

Rival Brexit camps battle; UK votes in referendum



Dubai auction of Islamic treasures raises \$11 million for refugees



Goal machine Messi leads Argentina to Copa final



North Korea test fires two powerful missiles

Ramadan Timings

Emsak:	03:04
Fajer:	03:14
Shrooq:	04:49
Dohr:	11:50
Asr:	15:24
Maghreb:	18:51
Eshaa:	20:23

150 FILS  
NO: 16913  
40 PAGES

## NATIONAL ASSEMBLY APPROVES AMENDMENT TO ELECTION LAW

NEW ELECTION LAW BARS THOSE WHO INSULT GOD, PROPHETS, AMIR

Min 33°  
Max 47°  
High Tide 02:55 & 12:12  
Low Tide 06:55 & 19:57

### BE MINDFUL OF GOD

By Hassan T Bwambale

To be mindful of God Almighty in whatever one does is to know for certain that God watches over you externally and internally. As such, people should be ashamed to commit sins either in private or public because in whatever place or situation they are, God (to Whom is ascribed all perfection and majesty) definitely sees them.

God says in the Quran what can be translated as, "Moreover, with Him (Allah) are the keys of the realms of the unseen. No one knows of them but Him. And He knows, as well, all that is in the land and the sea. Not even a leaf falls but He knows it. Nor is there any single grain hidden within the veils of the darkness of the earth - nor anything moist therein nor anything withered - but that it is recorded in a clear book." (6:59)

Worship God as if you see Him: Muadh Bin Jabal - Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) companion said, "O Messenger of Allah, advise me! The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said what can be translated as, "Worship Allah as though you see Him and always count yourself among the dead..." (Sheikh Al-Albani rated it as authentic in Saheeh At-Targheeb, 2,870)

If someone is mindful of Allah and counts himself among the dead, there is no way he will have the audacity to disobey God. He will also make sure that the aim of everything he does is to seek the pleasure of God. Zaid bin Aslam narrated that Ibn Umar passed by a shepherd and said to him, "O shepherd! Is there any sheep suitable for slaughter?" The shepherd replied, "The owner of the flock isn't here." Ibn Umar replied, "When he returns, tell him it was eaten by a wolf!"

Upon hearing this, the shepherd lifted his head towards the heaven and said, "Then where is Allah?" - a rhetorical question indicating that even he could lie to his master or anyone else, but he can't lie to God because He watches over him in all situations and circumstances. Ibn Umar was impressed by the piety, sincerity, honesty and above all the shepherd's mindfulness of God so much so that he paid that shepherd's master a considerable amount of money to set him

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KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah (center) greets MPs as he arrives for a parliamentary session at the National Assembly in Kuwait City. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The National Assembly yesterday overwhelmingly approved an amendment to the election law that bars all those convicted by court for insulting the Almighty, prophets or the Amir. The amendment, passed by 40 members against just three, means depriving dozens of opposition members including prominent opposition leader and former MP Mussallam Al-Barak from contesting or voting in elections.

The Assembly passed the critical amendment in two readings and sent it to the government. It becomes effective if the government, whose minister supported the change, will ratify the law and publish it in the official gazette. MPs also approved an amendment that would allow holding parliamentary elections from mid-day to midnight if they fall in the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. Parliamentary elections are scheduled to be held in summer next year after the current Assembly completes its four-year term. The Assembly also decided to hold its final session on July 3 when it is expected to pass a landmark legislation for the independence of the judiciary.

The Assembly also debated a report by the Audit Bureau outlining the main financial violations recorded by the Bureau against government ministries and departments from their final accounts in the 2014/2015 fiscal year. Although, the report says there has been a drop in violations as ministries responded positively to the Audit Bureau remarks, large sums of public funds have still been squandered due to failing to implement the law and the correct procedures.

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## AIRPORT AUTHORITIES TACKLE CONGESTION

KUWAIT: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) yesterday declared that new measures would be executed this week to revamp work and services at Kuwait International Airport. Yousef Al-Fozan, the DGCA General Director, said in a statement to KUNA that the entry zone for departing passengers would be expanded, with a gate for all passengers, another for Kuwaiti and GCC citizens and a third for first-class, business travelers and crew members.

Seven X-ray scanning devices have been installed,

and other ones would be set up next week, said Al-Fozan, who also revealed that the departure counters would be increased from 10 to 22. There are 100 counters for serving the departing passengers and their luggage at the passengers' terminal, in addition to eight electronic devices for issuing booking tickets for passengers carrying luggage by hand only.

Moreover, night-time flights have been re-scheduled to avert jamming. The airport can accommodate 2,000 departing passengers per hour. It

receives 100 planes on regular days and 130 planes during travel seasons. Al-Fozan also said that 200 personnel wearing phosphoric uniforms have been tasked with aiding the passengers. New gates at the parking lots have been built. A contract has been worked out with a Turkish company to build a new passenger terminal at a projected cost of KD 1.3 billion. The six-year contract has been signed to increase the passenger capacity from six million to 25 million per year. — KUNA



SANABIS, Bahrain: Bahraini Muslim boys read Quran, Islam's holy book, during the holy fasting month of Ramadan at a mosque in the village of Sanabis, west of Manama. — AFP

## SAUDI TO SPEND \$1 BN ON CULTURAL HERITAGE

ASIR: If Rijal Almaa, a stone village tucked into a fold of Saudi Arabia's southern mountains, showcases the polished endpoint of new efforts in the kingdom to preserve cultural heritage, the hamlet of Watan Emsoudah represents the difficulties faced. Its low-covered alleyways lie thick with the debris of decades of abandonment, some stone house roofs have caved in and thistles grow high between the hamlet's walls, but near the entrance three men are working to save a house.

Saudi Arabia has allocated nearly \$1 billion to preserve its heritage in a new reform plan, but after decades of neglect, and in some cases deliberate destruction, saving its cultural treasures will prove complex and expensive. While that money was allocated in a National Transformation Program unveiled this month, no details were given as to how it would be spent and the only tourism

projects listed in the plan were for a few large sites.

"For maybe 40 years we stopped using these old houses and every five years you need to rehabilitate them," said Abdulaziz Al-Ghanem representative of Asir's architectural heritage centre at the government's General Commission for Tourism and Antiquities. "I hope we get more money. We need it." Watan Emsoudah is one of around 4,000 old villages in Asir Province in the kingdom's southwest and the project to restore it to save architectural tradition and boost tourism is one of eight in the region by a local investor.

Rehabilitating the village, swaddled by terraced fields in a shallow bowl on a mountain plateau, will cost around 6 million riyals (\$1.6 million), says Ibrahim al-Almi, a former history teacher and the

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AMIR RECEIVES IRAQ FINANCE MINISTER

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4 ACQUITTED OF IS MEMBERSHIP

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## LIGHTNING KILLS AT LEAST 93 AS MONSOON SWEEPS INDIA

### News

in brief

#### Eid Al-Fitr holiday from July 5th to July 9th: CSC

KUWAIT: The Civil Service Commission (CSC) said yesterday that Eid Al-Fitr holiday would last five days starting from July 5th until July 9th, whether Ramadan is 29 or 30 days. It said in a statement that if Eid was to fall on Tuesday (July 5th), the official holiday would last till July 8th, whereas Saturday July 9th would be considered rest day. However if Eid starts on Wednesday July 6th, Tuesday - Ramadan 30th would still be a rest day while Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday would be official holidays. State bodies with special working circumstances shall determine their working hours according to their own needs.

#### Citizens, expats urged to abide by Mol's directions

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Interior yesterday urged citizens and residents to abide by the Ministry's directions on roads, in markets and mosques during the last ten days of Ramadan. Adel Al-Hashash, the General Director of Security Information, said in a statement that the special security plan covers the Grand Mosque, mosques in the six governorates, main roads, intersections, commercial and popular malls. Security monitoring will be tighter in front of the mosques, with more patrols and deployment of a larger number of policemen and other security personnel. He warned that the clampdown on beggars would continue, and advised motorists not to leave valuable things in their cars upon parking.

NEW DELHI: At least 93 people have been struck by lightning and killed in India over the past two days, disaster management officials said yesterday, as annual monsoon rains swept the country. Lightning strikes are relatively common in India during the June-October monsoon, which hit the southern coast earlier this month, but this week's toll is particularly high. Most deaths occurred in the eastern state of Bihar, where an overnight storm killed at least 56 people and injured another 28, mainly in rural areas.

"The death toll has climbed to 56 and 28 are injured. Many of the victims

are children and women," Anirudh Kumar, a senior official at Bihar's disaster management agency said. Another 37 people were killed across Uttar Pradesh, Jharkand and Madhya Pradesh states, according to figures compiled by local disaster management authorities. Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted that he was "deeply anguished" by the loss of life. Lightning kills thousands of Indians every year, most of them farmers working in the fields. More than 2,500 people were killed by lightning in India in 2014 according to the National Crime Records Bureau, the most recent figures available. — AFP



MUMBAI: Indian pedestrians and a cyclist wade through a flooded street after heavy monsoon rain showers in Mumbai. — AFP

## UN ENVOY APPLAUDS CHOOSING KUWAIT AS VENUE FOR YEMEN TALKS

**KUWAIT:** UN Special Envoy for Yemen Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmad has expressed satisfaction for choosing Kuwait as the venue for the inter-Yemeni conciliation talks noting that the Gulf state aided the Yemenis at this level in the past. Cheikh Ahmad was speaking in a statement after his participation in a closed-door session of the UN Security Council by satellite, briefing the council members about the diplomatic efforts in Kuwait.

Kuwait's political and logistical contribution to the political process is very positive, he said, lauding in particular the significant role undertaken by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for backing up the peace consultations. He also lauded the support given by the First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and his deputy, Khaled Al-Jarallah, for keeping the negotiations going. The troubleshooter expressed gratitude to Kuwait, as a State, Government and people, for hosting the consultations and offering all needed facilities for the political process.

Cheikh Ahmad added that His Highness the Amir had hosted him four times on sidelines of the process, adding that he had also received Yemeni delegations twice. During these meetings, His Highness urged for pursuing the dialogue for reaching a settlement to the crisis.

### Weapons' surrender

Asked about Ansarullah's statement expressing readiness to surrender weapons and re-establish the state institutions according to international guarantees, he said, "We have expressed a clear opinion in this respect and we have come to Kuwait to act under the umbrella of the Security Council resolutions 2216 and the five points upon which the dialogue has been based." The resolution 2216 stipulates adherence to the legitimacy, represented by President Abd-Rabbuh Mansur Hadi. "This matter is not contentious," he confirmed.

Regarding the UN-proposed road map, Cheikh Ahmad said it includes practical ideas to end the conflict, on basis of the resolution 2216, working out security measures and

forming a national unity government to be tasked with holding political dialogue pending a comprehensive political solution. "It is necessary that such a dialogue involves the women and the youth as well as the effective political forces," he stated.

He indicated that forming joint military committees was still under examination and revealed that the Arab League Secretary General Nabil Al-Araby had expressed readiness to dispatch observers to report about fighters' withdrawals and guns' handover. The talks have already resulted in releasing 54 prisoners by the government and 400 by Ansarullah.

Cheikh Ahmad urged all the parties to release political prisoners, journalists and detainees held for their opinions. He revealed that the government has demanded release of more than 2,000 prisoners held by the other side, while Ansarullah and their allies called for freeing more than 4,000 prisoners.

### Kuwait, GCC support envoy

Kuwait and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) had Tuesday reiterated support to the UN Special Envoy for Yemen to bringing success to peace talks to restore security and stability in Yemen. This came during a meeting between First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and GCC Secretary General Abdullah Al-Zayani with Ould Cheikh Ahmad, at Bayan Palace.

The GCC, a statement by the foreign ministry said, reaffirms efforts of Ould Cheikh Ahmad "to bringing success to Yemen peace talks hosted by the State of Kuwait to restore security and stability to Yemen, as well as stopping bloodshed of the Yemeni people."

The meeting was attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah, Assistant Foreign Minister for Protocols Dhari Al-Ajran, Assistant Foreign Minister for GCC Nasser Al-Muzayyen, Kuwait's Ambassador to Egypt Salem Al-Zamanan, Assistant Foreign Minister for Deputy Foreign Minister's office Ayham Al-Omar, Assistant Foreign Minister for Arab World Aziz Al-Daihani, and Assistant Foreign Minister for International Organizations Nasser Al-Hain. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Iraqi Minister of Finance Hoshiyar Zebari, in presence of 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. — Amiri Diwan photos

## AMIR RECEIVES IRAQI FINANCE MINISTER ZEBARI

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, with attendance of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, received yesterday at Dar Salwa the visiting Minister of Finance of the Republic of Iraq, Hoshiyar Zebari. Minister Zebari handed His Highness the Amir a letter from Iraqi Prime Minister Haidar Al-Abadi related to issues of joint concern, latest developments on the regional and international arenas.

The meeting was attended by Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs, Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, First Deputy Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance and Acting Oil Minister Anas Al-Saleh. In other news, His Highness Crown Prince received Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammed Al-Khaled Al-Sabah at Seif Palace. — KUNA



**Iraqi Minister of Finance Hoshiyar Zebari hands over a letter from Iraqi Prime Minister Haidar Al-Abadi to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.**

## UNHCR, SHEIKHA INTISAR AL-SABAH ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP TO PROVIDE BASIC RIGHTS TO REFUGEES

**KUWAIT:** A press conference was held Tuesday night to announce a partnership agreement between the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) office in Kuwait and Sheikhha Intisar Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Chairperson of Al-Noweir Initiative, as part of a plan to register Syrian refugees in Jordan through the UNHCR, in order to provide them with basic needs of life.

Dr Hanan Hamdan, Head of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Office in Kuwait, began her speech by thanking His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Humanitarian Leader, and the Kuwaiti people for their contributions and support to help the unprivileged, and the leading humanitarian role that Kuwait is taking worldwide. She also extended her gratitude to the staff working on the ground and in difficult circumstances, and the media representatives who play a key role in supporting the efforts of the global humanitarian action and highlighting the urgent humanitarian issues.

### Kuwait's vital role

The Head of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Office in Kuwait said that the State of Kuwait has played a vital role in alleviating the suffering of afflicted people as a result of disasters, conflicts, and wars around the world. It did not exclude any sect, race nor nationality from its donations, as its contributions extend throughout Africa, Europe, and Asia. The State of Kuwait's substantial offerings have lifted burdens from a large population of men, women, and children suffering from many different types of crises, and have improved their daily living standards and raised the quality of assistance provided to them. The State of Kuwait represented by His Highness, its government, its people, and its charitable and humanitarian organizations, has become an exemplar among the international community in its initiatives for helping refugees, internally displaced persons, and disaster victims who are sorely in need, and this leading humanitarian role has been also reflected as the UNHCR Office in Kuwait approached several private sector entities during the past year.

### Recent updates

Dr Hamdan said that the UNHCR Office has the honor to establish a partnership with Sheikhha Intisar Al-Sabah due to her numerous humanitarian accomplishments that are reflected on her charitable, developmental and professional work. Dr Hamdan praised Sheikhha Intisar's work and initiatives that support and develop the talents of youth in Kuwait, and her constant support to refugees in various fields such as education and health. Dr Hamdan stressed the importance of UNHCR's partnership with Sheikhha Intisar and stated that she is the best person to raise awareness and advocate for the registration and protection of refugees around the world. Based on Sheikhha Intisar's interest, she visited the UNHCR Office and UNHCR's registration centers in Jordan, including Zaatari camp, during which she attended registration interviews and met with Jordanian authorities and UNHCR employees to learn more about the challenges and obstacles faced by the government and institutions to register and protect refugees in the country, and to acquaint herself with the registration and protection processes of UNHCR. The Head of UNHCR Office in Kuwait said that she believes that this field visit marks the beginning of a long-term partnership between Sheikhha Intisar and UNHCR.

### Volunteer work

Meanwhile, Sheikhha Intisar Al-Sabah, who is also the Chairperson of the Lulua Publishing House, stated that the national rate of participation in volunteer and charity work indicates a nation's development and progress and measures the national prosperous wellbeing of a country, and



**Sheikha Intisar Al-Sabah visits the Zaatari camp department.**

the State of Kuwait is the best witness to these measures.

Sheikha Intisar said that after UNHCR Kuwait offered her the opportunity to visit UNHCR's Office in Jordan and witness the exact steps of the registration and protection process carried out on a daily basis to guarantee refugees an identity for themselves and their families, she further realized the importance of registering refugees as it is one of the most crucial and first steps in protecting them.



**KUWAIT:** (From left) Sheikha Intisar Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Chairperson of Al-Noweir Initiative and Dr Hanan Hamdan, Head of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Office in Kuwait attend the press conference. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

She affirmed that the registration of refugees offers them a better future in their country of asylum, given that it provides them an official identity which simplifies other procedures such as providing refugees with education, health, and shelter. It also helps in the process of family reunification, identifying the percentage of refugee population, registering the birth of children, and providing other necessary rights for every child, individual, and

family. Nevertheless, the increasing number of refugees burdens the registration process and financial resources in both the host country and the UNHCR Offices. Therefore, I am pleased to express my pleasure to support UNHCR in registering and protecting refugees worldwide. The first stage of this collaboration will be a project that aims to register 33,000 refugee children in Jordan to guarantee them protection and their basic human rights.

"In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude and thankfulness to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the attendees, media representatives and everyone who supports the refugee cause, not only in Kuwait but worldwide," Sheikha Intisar said.

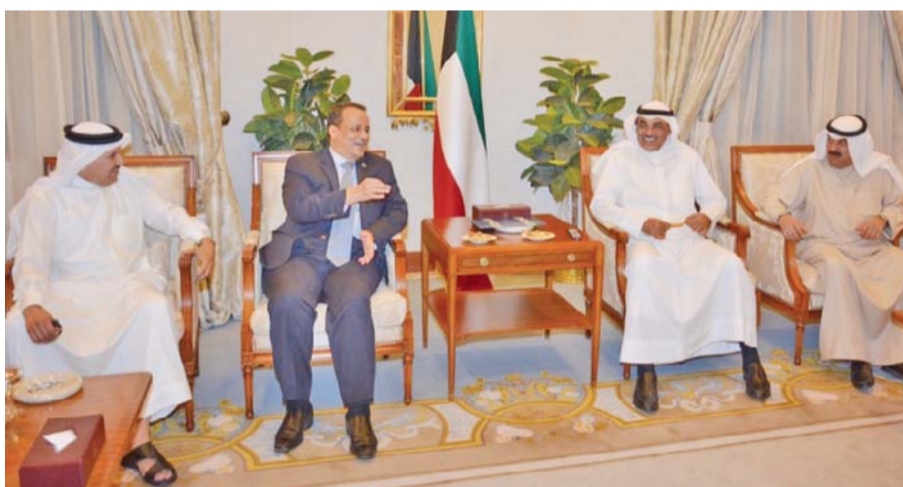
### Refugee statistics

- It is worth mentioning that the latest statistics on registered refugees include:
- Total number of Syrian refugees registered worldwide: 4,843,344 refugees
  - 39 percent of the total number of refugees are children aged between new-born to age eleven.
  - In Turkey, the number of registered refugees reached 2,743,497 refugees
  - In Lebanon the number of registered refugees reached 1,048,275 refugees
  - In Jordan, the number of registered refugees reached 655,217 refugees
  - In Iraq, the number of registered refugees reached 246,589 refugees
  - In Egypt, the number of registered refugees reached 120,491 refugees
  - In Morocco, the number of registered refugees reached 29,275 refugees

The numbers of refugees is continuously increasing due to the remaining humanitarian crisis faced by refugees around the world.



**Sheikha Intisar Al-Sabah visits Syrian refugees at the Zaatari camp in Jordan.**



**KUWAIT:** First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled and GCC Secretary General Abdullah Al-Zayani meet with UN Special Envoy for Yemen Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmad. — KUNA

## UN CHIEF VISITS KUWAIT SUNDAY AS PART OF MIDDLE EAST TOUR

**UNITED NATIONS:** UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon heads Friday to France ahead of a Middle East tour that will take him to Kuwait, Israel, the Palestinian territories and Jordan. In Paris on Saturday, Ban will meet



with President Francois Hollande and Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault, as France seeks to organize an international conference later this year to revive the moribund Israeli-Palestinian peace process. The following day in Kuwait he will meet

with the UN's envoy on the Yemen conflict, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, and with Yemeni parties involved in peace negotiations, said UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric.

He will also hold talks with Kuwait's Amir His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and government members. On Monday the UN chief heads to Jerusalem to meet with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Reuven Rivlin, and to Tel Aviv for a meeting with students. Tuesday will take him to Gaza for a visit to a UN-run girls primary school, then on to Rawabi and Ramallah in the West Bank for talks with Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas and prime minister Rami Hamdallah.

