Turkey into Greece - a stretch of Aegean Sea that has become the tomb of all too many refugees - before setting off a 2,000-mile trek through the Balkans and onwards to Germany and eventually Belgium.

First official refugee team

Now, as part of the first official refugee team at the Games, Anis will be going to Rio - having lost some of his edge and many illusions along the way. Still, he clings to one. "I wish from my heart that there will be no more refugees and we can go back and participate for our country," Anis said. Not so long ago, he dreamt of being among the best swimmers in the world. He had competed in two world championships and a short-course world cup, finished second at the Asian championships. In short, he was looking to break through at an international level.

After arriving in Europe last fall, he thought he could make money swimming, and provide for his family. All too often though, swimming costs money instead of making it, despite the allure of Olympic gold.

"He didn't want to accept charity," said Carine Verbauwen, a former Olympic swimming finalist who later became a coach. The best deal she had for him was that he would not have to pay to swim at her club S&R Rozebroeken, some 30 miles (50 kilometers) west of Brussels. It doesn't quite have the ring of Galatasaray, but at least his Olympic dream was rekindled.

His problems, though, were not solved. Belgian bureaucracy loomed. After Anis was recognized as a refugee he had to look for housing. To get that, he had to prove how much he made. But for social security to give him such a paper, he had to have housing first, Verbauwen said.

Verbauwen said it was a Belgian Catch-22. "We didn't get the house because we didn't have the paper. We didn't get the paper because we didn't have a house," Verbauwen said. So she looked around among friends and family for a kind spirit and instead of 6 hours of travel for 2 hours of training, he now only lives 25 kilometers from the pool.

Now, it is work on his form that counts, trying to overcome a half-year layoff from top-class training. Verbauwen said that for one month of rest, it takes two to come back. Little wonder Anis will not be challenging for 100-meter butterfly medals in Rio. "If you don't swim six months then you have lost a lot," Verbauwen said. "It was very, very hard for him to do the training with my swimmers. He was so tired he could not do it anymore," she said. Anis just wants to come out of the water, head held high. "God willing, I will do a good enough job that satisfied the Olympic Committee and the Syrian people," he said. — AP



KOLKATA: In this photograph taken on June 16, 2016, former Indian cricket captain and current president of the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) Sourav Ganguly (R) and former Indian batsman VVS Laxman play with a pink cricket ball during an event at the Eden Gardens ground. — AFP

PINK BALL MAKES INDIA DEBUT AS DAY-NIGHT CLAMOR GROWS

NEW DELHI: India will witness its first ever multi-day pink ball game at Kolkata's Eden Gardens from today, a possible precursor to a day-night Test later this year in the world's richest cricket market. The four-day match is an inter-club final between Mohun Bagan and Bhowanipore Club which is being hosted by the Cricket Association of Bengal, headed by former India skipper Sourav Ganguly.

The success of the experiment is expected to have a bearing on efforts by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to host a day-night pink ball Test against New Zealand in October. "Time has come to market Test cricket in a better way (to bring back the

fans)," Ganguly, who sat alongside former Australian batsman Dean Jones and India's VVS Laxman at a promotional event on Thursday, was quoted as saying by the Indian Express website. "Just think about Virat Kohli facing Jimmy Anderson in a pink ball Test—the spectacle it will present. Let's see the problem, address it and try to fix it with the technology we have." The Kolkata club match will be broadcast live in India with many prominent former Indian cricketers providing commentary. The BCCI also announced earlier this month that the domestic Duleep Trophy tournament in September will be played under lights with a pink ball for the first time. — AFP

SHANAKA'S 'DREAM DEBUT' DELIGHTS CAPTAIN MATHEWS

MALAHIDE: Sri Lanka captain Angelo Mathews hailed the one-day international debut of Dasun Shanaka after his match-winning performance in the first ODI against Ireland at Malahide. Shanaka scored 42 off 19 balls on Thursday and then took five for 43 to bowl the tourists to a convincing 76-run win, their first since their arrival in England last month for a tour of Britain and Ireland.

"Dasun had a dream debut and we are all happy for him and hopefully he will continue in the next few matches," Mathews said of the 24-year-old Shanaka, whose lively medium-pace bowling saw him take an encouraging three for 46 on his Test debut against England at Headingley last month. "It's nice to get the momentum on your side," Mathews, himself a seam-bowling all-rounder, added. "We have not done well in England and we have lost the Test series, but we have now won in similar conditions and can look forward to the one-day series (against England) coming up."

Mathews was just as delighted with the batting performance of his side as they posted 303 for seven in their 50 overs despite losing the toss on an overcast morning, with conditions ideal for bowling on a green pitch. "It was a challenge for the batsmen but they put up a good effort," he said of an innings that featured an unbeaten hundred from Dinesh Chandimal.

"In these conditions you have to rotate the strike and build partnerships so you can set it up for the middle-order batters. "I thought we got a brilliant start and the debutant, Kusal Mendis, batted brilliantly to score 51 and Chandimal has been batting brilliantly throughout. "Shanaka then scored 42 off just 19 balls and finished the job for us," added Mathews who modestly failed to mention his own innings of 49 from 53 balls with four fours and two sixes.