While in France, Ban will also attend the Cannes Lions advertising festival in the Riviera city in support of efforts to promote the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and receive an honorary degree from the Pantheon-Sorbonne university in Paris. He returns to New York on June 29. — AFP



**KUWAIT:** Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah meets with a number of ambassadors and diplomats yesterday. — KUNA

## DEPUTY FM MEETS WITH DIPLOMATS IN KUWAIT

**KUWAIT:** Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah yesterday met with a number of ambassadors and diplomats from the US, Germany, Australia and Canada. During the meeting, they discussed preparations and arrangements made by these countries for holding a donor meeting for Iraq due in Washington on July 20. Jarallah also met with the US charge d'affaires

and the ambassadors of South Korea and Japan on the international community's efforts to address North Korea's military activities in light of relevant UN Security Council resolutions. The meetings were attended by Assistant Foreign Minister for the Deputy Foreign Minister's Office Affairs Ambassador Ayham Al-Omar. — KUNA

# COUNCIL MEMBER ACCUSES MINISTER OF MISCONDUCT

‘MINISTER NOMINATED STAFF TO SERVE ELECTIONS INTERESTS’

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** Municipal Council member and head of the Farwaniya committee Nayef Al-Sour recently criticized Minister of State for Municipality Affairs Essa Al-Kandari because of his alleged interference in staff appointments. Sour claimed that Kandari listed some Kuwait Municipality employees alongside those due to receive a special bonus for their outstanding performance at the expense of others who really deserve the bonus. Sour said that the minister was doing this for election-related purposes. Sour also urged His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah to intervene because “Kandari has mobilized the entire municipality to serve his elections interests.”



Minister Essa Al-Kandari

od exams for the school year 2015-2016, said assistant undersecretary for development and administrative affairs Fahd Al-Ghaiss. Ghaiss added that MoE urged Civil Service Commission (CSC) to approve paying the bonuses to employees and teachers who had been officially assigned to work in the centers, in addition to teachers marking grades 10 and 11 exams at some Capital governorate schools.

In other news, CSC had earlier agreed to initially allow MOE to appoint 315 expatriate teachers to cover the shortages in some schools in various educational areas. In a letter sent to MoE, CSC explained that it agreed to lift the ban it had imposed on appointing expatriates in ministries and various government establishments to allow MoE to appoint the 1,060 teachers it had already interviewed. CSC also urged MoE to constantly provide it with updated information about the vacancies resulting from resignations to review them and make sure expats would only be appointed in positions suffering from a shortage in Kuwaitis.

### Teachers rewarded

The Ministry of Education (MoE) recently approved the bonuses for its employees working at the general certificate control centers during the second and the fourth peri-

### Nuclear medicine

Head of the Ministry of Health's (MoH) nuclear medicine department Dr Eman Al-Shemmari said that the total number of patients annually examined in those departments was 50,000. She also denied that patients have to wait long to get an appointment at any of the nuclear medicine departments.

Shemmari stressed that nuclear medicine is 100 percent safe and that the material used has a very short lifespan. In addition, Dr Shemmari added that 90 percent of the nuclear medicine department at Adan Hospital is complete.

### Violations at Co-ops

Chairman of the prices committee at the Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies Sami Al-Munayyehk said that 27 instances of price violations had been detected at Yarmouk and Rawda co-ops. Speaking on the sidelines of a tour he made with union inspectors in both co-ops, Munayyehk warned that co-ops that insist on violating union regulations would be subject to dissolving their boards of directors.

In my view

## SORRY RAMADAN



By Talal Al-Ghannam

local@kuwaittimes.net

**G**ood morning dear brothers and sisters, and I wish all of you a blessed month of Ramadan. In this article, I would like to talk about the blessings of this holy month and some of the ‘dos and don’ts’ during it.

The days of Ramadan are days of blessings, community and togetherness; a spiritual feast to replace the physical one of which we are deprived. Entirely understandable, we see Ramadan through a soft-focus lens: a time of exaltation, family togetherness, and spiritual pleasure in the face of physical pain. In forgetting the material burdens that only weigh us down, we are uplifted by the spirit into a stratosphere that is otherwise unimaginable. There is no doubt about the spiritual merits of Ramadan that Muslims recognize and share.

But it is no disrespect to the holy month if we recognize that our reality of Ramadan is not quite as picture-perfect as we like to portray it. Yes, we feel uplifted, and our sense of spirituality and community is irrepressibly heightened, but we must not airbrush out our less palatable behavior. It is time to tackle our Ramadan bad habits.

*Instead of Ramadan being a month of culinary restraint, many people actually put on weight during it.*

Women turn from already being hardworking wives and mothers into almost full-time chefs. We have high expectations of an amazing iftar evening after evening. Every food item we have craved over the previous 24 hours before iftar must materialize before us when it is time for it, and each person must have their tastes catered for. Around the world this duty falls mostly on women. What a counter-intuitive result for Ramadan, that women spend more time cooking and toiling into the small hours doing food preparation. Perhaps we can reduce our expectations, or better still, all get involved in the preparations, cooking and tidying up afterwards. We need to give wives and mothers a rest.

It is one of the Muslim World's open secrets that instead of Ramadan being a month of culinary restraint, many people actually put on weight during it. We are meant to be more conscious of food consumption as a sign of thankfulness, and to have empathy with those who have less, all the while shifting focus away from the body. If our body mass goes up, then we have done something terribly wrong. It is time to rethink our Ramadan strategy and dispense with a bad habit.

No doubt it is hard to maintain concentration while fasting. But laziness at work and complaints that it is impossible to engage in proper employment are, quite frankly, baffling. The point of fasting is to carry on with normal life as much as possible. Skiving off work is hardly an ethical form of behavior. No need to moan, be slothful or sleep at work. And if you really cannot do it, then take some holiday time. You go to a number of government institutions and want your papers done as quickly as possible, but there you get the answer: ‘Come back tomorrow, the manager is absent.’ Or another scenario is when you are told that the employee is sleeping in the other room.

In many parts of the Muslim World, traders unscrupulously raise the prices of their products and services to exploit the needs of Muslims at a time of need for staple goods. That is not very Ramadan-like in my view. But perhaps most important of all of Ramadan's bad habits is the lack of focus on our behavior. There is no point in getting hungry if all we are going to do is snap someone's head off, get into an argument, or sit and gossip to pass the time. Caffeine withdrawal seems relatively simple to deal with by comparison to some of the changes needed to get rid of those bad Ramadan habits.

Finally, let us treat Ramadan the way it deserves and act according to its blessed teachings and morals, rather than blaming everything on it.

*Till the next article insha Allah.*



**KUWAIT:** This handout photo released by the Interior Ministry shows a man arrested yesterday for forging residency transaction documents.



**Two trucks are seen heavily damaged after an accident reported yesterday on King Fahd Expressway.**

## MAN FORGED EMPLOYER'S SIGNATURE ON RESIDENCY TRANSACTION DOCUMENTS

### TRUCK DRIVER INJURED IN COLLISION

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Residency detectives recently arrested a Pakistani man for forging residency transaction documents, said security sources. Case papers show that detectives were tipped off concerning the suspect's activity of forging sponsors' signatures on various transactions in return for money. An undercover agent made a deal with the suspect to forge three transactions and the suspect was arrested red-handed on delivering the fake documents.

### Driver hurt

Two trucks collided in the early morning hours yesterday on King Fahd Expressway. One of them immediately caught fire, injuring its Gulf driver, said security sources, noting that the fire was controlled and the driver was rushed to hospital for treatment.

### Trees set ablaze

A number of palm trees recently caught fire on a Wafra farm, said security sources, noting that firemen rushed to the farm, where they managed to control the fire and prevent it from spreading to nearby power posts. Separately, a fire broke out in a Wafra house, said security sources, noting that when firemen arrived at the site, they found



**Firefighters extinguish flames on palm trees in a Wafra farm yesterday.**

that the fire was inside one of the house's rooms. The house was evacuated and ventilated to help the firefighting team control the flames and prevent the fire from spreading to other parts of the house. No casualties were reported. Another fire broke out in a house in Ardhiya. The house was evacuated and firefighters divided into teams to ventilate the house, fight the fire and rescue residents. No casualties were reported. Meanwhile a fire also broke out in a house in Andalus. Firemen from Sulaibikhat arrived in a record time and managed to control the fire. No casualties were reported. In another case, Qurain firemen were dispatched to deal with a fire in a pile of wood along Ghouss Street, where firemen had a tough time controlling the flames because of the wind, but finally managed to put the fire out. Separately, Qurain firemen freed a number of people who were trapped inside a malfunctioning elevator in Funaitees, said security sources. No injuries were reported.

### Gas leak

A gas leak was reported in a Farwaniya complex, said security sources, noting that the gas was coming out of a closed office where a cooking gas cylinder was leaking. The place was broken open according to standard safety procedures, the leak was stopped, and the place was ventilated.



## KUWAIT REALTY SECTOR TO BE STEADY: EXPERTS

**KUWAIT:** Property experts predict that the domestic real-estate market will be stable in the second half of this year due to the summer holidays' season, regional conditions and oil prices' steadiness. Haitham Al-Houti, in charge of sales at Aman and Investment Company, said the realty sector is gripped with stagnation in the summer period due to regional jitters and recent fall of the crude prices. However, there have been some trades on investment plots, namely in Hawally and Salmiya.

Mahmoud Al-Sabouni of Magic Home Company said oil prices' decline has affected the market in Q1 2016. “However the market has been active since May with rise of the oil prices.” Habib Al-Saffar of Al-Mejas Company said the local property market is stead despite the global

economic crisis, particularly the bearish trends in bourses and realty markets. Property prices are expected to be firm in the coming months with some hikes in the housing sector, he said.

On trades in the housing units, he said East Al-Gurain had the highest record of transactions noting houses that used to be sold for KD 180,000 are now being sold for KD 200,000. The investment sector is calm, he added, noting that Al-Salmiya and Hawalli have the highest figure of trades.

Meanwhile, Ahmad Al-Ahmad, a realty expert, said the market would not witness falls in the foreseeable future. The market was in a critical situation between middle of 2015 and first quarter of 2016, he said, attributing the negative situation to the unstable regional conditions and the bearish oil prices. — KUNA

## FOUR ACQUITTED OF IS MEMBERSHIP DUE TO LACK OF LEGISLATION

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** The appeal court yesterday seconded a first instant ruling acquitting four citizens who were charged of belonging to the Islamic State (IS), because the law lacks any legislations incriminating belonging to it. Notably, security force had arrested the four citizens, noting that they belonged to a five-member cell including one who died in Iraq. However, state security investigations showed that the suspects had no intention of committing any hostile activities in Kuwait and that all they did was to facilitate youth to travel to join IS in Syria and Iraq.

### Book controversy

Separately, a recent announcement by the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, calling for bids to

print a book on IS has led to many angry public and parliamentary reactions. Accordingly, the ministry issued a statement explaining that the idea behind the book was passed and approved, and that the book was meant to refute IS allegations and expose its ideological deviation from Islam.

The ministry added that the book's author had previously used the book's content as a paper he presented to Cairo University on extremism and terrorism and that it was judged and published by the ‘Research Magazine’ issued by the university's Darul Uloum faculty. “More books and academic studies need to be printed and distributed to scholars and teachers to provide them with enough proofs to counter and refute occasional allegations,” the ministry explained.

## EMBASSY DENIES ENVOY MET POPULAR MOBILIZATION FORCES' LEADERS

**BAGHDAD:** Kuwait's Embassy to Iraq Tuesday dismissed social media reports, posted on June 20, that Ambassador Ghassan Al-Zawawi met with leaders of the Popular Mobilization Forces. “These reports are baseless,” an

embassy source said in a statement, and affirmed that neither Zawawi nor any of the diplomats met with the Popular Mobilization Forces' leader. Al-Zawawi has been in Kuwait before the June 20 report, said the source. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Committee chairman and undersecretary of the ministry of finance Khalifa Hamada (left) chairs the meeting. — KUNA

## COMMITTEE FOR FINANCIAL REFORM HOLDS MEETING

**KUWAIT:** The Cabinet's higher committee for following up the implementation of the nation's plan for financial and economic reform met on Tuesday to continue perusing the plan and strategize means of carrying it out. The meeting was chaired by committee chairman and undersecretary of the ministry of finance Khalifa Hamada, a press statement by the ministry said.

Last month the committee focused on laying out possible remedies for any would be irregularities in the plan, which deals broadly with such financial reform steps as redrawing and redefining the role of the state in the national economy, increasing the contribution of the private sector to the economy, streamlining the labor market, and enacting legislation to better serve the goals set by the plan.

The nation's plan for financial and economic reform addresses the issue of the nation's revenues, including the imposition of a ten percent tax on corporate profits and a five percent value added tax (VAT tax) on purchases by the public (which has been adopted by the GCC), and adjusting the lease amount charged by the state for its property given to individual or corporate investors. On the other hand, the plan deals with rationing the nation's total expenditures including monies spent on government ministries and agencies, stopping the establishment of new government ministries, agencies, and authorities or merging existing ones or even doing away with some. Also, revamping current subsidies to the public and developing new approaches to preparing the nation's annual budget. — KUNA

## PUBLIC AUTHORITY FOR SPORTS HOSTS RAMADAN RECEPTION



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah and National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem are pictured with top Public Authority for Sports officials.— Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah and National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem take a group photo with top Public Authority for Sports officials.

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Sports (PAS) hosted a Ramadan reception Tuesday night, which was attended by Chairman of the Board, Minister of Information and Minister of Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, Director General Sheikh Ahmad Mansour Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, board members and other officials. His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem and other dignitaries attended the event.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah and National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem attend the event.



Kuwaiti businessman Emad BuKhamseen (third from left) is pictured with Public Authority for Sports' Director General Sheikh Ahmad Mansour Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and other guests.



Children greet officials during the event.

# Ramadan Quiz 2016

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

---

**Kuwait Times Ramadan Quiz Answer & Win**

18) What is the name of the second battle of Islam?

**Battle of Uhud**

YES  NO

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Civil ID.: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Young Voices

## ‘MY MOTHER ALWAYS COOKS DELICIOUS MEALS IN RAMADAN’

By Faten Omar

readers of the ties that bind us all together as a species. These are the voice of Kuwait's future and we invite them to share their thoughts with us here.

Talia Hussain is a five-year-old kindergartener from Salmiya. Talia is obsessed with shopping and makeup.

**Kuwait Times: What do you want to be when you grow up?**  
**Talia:** I want to be a doctor or a pharmacist like my parents.

**KT: What is your experience in Ramadan?**  
**Talia:** I love Ramadan because my mother always cooks delicious meals - the soups are my favorite.

**KT: What do you want to change about Kuwait or the world?**  
**Talia:** I would change my school and make a world without schools because I hate schools.

**KT: What is your favorite thing to do with your friends?**  
**Talia:** I love to make handmade flowers.

**KT: Tell me how will you use your allowance.**  
**Talia:** I will give some of it to poor people and then go shopping with the rest.

### Photo of the day

Ali Najdi (center) one of the most famous Kuwaiti Nokhethas (sailors) and protagonist the actual story of the book 'Sons of Sinbad' written by Australian adventure Allen Villiers, who participate in a 9-month voyage from Aden to Kuwait. The image shows Najdi with some of his companions in the island of Zanzibar, taken in the summer of 1938 during a trip back to Kuwait. Photo prepared by Mahmoud Zakaria Abu Alella, Researcher in Heritage, the Ministry of Information. (Source: 'Sons of Sindbad, the Photographs' —by Yacoub Hijji and Grace Pundyk)



KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem is pictured with Islamic Constitutional Movement members. —Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh



ICM member Nasser Al-Sane welcomes Minister of Public Works Dr Ali Al-Omar.

# ICM HOSTS RAMADAN GATHERING

KUWAIT: The Islamic Constitutional Movement (ICM) hosted a Ramadan reception Tuesday night at the diwaniya of former Secretary General Nasser Al-Sane. Lawmakers including National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem and MP Adel Al-Kharafi, government officials including education minister Dr Bader Al-Essa, and other guests attended the event.



MP Adel Al-Kharafi attends the event.



Minister of Education Dr Bader Al-Essa is pictured with ICM members.



Former MP Mohammad Al-Saqr (second from right) sits next to ICM member and former MP Mubarak Al-Duwailah during the event.

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## THE 'BUT' PEOPLE

By Hassan Al-Essa

Following Al-Qaeda's terrorist 9/11 attacks in New York that were condemned by many Arab writers and described as a mass killing crime targeting innocent civilians, a similar number of writers also condemned the crime and made some remarks using retraction words like the famous 'BUT' before they elaborately started reminding Arab readers about American policies in the Arab region and its spiritual and financial support to the Israeli regime.

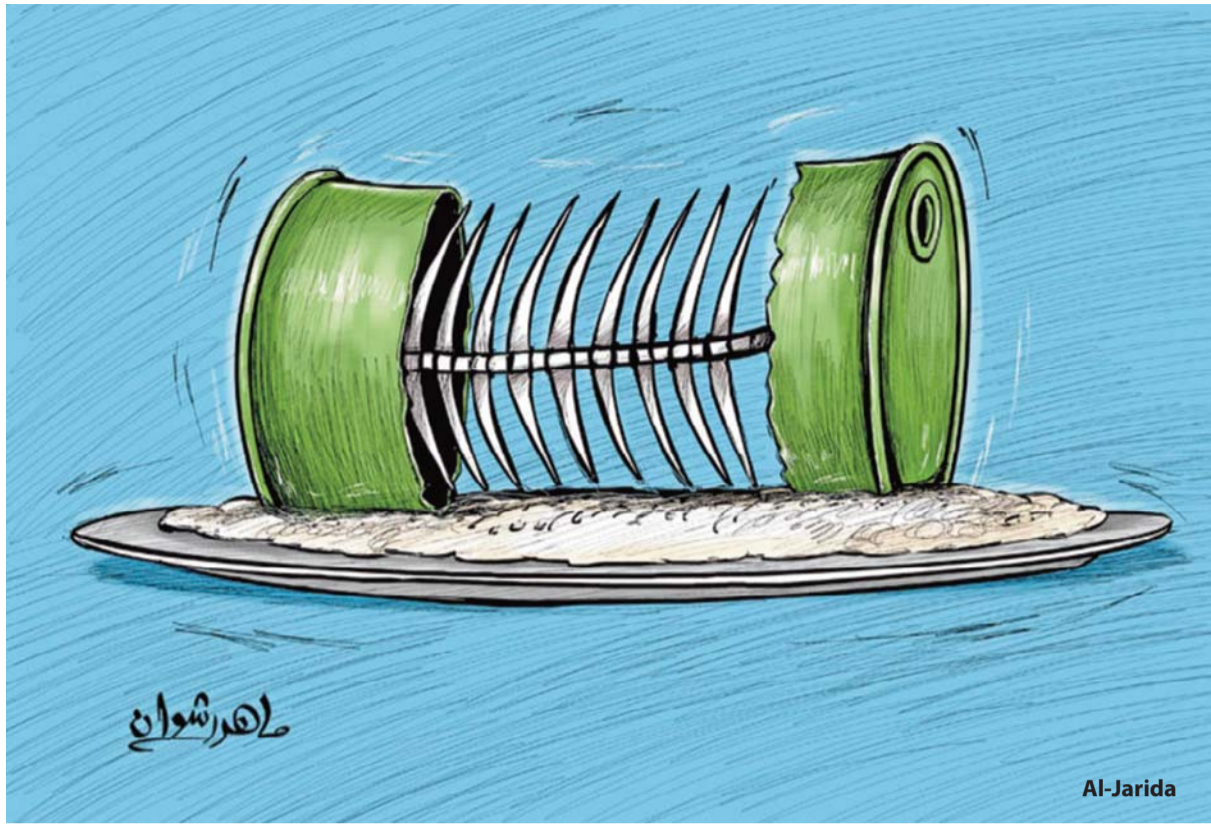
At that time, some colleagues including Dr Saad Bin Tafla wrote expressing rejection of such writings that they described as 'pulling down what your right hand does using your left hand'. Those writers who played both tunes were known as the 'Bin Laken' group to rhyme with Bin Laden, as 'laken' in Arabic means 'but'.

This disturbing argument made by the Bin Laken group indirectly justifies terrorism and violence despite their ugliness. They start by rejecting terrorism and violence be it state, group or individual terrorism - a situation that cannot take any retractions because condemnation originates from abstract general human situations that cannot be restricted or explained or justify any criminal act targeting civilians regardless of the scene or location of the crime.

The crime recently committed in a gay nightclub by Omar Mateen, who was inspired by IS, can be viewed in the same way by the Bin Laken group, who would start by condemning the action and then retract using a but to remind, as usual, that the victims were nothing but a group of gays. Nothing is new about US policies in the region, be it supporting Israel, interfering in Iraq, or even if we go back deeper in history to the foundation of the USA, when colonial white men wiped out the native Indians and then expanded west and south, assaulting Mexicans and dominating Latin America.

There is nothing new about this long bitter imperial history in dealing with Third World countries. So can this justify terrible crimes like the one committed at the Orlando nightclub? Wouldn't it have been better for these 'but' groups to focus more on the gun lobbies that strongly reject all policies and attempts to ban weapons with the excuse of a constitutional article they twisted, to make owning a weapon or rifle becoming more like picking up a chocolate bar from the neighborhood department store shelf!

The Orlando crime will surely provide enough support to presidential candidate Donald Trump and his fascism against Muslims and others, just the way IS inspired Mateen and justified Assad's tyranny against the Syrian people. So, should we not stop these 'but' groups and stop making excuses? — Translated by Kuwait Times



Al-Jarida

الانباء

Al-Anbaa

## ARABS' 'WAILING WALL'

By Salah Al-Sayer

Ramadan has its special atmosphere in various Islamic countries in terms of rituals like fasting and Taraweeh prayers for some and in terms of customs and social traditions such as Ramadan dishes, family gatherings and folkloric games. Naturally enough, all these practices have developed over time and we now have special Ramadan quizzes, costumes, sales and Ramadan series, that in turn created a phenomenon known as 'Ramadan critics'!

### Art criticism no longer needs academic studies or reading books

The growing TV productions have contributed in creating the seasonal phenomenon of Ramadan critics, which even grew greater with the spread of social media. Art criticism no longer needs academic studies or reading books.

And now with the deterioration of Arabic drama production, everybody has been racing to practice impressionistic criticism showing all the flaws in various Ramadan TV series and complain about how miserable are the productions they are keen on watching en masse similar to mass whale beaching!

Ramadan critics practice their seasonal suicidal conduct by insisting on watching even the bad works just to curse and express resentment, make comments about actresses' lips or actors' hairstyles as if the whole process is becoming more like self-torture by forcing oneself to follow bad works. The TV screen has become more like a 'wailing wall' for viewers or a 'find the seven differences' quiz when Ramadan critics wait for this or that bad program or series not to enjoy it, but rather to criticize it, fish for mistakes and talk about them in private gatherings or electronic diwanis! — Translated by Kuwait Times



## KFH OFFERS IFTAR MEALS TO FASTING PEOPLE

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) continued its 'Feeding a Fasting Person' campaign as part of its Ramadan program and charity activities that underline its Islamic identity and firm belief in its commitment to

assume social and humanitarian responsibility. KFH toured several crowded places to offer breakfast meals for those fasting. The distribution covered industrial areas, gathering places and Nayef Palace in addition to mosques

and crowded areas. KFH's efforts in Ramadan reinforce bank's role in the field of social responsibility, and keenness to take part in the efforts of easing the suffering of low-income segments.

### Photo

of the day



KUWAIT: The full moon seen in the clear sky during a Ramadan night in Kuwait. Muslims are looking to observe the last ten nights of Ramadan starting from tomorrow. — KUNA

## Crime

Reports

### Police free man from kidnapper

KUWAIT: A security source said a call was received about a kidnapping of a bedoon man by an unidentified person, adding that the victim sent messages to his father asking for help. The case was referred to criminal detectives, and they were able to locate the suspect in a Salmy desert area, who was arrested following a chase. Detectives fired gunshots at his car's tires, so he attempted to escape on foot. The suspect said he met the victim on the Internet, and convinced him to meet in person. He took him from Sulaibiya industrial area to the desert and attempted to rape him. In a separate case, Ahmadi detectives are investigating the kidnapping of a young man by several men in a SUV. The youth said he was beaten in the car before being able to jump out in Umm Al-Haiman desert area.

### Attempted miscarriage

Ahmadi prosecutor ordered Mubarak Al-Kabeer police station officers to file charges of attempted miscarriage as a felony. An American woman of Arab origin complained about her husband for attempting to make her have a miscarriage through violence in their house. She gave police a medical report stating she was 29 weeks' pregnant, and was admitted to hospital with severe bleeding. She was given medicine to stabilize the fetus.

### Suicide attempt

A woman was admitted to hospital for gastric lavage after drinking kerosene in a suicide attempt, after writing a message to her husband saying "I hate you". The woman's husband sought police help, so an ambulance was sent and the woman was rushed to hospital.

### Scam

A citizen complained against two Egyptians to whom he agreed to sell soap products, but they did not pay him for it. The citizen told Rumaithiya police he tried to collect the money several times but failed. Police called the two for questioning but they did not answer. Police are working on the case. Separately, a citizen accused an Egyptian and two Syrians of swindling him out of KD 12,000, as they made him believe they wanted to open a restaurant. But after he gave them the money, they disappeared. Police are investigating.

### Drugged driver arrested

A citizen failed to escape from Ahmadi police after colliding with a woman's car while under the influence of drugs. He was arrested and sent to the Drugs Control General Department. The suspect was unsteadily driving his car in Fahd Al-Ahmad when he collided with a citizen's car. She called the police, so he attempted to escape at high speed, but police stopped and arrested him. Police found the illicit pills that he used.

### Family disputes

A citizen was beaten and insulted by her brother because of family disputes. A security source said a woman told police her brother beat her and insisted on filing a complaint against him, because she does not want him to beat her again. In another case, seven citizens - four women and three men - had a fight in Adan due to a family dispute, until police brought them under control and charged them with fighting.

### Hairdresser sued

A Lebanese woman accused an Egyptian hairdresser of burning her hair, after asking to dye it. The client went to Abu Halifa police station and lodged a complaint. Investigations are underway. — Al-Rai and Al-Anbaa

# Kuwait Times International

THURSDAY, JUNE 23, 2016

TRUMP TO RAMP UP CRITIQUE OF CLINTON AS FAILURE

Page 9

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Popular Pakistani Sufi singer shot dead in 'act of terror'



BRISTOL: Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron, foreground, addresses Vote Remain supporters with former Prime Minister John Major, right, during a rally. — AP

## POLITICIANS MAKE FINAL APPEALS IN 'BREXIT' VOTE BRITAIN'S EU FAITH IN THE HANDS OF UNDECIDED VOTERS

**LONDON:** Campaigners on both sides of the crucial vote on whether or not Britain should remain in the European Union crisscrossed the country yesterday, their last day to win support from the undecided. Prime Minister David Cameron outlined his vision for a future with Britain retaining its place in the 28-nation bloc, bristling at the notion that the country would be headed in the wrong direction if it stayed in. He flatly rejected the charge that the institution is moribund.

"We are not shackled to a corpse," Cameron told the BBC. "You can see the European economy's recovery. It's the largest single market in the world." The most notable figure in the "leave" campaign, former London Mayor Boris Johnson, kicked off a whirlwind tour of England as he pushed for a British exit - or Brexit. Touring the Billingsgate Fish Market, Johnson mugged for the cameras with fish in hand - a not-so-subtle reminder that this is an island nation - and one very proud of its independence and self-assurance. "It's time to have a totally new relationship with our friends and partners across the Channel," Johnson said. "It's time to speak up for democracy, and hundreds of millions of people around Europe agree with us. It's time to break away from the failing and dysfunctional EU system." Britain goes to the polls Thursday after a campaign that has been both heated and complicated. The reach of the EU into every aspect of life has meant that all sorts of groups - from scientists to CEOs - have registered opinions on whether to stay or go.

### High stakes

The stakes are high as the vote is final - unlike an election in

which the results can be reversed in the next term. However, the vote is not legally binding, and Parliament would have to vote to repeal the law that brought Britain into the EU in the first place. A vote to leave would invoke Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union, which allows a member state to withdraw. The article has never been invoked and it would trigger a period of uncertainty during years of negotiations on the relationship between the EU and the UK.

Much of the debate has hinged on the economy. From the international banks in the skyscrapers of Canary Wharf to the traditional home of Britain's financial industry in the City of London, business has largely awaited the referendum with trepidation and caution. Many fear a vote to leave would undermine London's position as the world's pre-eminent financial center and damage an industry that underpins the British economy.

Leaders of about half of Britain's largest companies made a last-ditch appeal to their employees to vote for remaining in the European Union. In a letter to the Times on the eve of Thursday's vote, some 1,285 business leaders - include representatives of half of the FTSE 100 businesses - argue that a vote to leave will hurt the British economy.

### Acrimonious campaign

Similar letters have been released in the course of the acrimonious campaign. But Wednesday's letter is clearly meant to make the 1.75 million people employed by the signatories think twice about their vote. "Britain leaving the EU would mean uncertainty

for our firms, less trade with Europe and fewer jobs," the letter said. "Britain remaining in the EU would mean the opposite: more certainty, more trade and more jobs. EU membership is good for business and good for British jobs. That's why, on June 23, we back Britain remaining in the EU."

The companies represented include Barclays, Standard Life and Anglo-American. Stock markets and the pound continued to rise, indicating that investors think the "remain" side will win. Markets are likely to be jittery, however, as the vote is expected to be tight and a vote to leave would create huge uncertainty. US Federal Reserve chair Janet Yellen warned Tuesday that the upcoming vote "could have significant economic repercussions."

The head of the European Central Bank, Mario Draghi, also said the consequences of a vote to leave would be difficult to assess. "This lack of precision from two of the most eminent central bankers in the world with respect to the global consequences of a vote to exit was a refreshing outbreak of honesty in contrast to the very precise warnings that the UK public has been bombarded with," said Michael Hewson, the chief market analyst of CMC markets, citing warnings from the International Monetary Fund, the Bank of England and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development - all of which signaled dire consequences if the country were to exit. The betting markets solidly stood by the "remain" side. The Betfair exchange said remain is now at 76 percent probability. Some 80 percent of the 1 million pounds placed during and after a BBC debate on Tuesday was on "remain," the exchange said in a statement. — AP

## US COURT CONVICTS TWO OF CONSPIRING TO JOIN IS

**LOS ANGELES:** A US court on Tuesday convicted two men of attempting to help the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria, with one attempting to travel to the Middle East. A jury found Nader Elhuzayel and Muhanad Badawi, both 25, guilty of conspiring to provide material support to the jihadist group, the US Justice Department said in a statement.

Both men, from Anaheim, California, were arrested in May last year, when Elhuzayel was about to board a plane from Los Angeles to Turkey to join the IS group. They had "used social media to discuss ISIL and terrorist attacks, expressed a desire to die as martyrs, and made arrangements for Elhuzayel to leave the United States to join ISIL," the statement said, using a term for the IS group.

Badawi had bought a one-way ticket for Elhuzayel to travel to Israel with a layover in Istanbul, it added. In recorded conversations, Badawi and Elhuzayel "discussed how it would be a blessing to fight for the cause of Allah, and to die in the battlefield." The two also recorded a video in which Elhuzayel swore allegiance to IS group leader Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi and vowed to travel to Syria to join the group, the statement said. The jury also found Elhuzayel guilty of 26 counts of bank fraud, for which he faces up to 100 years in prison. It found Badawi guilty of fraudulent use of federal funds, for which he faces up to 35 years in prison. Elhuzayel obtained money for his travel by depositing stolen checks into his personal checking accounts before withdrawing cash from three banks.—AFP

## PRE-DAWN QURAN READINGS SPARKS FEARS FOR ISTANBUL'S HAGIA SOPHIA

**ISTANBUL:** Before dawn in Istanbul, in the holy Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, a turbaned Turkish cleric kneels on a prayer carpet and prepares to recite verses from the Quran. "In the name of God, the compassionate and the merciful..." Nothing especially unusual-except the cleric is reading not in a mosque but what is officially a museum. And the museum is the Hagia Sophia, one of the single most emblematic edifices of human civilization. A masterpiece of architecture, the Hagia Sophia was first built as a church in the sixth century in the Christian Byzantine Empire. It was almost immediately converted into a mosque following the conquest of Constantinople by the Muslim Ottomans in 1453 with minarets built to flank its magnificent basilica.

It became a secular museum in a key reform of the new post-Ottoman Turkish authorities under Mustafa Kemal Ataturk in the 1930s, making the Hagia Sophia universal heritage for peoples of all faiths. But critics have long accused the ruling Islamic-rooted Justice and Development Party (AKP) of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of harbouring a hidden agenda to turn the Hagia Sophia back into a mosque as a symbol of Turkey's status as a majority Muslim nation. Last year, a Muslim cleric recited the Quran in the Hagia Sophia for the first time in 85 years to mark the opening of an exhibition. But this Ramadan the Turkish authorities have gone a step further, with the state TV religion channel Diyanet TV broadcasting every day of the month the Quran recitation by a

different senior Turkish cleric, the most extensive use of the building for religious purposes since it became a museum. The recitation takes place at the time of suhur, the pre-dawn meal consumed by Muslims as they prepare for a day of fasting, hours before the thousands of tourists who sweep through the Hagia Sophia daily begin queuing outside the turnstiles.

### 'Lack of respect'

The recitation, broadcast live on Diyanet TV, aroused a furious reaction from Greece, which for years has warily eyed what Athens sees as a creeping Islamisation of the building. "This kind of obsession-bordering on bigotry-for holding Muslim ceremonies in a monument that belongs to the patrimony of humanity is incomprehensible and shows a lack of respect and contact with reality," Greece's ministry of foreign affairs said in a statement.

Foreign Minister Nikos Kotzias said he had written to the UN's cultural heritage agency UNESCO to complain about its use. US State Department spokesman Mark Toner said Washington "would encourage the Turkish government to preserve the Hagia Sophia in a way that respects its traditions and its complex history." But in a spiteful diplomatic row, Turkey's foreign affairs spokesman Tanju Bilgic said Greece's statement was "unacceptable" and said Athens should look more closely at its own record on religious freedoms. He said Greece has not given permission

for the construction of a mosque in Athens for years, violated the religious freedoms of its remaining Muslim minority and "mistakes being against Islam for being modern." Some Turkish officials-including a recent culture minister-have voiced a desire to see the Hagia Sophia become a mosque again but this has never been an official policy.

### 'Why another mosque?'

Erdogan had already caused some shudders when on May 29 he led a ceremony attended by hundreds of thousands-complete with a aerobic stunt display-to celebrate the conquest of Constantinople. Both sides may want to keep the dispute in check however, given the relatively robust relations between Turkey's AKP government and Greek Premier Alexis Tsipras, particularly on the migration crisis. Turkey has also pleased Greece in recent years by offering greater respect for Orthodox traditions, including this year allowing Epiphany Day to be celebrated in the Aegean city of Izmir for the first time in over nine decades. But critics also point to a 13th century Byzantine church in the Black Sea city of Trabzon which was turned into a mosque in the sixteenth century and then became a museum in the 1960s. After a lengthy legal battle, Turkey's religious affairs authority took repossession of the building-confusingly also called Hagia Sophia-and in 2013 it was reopened again to Muslim believers.—AFP

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## EGYPT GOVT APPEALS COURT BLOCK ON SAUDI ISLAND DEAL

**CAIRO:** Egypt's government said yesterday it had lodged an appeal against a court decision to block the controversial handover of two uninhabited Red Sea islands to Saudi Arabia. The deal over the islands of Tiran and Sanafir prompted some of the largest public protests in two years when it was signed in April.

The country's State Council ruled on Tuesday that the islands, strategically sit-

uated at the mouth of the Gulf of Aqaba, must remain under Egyptian sovereignty. "The government will present all the documents it has to demonstrate the integrity and strength of the case it presented to the Supreme Administrative Court which has the right to rule on the case," the prime minister's office said in a statement yesterday.

"It will also present a dossier contain-

ing documents and maps that will assist in resolving the case." The government argues that the islands—which can be used to control access to the Israeli port of Eilat—have always been Saudi territory but were leased to Cairo in 1950 following a request by Riyadh. It says the deal to transfer them was based on a decree by since-ousted president Hosni Mubarak. Cairo says Mubarak had even

informed the United Nations about the matter in 1990. The deal, signed during a visit to Cairo by Saudi Arabia's King Salman in April, prompted an outcry from many Egyptians, and sparked protests against President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi. Sisi, whose government depends heavily on Saudi largesse, faced criticism on social media for "selling" the islands in return for multi-billion-dollar investment

deals with Riyadh. More than 100 people were jailed for up to five years for taking part in demonstrations against the deal that police quickly dispersed, but they were later freed on appeal. Oil-rich Saudi Arabia is one of the main regional backers of Sisi, a former army chief who has overseen a crackdown on the opposition since ousting his Islamist predecessor Mohamed Morsi in 2013. —AFP

## TURKEY DETAIN IS SUSPECTS OVER A 'LGBT RALLY PLOT'

**ISTANBUL:** Turkish authorities have arrested three suspected Islamic State (IS) jihadists in a probe into a planned attack on a transgender rights rally last weekend, a report said yesterday. The three, comprising one Turkish national and two men from Russia's volatile Caucasus region of Dagestan, were detained in raids on Friday and remanded in custody by a court on Tuesday, the Dogan news agency said.

Items including suicide belts packed with explosives, camouflage gear and military knives were seized by the authorities, it added. The three had been planning to attack a rally around Istanbul's Taksim Square promoting transgender rights. The gathering took place on

Sunday but was broken up by police, Dogan said. It said the raids had been conducted in the Istanbul districts of Basaksehir and Pendik after police acted on a tip-off. The Istanbul authorities had broken up the transgender rally after banning that event as well as a larger gay pride rally planned for the coming Sunday. It had cited security reasons and safeguarding public order as the reason for the ban. Istanbul has twice been hit this year by deadly attacks blamed on IS. A blast in Istanbul's historic centre in January killed a dozen German tourists while an attack on the Istiklal Street shopping hub in March killed three Israelis and Iranian. — AFP

## FALLUJAH NEARLY CLEARED BUT AID EFFORT FLOUNDERS

**BAGHDAD:** Iraqi forces hunted jihadist fighters in their last Fallujah redoubts yesterday as tens of thousands of displaced civilians massed in overcrowded camps around the city. A month exactly after the offensive against the Islamic State group's bastion was launched, progress on the military front exceeded expectations but so did the scope of the ensuing humanitarian crisis. "The northern and central parts of Fallujah have almost been cleared of Daesh," Lieutenant General Abdulwahab Al-Saadi told AFP, using an Arabic acronym for IS. "There are few IS fighters left, only in the Al-Muallemin and Jolan neighborhoods in the north of the city," said Saadi, the overall commander of the Fallujah offensive. "The militants in Jolan are offering some resistance but we're pushing back and we've killed a number of them," he said.

Operations against IS in northern Fallujah were being conducted by the elite counter-terrorism service and forces from the federal and provincial police. Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi launched the offensive against the jihadist stronghold, 50 kilometers west of Baghdad, a month ago. After an initial phase of staging operations to encircle Fallujah, elite federal forces stormed the city centre and were able to gain the upper hand relatively quickly. Abadi declared victory on June 17, saying only small pockets of IS fighters remained after Iraqi forces raised the national flag over the main government compound in the city centre. Saadi and other Iraqi commanders have said government forces controlled at least three-quarters of the city.

Christopher Garver, the spokesman of the US-led coalition assisting Iraqi forces, said Tuesday that by the US military's definition, only a third of the city had been cleared. US forces battling one of IS's previ-

ous incarnations in 2004 suffered some of their worst losses since the Vietnam War in Fallujah, despite huge numerical and technological superiority.

Iraqi forces who have been re-conquering swathes of territory lost to IS two years ago had been expected to face their toughest battle yet and IS fighters to defend their emblematic bastion to the death. After breaching the jihadists' defenses in the south of the city, Iraqi forces moved relatively rapidly and despite persistent violence in northern neighborhoods the outcome of the battle appears in no doubt.

### More aid agencies needed

Tens of thousands of starving civilians, who had been living virtually besieged under IS rule in and around Fallujah, fled their homes and filled hastily expanded displacement camps. The influx of families however caught the aid community flat-footed and relief organizations admitted the response was inadequate.

"We have to admit that the humanitarian community has also failed the Iraqi people," said Nasr Mufahi, Iraq head of the Norwegian Refugee Council, one of the organizations providing aid to people displaced from the Fallujah area. "There are serious funding shortfalls, but there is no justification why there aren't more aid agencies helping the people of Fallujah," he said. As already existing camps filled way beyond capacity, other camps were being set up but the newly displaced families arriving there often found nothing to sleep on or under, nothing to eat or drink. At a camp in Khaldiyyeh, on the shores of Lake Habbaniyah west of Fallujah, Intikha Mohammed and her three children had to share two mattresses with 10 other people. —AFP



**ARSAL:** In this Sunday June 19, 2016 photo, a Lebanese army soldier takes his position overlooking an area controlled by the Islamic State group at the edge of the town of Aarsal, on the Syrian border, in northeast Lebanon. — AP

## AIR RAIDS KILL 25 CIVILIANS IN IS STRONGHOLD IN SYRIA

### SUPPLY LINE OFFENSIVES HAVE STALLED

**BEIRUT:** Warplanes have bombed the Islamic State group's de facto Syrian capital Raqa, killing at least 25 civilians, after the jihadists drove pro-government forces out of their bastion northern province. Twin offensives aimed at severing the jihadists' supply line from the Turkish border to Raqa city appear to have largely stalled as IS mounts a fierce defense using suicide bombers.

Six children were among the 25 civilians killed in bombing raids on Raqa city late Tuesday, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. "Dozens more were wounded, some of them critically," said the British-based monitoring group, which was not immediately able to determine who had carried out the raids. The Syrian government, its longtime ally Russia and a US-led coalition have all carried out air strikes against IS in Raqa.