Backbone of the innings

It was Chandimal who provided the backbone to the innings. Coming to the middle at the start of the 10th over, with Sri Lanka on 47 for two, the experienced wicket-keeper—who made a hundred in the second Test against England at Chester-le-Street—batted through the rest of the innings, finishing exactly 100 not out from 107 balls with just seven boundaries.

Mathews surprisingly opted to open the bowling himself and although he and Shaminda Eranga failed to take a wicket they restricted Ireland to just 22 in seven overs. When Shanaka was introduced he made the breakthrough with only his second delivery and added the big wicket of Ed Joyce, Ireland's best batsman, in his third over to put the home side on the back foot.

Ireland captain William Porterfield (73) and Kevin O'Brien (64) added 69 for the fourth wicket at exactly a run-a-ball, to get the home side back on track but the skipper's dismissal and an interruption for rain 11 balls later cut off their momentum. "I got out just before the rain which set us back and that proved crucial to our hopes of winning," said Porterfield. "We couldn't get put together any partnerships at the end and Shanaka bowled very well." The teams meet back at Malahide on Saturday for the second and final match of the series before Sri Lanka 'go back over the water' for a five-match ODI campaign against England. — AFP



LAHORE: Pakistani cricketers and team officials pose for photographs with the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Thomas Drew (4R) during an Iftar dinner by the British High Commissioner ahead of the Pakistani team departure for England. — AFP

YOUNIS UNDAUNTED BY ENGLISH ATTACK IN LORD'S TEST RETURN

LAHORE: Pakistan's top Test batsman Younis Khan has brushed aside the threat posed by England's in-form pace attack as his team prepare to return to the scene of an infamous spot-fixing scandal in 2010. Khan said Pakistan's familiarity with the likes of Stuart Broad and James Anderson would blunt their potency when they open a four-Test series at Lord's on July 14.

The 'home of cricket' will provide a tough opening environment for Pakistan after the spot-fixing case of 2010, which ended with jail terms for young fast bowler Mohammad Amir and two other players. Amir, now 24, is back in Pakistan's squad after completing a ban from cricket but Khan said his teammates now wanted to put the past behind them and enjoy playing at the historic London ground.

"It is always a pleasure whenever you play in Lord's," told AFP at a dinner organized by Britain's High Commission in Lahore. "The tradition and using that dressing room and that ground... in my mind it's always a challenge and a pleasure for me so playing cricket in England is all about that." England's fast bowlers combined to take 33 wickets between them in their recent 2-0 rout of a Sri Lankan side missing recent retirees such

as Kumar Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardene.

Anderson's 21 wickets came at a phenomenal 10.8 runs apiece, but Khan, the lynchpin of Pakistan's batting for more than a decade, said his team would not roll over as easily. "No doubt about Anderson and Broad—they are the top bowlers these days. But we play regularly against Broad and Finn and Anderson," he said.

Last hurrah?

The two teams last clashed in the UAE, where Pakistan plays its home games because of security concerns, in October-November 2015 with the South Asian side prevailing 2-0 in the three match series. They also played in the UAE in 2012, when Pakistan rolled over the English 3-0.

Then, as now, Khan and fellow veteran Misbah-ul-Haq (age 42) are seen as key to holding up a batting order that has traditionally been troubled by quality swing bowling. "If you go there and play according to your plans you'll be successful in any conditions and against any bowler," he said. It is a strategy that has paid dividends for Khan in the past even in English conditions, with its pacey pitches that encourage movement in the air.

In five previous Tests on English soil he has maintained an average of 52.22 — one run shy of his overall career figure—and managed one century along with three fifties. Now in the twilight of a career that has seen him amass 31 Test centuries tenth on the overall list and the highest number by any current player—Khan remained coy on his future plans.

"Maybe it will be my final tour," he said, before quickly adding: "As a cricketer and as a top sportsman I feel very comfortable with my fitness and my form so God willing (if) I perform the way I perform for my country maybe I will play for four-five more years, maybe." Beyond Khan and Misbah, no Pakistani batsman has broken into the world's top 10 for many years, but the ethnic Pashtun said he was confident about the younger players who are waiting in the wings.

"Asad Shafiq is there, Azhar Ali is there, then after them there are the youngsters are upcoming," he said. "Whenever a top cricketer retires everyone thinks after him what should we do. But suddenly some of the players come and they play for their country and they play for themselves. "So I think after us there will be guys who play better than us." — AFP



CLEVELAND: LeBron James #23 of the Cleveland Cavaliers and Stephen Curry #30 of the Golden State Warriors react during the first half in Game 6 of the 2016 NBA Finals at Quicken Loans Arena. — AFP

LEBRON, CAVALIERS DOWN WARRIORS TO FORCE GAME 7

MAGNIFICENT JAMES PUTS CAVS ON BRINK OF HISTORY

CLEVELAND: From the edge of elimination to the brink of history. LeBron James and the Cleveland Cavaliers have pushed the NBA Finals to their limit. Game 7 is necessary. James scored 41 points, delivering another magnificent performance with the season on the line, Kyrie Irving added 23 and the Cavs sent the finals packing for California by beating the rattled Golden State Warriors 115-101 on Thursday night to even this unpredictable series and force a decisive final game. Cleveland saved its season for the second time in four days and will head back to Oakland's Oracle Arena for Sunday's climactic game with a chance to become the first team to overcome a 3-1 deficit in the NBA Finals, and more importantly, give this title-starved city its first major sports championship since Dec. 27, 1964. "One more game left," James said. "I'll play it anywhere."

Ejected out

James added 11 assists, eight rebounds and again outplayed two-time Most Valuable Player Stephen Curry, who fouled out and was ejected in the fourth quarter. The Warriors never imagined being in this spot. The defending champions, who powered their way to a record 73 wins in the regular season, won the first two games by 48 combined points. But NBA Most Valuable Player Stephen Curry and his teammates have lost their touch, their poise and are in danger of seeing their historic season - and a second title - vanish. Curry was ejected with 4:22 left after he was called for his sixth personal foul, cursed several times at an official and fired his mouthpiece into the front row, striking a fan. Curry finished with 30 points, Klay Thompson had 25 and Draymond Green, back from a one-game suspension, had 10 rebounds. Warriors coach Steve Kerr felt the officiating was biased against Curry.

"He gets six fouls called on him, three of them were absolutely ridiculous," Kerr said. "As the MVP of the league, we're talking about these touch fouls in the NBA Finals. I'm happy he threw his mouthpiece." Curry walked off the floor smiling before making the long walk to the locker room. "I didn't think I fouled either Kyrie or LeBron," said Curry, recounting fouls No. 5 and 6. "It was obviously frustrating fouling out in the fourth quarter of a clinching game and not being out there with my teammates. So it got the best of me, but I'll be all right for the next game."

Big game James

On Wednesday, James called Game 7, "the two best words

ever." He'll live them once more, thanks to a spell-binding effort - the two-time champion had a hand in 27 consecutive points during a stretch in the second half - and put away the Warriors after they trimmed a 24-point deficit to seven in the final period. James scored 14 in the fourth before checking out to a thunderous ovation in the final minutes as Cleveland fans chanted, "Cavs in 7!" and "See you Sunday!"

"It's LeBron being LeBron," Cavs coach Tyronn Lue said. "He's one of the greatest of all-time. Our back was against the wall and he took it upon himself, him and Kyrie, they put us on their backs. They've got us to where we wanted to be and that's Game 7." In typical Cleveland fashion, there were some heart palpitations in the fourth. The Cavs were up 70-46 in the third, and when JR Smith blindly dropped a lob pass to a trailing James for a dunk, Quicken Loans shook with noise. The Warriors, though, weren't done. On the same floor where they won their title exactly one year ago, Thompson made a pair of 3-pointers as Golden State, playing without injured center Andrew Bogut, used a 25-10 run to pull within 80-71 entering the final 12 minutes. But James, as he did while winning two titles in Miami, made sure those belonged to him and extended Cleveland's dream season. For the Warriors, a golden year is suddenly stained. "The playoffs haven't been easy," Curry said. "But we've given ourselves a chance with Game 7 at home." James has scored 41 points in the past two games, continuing a trend of bailing his team out in its darkest hour. He's now 9-8 in elimination games. "He's a fantastic player, brilliant player," said Kerr, who played with Michael Jordan.

Tip-ins

F Harrison Barnes missed all eight shots. ... Green and Thompson played in their 103rd game this season, most in the NBA. That was also the highest total in the league a year ago, with Barnes getting to 103. ... Andre Iguodala's start was his third of these playoffs. It was his first instance of consecutive starts this season. ... Kerr is one of 26 players in league history to win five titles as a player.

He famously made the title-clinching shot for Chicago in the 1997 finals. ... Bogut's injury will take 6-to-8 weeks to heal, essentially knocking him out of playing for Australia in the Rio Olympics. "We'll re-evaluate it in a month," he said. "If I can get back on the court, we'll see. But as of now it's not looking good." — AP

FRUSTRATED CURRY LOSES HIS COOL

CLEVELAND: Stephen Curry's frustrations over foul calls boiled over in a stinging NBA Finals loss to Cleveland that saw the Golden State star guard ejected for the first time in his career. And in the wake of the defending champion Warriors' 115-101 loss to the host Cavaliers on Thursday, they face a winner-take-all title showdown Sunday on their home court to decide a best-of-seven series deadlocked at 3-3.

"Everybody has got to stay confident, stay in the moment," Curry said. "I like our chances in game seven to have everything click at the right time and win this thing." Curry, the NBA Most Valuable Player and scoring leader, scored 30 points but fouled out for the first time since 2013. He was upset at being called for the last two fouls that he hurled his mouthpiece into the stands in anger, earning banishment to the locker room.

"I usually aim at the scorer's table. I was off," Curry said. "I definitely didn't mean to throw it at a fan, but it happened. I went over and apologized to him because that's obviously not where I was trying to take my frustration out. "But the last two fouls I had, I didn't think I fouled either Kyrie or LeBron. That's just kind of my perception of the plays and I had a reaction to it."