The Observatory said there were fresh air strikes—apparently by the coalition—on the city on Wednesday, one of which hit the town hall. Raqa is being Slaughtered Silently (RBSS) — an anti-IS activist group which gathers news on atrocities in the city—posted photos of what it said were the aftermath of Tuesday's strikes. They show a concrete balcony hanging off the damaged facade of a residential building as a large fire engulfs a white minivan. The group has accused IS of preventing civilians from leaving the city in order to use them as human shields. RBSS activist Abu Mohammad told AFP that the

wounded were struggling to get proper medical treatment as IS has recruited most doctors in the city to treat its own fighters.

### 'Disastrous' retreat

Raqa city was seized by IS in early 2014 and regime forces were expelled from the entire province that year. Backed by Russian air power, government troops re-entered the province this month as part of an offensive to retake the town of Tabqa, a key stop on IS's supply route from Turkey to Raqa city. But after advancing to within seven kilometers of Tabqa airbase, they were driven back an estimated 20 kilometers late Monday. More than 40 troops and militia were killed in a jihadist counterattack. Al-Masdar, a news website close to Syria's regime, said yesterday the lightning IS offensive had led to a "disastrous turn of events" and "a disorganized retreat that left behind weapons and several soldiers." Syria analyst Fabrice Balanche said the pullback could be attributed to a lack of "elite forces" engaged in the battle.

"At the first suicide attacks, they retreated," the Washington-based expert told AFP. "The Syrian forces were spread too thin to be defensible." Further west in the adjacent province of Aleppo, another assault aimed at blocking IS supplies have stalled. The US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces encircled the jihadist-held town of Manbij on June 10 but have since faced

a barrage of IS suicide attacks, including three on Tuesday, the Observatory said.

### 'Civilians are starving'

Syria's conflict began in 2011 as protests demanding political reform and the ouster of President Bashar Al-Assad. But a brutal regime crackdown and the rise of jihadist groups have transformed it into a multi-front civil war that has killed more than 280,000 people. Peace efforts have failed to put an end to the violence, and a truce brokered by the US and Russia has all but collapsed.

UN mediator Staffan de Mistura said Tuesday he hoped peace talks could resume in July, but warned they could not proceed "while hostilities are escalating and civilians are starving." Negotiations could restart if the truce is reinforced, humanitarian aid is increased, and a "common understanding of a political transition" is reached, he told the General Assembly via video link. "Then we can have, hopefully in July, inter-Syrian talks that are not about principles but about concrete steps to a political transition," he said. The main Syrian opposition body—the High Negotiations Committee—has called for a transitional government body without Assad. But Syria's regime says Assad is a "red line" and it would only be willing to broaden the government structure to accommodate some opposition figures. — AFP



**KHALDIYEH:** Displaced Iraqis who fled the government's operation against the Islamic State (IS) group in the city of Fallujah carry bags of food donated by a NGO called Preemptive Love Coalition on June 20, 2016 in a camp. —AFP

## US-BOUND MIGRANTS GO THROUGH LATIN AMERICA

**TURBO, Colombia:** Mohamud Warfa Hirsi is a long way from home. From a dusty Kenyan refugee camp, he has reached the sticky heat of the Caribbean, and his journey is not over. The 27-year-old Somali has traveled nearly 13,000 kilometers from East Africa. His hoped-for destination now lies hundreds of miles to the north, in the United States. "My journey was very hard," he told AFP. He has made it to an obscure milestone on the transcontinental refugee trail: Colombia's port of Turbo. Warfa Hirsi is one of thousands of migrants treading this trail through South and Central America. They risk arrest, drowning, disease and abuse by people-traffickers. But still they come in their thousands. From Turbo, traffickers take them by boat to a remote bay up the coast from where they can cross the border into Panama.

### Drowned

Arriving by boat and plane from countries like Cuba and Haiti, and from as far away as Africa and Asia, migrants gather in

Turbo, sleeping in hotels, abandoned buildings or under the stars. They cram without life vests onto boats, sometimes with 40 people in a craft made for 20, braving four-meter (13-foot) waves. "Vessels have capsized. These people have been drowning in the sea," said Brigadier General Adolfo Enrique Martinez, head of a Colombian navy anti-drugs task force in Turbo.

Those who make it to the border will trudge through the Darien jungle into Panama, risking hunger, dehydration and disease, and on through Central America. One Cuban migrant, 33-year-old computer engineer Alex Artiles, tried it that way in 2010. He wants to reach the United States to apply for residency under a special US agreement with Cuba.

Last time he got through the Panamanian jungle and as far as Mexico, where the authorities sent him back home. This year, Artiles set off again, by plane from Havana to Trinidad, then by ferry to volatile Venezuela, from where he crossed the border into Colombia. —AFP

## TURKEY: NORMALIZATION DEAL DEPENDS ON ISRAEL

**ANKARA:** Turkey said yesterday that reaching a deal to normalize relations with Israel downgraded after a 2010 Israeli raid on a Gaza-bound Turkish vessel depended on steps taken by the Jewish state. Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said Turkey had made its demands crystal clear ahead of upcoming talks—while insisting that Ankara's relationship with Palestinian militant group Hamas, which rules Gaza, was not a condition in the talks. Two of Turkey's key conditions for normalization—an apology for the deadly 2010 raid and compensation—were largely met, leaving its third demand, that Israel lift its blockade on the Hamas-run Gaza Strip, as the main obstacle.

"Whether a deal can be reached at the first upcoming meeting depends on the steps to be taken by Israel," Cavusoglu told a news conference in Ankara. "Our conditions are not very complicated, they are plain conditions," Cavusoglu said. "They need to be fulfilled the same as our apology demand." He did not give the date of the meeting although press reports have said it would take place on Sunday and be followed by an announcement on the normalization of ties.

Relations between once close allies Turkey and Israel hit an all-

time low after Israeli commandos staged a botched pre-dawn raid on a six-ship flotilla in May 2010 as it tried to run the blockade on the Hamas-run Gaza Strip. Nine activists on board the Turkish-owned Mavi Marmara ferry were killed, with a tenth person later dying of his wounds, sparking a bitter diplomatic crisis. All 10 were Turkish nationals.

The Hurriyet newspaper reported on Tuesday that the announcement for a deal would be made after talks between top Turkish foreign ministry official Feridun Sinirlioglu and Israel's pointman on Turkish relations, Joseph Ciecchanover. It did not say where the talks would be held. Israeli daily Yedioth Aharonot reported on Wednesday that the next round of talks would be held in Turkey and an announcement made there.

Previous reports have said that for any normalization, Israel also wants Turkey to prevent senior Hamas operative Salah Aruri from entering its territory and acting from there. Ankara has never confirmed his presence in Turkey. A report in the Turkish daily newspaper Karar yesterday suggested that all Hamas operatives previously based in Turkey had left the country for Qatar several months ago at the request of Turkish authorities.

Turkey is a key backer of Hamas,

with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan holding regular meetings with the Doha-based Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal. Cavusoglu yesterday said Turkey's contacts with Hamas were "not clandestine" and that they would continue for the sake of intra-Palestinian unity and Middle East peace. But he ruled out any condition about Hamas for a deal with Israel. "There is no such a condition like Hamas for normalisation of our bilateral

relations with Israel and there cannot be." Analysts have said Turkey may pursue a more conciliatory foreign policy following the departure of former Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, who spearheaded an aggressive and interventionist strategy. His successor Binali Yildirim last week said he wanted no permanent tensions with neighbors after serious ruptures not just with Israel but also with Egypt and Russia. — AFP



**ANKARA:** Turkish Prime Minister and leader of Turkey's ruling party, the Justice and Development Party (AK Party) Binali Yildirim addresses MPs during an AK Party's group meeting at the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. — AFP



## TOP US DIPLOMAT TO MEET WITH VENEZUELA OFFICIALS AMID CRISIS

**CARACAS:** A senior US diplomat was in Venezuela on Tuesday to meet with officials to jumpstart dialogue between the normally hostile governments as the socialist-run nation is torn apart by daily food protests and a campaign to oust President Nicolas Maduro. Thomas Shannon, a career diplomat with extensive experience in Latin America, flew to Caracas after weeks of looting and hunger riots in Venezuela. The riots led to hundreds of arrests and several deaths.

State Department spokesman John Kirby said Shannon, who now serves as undersecretary of state for political affairs, hoped to foster dialogue about the social, economic and political challenges facing the oil-rich country. He was to meet with leading opposition figures and was also expected to meet with Maduro and other government

representatives. The visit comes as the Organization of American States is set to meet later in the week in Washington to debate the mounting crisis and weigh sanctioning Maduro for allegedly stamping out political dissent in violation of regional commitments to democracy. Maduro used the diplomatic mission as a cudgel to batter his critics. In televised statements, he returned to one of his favorite topics: What he describes as the childish stubbornness of the country's political opposition. "I think it is very good that we are taking these steps with the US," he said. "I only wish the Venezuelan opposition would engage in serious, transparent dialogue in the same way."

### Bloody protests

The opposition held talks with Maduro two years ago after bloody anti-

government protests swept the nation, but that dialogue eventually dissolved without bearing fruit. Today, government opponents are taking a different tack, organizing around a recall referendum they hope will lead to Maduro being removed from office this year with one of their own potentially to replace him.

Thousands of Caracas residents stood in a warm drizzle Tuesday waiting to verify their signatures on a recall petition by having their fingerprints taken. The weeklong verification drive began Monday and is the first of a series of steps in the byzantine recall process. People in the lines said they were glad to wait and see the recall as the best way to remedy the shortages and triple-digit inflation that are forcing many here to skip meals.

Food protests continued to pop up

in the capital on Tuesday. A small group of residents stopped traffic near a Caracas slum, while in a wealthy neighborhood people hung banners saying "we are hungry." Shannon, a former ambassador to Brazil, steps into the quagmire with an uncertain outcome. A procession of visits he made last year to Caracas yielded no tangible results, setting low expectations that this trip could result in a breakthrough on releasing political prisoners and calls for the referendum to move forward. The US and Venezuela haven't exchanged ambassadors since 2010, and even when announcing Shannon's visit last week at a summit in the Dominican Republic, US Secretary of State John Kerry and his Venezuelan counterpart could barely hold back the animosity that has long characterized relations. But as Venezuela unravels, US officials

are increasingly concerned about the risk of further bloodshed and a humanitarian crisis that could spill across its borders and undermine President Barack Obama's legacy in a region where he made history by reopening relations with Cuba.

Members of the opposition say the recall drive and food riots have caused the government to tighten control over critics. Human rights groups say intolerance for dissent has led to the jailing of dozens of people they consider of political prisoners. Over the weekend, officials arrested two opposition activists who had been traveling outside of Caracas to participate in the validation process. On Tuesday, Human Rights Watch denounced the arrests and called on authorities to produce a legal rationale for holding the men or release them immediately. — AP

## MEXICO TOWN BURIES DEAD AFTER CLASH BETWEEN TEACHERS, POLICE

**NOCHIXTLAN:** A small town in southern Mexico buried three of its own Tuesday, two days after a clash between police and protesters left eight dead. Residents in the town of Nochixtlan in Oaxaca state accused police of opening fire during a confrontation involving protesters and striking radical teachers, killing several people including 19-year-old Jesus Cadena Sanchez.

A middle child, Cadena Sanchez was the second of three burials, as hundreds marched with his casket to a rocky hilltop cemetery under a steady rain. After his burial, Cadena's mother, Patricia Sanchez Meza, recalled her last conversation with him in what must have been minutes before a bullet ripped through his lower abdomen on Sunday.

Federal and state police had moved in to remove a highway roadblock on the outskirts of Nochixtlan on Sunday. By late morning shots rang out. Though who started shooting is disputed, journalists filmed police firing their weapons. Eight were killed and more than 100 injured. Sanchez had gone out on an errand Sunday morning and was surprised to find her son gone when she returned. She called for him thinking maybe he was asleep. They had the habit of always eating breakfast together. Then she thought maybe he had walked the couple blocks to the church, because the bells had rung calling people to help. She gathered some supplies to help the injured and walked toward the action. She turned back a block from the hospital because there was shooting. Eventually, around 11:20 a.m., Sanchez was able to speak briefly with Cadena by phone. She heard a lot of noise. He told her they had them pinned behind a bus.

### Chaotic scene

"He told me, 'I'm all right mommy, relax, I'll be right back.' Then the call cut off. Photos Cadena took with his cellphone

before his death showed a chaotic scene under a blue sky. Dozens of protesters, some with handkerchiefs tied around their faces were spread across the roadway. One man held a softball-size rock. In the distance a line of what appear to be blue-uniformed federal police stretch across the road. A helicopter circled overhead. Other men who were with Cadena at the end told Sanchez that federal police fired on them. One of those who tried to help him was shot in the mouth and killed. Another was grazed. Cadena had not told his mother he was going to support the teachers' roadblock that morning, but it did not surprise her. "He was very supportive, he didn't like injustices," she said. Cadena had graduated high school one year before. Sanchez proudly flipped through photos of him in an album. He with a friend in their school uniforms. The soccer and music lover wanted to continue his studies and become a civil engineer, Sanchez said.

The crowd at Cadena's funeral was defiant. They blamed authorities and chanted that his death be avenged. The first step forward could come when the Mexican government and representatives of the dissident teachers' union will hold talks. The meeting was to be held in Mexico City and will be led by Interior Secretary Miguel Angel Osorio Chong.

The Interior Department said in a statement that the talks will seek to find solutions that allow for a return to peace in regions that have seen turbulent protests recently. Radical teachers unions are vehemently opposed to education reforms that include subjecting teachers to evaluations, and have led demonstrations in several states and the Mexican capital. Officials said the reform itself will not be up for negotiation in yesterday's talks. The most recent round of protests was set off by the arrest of some union leaders on charges including corruption. — AP



TEXAS: In this file photo, Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump speaks in The Woodlands, Texas. —AP

## IN SPEECH, TRUMP TO RAMP UP CRITIQUE OF CLINTON AS FAILURE

### TRUMP FACES GROWING QUESTIONS ABOUT HIS READINESS

**NEW YORK:** Seeking to refocus his presidential campaign, Donald Trump will lambast Democratic rival Hillary Clinton as a failed secretary of state who is out of step with Americans on trade and immigration. Trump's address yesterday morning at his hotel in New York's SoHo neighborhood marks his official opening salvo against Clinton, the prospective Democratic presidential nominee, in the general election. It comes as Trump faces growing questions about his readiness not just for the presidency, but for the campaign he will need to run to get there.

The Trump campaign is hoping the speech can quiet those concerns and rally Republicans around their shared opposition to Clinton. The billionaire businessman plans to focus in particular on Clinton's tenure at the State Department, arguing that her foreign policy is in part responsible for the creation of the Islamic State militant group. "Hillary Clinton had a four-year tryout for the presidency as secretary of state," said Stephen Miller, a Trump policy adviser. "She ran the State Department and the world went up in flames. Everything took a nosedive, except for Hillary Clinton's bank account - which swelled to new highs." Trump is also expected to cite Clinton's past support for trade deals and her willingness, along with her husband, former President Bill Clinton, to accept speaking fees and contributions to their foundation from countries with poor human rights records. However, Trump is not expected to target the former president's personal infidelities, as he did earlier in the campaign.

### Reckless approach

Clinton has been harshly critical of Trump, particularly since she wrapped up her lengthy Democratic primary battle. On Monday, she warned that the businessman would send the US economy back into recession and said his "reckless" approach would hurt workers still trying to recover from the 2008 economic turbulence. "Every day we see how reckless and careless Trump is. He's proud of it," Clinton said. "Well, that's his choice. Except when he's asking to be our president. Then it's our choice."

Trump had planned to deliver his address on Clinton last week, but he postponed the event because of the nightclub shootings in Orlando, Florida. The Republican's response to the attack was panned by many in his own party, who bristled as he took credit for "being right" about terrorism and suggested that President Barack Obama was sympathetic to militant groups. The Orlando gunman identified himself as an Islamic soldier in calls with authorities during his rampage. On Monday, Trump fired his campaign manager, Corey Lewandowski, hours before a new fundraising report showed that the billionaire's campaign had just \$1.3 million in the bank at the start of June. Trump allies cast Lewandowski's firing this week as the start of a new phase for the campaign. Paul Manafort, the campaign chairman and Lewandowski's internal rival, signaled on a conference call with aides that a rapid staffing expansion would be coming soon.

Tennessee Republican Senator Bob Corker, who has been seen as a potential vice presidential pick, said he was "pretty excited" to learn of the changes. "I think that what appears to be occurring over the last 24 hours is a movement in a direction that I think could be very, very positive," Corker said. While Manafort, a longtime

Republican operative, is believed to be in charge now, the campaign has not fully clarified who is running the operation. "It's not been written down anywhere, but you have to assume," Ed Brookover, the campaign's liaison to the Republican National Committee, said of Manafort. As with everything involving Trump,

the billionaire appears to be the only one truly in charge. "I think I want to be who I am. I don't want to be a phony like Hillary Clinton," he told NBC's "Today." He added: "I want to be what I am." Pace reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Steve Peoples and Erica Werner contributed to this report. —AP



NOCHIXTLAN: The mother of Jesus Cadena, who died last Sunday during the clearing of the highway by police, is comforted by relatives. — AP

## THOUSANDS OF CALIFORNIA COLLEGE STUDENTS HOMELESS AND HUNGRY

**LOS ANGELES:** Nearly 50,000 students attending the largest public university in the United States are homeless and many more go hungry, according to a new study made public this week. The study, commissioned by California State University (CSU), which has 23 campuses across the western state and some 460,000 students, shows that 8.7 to 12 percent of students at the school are homeless while 21 to 24 percent lack a consistent food source.

"I reflected a bit on the number, and the number one in five students at Cal State are food insecure are a gasp," said Timothy White, chancellor of the Cal State system, as he presented the findings at a conference on Monday. He said the study was commissioned in February of last year in order to quantify anecdotal evidence on the issue. Staff, faculty and administrators were questioned along with students. The report said that many struggling students felt their level of need was not understood by campus personnel and some were unaware of the assistance available to them.

One homeless student identified as Nikki said she had informed residential staff at one campus of her situation but was told it would not be "fair" to allow her to stay in the dorms. "Well, if we do that for you, then we have to do that for everybody," she recounted being told. Another student identified as Annie said she would welcome food assistance in order not to be stigmatized and made to "feel like you're walking with a scarlet letter on your chest."

Staff interviewed said they limited "outreach and promotion" of assistance programs such as food stamps or financial aid for fear they would be deluged with requests given their limited resources. "Often, programs and services were the 'best kept secret' of the campus because participants saved resources for the students experiencing the most acute crisis," the report said. It added that the scale of the problem was also often misunderstood or minimized.

"In some cases, there was a normalizing of the 'starving student' as part of the college vernacular," the report said. "Some participants suggested, outside of rare circumstances, that students generally squander their resources with youthful behavior." The students who reported being homeless said they often "couch-surfed" or slept in their cars, in tents, in parking lots or railway stations. The study, the first such survey in the country, said a system-wide commitment was needed to remedy the situation.

"CSU campuses are developing programs to support the needs of displaced and food insecure students," the report said. "However, a greater understanding of this student population, their experiences accessing and utilizing existing services, and their rates of retention is needed," Elizabeth Chapin, a spokeswoman for CSU, said the study would continue for another two years to assess how widespread the issue of homelessness and hunger is among students and to come up with intervention programs to assist them and ensure they graduate. — AFP

## FIRES RAGE ACROSS SOUTHWEST, BUT HOMES ARE MOSTLY SPARED

**LOS ANGELES:** For days, wildfires have raged amid spiking heat across Southern California and much of the West, driving hundreds of people from their homes. Yet homes have overwhelmingly remained safe so far, after aggressive and strategic firefighting and a dose of luck. In the foothill suburbs northeast of Los Angeles, a major wildfire gave a major scare to homeowners when it broke out within feet of residential streets. But a day later, firefighters had stopped its progress with bombardment from helicopters and crews hiking into the hills to douse it and cut fire lines.

"They are working so hard, it's excruciating with the heat, and up and down these hills, they're steep," LA County fire Capt. Mike McCormick said. Homeowner Gordon Witby said Tuesday he couldn't believe how close the flames had been to his house in Duarte a day earlier, and how calm the scene was now. "The flames were so high. And so fierce," Witby told KABC-TV. The blaze, along with a neighboring one that broke out shortly before, were 10 percent contained on Tuesday night after burning about 71/2 square miles, US Forest Service spokesman Nathan Jiles said.

### 'Another night at least'

Still, no one was being allowed back yet to the 770 homes in Duarte that were under evacuation orders. "We're looking at another night at least," Jiles said. "We understand the stress it puts on families if you displace them from their homes, and we want to get them back as soon as we can." Near the US-Mexico

border southeast of San Diego, a two-day-old, 9-square-mile wildfire has forced the evacuation of about 600 homes and more than 1,500 people in Lake Moreno Village. It was also 10 percent contained.

Elsewhere, crews made progress against a week-old blaze that has charred more than 12 square miles in rugged coastal mountains west of Santa Barbara, boosting containment to 82 percent. Most evacuees from that fire were set to be allowed to return on yesterday morning. In Utah, officials have evacuated about 100 homes from a mountain near a town in the southwest section of the state as a wildfire less than a mile away moved down a rocky slope toward the community of Pine Valley. The blaze is about a square mile, but it is moving dangerously close to homes in difficult terrain, officials said. In eastern Arizona, a fire doubled to nearly 42 square miles and led officials to warn a community of 300 residents to prepare to evacuate. The blaze on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation was not moving quickly toward the community of Cedar Creek because of sparse vegetation and shifting winds. Governor Doug Ducey declared a state of emergency to free up state funds to help in the fire area. New Mexico is one place where homes were not spared, with about two dozen destroyed last week in the mountains south of Albuquerque. That blaze was showing signs of slowing by Tuesday night, when authorities said it was 61 percent contained. Higher humidity helped crews strengthen fire lines, and evacuees prepared to return home. —AP



MONROVIA, California: Firefighting aircraft drop fire retardant to protect communities that border the wildness in case evening winds change direction, as is common in the area, at the San Gabriel Complex Fire in the Angeles National Forest on June 21, 2016 near Monrovia, California. —AFP

## NIGER'S DIFFA SUFFERS GREATLY UNDER BOKO HARAM VIOLENCE

**DIFFA:** Outside the Diffa grand mosque in Niger's southeast, two soldiers stand at the ready, rifles pointed at the wave of worshippers walking towards them. Unbidden, the men raise their "boubous," the traditional wide-sleeved robes worn across West Africa. They need to show they're not hiding explosives under the tunics.

This is one of the ways that Boko Haram insurgents have changed life in Diffa, the regional capital of a territory of 600,000 people situated uncomfortably close to the border with Nigeria. The attacks by the Nigeria-based Islamists, the swarms of refugees from the violence, and government security measures to combat Boko Haram have combined also to strangle the local economy.

"There are no more customers," said Mamane Noure Abdou, owner of a half-empty

store selling peanuts and drinks. "People are afraid or have fled." "There's no money, no jobs, no fields (to tend), nothing," he added, saying his profits have dropped by a third compared to 2015. In its quest to form a hardline Islamic state, Boko Haram's seven-year insurgency has left at least 20,000 people dead in Nigeria and made more than 2.6 million homeless. Extending the attacks to neighboring countries, the group has prompted a regional military fight back involving troops from Niger, Chad and Cameroon as well as Nigeria.

### State of emergency

Some 2,000 Chadian soldiers currently are set to launch a counter-offensive against the group in the region, in coordination with Nigeria, Niger and Cameroon. In an effort to protect its citizens, Niger has imposed security

measures in the southeast which have further slowed down the country's economy.

In March 2015, the local governor evacuated some 25,000 people living on the nearby islands of Lake Chad, many of whom resettled in Diffa. He also suspended trade in fish and pepper, the region's most important products, and banned motorcycles—the leading local mode of transport—because they had been used by Boko Haram fighters to get around. Then he slapped a curfew on night-time traffic. "We don't do anything anymore," said mechanic Mohamed Ali. "We just sit around."

A year ago, Ali, 22, was the proud owner of a motorcycle repair shop set up in the space next to Abdou's small grocery store. Now the shop has become a "fada", or gathering place, where mats cover the floor, and Ali is unemployed. About 13,000 people in all have lost

their jobs because of the motorbike ban, according to a civil society source.

### 'Lost all activity'

"I hold it against Boko Haram, but the measure wasn't well thought out," said Ali, who "really misses" the engines. On the other hand, the motorcycle ban proved to be good news for Adama Malamari, a onetime motorcycle taxi-driver, who swapped his two-wheeler for a four-door. "We sold the motorcycle and other things and bought our taxi," the 22-year-old said.

Malamari said he makes more money now though his work is more difficult because of the state of the roads, the police roadblocks, and the thousands of inexperienced drivers. Couriers have been hardest hit by the crisis, many simply walking away from the job, said

Sabou Ali, the region's secretary general in charge of couriers.

"There is insecurity on the roads because of Boko Haram," he said. "We have lost all activity in the forbidden zones," such as the islands and regions evacuated by the authorities. "Roads and markets have been closed, traffic has slowed," Sabou Ali added, saying that costs have also risen. It used to cost 400 CFA francs (0.60 euros, 88 US cents) a liter to fuel up a truck on petrol from Nigeria, but now 530 CFA francs.

Pepper, a local specialty, too has been impacted by the violence and security measures, with most of the local farmers now displaced and living on international aid. Buyers who resold the commodity in cities such as Niamey in the west and Zinder in south central Niger meanwhile no longer work. —AFP

## CORRUPTION, POLITICS, MURDER: ANATOMY OF A KENYAN KILLING

### ELECTION SEASON TRIGGERING SPIKES IN CORRUPTION

**NAIROBI:** On a wet Thursday night in early May, a well-known businessman and government critic was found dead in his armored blue Mercedes by a busy road on the outskirts of Nairobi, five bullet holes in his chest, neck and arm. Kenya's long history of state violence meant the murder of Jacob Juma, who was in his mid-forties, was quickly viewed as a political assassination.

His death dominated the country's newspapers as amateur sleuths picked holes in the police narrative of a business deal gone

wrong. Juma was "a scoundrel that bitterness turned into an asset for those fighting corruption," says John Githongo, a renowned anti-corruption campaigner. "He became a fount of confidential treasury documents, information, history and gossip," he says.

Elections trigger spikes in corruption and the country is already getting set for next year's vote: there are regular, sometimes deadly, street protests against an election commission the opposition says is biased; MPs on both sides have been investigated for hate

"He was very poorly dressed but he had a lot of confidence. That confidence alone would make you think that, surely, he was worth your money."

Jirongo housed Juma with his nieces and nephews, paid Juma's college fees and introduced him to the twinned worlds of politics and business. Juma made friends with allies and relatives of then-president Daniel Arap Moi (on whose 1992 election campaign Jirongo worked) and founded his business empire on those first government contracts, re-surfaced

believed his relationship might help him secure control of the Mrima Hill niobium and rare earth mine in Kwale on Kenya's coast.

Instead his license was cancelled. "He refused to cut government figures in on the deal," says one close friend. "That mining deal was the turning point." Juma was left bitter, angry and dangerous. "After that he dedicated himself to doing nothing else but exposing the regime," says the friend.

### 'This was a hit squad'

Juma played a central role in revealing at least two major corruption scandals, including one in which the government has been unable to explain how it spent \$2.75 billion (2.6 billion euros) raised through a 2014 Eurobond issue.

He took his combative persona to Twitter—once using the social media site to accuse Ruto of ordering his death—and feeling corruption had done him out of his biggest-ever business deal, it was corruption he focused on. Githongo and others regard the current government as perhaps the most corrupt in Kenya's history.

Foreign businessmen routinely complain that a 30 percent skimming off the top of contracts has become standard. One foreign executive described the increasing corruption and extortion ahead of next year's election as a "smash and grab" while a prominent Kenyan businessman described it as "a shakedown". "It is very difficult to do business with the Kenya government if you are not willing to pay right from the top to the bottom," says Jirongo.

Allies of Juma have openly accused the state of his murder. "The inspector-general (of police) knows who killed Jacob Juma. This was a hit squad and it is known," opposition leader Raila Odinga said at a memorial service in Nairobi. Ruto denies involvement and has threatened legal action against those who repeat allegations that he was behind the killing.

For Juma's wealthy and influential friends in Kenya's business community, aggrieved at the levels of corruption and eager for an end to a government they feel has betrayed them, his death is a message. "It's a warning to all of us: You stay in the corner we give you or we will deal with you, ruthlessly." —AFP



**BUNGOMA:** A photo taken on May 14, 2016 shows people lowering the coffin of Kenyan businessman Jacob Juma during his funeral in Bungoma County, western Kenya. —AFP

wrong, and opposition politicians cried foul. It was a tricky case, the country's senior detective Muhoro Ndegwa told journalists, with no witnesses and no weapon. He promised his team would do their best, but in the six weeks since his death no arrests have been made.

The arc of Juma's life was unusual at first, and then unique: Kenya's pervasive tribal patronage helped a poor but smart rural kid make the political connections necessary to get rich on ill-gotten government contracts. But after he was cut out of a potentially lucrative mining deal he became a relentless anti-corruption activist and government critic leading many to see politics behind his death.

speech and inciting violence; and graft is accelerating as politicians seek to fund either their campaigns or their retirements. Juma's murder is being seen as the curtain raiser to a potentially violent election season. Diplomats are already muttering about "a repeat of 2007" when more than 1,100 people died in election-related tribal violence.

### Rags to riches, ally to enemy

Juma won a place at a Nairobi polytechnic in 1989 and quickly impressed businessman and politician Cyrus Jirongo, who hails from the same part of the country and became his patron. "You could tell this was somebody who was going to get somewhere," recalls Jirongo.

ing rural dirt roads.

He grew into his wealth, adopting the flashy style of the newly rich with designer suits, smart cars, gaudy property and sparkly watches. Jirongo approved: "Above all, he wanted the world to know he had succeeded, he'd beaten the poverty he'd come from." During this time Juma got to know William Ruto, a fellow hustler but one with big political ambitions.

Accusations that he orchestrated violence in the wake of the 2007 election, and subsequent crimes against humanity charges at the International Criminal Court, did not derail Ruto's career and in 2013 he became deputy president. Juma wasn't a supporter but, friends say,



**BERLIN:** German Chancellor Angela Merkel, right, and Poland's Prime Minister Beata Szydlo attend a news conference after German-Polish government consultations at the chancellery. —AP

## GERMANY WARNS OF NEW RISKS TO EUROPE; URGES DIALOGUE

**BERLIN:** Seventy-five years after the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, which led to the deaths of tens of millions, Germany's foreign minister warned Wednesday that "Europe is at risk of splitting along new divides," while Russia's president drew parallels to the lead-up to the attack and today, saying the West still seeks to isolate his country.

In an op-ed printed in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, Frank-Walter Steinmeier cautioned "peace in Europe cannot be taken for granted, not even today." Referring to Russia's annexation of Crimea, Steinmeier said "unilateral shifting of borders in breach of international law and the failure to respect the territorial integrity of neighboring countries ... take us back to the times from which we believed we had escaped, times that nobody can wish for."

Steinmeier urged all sides to return to dialogue, saying "the leaders of today have the duty to draw the right lessons from our common past." In Moscow, Russian President Vladimir Putin placed a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier by the Kremlin wall and suggested in remarks to the Duma that the Western Allies had paved the way for the invasion by not working more closely with the Soviets.

"Leaders of some Western countries preferred a policy of containment toward the Soviet Union and tried to put it into international isolation," he said. Putin drew parallels to today, saying that Russia has "repeatedly expressed its willingness to talk" about joint responses to international terrorism. "But just like before the start of the WWII we don't see a positive response," Putin said. "Quite on the contrary, NATO is ratcheting up its aggressive rhetoric."

Though the Soviet Union and Hitler's Germany had signed a non-aggression pact in 1939, which led to the division of Poland between the two nations, the Nazis broke that with the June 22, 1941, invasion. Steinmeier went out of his way to empha-

size Germany's responsibility, calling the invasion part of Adolf Hitler's "crazy and megalomaniacal" attempt "to subjugate and exterminate the people of the Soviet Union." "In all the current debates on Europe's peaceful order, we must never forget that the aggression, the war of destruction, the ideology of Slavic subhumans, descended upon the peoples of the Soviet Union from Europe, from the West, from Hitler's Germany," Steinmeier said.

### Merkel backs greater role

Meanwhile, Chancellor Angela Merkel's cabinet agreed yesterday to expand the role of the German navy in the Mediterranean Sea to include efforts to stop arms headed to Islamic State militants in Libya, government sources said. The German decision comes days after the European Union gave its naval force the authority to search suspicious vessels as part of its five-ship "Sophia" mission, which is also seeking to break up gangs smuggling migrants to Europe.

Parliament is expected to approve the move before it adjourns for the summer at the end of June, the sources said. The mandate also covers work to help Libya build up a coastal patrol and navy. Germany has thus far participated in the EU mission with a logistics ship, and about 950 German soldiers have helped rescue about 15,000 people at sea since May 2015, according to the German military.

Once approved by parliament, Wednesday's decision means German ships will be able to stop, search and seize larger vessels used by gangs transporting migrants, and also take suspects into custody, the sources said. In cases of suspected arms smuggling, they will also be able to search ships transiting to and from Libya, they added. Merkel often underscores the need to improve conditions in countries like Libya to help end the current migrant crisis. —Agencies

## 'OPERATION CROISSANT': FRENCH LOVE SEEKS TO KEEP UK IN EU

**LONDON:** Volunteers from Paris travelled to London Wednesday to hand out love letters from France aiming to persuade Britons to stay in the EU on the eve of a knife-edge referendum. Standing outside one of London's busiest commuter rail stations, around 15 volunteers from "Operation Croissant" handed out postcards with handwritten messages from French

nationalists. "Because what would you do without French kisses?" read one.

Organizers had hoped to distribute freshly-baked croissants with the roughly 500 postcards sending greetings from the city of love ahead of Thursday's European Union membership vote. But their plans were scuppered by British police, who cited laws banning campaigners

from providing food to voters in the run-up to an election because it could corrupt the result. Organizer Rosa Rankin-Gee said they wanted to make a gesture which contrasted with the often bad-tempered main debate, in which Prime Minister David Cameron is leading the push to stay in. "We're all aware of how vitriolic the campaign has been and we wanted to do something happy, to make people smile," said the 29-year-old, who lives between Paris and Britain.

On the postcards, people write about "their love for our eccentricity or our music" or about their families' Anglo-French connections, she said. Wearing "Operation Croissant" T-shirts, volunteers handed out the messages in the morning rush hour outside King's Cross station. Some walked on without taking the postcards while others were intrigued by the interest that their French neighbours were taking in the vote.

Kathryn Sygrove, 50, received a postcard which read: "Please don't leave us alone with the Eurovision Song Contest." "I've already made my mind up," she said. "I'm on the side of the croissant." Amy Ferguson, 33, who actually works for a company making croissants, said she too had already decided to vote in, but added: "I think it's nice that they have sent us this. I'm touched."

After a long and often bitter campaign, opinion polls indicate that the race is extremely close. The "Remain" camp is currently on 51 percent and "Leave" is on 49 percent, according to a poll of polls by the What UK Thinks project which excludes undecided voters. Rankin-Gee said the fresh croissants which volunteers had brought with them on the Eurostar train from Paris would now be given to a homeless shelter, with no political message attached. —AFP



**LONDON:** Pro-remain campaigners from "Operation Croissant", a French pro-EU group, hand out postcards written by Parisians urging people in the UK to vote to remain in the EU, to commuters at Kings Cross Station. —AFP

## SPAIN MINISTER FACING CALLS TO RESIGN OVER CONVO LEAK

**MADRID:** Spain's interior minister faced calls to resign yesterday over a conversation leaked four days before elections in which he and an anti-fraud official appear to discuss ways to incriminate his political rivals.

In the conversation published by online left-wing daily Publico, Jorge Fernandez Diaz and the head of Catalonia's anti-fraud office go through potential leads or probes that could be launched against pro-independence politicians of this northeastern region, or their relatives. With general elections looming on Sunday, the allegations unleashed a storm. Several rivals of Fernandez Diaz's conservative Popular Party (PP) demanded he quit.

"We have an interior minister, who should be protecting us all, apparently using his post to investigate political rivals," Pablo Iglesias, head of the anti-austerity Podemos party, told TVE television. "I think this should trigger an immediate resignation." Fernandez Diaz immediately slammed the leak as a "conspiracy." But he acknowledged that the meeting, which dates back to 2014, had taken place.

"I remember having had this meeting, but as for the content of these conversations, I remember the general gist, which was to meet a magistrate that

heads up the anti-fraud office of the regional government, whose mission is to fight fraud and corruption," he told Spanish radio. "To claim that an interior minister is conspiring against members of Catalonia's government is surreal," he said, adding police had been tasked to investigate exactly how the conversation was recorded and leaked.

Madrid and Catalonia's separatist politicians have long been at odds over a pro-independence drive in the wealthy Spanish region. During the conversation, Daniel de Alfonso, the anti-fraud official, allegedly lays out several leads for possible offences committed by various pro-independence politicians or their relatives, but adds they are all "weak."

But Fernandez Diaz allegedly insists that some can still inflict "a lot of harm politically". The revelations come just before Sunday's elections, in which the PP is expected to come first, though without the absolute majority it needs. The elections are the second in six months, after polls in December resulted in a hung parliament with the arrival of Podemos and centre-right Ciudadanos, another upstart, on the scene. Parties subsequently failed to agree on a coalition government, forcing fresh elections. —AFP

## INDIA'S FEMALE FIGHTER PILOTS PAVE WAY FOR MORE WOMEN IN COMBAT

**NEW DELHI:** The Indian Air Force (IAF) has recruited its first female fighter pilots, paving the way for more women to be given combat roles as one of the world's biggest military forces takes steps towards greater gender parity. Flying Officers Mohana Singh, Bhawana Kanth and Avani Chaturvedi received their wings on Saturday when they were commissioned into the IAF at a graduation ceremony in the southern city of Hyderabad.

"It is a golden day as for the first time these women are going to join the fighter pilots," Indian Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar said at the ceremony. "This will inspire more women to take up

the most challenging task in the armed forces. Our long-term objective is to work towards gender parity in the armed forces."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi also congratulated the women, saying it was "a matter of immense pride and joy" to have the first female fighter pilots. "More power to them," he tweeted. Only a handful of countries such as Britain, the United States, Israel and neighboring Pakistan, have allowed women into the cockpits of fighter jets. India had until now kept women out of that role, and away from frontline warships and ground combat, citing concerns over their vulnerability if captured and their

physical and mental ability to handle the stress of such deployments.

**Opportunities for women**

The country's defense forces began recruiting women to non-medical positions in 1992, yet only 2.5 percent of its more than 1 million personnel are women - most of them administrators, intelligence officers, doctors, nurses or dentists. In recent years, Indian courts have pushed the military to widen opportunities for women, by giving them permanent commissions, for example, instead of limiting them to five-year terms.

Modi's government announced last

year it would bring women into fighting roles and approved IAF plans for women pilots to fly warplanes from June 2017 on a three-year experimental basis. Indian President Pranab Mukherjee in February went a step further announcing the country would induct women in all fighter streams of the armed forces in the future. Defense Minister Parrikar confirmed plans to extend combat roles for women in the army and navy, adding it would take time.

"There are still a lot of technical and administrative difficulties in several areas in taking more women. We need to create a lot of infrastructure for women, especially in air force and navy

wings," he told reporters at the event. "Yet, we will work towards creating more opportunities for them."

The three women, who are in their early twenties, will undergo training on Hawk advanced jets for a year, before they fly supersonic warplanes. The new female fighter pilots told reporters they were excited about the opportunity, adding that they expected to be treated on a par with their male counterparts. "I always wanted to be a fighter pilot, but when we joined the option was not there," Kanth said. "So when it came to us in December 2015, I knew I was going to grab it with both my hands." —Reuters



**KATHMANDU:** Nepalese relatives of 12 victims of a suicide bomb attack react as they pay their last respects alongside the coffins of those killed. —AFP

## 'DEVASTATED' NEPALESE RECEIVE THE BODIES OF KABUL VICTIMS

**KATHMANDU:** Dozens of people, many in tears, thronged Kathmandu's airport yesterday to receive the bodies of 12 Nepali guards killed in a suicide bomb attack in Kabul this week. The victims were among 14 security guards who were killed Monday in a Taliban suicide blast targeting their bus as they headed to work at the Canadian embassy in Kabul.

Afghan authorities had earlier said that all 14 were Nepali nationals, before Kathmandu clarified that 12 of the victims belonged to Nepal. Relatives and friends broke down in tears as they approached the pink-and-white coffins, tagged with the names of the dead. "Our family is devastated," said Sarajan Adhikari, whose brother-in-law Madhusudhan Koirala was killed in the attack.

The 45-year-old's death was the latest tragedy to hit the family. The guard lost two children in last year's massive earthquake that killed nearly 9,000 people in the Himalayan nation. "My sister had told him not to go (back) the last time he came home. It was only the compulsion to earn that made him return," Adhikari told AFP.

Nepal's Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli offered a floral tribute to the victims as he attempted to console distraught family

members, many of whom had camped out for hours at the airport. "The whole country is mourning the death of innocent Nepalese killed in this cowardly attack," Oli told reporters after placing marigold garlands on each coffin.

The aircraft, chartered by the Nepal government, also brought back 24 other Nepalese who worked as guards for Sabre International, the same company that employed the victims. "It could have been me," said former Nepal army soldier Shyam Bahadur Tamang, 47, who began working in Afghanistan in 2014. "There is no security for us... there are many other Nepalese who are eager to quit and return home," Tamang told AFP.