"It was obviously frustrating fouling out in the fourth quarter of a clinching game and not being out there with my teammates. So it got the best of me, but I'll be all right for next game." Curry walked back to the locker room and collected himself, uncertain of what to do next. "I just sat in my chair. I've never been ejected before, so it was a weird feeling," Curry said. "It was just frustration and I thought it was kind of hilarious the way the last two fouls and me blowing up kind of unfolded, and some of the things that were said out there."

'Inappropriate calls'

Warriors coach Steve Kerr backed Curry and ripped officiating that he said allowed some players to be more physical than the league MVP. "Let me be clear, we did not lose because of the officiating. They totally outplayed us and Cleveland deserved to win," Kerr said. "But those three of the six fouls were incredibly inappropriate calls for anybody, much less the MVP of the league."

"As the MVP of the league, we're talking about these touch fouls in the NBA Finals. Everybody's competing out there. There are fouls on every play. It's a physical game. If they're going to let Cleveland grab and hold these guys constantly on their cuts and then you're going to call these ticky-tack fouls on the MVP of the league to foul him out, I don't agree with that."

Curry also endured trash talk from LeBron James after the Cleveland star blocked one of his shots late in the game, but Curry said James will not intimidate him or psyche him out. "However he wants to celebrate or whatever he wants to do to take in that moment, it is what it is," Curry said. "I stay aggressive, don't let that try to get in my head." — AFP



CLEVELAND: Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry (30) holds his head on the bench during a timeout against the Cleveland Cavaliers in the second half of Game 6 of basketball's NBA Finals. — AP

US INTO COPA LAST FOUR AFTER DEMPSEY STRIKES

SEATTLE: Clint Dempsey struck again as the United States powered through to the semi-finals of the Copa America Centenario on Thursday in a stormy 2-0 win over Ecuador that saw both sides finish with 10 men. Dempsey scored his third goal in as many games for Jurgen Klinsmann's side at CenturyLink Field, pouncing on 22 minutes before setting up a second for Los Angeles Galaxy forward Gyasi Zardes in the 65th minute.

Michael Arroyo pulled a goal back for Ecuador in the 74th minute to set up a frantic finale, but the US held on and will now face either Argentina or Venezuela in the semi-finals in Houston next week. Man-of-the-match Dempsey said the hosts were determined to extend their stay in the tournament beyond the semis.

"Hopefully we can keep going, we're in the semi-finals of a major tournament so we're happy," Dempsey said. "This is what you dream about as a kid. We're going to keep wishing, we're going to give everything we can, we're going to try and get to the final, we want to win it. "You don't get many opportunities to go all the way in a major tournament and that's what we're trying to do."

But the victory came at a cost for Klinsmann's side, as key midfielder Jermaine Jones was sent off early in the second half to earn a suspension which will see him miss the semi-final. France-based midfielder Alejandro Bedoya and Hamburg striker Bobby Wood also earned yellow cards that will see them suspended for the last four.

Klinsmann was furious at the manner of Jones' dismissal, which he branded "an absolute joke." "I was right there—the fourth official made the decision, not the referee, he didn't see it," Klinsmann



SEATTLE: United States' Clint Dempsey, right, celebrates after his teammate Gyasi Zardes scored against Ecuador during a Copa America Centenario quarterfinal soccer match, Thursday, June 16, 2016 at CenturyLink Field. — AFP

said. "He followed the decision of the fourth official. It's a disgrace, a decision like that." For Ecuador, Manchester United's Antonio Valencia was dismissed after picking up two yellow cards before triggering the melee which led to Jones' dismissal.

Earlier, a cagey start had seen both sides begin tentatively before Jones and Michael Bradley steadily imposed themselves in midfield as the US

started to gain the upper hand. Wood's speed troubled the Ecuador defense on 17 minutes, when he darted onto a low pass only to prod his finish well wide of the advancing Alexander Dominguez.

Dempsey strikes

Yet five minutes later the US took the lead with a beautifully worked goal that began when

Dempsey gathered in midfield and released Wood, who fed Jones near the edge of the area. The midfielder picked out Dempsey with a superb cross and the former Tottenham and Fulham stalwart duly headed home. Five minutes later Dempsey was threatening again, this time his shot well-saved by Dominguez. Bedoya almost doubled the US lead three minutes before the break when played through Dempsey, yet Dominguez saved smartly down to his left. The South Americans had a strong shout for a penalty when Enner Valencia was bundled over by Stoke City's Geoff Cameron, and the West Ham striker also went close with a glancing header in the 48th minute.

Three minutes later the simmering nature of the contest boiled over, when Antonio Valencia, booked for a sly kick on John Brooks in the first half, picked up a second yellow for clattering into Bedoya. In the skirmish that followed Jermaine Jones appeared to flick Valencia in the face with a hand and earned a straight red from Colombian referee Wilmar Roldan.

With both sides down to 10 the game opened up dramatically but it was to be the US who struck first. Dempsey latched onto a long ball forward and showed great determination to cut back for Zardes, who had the easiest of tap-ins at the far post for 2-0. Ecuador responded furiously, pulling a goal back through Michael Arroyo's thunderous low strike in the 74th minute. Enner Valencia had hearts in American mouths two minutes later when he headed wide from close range. Ecuador laid siege to the US goal and in a frantic finish saw manager Gustavo Quinteros given a red card from the touchline. — AFP

LUKAKU TITTERING ON BRINK AS BELGIUM PREPARE FOR IRELAND

BORDEAUX: Belgium head into their Euro 2016 clash with the Republic of Ireland today desperate to atone for their opening defeat to Italy as debate rages about whether Romelu Lukaku should be dropped. Marc Wilmots' much-fancied side are second in the FIFA world rankings but they are disappointed in a 2-0 loss to Italy in their first Group E outing in Lyon on Monday.

Lukaku's profligacy in front of goal contributed to that loss and Coach Wilmots has indicated that, with Michy Batshuayi, Divock Origi and Christian Benteke all waiting in the wings, the Everton striker could pay the price in Bordeaux. "Certain other strikers are working very well in training and will maybe get their chance," Wilmots said at the

Belgian base before implicitly criticizing Lukaku's work-rate. "I want more pressure on the opposition defense. I watched Romania's striker (Florin Andone) against France. He works hard for the team. That's important."

Lukaku is far from the only Belgian player in the firing line, however, as midfield duo Marouane Fellaini and Radja Nainggolan as well as right-back Laurent Ciman are also at risk of being dropped for the match at the impressive Matmut Atlantique stadium. Either captain Eden Hazard or Kevin De Bruyne—who have both been back in training after picking up knocks against Italy—could play in a central role behind the striker while Dries Mertens, of Napoli, is a contender to start. One thing

is certain, however—Wilmots will not veer from his favored 4-2-3-1 formation.

Tough night

"You can lose one match, you can lose two matches. I will leave everyone else to judge whether we have been good or not, but I won't change my philosophy," added the 47-year-old coach. "This is a four-year project. We can't let one defeat call into question everything we have accomplished."

Another defeat for Belgium could prove fatal to their prospects, although it is half a century since they lost to Ireland and they have never been beaten by the Irish in a competitive game. Ireland are looking to build on a promising display in drawing 1-1 with Zlatan Ibrahimovic's Sweden at the Stade de France in a match that featured a brilliant goal by diminutive playmaker Wes Hoolahan.

Martin O'Neill's side already have one point more than they garnered in three games at Euro 2012 but the manager knows Belgium represent an altogether different challenge to that posed by a limited Sweden. "When the group was announced, I think that Belgium finishing any worse than second is not something that they would have contemplated, so they will be coming out all guns blazing," O'Neill said at Ireland's base in Versailles, near Paris.

"They are possibly the most talented set of individual players at the tournament, that would be my view of them. "It will be a tough night for us. We want to try to make it as tough for them as well." Left-back Robbie Brady, who put in an outstanding performance against the Swedes, added: "We can't have any fear going into these games. —AFP



LYON: Belgium's forward Romelu Lukaku (2nd R) is challenged by Italy's defender Giorgio Chiellini (R) during the Euro 2016 group E football match between Belgium and Italy at the Parc Olympique Lyonnais stadium. — AFP

POGBA 'SINCERELY' DENIES MAKING OFFENSIVE GESTURE

PARIS: French midfielder Paul Pogba has fended off suggestions that he had made an offensive gesture celebrating his country's latest last gasp win over Albania. Pogba had been criticized for his performance in France's opening win over Romania. He was a substitute against Albania but came on to provide the assist for the Dmitri Payet's stoppage time goal. Pictures of him celebrating showed his arm waving, apparently directed at the press tribune.

"I want to say very sincerely, and very strongly, that whatever interpretation one can make about the images, I never had the intention to 'demonstrate' or to attack anyone or to take revenge," Pogba said in a statement to AFP. "I was so happy with the way it had turned out and I turned to the stand where my mother and brothers were sitting and I did my usual dance with my arm in the air and with a raised fist. It was nothing more and nothing less," Pogba said.

The Juventus player's Mino Raiola agent also told French media that Pogba was doing a "dance" for the benefit of his friends and family. The 'bras d'honneur' that some alleged Pogba made is a common gesture of defiance in the Latin world. The debate began when a journalist from beIN Sports television tweeted a screen grab of Pogba making the gesture which the journalist judged to be offensive.

beIN Sports has not broadcast images of the incident. The channel's chief editor, Florent Houzot, told L'Equipe newspaper that he had taken the decision not to show the video "which does appear to show an offensive gesture from Paul Pogba". "We are supporters of the French team and it is not the time to create an unhelpful controversy". Some observers interpreted Pogba's gesture as a response to media criticism of two underwhelming performances at Euro 2016 from a player tipped to be one of the tournament's stars.

Support for the Juventus player came from former France international Nicolas Anelka, who is no stranger to controversy himself. "Gentlemen of the press, stop bashing the players," Anelka said in an online video. "We don't care what the truth is in all this. France have won two matches, two victories, six points, that's all, that's what counts isn't it?" the former Arsenal and Real Madrid forward said. — AFP

FAN FERVOR



RONALDO SEEKING EURO 2016 REDEMPTION AGAINST AUSTRIA

PARIS: Portugal superstar Cristiano Ronaldo is looking to make amends for a poor performance and some unwise words when his side take on Austria at Euro 2016 today. Ronaldo was eclipsed in his opening Group F game, and after the 1-1 draw against Iceland he lambasted the North Atlantic minnows for their "small mentality" because of their defensive tactics. Iceland's defense froze out Ronaldo who is looking for a goal that will make him the first to score in four European Championship tournaments. The Real Madrid ace has been lambasted across the continent for his petulant outburst with Iceland's Karni Arnason labeling him "not a gracious human being".