Authorities said around 3,300 Nepalese were currently working in Afghanistan as security guards but accurate figures for the total number employed across the world are hard to come by. Impoverished Nepal has long served as a supplier of security forces to the world. A number of them are former soldiers with the Gurkha brigades of the Indian and British army's while others are retired Nepal army or police personnel. Four Nepali guards were killed in a 2011 attack on a UN compound in the northern Afghan city of Mazar-i-Sharif in 2011. —AFP

## POPULAR PAKISTANI SUFI SINGER SHOT DEAD IN 'ACT OF TERROR'

MYSTICAL SECT OF ISLAM VIEWED AS HERETICAL

**KARACHI:** One of Pakistan's best known Sufi musicians was shot dead by unknown assailants riding a motorcycle in Karachi on Wednesday, triggering an outpouring of grief over what police described as an "act of terror".

Amjad Sabri, aged around 45, was travelling by car from his home in the city's eastern Korangi area to a television studio, when a motorcycle pulled up alongside the vehicle and the attackers opened fire, Farooq Sanjarani, a police officer told AFP. Sabri was hit by five bullets and was declared dead at Abbasi Shaheed Hospital while a companion, named as a relative, Saleem Sabri, was in critical condition, a hospital source added.

"It was a targeted killing and an act of terrorism," Muqaddas Haider, a senior police officer said, without naming possible suspects. Grisly mobile phone footage of the scene of the crime shot by an onlooker showed the singer's head slumped on his right shoulder and a pool of blood on the ground by the driver's side where he sat.

**Targeted sect**

Sabri was a 'Qawwal', or singer of 'Qawwali', which is a traditional form of Islamic devotional music that is popular across South Asia with roots tracing back to the 13th century. The music is closely associated with Sufism, a mystical sect of Islam that is viewed as heretical by hardline groups such as the Taliban.

The Taliban and other Islamist groups have carried out major attacks on Sufi mosques and shrines in recent years, including the 2010 bombing of the Data Darbar shrine in Lahore that killed more than 40 people. Sabri, the son of another leg-

endary Qawwali singer, Ghulam Farid Sabri who died in 1994, was a fixture on national television and regularly performed on a morning show during the ongoing holy Muslim month of Ramadan.

In May 2014 he was asked by a court to respond to blasphemy charges following the broadcast of a controversial song-and-dance routine that was set to a Qawwali piece about the wedding of the Prophet Mohammed's daughter to his cousin.

**'Mission of love'**

His killing was met with shock and condemnation. Neighbors congregated outside the singer's home to offer condolences to his

relatives, while TV channels broadcast recordings of his music in tribute. "Totally shocked to hear the news of @AmjadSabri. May Allah bless him with Jannah (heaven) for he praised Him & His Prophet beautifully all his life," tweeted Ayaz Sadiq, the speaker of Pakistan's parliament.

"Shocked and saddened by news of the killing of Amjad Sabri, not just a crime but an attack on our culture and heritage," added Mustafa Qadri, a human rights researcher at Amnesty International. While the motive behind the killing was not immediately clear, Ariebe Azhar, another popular Sufi singer, told AFP he believed Sabri may have been targeted because

of his religious views.

"Our own dear Amjad Sabri, son of Ghulam Farid Sabri and nephew of Maqbool Sabri, the renowned Sabri brothers, was a true lover of God, life and all that's good," he said. "His mission of love has tragically been cut short by those who spread hate in the world, and is a great loss for all the divided people of our country," he added.

Karachi, a city of 20 million and Pakistan's economic hub, is frequently hit by religious, political and ethnic violence. Paramilitary forces began a sweeping crackdown on militants in the city in 2013, which has led to a substantial drop in overall levels of violence. —AFP



**KARACHI:** Pakistani investigators and journalists gather around the blood-stained car of famous Sufi singer Amjad Sabri after an attack in Karachi, Pakistan, yesterday. —AP

## BANGLADESH RIVER EATS UP HOMES, TRAPPING VILLAGERS

**KURIGRAM:** Piyara Begum once had a happy life in Garuhara village by the Brahmaputra River in northern Bangladesh, but worsening erosion of the river banks has displaced her family seven times. Now Piyara, 30, has taken shelter in Panchgachi village, 8 kilometers away in the same sub-district of Kurigram Sadar. "I am always concerned about where Piyara and her three children are living, and how she manages her family expenses, as she has lost everything due to erosion," said her uncle, Abdul Majid, who still lives in Garuhara village. The loss of Piyara's home is taking a toll on her mental and physical health, he added.

Riverbank erosion is a common problem along the mighty Brahmaputra during the monsoon, but scientists say climate change is making the phenomenon worse by contributing to higher levels of flooding and siltation. According to villagers in Garuhara, about 200 families have been displaced by erosion there in the last two years.

Majid fears that if the trend continues, the whole of the village will go underwater, rendering about 1,000 families homeless. But some of those who want to escape that prospect cannot - because they are unable to turn their assets into the cash they need to pay for their move. Abdul Malek, 45, a farmer in Garuhara, had 0.4 acres of agricultural land on the bank of the Brahmaputra, but the river washed away half his plot during the monsoon last year. "My family had no problem in the past as we cultivated crops on the land to meet our food demand. But now we are facing trouble," he said. Malek and his family are planning to migrate to another part of the country after selling their homestead, but they cannot find a buyer because the property is at high risk of erosion. Other families in Garuhara village who also want to sell up and leave are trapped there for the same reason.

**Erosion rates rising**

The Brahmaputra is a transboundary river, originating in southwestern Tibet, flowing through the Himalayas, India's Assam State and Bangladesh, and out into the Bay of Bengal. Climate change has contributed to rapid siltation of the river in recent years, which is intensifying bank erosion during the monsoon, Bangladesh Water Resources

Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

A 2014 study from the International Union for Conservation of Nature showed that the flow of the Brahmaputra is influenced strongly by the melting of snow and ice upstream, mainly in the eastern Himalaya mountains. This century, as temperatures rise, the river is likely to see an overall increase in flows throughout the year, driven by more rainfall, higher snow melt rates and expanded run-off areas, the study said.

Every year, the river carries silt from the Himalayas and deposits it downstream in Bangladesh, creating myriad islands known as chars. When floods occur upstream on the Brahmaputra, amid more intense bursts of heavy rainfall linked to climate change, the silted-up river has less capacity to carry the huge volume of water, accelerating bank erosion.

Maminul Haque Sarker of the Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS), a Dhaka-based think tank, said the erosion rate has increased at some points of the river in Kurigram, Gaibandha, Jamalpur and Sirajganj districts. A 2015 CEGIS study put the annual rate of erosion along the Brahmaputra at around 2,000 hectares in recent years. Bangladesh's major rivers combined consume several thousand hectares of floodplain annually, destroying homes and infrastructure and leaving people landless and homeless.

**'Silent cancer'**

A 2013 study by the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit at the University of Dhaka and the UK-based Sussex Centre for Migration Research estimated that riverbank erosion displaces 50,000 to 200,000 people in Bangladesh every year. Those displaced by erosion become isolated from their families and wider social networks, and most have no scope to return to their roots.

Majid from Garuhara village said many of his neighbors and relatives have already left for other parts of the country and do not see each other even once a year. Minister Mahmud said riverbank erosion works like a silent cancer and can be more devastating than storms or floods because it takes everything people own, including their land. —Reuters

## NEPAL'S QUAKE WIDOWS STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE

**KATHMANDU:** Rani Maya Shrestha was working on a neighbor's potato farm when the first of Nepal's two massive earthquakes struck last year. She rushed home to find her husband buried in the ruins of their house northeast of the capital Kathmandu. "I should have died with him," said Shrestha inside the tin hovel that has been her home for the last year. "Without my husband, my life has become meaningless."

The frail looking 45-year-old woman has no documents to prove her rights to her husband's property in the ancient town of Sankhu. She survives on around 75 cents a day from knitting mufflers and woollen caps. Twin quakes in April and May 2015 killed some 9,000 people in the Himalayan nation, leaving many women to fend for themselves in a country where widows face hostility, abuse, discrimination and even enslavement.

Mina Adhikari says her life was shattered after she lost her school teacher husband in the disaster. She is now struggling to bring up their two sons alone. "It drastically changed the way I am

treated by society. Society does not accept me as one of them," the 33-year-old said by phone from the village of Gairigaon close to the 7.8 magnitude quake's epicenter in west Nepal.

Women for Human Rights (WHR), a Nepali organisation which campaigns for widows' rights, said women who had lost their husbands in the disaster faced a multitude of problems. "There is superstition and stigmatization. Widows have no status," said WHR's chief Lily Thapa ahead of International Widows' Day today.

She said many widows lacked documents to claim their dead husband's property or faced difficulties getting rebuilding grants because their marriage was not registered, as is common in Nepal. Some widows have also been abandoned when family members moved to new locations following the disaster, she added.

Although Nepal has taken major steps to empower women since the end of its decade-long civil war in 2006, widowhood remains sur-

rounded by taboos in this patriarchal society. Like other widows, Adhikari said she was no longer allowed to attend religious ceremonies or other celebrations because women who have lost their husbands are seen as inauspicious. In some places, widows are considered so unlucky that people steer clear of them in the street.

**Destitution and enslavement**

Nepal has around half a million widows. Many lost their husbands during the war or to HIV. Others were widowed when their husbands died in accidents while working overseas as migrant laborers. Another factor is child marriage, with girls in Nepal often married off as teenagers to much older men.

When their husbands die many widows are left destitute. If they remain with their in-laws they may be confined to the house and treated like servants, activists say. In some cases the family may even blame the widow for her husband's death. The Loomba Foundation, a widows' rights charity, said widows could face hostility because it was sometimes believed their husbands had died as punishment for immoral acts or crimes their wives had committed in a previous life.

"The younger the age of the husbands when they died, the greater the severity of the crime the widows (are believed to have) committed in the past life," the foundation said in a global report on widows last year. The charity says widows in Nepal are also regularly accused of killing their husbands deliberately or through neglect - including by passing on HIV. Traditionally, widows are required to shun merriment. They are banned from wearing red clothes and most jewelry. Many wear only white. Often forced into virtual seclusion, they are not supposed to remarry or move out of their in-laws' homes, which leaves many open to exploitation.

Most widows in Nepal are illiterate and two thirds are under 35, compounding the risks of abuse, activists say. In 2008, in recognition of the large number of war widows and popular aversion to widow remarriage, the government put forward a scheme to pay men a 50,000 rupee (\$460) incentive to marry widows. But widows protested, saying the proposal was open to abuse by traffickers and would turn them into commodities. Nepal's Supreme Court ordered the government to ditch the initiative. —Reuters



**HERAT:** A burqa-clad Afghan woman buys bread at a shop during the Islamic month of Ramadan in Herat on June 21, 2016. Throughout the month, devout Muslims must abstain from food and drink from dawn until sunset when they break the fast with the Iftar meal. —AFP

## DEBRIS FOUND IN AUSTRALIA RULED OUT AS FROM MH370

**SYDNEY:** A piece of debris that washed up on an island off Australia's south coast was not from missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370, officials said yesterday as they confirmed there are no plans to extend the underwater search for the plane. The item was found earlier this month among seaweed and driftwood and resembled part of a plane, with the words "Caution No Step" visible, according to footage on Australia's Channel Seven.

The Australian Transport Safety

Bureau (ATSB), which is coordinating the search, examined the debris and dismissed it as being from the jet that vanished in March 2014 with 239 people on board. "Information received from the manufacturer indicates the item is not consistent with the manufacturing specifications of a Boeing commercial aircraft," the bureau said in a statement.

Two other pieces of debris found around the same time on the Madagascan island of Nosy Boraha are still being examined. The fate of the

plane, presumed to have crashed at sea while travelling from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing, remains a mystery. Five pieces of debris believed to have come from the aircraft have so far been discovered thousands of kilometers from the current search zone far off the west Australian coast, presumed to have drifted there. Wild weather continues to hamper the search operation's progress to find the plane's crash zone, with one of three ships involved sustaining damage to a tow cable. So far 105,000

square kilometers of the designated 120,000-square-kilometre seafloor search zone has been covered without success. If nothing turns up once the area is fully scoured, expected by August, the search will be abandoned, Australia, Malaysia and China—the countries that most of the passengers came from—have jointly said.

Officials from the three countries met in Malaysia this week to further discuss the issue, but the talks wrapped up with no announcements. As the meeting

began on Monday, an international network of MH370 next-of-kin released a statement repeating its call for the search to be extended. But the ATSB confirmed that consistent with the undertaking made last year, only the agreed 120,000 square kilometers would be searched. "In the absence of credible new information that leads to the identification of a specific location of the aircraft, governments have agreed that there will be no further expansion of the search area," the bureau said. —AFP

## NORTH KOREA MAKES PROGRESS WITH TWO MIDRANGE MISSILES

### BALLISTIC MISSILES AIMING TO REACH US BASES

**SEOUL:** North Korea took a significant step yesterday in the development of a powerful ballistic missile intended to reach US bases in the Pacific, launching one of the weapons about 1,000 kilometers high after five failed attempts in recent months.

The North's suspected Musudan tests worry Washington and its allies, Tokyo and Seoul, because the missile's potential 3,500-kilometer range puts much of Asia and the Pacific, including US military bases there, within

banned missile technology.

A statement from South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said a suspected first Musudan launch from the east coast city of Wonsan failed. It didn't elaborate, but Japan's Defense Ministry said the missile fragmented and pieces fell into waters off the Korean Peninsula's east coast. Later yesterday, the South's military said the North fired another suspected Musudan, which flew about 400 kilometers. Seoul didn't immediately classify this launch as either

pose a threat to North America, it said. In April, North Korea attempted unsuccessfully to launch three suspected Musudan missiles, but all exploded midair or crashed, according to South Korean defense officials. Earlier this month, North Korea had another suspected Musudan failure, South Korean officials said.

Before April's launches, North Korea had never flight-tested a Musudan missile, although one was displayed during a military parade in 2010 in Pyongyang. The

#### Pushing hard

The string of recent launch attempts shows the North is pushing hard to upgrade its missile capability in defiance of US-led international pressure. The North was slapped with the strongest UN sanctions in two decades after its nuclear test and long-range rocket launch earlier this year.

"These provocations only serve to increase the international community's resolve to counter (North Korea's) prohibited activities, including through implementing existing UN Security Council sanctions," State Department spokesman John Kirby said. "We intend to raise our concerns at the UN to bolster international resolve in holding (North Korea) accountable for these provocative actions."

South Korea's Unification Ministry called the launches a "clear provocation." In Tokyo, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was also critical, saying, "We find it utterly unforgivable." Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said that Beijing didn't consider the missile launches to be an act of defiance against China, North Korea's long-time ally with whom its relations have cooled substantially in recent years.

"To say such an act taken by North Korea shows disapproval against China is reading too much into it," Hua said at a press briefing. North Korea has recently claimed a series of breakthroughs in its push to build a long-range nuclear missile that can strike the American mainland. But South Korean officials have said the North doesn't yet possess such a weapon.

The North, however, has already deployed a variety of missiles that can reach most targets in South Korea and Japan, including American military bases in the countries. The Korean Peninsula remains in a technical state of war because the 1950-53 Korean War ended with an armistice, not a peace treaty. About 28,500 US soldiers are stationed in South Korea to deter possible aggression from North Korea; tens of thousands more are stationed in Japan. —AP



**PAJU:** South Korean army soldiers prepare to fire 105mm howitzers during an exercise in Paju, South Korea, near the border with North Korea yesterday. —AFP

reach. Japanese Defense Minister Gen Nakatani said the most recent launch demonstrated a "certain level of capability," and could lead to a further strengthening of North Korea's ballistic missile capabilities that can cover Japanese territory.

Each new test - apparently linked to a command from North Korean leader Kim Jong Un - likely provides valuable insights to the North's scientists and military officials as they push toward their goal of a nuclear and missile program that can threaten the US mainland. Pyongyang earlier this year conducted a nuclear test, its fourth, and launched a long-range rocket that outsiders say was a cover for a test of

a success or failure.

#### Flying high

Japan's Defense Ministry said that its radar analysis found that the missile reached an altitude exceeding 1,000 kilometers, which suggests it was a Musudan missile. "We have to see it as a success," Lee Choon Geun, an analyst at South Korea's state-funded Science and Technology Policy Institute, said of the second launch. "No other (previous) missiles fired by North Korea have ever flown that high."

The US Strategic Command in Hawaii said its systems detected and tracked two suspected North Korean Musudan missiles that fell into the Sea of Japan. They didn't

launches appear to stem from Kim Jong Un's order in March for more nuclear and ballistic missile tests. The order was an apparent response to springtime US-South Korean military drills, which North Korea views as an invasion rehearsal.

Since the end of those military drills, Pyongyang has repeatedly called for the resumption of talks with Seoul, even as it pursues new missile development, but the South has rejected the overtures. Seoul wants the North to first take steps toward nuclear disarmament. Pyongyang says its rivals must negotiate with it as an established nuclear power, something Washington and Seoul refuse to do.

## JAPAN'S ELECTION CAMPAIGN BEGINS

**TOKYO:** Japan's parliamentary election campaign kicked off yesterday as Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's ruling party seeks a mandate for his economic policies amid opposition criticism that the lives of the ordinary people are not improving. As more than 380 candidates took to the streets across the nation, pleading for votes from vans outside train stations and shopping arcades, Abe opened the campaign with a pledge to proceed with his

"Abenomics" plan to revive the economy and pull the country out of a slump.

"The biggest topic of this election is economic policies," Abe told a crowd in Kumamoto, a southern city struck by deadly earthquakes in April. "This is an election in which we decide whether to return to that dark doldrums or not." Up for grabs in the July 10 vote are 121 seats, or half of the seats in Parliament's less powerful upper house.

The pro-business ruling party is hoping for a show of support for Abe's economic program, while the opposition is criticizing his efforts to have Japan take a bigger global security role and has warned of his party's ultimate goal of wanting to rewrite Japan's pacifist constitution to reflect the new security policy. "We will stop the reckless Abe politics and change its course," Katsuya Okada, head of the main opposition Democratic Party, said in a speech in Kofu in central Japan. "We will bring in a new wind into Japanese politics."

It is the first nationwide election since the voting age was lowered to 18 from 20, a step aimed at encouraging younger generations to vote. Old-style loyalties are generally crucial in Japanese elections, so the addition of 2 million younger voters - about 2 percent of the total voter population if they all turn out - will be closely watched, although campaign platforms largely catering to Japan's aging population are turning away young voters and experts say the impact of the expanded voting age will be minimal.

Opposition groups want to keep the ruling bloc from gaining ground in the upper house, where they have a majority but are short of the two-thirds mark. Abe's ruling coalition holds a two-thirds majority in the more powerful lower house, - the benchmark needed for approval in both houses to hold a national referendum on changing the constitution. The splintered opposition sorely disappointed the public over what was widely seen as its fumbling response to the 2011 quake, tsunami and nuclear disaster in northeastern Japan when it was in power. —AP



**TOKYO:** Eiko Imai, singer and candidate for House of Councilors for the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, top in orange shirts, yells in unison as she kicks off her election campaign. — AP



This photo taken on June 16, 2016 shows a crew member of a fishing vessel sitting at the bow, anchored at the mouth of the South China Sea off the town of Infanta in Pangasinan province, as they prepare for a fishing expedition to Scarborough Shoal. —AFP

## FILIPINO FISHERMEN PLACE HOPES ON CHINA TRIBUNAL

**INFANTA:** Jonathan Almandrez was chased away from the rich fishing grounds of a South China Sea lagoon by a Chinese patrol—something he hopes will stop happening if the Philippines wins an international legal case against Beijing. The incident at Scarborough Shoal, a necklace of reefs and rocks that Filipino fishermen say hosts some of the world's most abundant marine life, is part of a long-running territorial row that sits at the heart of a UN backed tribunal expected to rule in the coming weeks.

"I was angry at their gall to shoo us away when we were clearly inside Philippine territory," said the 30-year-old, who used a pseudonym as he did not want to be identified for fear of potential Chinese repercussions. Almandrez—who provided mobile phone footage of the encounter to AFP—said for two hours on June 7, Chinese coast guard patrol boats circled a wooden outrigger carrying 10 Filipino fishermen.

The patrol boats got within about two meters (six feet) of the vessel, which had been fishing the reefs just outside the shoal before daylight betrayed them to the Chinese. "Transfer to another area! No fishing inside," the Chinese patrol personnel shouted in English, according to Almandrez. "You go (back) to China because this is the property of the Philippines," Almandrez recalled shouting back.

The Filipino crew eventually left when a much larger Chinese vessel began to approach and they feared it would fire water cannon. Video footage shows two patrol boats flying Chinese flags and with the English words "CHINA COAST GUARD" on the side.

#### China takes control

Local fishermen say the shoal, 230 kilometers off the main Philippine island of Luzon, has been their hunting ground for generations. It is 650 kilometers from Hainan island, the nearest major Chinese landmass, but falls within the ill-defined "nine-dash line" that marks the extent of Beijing's claim to control of nearly all of the South China Sea.