For Ronaldo's sake, Austria will also need to attack after a side led by Bayern Munich's David Alaba-increasingly rated after their stunning qualifying campaign — were shocked 2-0 by neighbors Hungary in their opening game. Despite a forgiving format allowing 16 of the 24 teams to progress to the knockout stages, defeat for either side will leave them facing an embarrassing early exit. "The group is relaxed, and despite the draw we still feel good," said Portuguese teenager Renato Sanches, who will team up with Alaba at Bayern next season after sealing a 35 million euro (\$39.6m, £27.4m) move from Benfica.

Hero Halldorsson

"This only gives us motivation and desire because we know that every game will be more difficult now. So I think the group is quietly determined." Portugal dominated against Iceland, the smallest country ever to take part in a Euros with a population of just 330,000. Ronaldo had 10 of Portugal's 24 shots on goal, but they were denied by an outstanding display from Iceland goalkeeper



PARIS: A combination of two file pictures shows Portugal's forward and captain Cristiano Ronaldo (R) in Lisbon on June 8, 2016 and Austria's defender and captain Christian Fuchs in Vienna on September 5, 2015. Portugal face Austria in their second Euro 2016 group F football match in Paris today. — AFP

Hannes Halldorsson. "I think it was a good match in terms of what we did, we had several chances to score and a lot of possession. Obviously it wasn't the result we wanted, but I think we played well," added Sanches. And the 18-year-old expects another physical encounter against the desperate Austrians. "We are expecting to come up against a very aggressive team that wants to win, because if they lose this match they'll be in a very difficult position. So we're expecting to face a team playing with great intensity." To add to the Austrians woes they will be without suspended defender Aleksandar Dragovic,

whilst midfielder Zlatko Junuzovic's tournament looks to be over after he suffered ankle ligament damage against the Hungarians. Austria coach Marcel Koller believes his side froze under the favorites tag on their first major finals for eight years. "Maybe some players were nervous because it was the beginning. We can't just push a button and say 'now I'm going to play at my best level'. "The situation now is we'll have to try and win against Portugal." Alaba was Austria's one shining light in Bordeaux as he struck the post in the opening 30 seconds and looked a threat throughout.—AFP

MUDDLED ENGLAND TEAM GIVE HODGSON FOOD FOR THOUGHT

LENS: As the dust settled following England's dramatic comeback victory over Wales at Euro 2016, victorious manager Roy Hodgson was left facing more questions than answers. Daniel Sturridge's stoppage-time goal at Stade Bollaert-Delelis in Lens on Thursday earned England a 2-1 win over their British rivals that left Hodgson's men on top of Group B and on the cusp of the last 16.

The manner of victory, though, was muddled, England finishing the game with Sturridge, fellow goal-scorer Jamie Vardy, Marcus Rashford and Wayne Rooney on the pitch, yet mustering only four shots on target. "It seemed to me that we were on the ball so much over 90 minutes, so it's good when you've got a few players who can do something different around the penalty area and ask further questions of their defense," Hodgson said.

England ended the game with an impressive attacking armada on show-Vardy leading the line, flanked by 18-year-old Rashford and Sturridge, with Rooney and Dele Alli thrusting forward from midfield. But while England enjoyed 64 percent of possession, Wales manager Chris Coleman was justified in asserting that his goalkeeper, Wayne Hennessey, had not been obliged to pull off "save after save".

Vardy's 56th-minute equalizer stemmed from a mistimed attempted clearance by Wales captain Ashley Williams, whose touch unwittingly enabled the Leicester City striker to sweep the ball past Hennessey from close range. Despite Wales sitting perilously deep at times, England toiled in their attempts to pull them out of their defensive shape and it was not until added time that the decisive moment of quality arrived.—AFP



CHANTILLY: England's coach Roy Hodgson arrives for a training session. — AFP



STALEMATE EDGES GERMANY, POLAND TOWARDS LAST 16

PARIS: Old rivals Germany and Poland fought a battle of attrition that ended in a goalless draw and edged both countries towards a place in the last 16 of Euro 2016 on Thursday. The stalemate left Germany on top of Group C on goal difference with both sides on four points from two matches.

Poland's Arkadiusz Milik had the best chance when he bundled the ball wide from point-blank range early in the second-half. Germany's Jerome Boateng complained that his side had been "too rigid", but agreed that a draw was a fair result from a tightly contested encounter.

"We can be happy with the nil-nil," Boateng said, but he criticized his side's lack of attacking punch. "We didn't take the game to our opponents, we weren't dangerous enough and we have to improve that or we won't get far," he told ZDF. "We've now got to make sure we win the last group game so that we go through as group winners."