The reefs and shallow waters mean one fisherman can easily spear 200 kilograms of fish in just over an hour, according to Almandrez and others from Infanta, one of the main Scarborough Shoal fishing towns on Luzon. It also provides vital shelter for stranded fishermen during storms. China took effective control of the shoal in 2012, following a brief encounter with the Philippine Navy's flagship and Filipino coast guards.

Since then, non-Chinese fishing boats approaching the lagoon mouth have routinely been given an ear-splitting horn blast from a ship stationed inside, and

those who refuse to leave run the risk of being hosed down or even rammed, according to Filipino fishermen.

"The water spray was so strong it destroyed one of our styrofoams," Felix Lavezares, 36, told AFP at Infanta, recalling an early May water-cannon attack at the lagoon mouth that split an ice box used to store their catch.

An expedition to the shoal costs around 90,000 pesos (nearly \$2,000) per boat, including fuel, supplies and crew salaries—money the boat's owners cannot make back if they are forced to hightail it home with an empty hold. The Chinese at times also cut anchor cables, putting Filipino boats at risk of running aground, according to some of the Filipino fishermen at Infanta and Masinloc, another fishing town.

#### 'Intrinsic territory'

China claims it has sovereign rights to nearly all of the South China Sea, even waters approaching the coasts of its Asian neighbors. When asked about incidents at the shoal, foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying repeated China's long-standing position. "We have said that Scarborough Shoal is China's intrinsic territory. The Chinese coast guard vessels' law enforcement activities in China's sovereign territorial waters are legitimate and beyond reproach," Hua told reporters in Beijing on Tuesday.

The competing territorial claims have for decades made the South China Sea a potential source of regional conflict, and tensions have risen sharply in recent years as China has sought to expand its presence in the disputed areas. Aside from taking control of Scarborough Shoal, it has undertaken unprecedented land-reclamation works in the Spratly Islands, one of the sea's main archipelagos that are also claimed by the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Taiwan.

Critics of China fear the artificial islands could be put to military use, and to establish effective sea and air control over some of the world's most important shipping routes and waters that are believed to sit atop significant oil and gas deposits. The Philippines, the most vocal critic, has responded by lodging a case with the Permanent Court of Arbitration, a UN-backed tribunal at The Hague, asking it to rule that China's claims to most of the sea violate international law.

Although China is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, it has vowed to ignore the ruling and accused the Philippines of stirring tensions with its legal challenge. The Philippines hopes a favorable verdict will, at minimum, help build global diplomatic pressure on China. But regardless of the outcome, China looks unlikely to let Philippine fishermen return to Scarborough Shoal. —AFP

## 29 FILIPINAS SAVED FROM TRAFFICKING IN MALAYSIA

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Malaysian police have rescued 29 Filipinas who had been trafficked into work in bars, the Philippine embassy in Kuala Lumpur said yesterday. The women were rescued from two bars in the town of Bintulu in the Malaysian state of Sarawak on June 9 after the embassy brought reports of trafficked women to Malaysian police, a statement by the embassy said.

Also arrested during the raid were three Filipinos who served as agents and caretakers of the women, it said. It gave no further details on the case of the 29

women. But it said some individuals and agencies were allegedly offering work in Malaysia to people who enter as tourists, promising to convert them to employment visas in exchange for payment.

"The embassy reminds Filipinos to be vigilant and not to deal with unlicensed individuals or purported placement agencies, especially online, as they could end up being trafficked," it said. Malaysia's relatively developed economy is a magnet for migrants—many of them illegal—from around Southeast Asia, including large numbers of Filipinos. —AFP

## IN CAIRO, HEAT AND LONG DAYS TEST THE FAITHFUL

**CAIRO:** Pushing his cart through the teeming Egyptian capital, 71-year-old Cairo street sweeper Abdallah Mohamed says nothing can stop him from fasting during Ramadan. Not the stifling heat pushing temperatures above 50 degrees Celsius (122 degrees Fahrenheit). Not even the long days of this year's Muslim fasting month, which is coinciding with the summer solstice. "He who is used to fasting will fast even in the middle of a fire," Mohamed says as the sun beats down. "But he who is not used to fasting will not fast no matter where he is." More than a billion people around the world are marking Ramadan this month, when Muslim faithful abstain from eating and drinking from dawn to dusk.

Determined by the lunar hijri calendar, which has 11 days fewer than the solar Gregorian calendar, Ramadan shifts back every year. The last time the holy month began in early June was in 1983. Mohamed wakes and eats around 3:00 am, before his daily two-hour commute from the southern town of Dahshur to Cairo, where he earns 25 Egyptian pounds (\$2.80) a day cleaning the streets. He works until around 2:00 pm, then heads home and sleeps for a few hours before breaking his fast once the sun sets.

### 16-hour fast

Sixteen hours after he last ate or drank, Mohamed takes a sip of hot soup, then some food, tea and finally water. "Many people are not able to fast. They did not get used to these things, to getting hungry," he says. Across the street from where Mohamed is working, 37-year-old cook Fathy stands before a long grill with flaming charcoal, smoke billowing in his face as he turns cooking chickens. During the days of Ramadan, Fathy packs his barbecued meat, rice, vegetables and salads to go, even for those who are not observing the fast. "A customer tells me he will eat here? No," Fathy says. "Everyone here is fasting. The young kids are fasting." Fathy's staff arrive at 8:30 am to begin preparing the food. They start grilling the meat around noon, around seven hours before the traditional evening meal to break the

Ramadan fast, known as iftar.

When sundown comes, they must first tend to customers before taking their own meals. "The most important thing is that there are tables here and people are breaking their fast," Fathy says. Ramadan is a busy time for restaurant workers like Fathy, but for others the fasting month is quiet. "During the daytime, workers reach their limit, unable to move after one or two hours of work," says 58-year-old Reda Mohammedeen, a manager at an auto repair shop. "That is the maximum effort that they can muster."

### 'Can't change obligations'

But Mohammedeen says he doesn't mind as customers "themselves do not go out in Ramadan especially during the daytime... things are very quiet." Pharmacist Mohamed Ibrahim says he has been busy this year however, with the long fasting days leading more people to seek medical assistance. Many come to his shop in Cairo's Sayeda Zeinab district with low blood pressure, headaches and dizziness. "Everyday I inject painkillers that do not break the fast to struggling customers of all ages," Ibrahim says.

Egyptians are not alone, with Muslims across the northern hemisphere having to cope with this year's long Ramadan hours. In Saudi Arabia, Islam's spiritual home, Saad Al-Rayes says the long days and searing temperatures are proving difficult. "The heat is definitely intense this year, on top of the length of the fasting period which is over 16 hours," the 45-year-old Riyadh resident says as he heads to the mosque.

But Rayes says he hasn't altered his Ramadan routine. "We have to deal with this weather and we can't change our daily obligations." Nasr Abu Zaid, 25, worries about those having to toil outdoors, even though Saudi authorities have banned work in the sun between 10:00 am and 3:00 pm. "Ramadan this year came at the height of summer and that makes it hard for many people. The most affected are those who work outside and in the construction industry; it's important to be kind to them." — AFP



**CAIRO:** Egyptian cook Fathy grills chicken outside a restaurant in the Egyptian capital Cairo. More than a billion people around the world are marking Ramadan this month, when Muslim faithful abstain from eating, drinking, smoking and having sex from dawn to dusk. — AFP

## BE MINDFUL OF GOD

Continued from Page 1

free and bought that flock of sheep for him as a capital to begin his free life with.

(Al-Albani said in *As-Silsila As-Saheeha* 7/469 that its chain of narrators is correct.) The shepherd would never have dreamt of being free, let alone owning the flock of sheep he was tending. Fear and love of Allah, and anticipating His rewards made that possible. That can happen to anyone who is sincere in his worship of God Almighty. Being mindful of Allah is underscored more in Ramadan because only God knows who really fasts and who doesn't.

Someone can easily lock up himself in a room, eat and drink and then come out claiming to be fasting, which people would not doubt - but because of the fear and love of God, those who fast don't do that. Fasting is training for the mindfulness of God that should be continued even after Ramadan. It should be well understood that no one dies until he gets his full share of what Allah had preordained for him in terms of sustenance. Therefore, no one should employ illicit means to get sustenance.

Abu Umama Al-Bahily narrated that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "Indeed, Angel Gabriel has revealed into my heart and mind that

no one will die until his life-span ends and until he gets its sustenance in full measure. So fear Allah and seek your sustenance licitly. Moreover, do not let (your assumptions of) delayed subsistence cause you to disobey Allah (in order to expedite your sustenance). For, indeed, whatever is with Allah cannot be obtained except by obeying Him." (Al-Imam Al-Albani rated it as authentic in *Saheeh Al-Ja'mei* 2,085.)

If you truly fear Allah, He will provide for you from places and means that you do not expect. Moreover, He will find solutions to your problems. Abu Uthman said that Abu Hafis (both pious men) told him, "When you sit in front of people (to exhort and advise them), then be an advisor first to your soul and heart. Moreover, do not be misled by the fact that they gather around you to listen to you. For indeed, they only watch your external behavior, emotions, etc, whereas, Allah (to Whom is ascribed all perfection and majesty) watches over you internally and externally." (Ihya'ulUloum Ad-Deen by Al-Ghazali 4/297)

*Courtesy of the TIES Center: The TIES Center aims 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*

## BAHRAIN GAMBLES WITH SECURITY BY LAUNCHING CRACKDOWN ON SHIITES

**DUBAI:** Bahrain aims to end years of instability with a crackdown on Shiite political parties, but it could be a gamble that risks further destabilizing the Western-allied kingdom and the wider Middle East. Five years after it crushed street protests with Saudi military support, the Sunni Muslim royal family that rules over a population with a Shiite majority appears convinced it will again weather international disapproval for tough measures.

In a series of moves over the past three weeks, authorities closed down the main Shiite opposition Al-Wefaq Islamic Society, doubled the prison sentence on the group's leader, Sheikh Ali Salman, detained prominent rights campaigner Nabeel Rajab and stripped Ayatollah Isa Qassim, Bahrain's Shiite spiritual leader, of his citizenship. Authorities have managed to muzzle anger each time by deploying extra police officers to the streets, but the move against Qassim this week brought thousands in spontaneous protests outside his home west of the capital Manama.

The United States and other Western countries have expressed alarm, but Bahrain appears to be calculating that the distance will not translate into concrete reprisals against a country closely allied to key US partner Saudi Arabia. However, opponents say that by limiting peaceful ways to express their views through a recognized group like Al-Wefaq, the government will only push Shiite youths into the arms of extremists, including some responsible for bomb attacks.

"Dangerously, by outlawing the moderate opposition, the authorities are pushing all opposition into illegality, which strengthens hardliners on all sides," said Ali Alaswad, a former member of parliament from al-Wefaq, now in exile. "That clearly leaves the prospect for dialogue and reconciliation completely dead in the water. This will not take the country forward." The concern is shared even by some who support the authorities.

"Extremism is currently confined to small arenas, involving mostly young men, many of them living abroad," said a former Bahraini official who asked not to be identified in a country where open criticism of official policy is often muted. "When the main group (Al-Wefaq) is struck, I believe that even without intending it, you are opening the arena to all kinds of extremism," he added. Regional analysts worry that an intensification of sectarian animosity in Bahrain could spill over into the wider region, where allies of Sunni Saudi Arabia and Shiite Iran are fighting proxy wars from Syria to Yemen.

### Anger, dismay

The United States, which maintains its navy's Middle East headquarters in Bahrain, expressed alarm at the stripping of Qassim's citizenship. The UN human rights office said it was very concerned by what it called a "clearly unjustified" step.

Bahrain has defended its actions as necessary for national security. The authorities accuse Al-Wefaq and Qassim of promoting sectarianism and of links to Iran, which they blame for backing militants who have used improvised bombs to attack security forces, killing 17 officers since 2011, according to the interior ministry.

Iran denies fomenting violence. But the commander of an elite force in Iran's powerful Revolutionary Guards, Qassem Soleimani, responded to the stripping of the cleric's citizenship by suggesting Bahrainis may have no choice but to resort to "armed resistance" against the ruling Al Khalifa dynasty.

Some critics say Bahrain may have been encouraged to launch its latest crackdown by a timid response from Washington to the kingdom's suppression of protests five years ago, when "Arab Spring" demonstrations were sweeping the region. "This is the most naked show of brutal force since the violent 2011 crackdown," wrote Brian Dooley of the US group Human Rights First, which lobbies Washington to stress the importance of rights in its foreign policy.

"It leaves the US government's approach of quiet diplomacy and big rewards for small gestures of reform in tatters." After an international inquiry into the government's handling of the 2011 unrest, Bahrain made some reforms and opened political dialogue with Shiite parties. However, talks with opposition ended without agreement in 2013, and since then Bahrain has remained gripped by political deadlock. More recently, the smouldering discontent on the streets has been exacerbated by financial strains caused by lower oil prices.

Bahrain's close ally Saudi Arabia, which allows no independent political parties of its own, has been sceptical of pro-democracy measures. Bahrain is connected by a cause-way to Saudi Arabia's oil-rich Eastern Province, home to a large Shiite minority, and Riyadh worries that its own Shiites could be emboldened by gains by Shiites in Bahrain. Some experts attribute the crackdown to a resurgence in influence of Bahraini government hardliners who see limiting Shiite power as a natural part of Arab opposition to non-Arab Iran, and who have been emboldened since reform talks stalled.

However others say Al-Wefaq shares the blame, after it, along with three smaller opposition groups, boycotted parliamentary elections in November 2014. That made the opposition vulnerable to accusations that it was not interested in dialogue. Al-Wefaq said it chose not to take part in the vote because the elected parliament would not have enough power and because voting districts favored the Sunni minority. "This is all still a fallout from the decision of Al-Wefaq not to participate in the most recent parliamentary elections, and they see Ali Salman as someone who is not willing to compromise," said Justin Gengler, a Qatar-based Bahrain expert. — Reuters



**DIRAZ, Bahrain:** Bahraini Shiite clerics attend a protest against the revocation of the citizenship of top Bahraini Shiite cleric Sheikh Isa Qassim (portrait) near Qassim's house in the village of Diraz, west of Manama. — AFP

## NATIONAL ASSEMBLY APPROVES AMENDMENT TO...

Continued from Page 1

The reports said that government ministries and departments have failed to collect over KD 510 million in charges and fees rendered by the government agencies. It said that the amount of government debt on others has grown to about KD 1.9 billion and called for action to recover government charges and debt. Public Treasury has been deprived of fines on others totaling KD 77 million because government agencies failed to collect those fines, the report said.

The Audit Bureau reported a suspected profiteering case amounting to KD 21 million at the Ports Authority

in which employees are suspected of facilitating to others to seize the funds. MP Jamal Al-Omar said the remarks of the Bureau are frightening and after its publication, the government must resign and leave, adding that he fully trusts the Bureau. He also asked about the government measures in this regard.

Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh said the government reiterates its full cooperation with the Bureau, but "we do not agree to all the remarks", adding that the government will refute some of the remarks. Later the Assembly held a secret session to hear the report of the Finance Minister about the financial status of the country. Nothing was announced after the session.

## SAUDI TO SPEND \$1 BN ON CULTURAL HERITAGE

Continued from Page 1

local investor behind these projects. That high cost - for one tiny village in a country where most old dwellings were deserted for modern concrete houses after last century's oil boom - shows how little of its heritage Saudi Arabia may be able to protect even with new investment.

Although the capital Riyadh is a low-rise sprawl of highways and modern, concrete shopping malls, the towns of the Red Sea coast and the southern highlands still contain some fine buildings in their historic old quarters. Some good mud buildings survive in the central regions of the country, including the ruling al-Saud family's restored historical capital of Diriyah just outside Riyadh, but as these areas originally were mostly populated by tent-dwelling nomads, the architectural legacy was scarce.

### Investing in heritage

In its efforts to end reliance on oil for economic wealth, Riyadh wants to invest in tourism, aiming to increase spending by Saudis at home instead of on holidays abroad, and by pilgrims to Makkah at other attractions around the country. There is also an ideological agenda to such efforts: restoring cultural sites occupied a prominent place in Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's Vision 2030 reform plan as a means of boosting national pride. Encouraging visits to local places of beauty or interest is a key goal and Saudi Arabia has some world-class sites, some in remote areas, that are all but unknown outside the kingdom.

The spectacular rock-hewn Nabatean tombs of Madain Saleh, the ornate facades of Jeddah's coral-built old town and the ancient rock art hidden among the boulders of the northern deserts constitute an inheritance unique to the kingdom. But previous efforts to protect cultural heritage were directed only at a few landmark sites while rapid development fuelled by oil wealth and a lack of interest in preserving traditional architecture has allowed others to crumble.

Ironically, given the focus on religious tourism, recent destruction has mostly been in Makkah. Its old houses, including some dating to the time of the Prophet Mohammed, have been razed for development projects to increase pilgrimage. That approach was partly a result of the austere local Sunni Muslim tradition, which regards the veneration of objects, including buildings associated with Islam's earliest days, as tantamount to idolatry. The focus on national and even pre-Islamic heritage today shows one way in which religious strictures are loosening.

### Rain comes and houses fall

The road from Watan Emsoudah to Rijal Almaa descends Mount Souda in hairpin bends as the juniper scrub of the cool upper slopes gives way to the humid heat of the Red Sea coastal plain. The example of Rijal Almaa, where investment of 4 million riyals over the past three years has created from the village an attraction that is now prominently featured in Asir province's tourist literature, shows how restoration projects can succeed.

While its spectacular setting in a mountain valley and the towering size of its stone houses, decorated with checkerboard patterns in quartz, gives it advantages some

other old villages lack, Almy believes this model could be emulated. He envisages a trail of restored villages through Asir's mountains, each reflecting a different element of the region's unusual architectural heritage and adding to the flow of local tourists drawn by the region's clement summer weather.

But money is a big problem. Almy, who lived in an old house in Rijal Almaa until the age of 16, is an independent investor and his projects were carried out in partnership with government agencies, which provided some money and official blessing. Still, the government has so far invested so little in local heritage that it does not even have a register of traditional architecture in Asir or neighboring provinces where most towns and villages have crumbling old houses.

Even in central Abha, the capital of Asir, local custom is celebrated in traditional motifs added to concrete buildings while actual mud houses in the unique highland style, with slate courses providing a serrated effect, fall to ruin. "In five or 10 years this will all collapse. The rain comes and the houses fall. There has to be investment. The state needs to invest," said Almy, standing in Abha's al-Basta district where a cluster of old houses is gradually disintegrating.

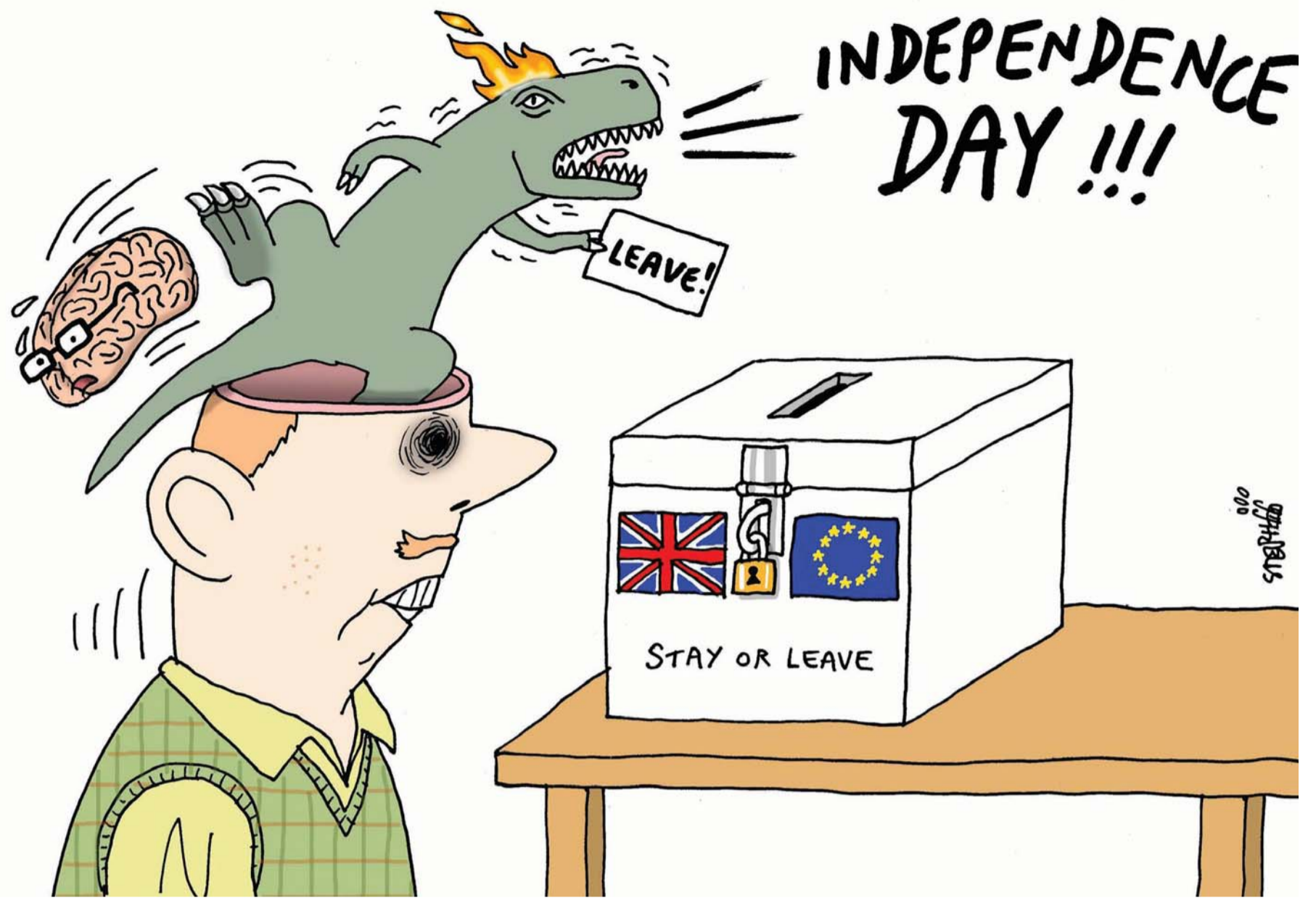
### The empty quarter

It is a pattern repeated across the country: In Najran, a fertile valley running between steep dry hills into the Empty Quarter desert, clusters of adobe tower houses with distinctive horizontal ribs nestle among the fields. Some are clearly looked after by their owners, but most are slowly eroding, their lack of care causing such structural damage that wide cracks are opening down their flanks or that the towers are starting to list dangerously to the side.