Poland's superstar Robert Lewandowski was kept quiet by his Bayern Munich teammate Boateng, but was content to hold the world champions. "We're happy with the point. We showed Germany a bit too much respect in the first half," he said. "It's a pity that we didn't get the goal, but that's football and it's not a bad result for us." Their opponents will be Northern Ireland, whose 2-0 win over Ukraine earlier Thursday leaves Michael O'Neill's men just a point behind the leaders ahead of the final group game in Paris on Tuesday.

Poland take on Ukraine in Marseille in their final pool match with a draw enough to seal their place in the knockout stages. Poland had only beaten



SAINT-DENIS: Poland's midfielder Grzegorz Krychowiak (C) vies for the ball against Germany's forward Mario Goetze during the Euro 2016 group C football match between Germany and Poland at the Stade de France stadium in Saint-Denis. — AFP

Germany once in 20 previous meetings, but that came in qualifying for Euro 2016 and the Poles were full of confidence having won their first ever European Championship finals match against Northern Ireland on Sunday.

Return to night of trauma

Germany were playing at the Stade de France for the first time since they were caught up in the November 13 militant attacks in Paris. Die Mannschaft were forced to spend a traumatic night

in the dressing rooms at France's national stadium when a series of jihadist attacks across Paris left 130 dead on a night they faced the French in a friendly.

However, the emotional return did not seem to affect Joachim Loew's side. They made by far the better start as Mario Goetze headed just over from Julian Draxler's cross, whilst Toni Kroos also failed to hit the target as he burst into the box.

At the other end, Lewandowski was kept in close check by Boateng and the returning Mats Hummels—playing in his first game for a month due to a calf injury. A drab end to the first-half was quickly forgotten by a fast start to the second period. The hordes of Polish supporters watched in amazement when on 48 minutes Milik—scorer of the only goal against Northern Ireland—somehow failed to turn home Kamil Grosicki's dangerous cross from barely a meter out.

Poland goalkeeper Lukasz Fabianski was not forced into a save in the first-half as he deputized for the injured Wojciech Szczesny. However, the Swansea City stopper was finally called into action as Goetze fired straight at him when well-placed inside the area. Milik drove a well-worked free-kick just wide before Boateng produced a miraculous last-ditch challenge to deny Lewandowski as Poland began to look the more threatening. Ajax striker Milik fluffed his lines again when he failed to make a clean contact when picked out again by Grosicki inside the box. Yet, Fabianski then produced a stunning stop to turn Mesut Ozil's fierce strike from the edge of the box over the bar. —AFP

NORTHERN IRELAND IN FIRST WIN THAT HELPS ELIMINATE UKRAINE

LYON: Northern Ireland won its first game at the European Championship on Thursday, a 2-0 victory over Ukraine that helped to eliminate its opponent. Northern Ireland's victory - its first in a major competition in 34 years - combined with the later 0-0 draw between Germany and Poland to leave Ukraine unable to advance from Group C.

Building on a strong finish to the first half, Northern Ireland center back Gareth McAuley put his team ahead with a header from an Oliver Norwood free kick in the 49th minute. Substitute Niall McGinn added the second deep in stoppage time when Ukraine was chasing an equalizer. The victory, which followed a 1-0 defeat to Poland in its first game, is Northern Ireland's first since beating host Spain in the 1982 World Cup. It also means the team has a good chance of qualifying for the knockout stages of Euro 2016.

"It has been a long time," the 36-year-old McAuley said. "We talked about leaving a legacy from this tournament. A few years down the line when I am finished and I look back on it, it will be extra special. It's just sinking in, and now it means staying in the tournament." After two games, Northern Ireland team now has three points, just behind Germany and Poland, which both have four. Northern Ireland's next Group C game is against world champion Germany on Tuesday at the Parc des Princes in Paris.

In the 24-team format that's being used at Euro 2016 for the first time, some third-placed group teams will qualify for the round of 16. The long-awaited victory was dampened by the death of a second Northern Ireland fan at the tournament. Northern Ireland spokesman Neil Brittain said that a team supporter died in the stadium, without giving more details. "The fan passed away as he was watching the game in the stadium," Irish FA chief executive Patrick Nelson said. "This puts any result of a football match into perspective."

Hooligan violence

During the match, Northern Ireland's players wore black armbands and its fans dedicated a round of applause to pay their respects to another supporter who died following the loss to Poland on Sunday. Darren Rodgers, who was 24, died after a fall unrelated to the hooligan violence that has marred the competition at times.

Northern Ireland was a far different team against Ukraine than the one that failed to even register a shot on goal against Poland. Coach Michael O'Neill made five changes to his team in response to that lackluster start to the tournament. His team's first shot between the posts came as soon as the 4th minute when new addition Stuart Dallas fired into the arms of goalkeeper Andriy

Pyatov. Northern Ireland grew in confidence through the first half and with McAuley's goal registered its first goal in an international competition since the 1986 World Cup. With rain pouring down, O'Neill's team showed the extra aggressiveness he had requested for the match at the Stade de Lyon. A short suspension in play in the 58th minute because of hail did not alter the team's intent.

"It's probably the proudest I have felt in a dugout as manager," O'Neill said. "When you get a performance that is just pure commitment, pure heart, you can't ask for anything more." Northern Ireland made Ukraine look downright lethargic and had little trouble in marking wingers Andriy Yarmolenko and Yevhen Konoplyanka out of the match. —AP



RHONE: Northern Ireland's players celebrate after scoring during the Euro 2016 group C football match between Ukraine and Northern Ireland at the Parc Olympique Lyonnais stadium in Decines-Charpieu. — AFP

Live
Matches on TV
(Local Timings)

UEFA EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP

Belgium v Ireland	16:00
beIN MAX 2 HD beIN MAX 3 HD EN beIN MAX 1 HD beIN MAX 4 HD FR	
Iceland v Hungary	19:00
beIN MAX 2 HD beIN MAX 3 HD EN beIN MAX 1 HD beIN MAX 4 HD FR	
Portugal v Austria	22:00
beIN MAX 2 HD beIN MAX 3 HD EN beIN MAX 1 HD beIN MAX 4 HD FR	
COPA AMERICA CENTENARIO	
Peru v Colombia	3:00
beIN SPORTS 1 HD FR beIN MAX 2 HD beIN MAX 3 HD EN beIN MAX 4 HD FR	
Tomorrow	
Argentina v Venezuela	2:00
beIN MAX 2 HD beIN MAX 3 HD EN beIN MAX 4 HD FR	
Mexico v Chile	5:00
beIN MAX 2 HD beIN MAX 3 HD EN beIN MAX 4 HD FR	

Sports



Cavs down Warriors to force Game 7

44



TOULOUSE: Italy's forward Citadin Martins Eder celebrates scoring a goal with Italy's midfielder Emanuele Giaccherini during the Euro 2016 group E football match between Italy and Sweden at the Stadium Municipal. — AFP

EDER FIRES AZZURRI INTO LAST 16

TOULOUSE: Brazil-born striker Eder overcame an otherwise patchy performance to hit a cracking late winner in a 1-0 victory over Sweden that sent Italy into the last 16 of Euro 2016 yesterday. Eder, playing in his first major finals for Italy after being naturalized last year, came close to being substituted by Antonio Conte after a dismal opening half up front alongside Southampton striker Graziano Pelle.

But the Inter Milan striker had the Italy bench celebrating wildly on the pitch at the Stadium de Toulouse with a well-taken 88th minute strike after running on to Simone Zaza's header to beat Andreas Eriksson at his far post. Italy, 2-0 winners over Belgium last week, now top Group E with six points, leaving Sweden, who had late claims for a penalty waved away, realistically needing to beat Belgium on Wednesday if they are to have any hope of making it to the knockout phase.

Cautious Italy

After a mediocre display in Sweden's 1-1 draw with the Republic of Ireland, all eyes were on captain Zlatan Ibrahimovic as the towering striker sought to make his mark by becoming the first man to score in four editions of the competition. But a cautious Italy restricted the former Juventus and Paris Saint Germain striker to few real chances in

front of a huge army of yellow-clad Sweden fans. They were given hope after just two minutes when Ibrahimovic rose to meet a high cross, but Giorgio Chiellini cleared with his head.

It was one of few real chances for Erik Hamren's men in a tight first half that saw Italy strikers Pelle and Eder fail to shine on their few real forays up the park. Italy's formidable three-man defense meant Gianluigi Buffon had little to do until he dived to collect Kim Kallstrom's curling shot, and the Juventus 'keeper was happy to see Olsson's drive whistle past the post soon after.

When Daniele De Rossi fouled Ibrahimovic in midfield, the striker got his head to Kallstrom's 40-yard free kick but he was flagged offside. The Azzurri broke the monotony when Candreva collected Florenzi's cross-field ball to fire in an inviting cross, but Erik Johansson was quick to intercept.

Half chances

At the other end Sweden edged closer, Sebastian Larsson chesting a long cross into the path of Celta Vigo's John Guidetti only for the striker to skew wide. Italy started the second half in positive fashion, Pelle controlling Eder's cutback from a Marco Parolo through ball, but his volley dipped over the crossbar.

Parolo did well to control De Rossi's pass and set up Candreva on the right, but the Lazio man's drive into the area was collected by Isaksson, who got down quickly to smother moments later after another Candreva delivery. On that occasion, Eder was well out of position but it was Pelle who was replaced on the hour, by Simone Zaza.

Minutes later, Florenzi's high delivery across goal found Candreva at the back post, yet Isaksson again got down low to smother the Lazio man's low first-time effort. Italian hopes looked to be dying out and the Azzurri breathed a sigh of relief when Ibrahimovic fired over from a yard out at the back post although he was ruled offside. Candreva was called into once again soon after connecting a thumping header from Emanuele Giaccherini's high-cross but was denied by the top post.

Parolo raised Italian hopes on 82 minutes with a header that came off the woodwork. But it was Eder who rescued Conte's men with a fine run that took him past the Swedish defense to fire the ball into the net with two minutes to play. Having already qualified for the next round, Italy can now rest key players against Ireland on Wednesday while Sweden will hope to at least get a shot on target against Belgium, something they haven't managed to do in two consecutive games. — AFP