The spending envisaged on tourism and heritage in the new reform plans, however, seems likely to focus mostly on big projects. Widescale investment is planned near Madain Saleh and on some Red Sea islands rich in marine wildlife. However, Saudi heritage was given a boost in 2014 when the United Nations cultural body UNESCO listed old Jeddah as a world heritage site. It presents some of the same preservation challenges as the villages of Asir, where like in Jeddah, most old houses are privately owned and some are in grave disrepair. "When I was young we didn't know the importance of these buildings. In those days we cheered when they knocked them down for a new road. But now we have managed to safeguard the architecture," said Sami Nawar, mayor of Jeddah's old city.

The humid climate rots the houses' wood and erodes walls, demanding constant repair, and the magnificent buildings of the seventh-century old town are inhabited by poor foreign laborers instead of the merchant elite for whom they were built. The UNESCO listing has helped to ensure a brighter future for old Jeddah's 600 historical houses, built of coral and with delicate wooden screens ornamenting their imposing facades. It galvanized state investment and a restoration plan. In Asir, any such holistic approach still appears a long way off. "Saving our heritage is a national project. It's for the whole nation. But I don't think there's going to be any investment soon," said Almy. — Reuters

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‘PLEASE DON’T GO’: BALKAN EU HOPEFULS FRET OVER BREXIT

By Jovan Matic, Ismet Hajdari

When Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama wrote to the London Times about the risk of Brexit, his message was clear and echoed other Balkan nations desperate to join the European Union. “Please don’t go,” Rama pleaded. As Britons head towards Thursday’s stay-or-go referendum on the EU, countries in southeastern Europe fear for the impact on their own hopes of joining the Brussels club if the Leave campaign wins. “My biggest fear is that the Western Balkans will go ‘below the radar’ whatever happens in the UK,” said Tanja Miscevic, who is leading Serbia’s negotiations with the EU.

“Negotiations between the 27 member-states and the UK will be a priority on the EU’s agenda along with the migrant crisis, Turkey and then-if something else does not come up-enlargement and Serbia,” she said. Six countries have officially said they want to join the EU: Albania, Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia-together home to around 20 million people.

Membership negotiations have already started with Serbia and Montenegro, but are yet to get underway for Albania and Macedonia. Bosnia and Kosovo have been promised the prospect of membership when they are ready. However, the bloc has ruled out any further enlargement before 2020, and even that date looks unrealistic. Macedonia “would be even further from the European Union than it is now” if Britain severs its links with the bloc, said Petre Silegov, spokesman for the country’s opposition Social Democrats.

Feeding euroscepticism

Where Britain’s Brexiters see the EU as an interference in national sovereignty, many in the Western Balkans—a region of widespread poverty and turbulence—see the 28-nation bloc as a beacon of stability and prosperity. Even so, enthusiasm for the EU has ebbed in the face of the euro-zone’s troubles and Europe’s migrant crisis, with the latter putting these countries on the frontline without the feeling of being supported by Europe. A Brexit would only reinforce these sentiments,

said regional politicians and analysts.

“Britain’s exit would feed eurosceptic ideas that have always existed,” warned Kosovo’s minister for dialogue, Edita Tahiri. Officially, the region remains in keen pursuit of European integration. Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic, a staunch ultranationalist in the 1990s who now styles himself a pro-European reformist, won re-election in April with a strongly pro-EU campaign. In Albania, judicial reforms demanded by Brussels have created a political crisis-but it is for internal

reasons and EU accession faces no credible opposition.

“It is because of this aspiration that we have changed our long history of wars and bloody conflicts, and entered a new era of peace and cooperation,” said Rama in his letter to The Times in April. One example of improved cooperation is the ongoing Brussels-brokered dialogue between former foes Serbia and Kosovo, a key requirement in both sides’ bids to join the EU. But more than ever, Balkan players have the feeling of not being a priority for the troubled bloc—a sentiment that could be exacerbated by an EU-British divorce. “You cannot expect an EU shaken by the departure of Britain to be pre-occupied with expansion into the Balkans,” said Safet Gerxhaliu, head of the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce.

Calls to consolidate

While far-right parties in the region enjoy less success than in France or Austria, pro-Russian ultranationalists are on the march in Serbia, returning to parliament after April elections to fan the anti-European flame. The Brexit campaign has already had a knock-on effect for accession hopefuls, according to Maja Bobic, secretary general of the European Movement in Serbia (Evropski Pokret). Bobic pointed to politicians “listing enlargement as one of the EU’s bad sides” and waving “the threat of mass immigration from candidate countries”. But Balkan nations waiting at the EU’s gates might soon become a problem for the bloc, according to those keen to join. Miscevic warned that “only a consolidated Europe” can overcome issues such as the migrant crisis. “This means that the EU can only overcome and react to the challenges it faces by working hand-in-hand and integrating the Western Balkans,” she said.—AFP



LONDON: Pro-remain campaigners from ‘Operation Croissant’, a French pro-EU group, hand out postcards written by Parisians urging people in the UK to vote to remain in the EU, as they campaign to avoid a Brexit ahead of the June 23 EU referendum.—AFP

BECKS AND BOTHAM: FROM BALL GAMES TO BREXIT BALLOT

By Pirate Irwin

David Beckham and Ian Botham may be retired, but their competitive spirit has not deserted them as they battle it out on opposite sides of Britain’s heated EU referendum debate. Beckham, once the darling of football terraces worldwide, has declared himself for the “Remain” camp, while ageing cricket legend Botham has come out for “Leave”.

Beckham, who also played in France, Spain and Italy during his stellar career, said the remarkable Manchester United team built by manager Sir Alex Ferguson was more successful because of the eclectic mix of Europeans who contributed to its triumphs. “We were a better and more successful team because of a Danish goalkeeper, Peter Schmeichel, the leadership of an Irishman Roy Keane and the skill of a Frenchman in Eric Cantona,” said the 41-year-old on Tuesday in a post on Instagram.

Botham, never one for subtlety either as a player or subsequently as a pundit, said he had tired of the number of foreigners entering Britain. “The people coming into our country, they don’t seem to have to come over with a job, any qualifications, just turn up,” the 60-year-old nicknamed ‘Beefy’ said at a Vote Leave event with Boris Johnson in May. “I think it will get cluttered. I would actually start thinking, ‘hang on a minute, we’ve got enough people in this country,’” said the former all-rounder, whose exploits in winning the Ashes in 1981 remain one of England’s greatest sporting achievements. Beckham’s former



David Beckham

Manchester United team-mate Rio Ferdinand followed him on Tuesday, declaring for Remain.

Ferdinand, capped 81 times, said it would be the first time he has ever voted-aged 37. “I think all the focus on immigration has been a real shame,” wrote Ferdinand in London’s Evening Standard newspaper. “I don’t want Britain to become an angry and mean-spirited country. I think there’s a danger that, if Leave wins, it’ll be an endorsement of the idea that it’s OK to blame all our problems on foreigners. “The England football team used to do that.

And it didn’t help us play any better. “Europeans make a really important contribution to our country, and most of our problems are actually home-grown,” Ferdinand said.

‘A precarious place’

Reflecting the divide within the country which has seen families split over how to vote, Ferdinand’s former England central defensive partner Sol Campbell declared for “Leave”. England legend John Barnes, meanwhile, came out for “Remain” after justice minister Michael Gove previously named him as part of the “Leave”

camp celebrity lineup. Barnes said his comments about a Brexit vote being good for English footballers had been “misinterpreted” by Gove as an endorsement for leaving the EU, but that he in fact supported remaining part of the bloc. More practically, a Brexit would impact negatively on how Europe shares intelligence on hooliganism, money laundering and people trafficking, Conservative lawmaker Damian Collins said.

“If you were a corrupt sports official you would want the UK to leave the EU,” said Collins, who is an influential member of the British parliament’s culture, media and sports committee. “I say that because what they don’t want is countries working together to improve governance standards across the EU and law enforcement agencies sharing intelligence and information. “That has made them more effective, as they have shown in the past couple of years with regard to FIFA and the IAAF. “All sorts of practical things that are being created through the EU, if we came out we would have to renegotiate all those with individual states.

“If Sepp Blatter (disgraced former president of FIFA) had a vote, he’d be voting to leave.” Horse trainer John Gosden—who trains mounts for owners ranging from Qatari sheikhs to Lady Bamford, wife of leading pro-Brexit businessman Anthony Bamford—said a vote to leave would have severe consequences, and not just for the “Sport of Kings”. “A vote to leave would act as a catalyst for the disintegration of the EU,” the 65-year-old Cambridge University economics graduate and two-time Epsom Derby winning trainer said. “In truth it would be a precarious place for all of us to be.”—AFP

Issues

KEY DATES IN UK’S EU REFERENDUM

Yesterday was the last day of campaigning for Britain’s referendum on whether or not to stay in the EU, a momentous decision with far-reaching implications for Britain and Europe. The campaign has divided the country and been ferocious in tone. The Daily Mirror newspaper called it the “most divisive, vile and unpleasant political campaign in living memory”. Here are some of the key dates in the run-up to today’s historic vote.

Date set, Boris backs Brexit

After marathon talks in Brussels, Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron emerges late on February 19 with what he describes as key reforms to the European Union that allow him to recommend Britain staying in. Back in London the following day, he sets the referendum date for June 23, firing the starting gun for campaigning which begins almost immediately. The day after that, February 21, London’s then mayor Boris Johnson, who many tip as a possible successor to Cameron, reveals his hand and says he will support the “Leave” camp, in a major blow to the prime minister.

Corbyn and Obama weigh in

The leader of the main opposition Labor party Jeremy Corbyn makes his first major intervention on April 14, urging Britons to vote in favor of staying in the EU, a day before the start of official campaigning. US President Barack Obama delivers a major boost to the “Remain” camp when he says on a visit to London on April 22 that Britain would be “at the back of the queue” for a trade deal with Washington if it left the EU.

Global bodies issue warnings

The ‘Remain’ camp wins a boost from international organizations which back its line that leaving the bloc would be catastrophic for the economy. The G7 group of top economies says on May 27 that a Brexit would pose a “serious risk to growth”. International Monetary Fund managing director Christine Lagarde warns on May 13 that quitting the EU would be “pretty bad to very, very bad” for the British economy. Others backing the “Remain” camp include EU politicians, former NATO leaders and the US defense, foreign and treasury secretaries.

Poll turnaround

Early June sees a shift in mood, as the “Leave” camp takes the lead in opinion polls on the back of increasing fears over immigration, proposing an Australia-style points-based system. Lending weight to the “Leave” campaign is the backing of the country’s most-read newspaper, the Sun, which urges readers to “BeLEAVE” in Britain. Meanwhile, the rival campaigns seek to outdo each other with stunts to drum up support. On June 15, a Brexit fishing flotilla sails up the River Thames sounding foghorns and displaying anti-EU signs, led by UK Independence Party (UKIP) leader Nigel Farage in a protest against EU fishing policies. Pro-EU rocker Bob Geldof pulls alongside in another boat, flicking a V-sign and shouting “Nigel you’re a fraud” through a loudspeaker. He is doused with water from a “Leave” boat.

Pro-EU MP killed

Pro-“Remain” lawmaker Jo Cox of Labor is shot and stabbed to death in her constituency in Birstall in northern England. The murder in broad daylight plunges the country into mourning and both sides suspend campaigning. In his first court appearance, her alleged attacker Thomas Mair gives his name as: “Death to traitors, freedom for Britain.” Husband Brendan later told the BBC she had been “worried” about the tone of the EU debate and that he believed she had been killed for her political views.

Last days, last ditch pleas

In the final days of the campaign, polling swings back towards the “Remain” campaign, with most surveys now giving it a narrow lead. Political, economic, cultural and sports figures, along with newspapers on both sides of the debate, issue last-ditch pleas for votes. Cameron makes a clear appeal to older voters—seen as more likely to vote for a Brexit—urging them to think of the “hopes and dreams of your children and your grandchildren”. Global stocks and sterling rise again on the belief Britain will choose to stay. The biggest debate of the campaign takes place on June 21 as Johnson goes head-to-head with his successor as London mayor Sadiq Khan, a “Remain” supporter, at London’s Wembley Arena. Both sides accuse each other of scaremongering.—AFP

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## CHAMP SCHWAZER FAILS ANOTHER DOPING TEST

**ROME:** Italy's 2008 Olympic 50km race walk champion Alex Schwazer, who returned from a doping ban to win the world championship title last month, has tested positive again for a banned substance, Italy's athletics federation said yesterday. "There has been a notice of a violation," a spokesman said but could not confirm newspaper reports that the positive was the result of a re-test of a January sample, taken after Schwazer had qualified for the Rio De Janeiro Olympics.

Schwazer, who also won the European 20km title in 2010, served a ban of three years nine months after admitting using the blood-booster EPO in 2012 and now faces a life ban from the sport.

An assistant to one of his coaches said Schwazer would hold a news conference later yesterday. — Reuters



## JONES TARGETS ANOTHER TAEKWONDO GOLD IN RIO

**LONDON:** Jade Jones is determined to retain her Olympic title in Brazil after being named in Britain's four-athlete taekwondo squad for the 2016 Rio Games, announced yesterday. The 23-year-old, who became the first Briton to win Olympic gold in taekwondo, will be joined by world champion Bianca Walkden (+67kg), Olympic bronze medalist Lutalo Muhammad (-80kg) and Mahama Cho (+80kg). "I'm going to Rio for gold," Jones, who will compete in the -57kg category, was quoted as saying by British media. "I'll be leaving everything on the mat and I want to be the best which makes me hungrier than ever and determined to succeed. "Overall my preparation for the Games is going really well and things are coming together at the right time." European champion Walkden, 24, who missed the 2012 London games due to injury, said she was eagerly anticipating making her Olympic debut in the Aug. 5-21 Games. "I can't wait to get there now and take the chance to live my dream," she told British media. "My journey to Rio has been a roller coaster, so it's amazing to be selected, and winning at the Olympics would mean everything to me." — Reuters

## FROOME HUNGRY FOR THIRD TOUR TITLE AS SKY'S LEADER

**LONDON:** Tour de France champion Chris Froome said he was "hungrier than ever" to win the race for a third time after being named yesterday as Team Sky's leader for next month's edition. Froome, who won in 2013 and last year, leads a powerful looking Sky team built to steer him to the yellow jersey when racing begins at Mont-Saint-Michel on July 2. He will be joined by Spain's climbing specialist Mikel Landa, another world-class climber in Colombia's Sergio Henao and key support rider from last year Geraint Thomas. Vasil Kiryienka, Mikel Nieve, Wout Poels, Luke Rowe and Ian Stannard complete team principal Dave Brailsford's squad. "The Tour de France will always be the pinnacle of our sport," Froome, who clicked into gear with victory in the Criterium du Dauphine this month, said in a statement. "Every rider obviously starts every new Tour equal and what has gone before counts for nothing. This year I am hungrier than ever for success." — Reuters



# SALE FIRST TO 12 WINS, WHITE SOX BEAT RED SOX

**BOSTON:** Chris Sale mowed down baseball's most lethal lineup and in return became the majors' first 12-game winner as the Chicago White Sox quieted the Boston Red Sox 3-1 on Tuesday night at Fenway Park. Sale (12-2) struck out nine, tying a season high, and allowed one run on four hits and a walk over seven innings as Chicago (35-36) won its fifth game in six tries in Boston. Todd Frazier hit his 20th home run of the season, Tim Anderson slugged his first career homer and Melky Cabrera drove in a run for the White Sox. Mookie Betts drove in the lone run for Boston (39-31), which has dropped six of nine. Clay Buchholz's return to the Red Sox's rotation was listless as he served up a pair of homers and gave up three runs total on four hits and a walk with five strikeouts in five innings. Buchholz (3-7) lost his starting job May 26 after giving up six runs in an 8-2 loss against Colorado and had made five relief appearances since.

### DODGERS 3, NATIONALS 2

Yasmani Grandal hit a towering three-run homer in the eighth inning as Los Angeles came from behind to defeat Washington. Tanner Roark (6-5), who had been masterful all night behind a 2-0 lead, put the first two batters on in the eighth inning and Grandal drove a 2-1 fastball over the center field fence. It was the catcher's sixth home run of the season. One day after becoming the Dodgers' all-time saves leader, Kenley Jansen earned his 21st of the season with a perfect inning of relief. Louis Coleman (1-1) recorded the winner with one scoreless inning.

### GIANTS 15, PIRATES 4

Angel Pagan hit a grand slam and Johnny Cueto picked up his 11th win as San Francisco walloped Pittsburgh. Conor Gillaspie added a two-run homer and finished with four hits and four RBIs for the Giants, who had 22 hits. They have won nine of their past 10 games. Puetto (11-1) allowed one run on four hits with six strikeouts and one walk over 6 2/3 innings. He left in the seventh after the Pirates broke up his shutout when Jacob Stallings got his first major-league hit, a double to the left-field wall, and RBI. Pittsburgh has lost six of its past seven games and 11 of its last 13.

### ASTROS 3, ANGELS 2

Carlos Correa hit a two-run, walk-off single in the ninth inning to lift Houston. Correa, whose leadoff homer in the fifth inning served as the lone run scored against Angels left-hander Hector Santiago, lined a 3-2 pitch from Angels closer Huston Street (2-1) into the right-center field gap to score George Springer and Marwin Gonzalez, both of whom had walked. Astros second baseman Jose Altuve followed Gonzalez with a grounder off the glove of third baseman Yunel Escobar to load the bases for Correa. The Astros (36-36) pulled to .500 for the first time since April 6. Astros right-hander Luke Gregerson (1-1) earned the victory in relief.

### CARDINALS 4, CUBS 3

St. Louis' Adam Wainwright was hit for three early runs then shut down Chicago for his first win in more than three weeks. The victory was the second straight for the Cardinals (37-33) over the Cubs in a series that wraps up Wednesday. Chicago (47-22) saw its still formidable National League Central lead over St. Louis slip to 10 1/2 games. Wainwright (6-4) was hit for single runs in the first, third and fourth innings but held the Cubs scoreless through the balance of his 6 2/3 inning outing. Chicago starter Jason Hammel (7-3) suffered his second loss of June after giving up four runs on six hits, walking one and striking out three.

### INDIANS 6, RAYS 0

Corey Kluber pitched a three-hit, complete-game shutout and Jose Ramirez and Juan Uribe homered to lead streaking Cleveland. Kluber (7-7) struck out nine and walked two in pitching his third career shutout. The only hits allowed by



**BOSTON:** Jose Abreu #79 of the Chicago White Sox slides under the tag of Xander Bogaerts #2 of the Boston Red Sox in the sixth inning during the game at Fenway Park on Tuesday in Boston, Massachusetts. — AFP

Kluber were singles, by Corey Dickerson in the second inning and by Brad Miller and Evan Longoria in the ninth. The victory extends the AL Central-leading Indians' winning streak to five in a row. They have also won 10 straight home games. Tampa Bay, last in the AL East, has lost six in a row.

### METS 2, ROYALS 1

Five New York pitchers combined for 8 2/3 innings of one-run relief after right-hander Bartolo Colon departed with a thumb injury, and Asdrubal Cabrera and Yoenis Cespedes each hit solo homers as the Mets edged Kansas City in a rematch of the 2015 World Series at Citi Field. The piecemeal win stopped a three-game losing streak for New York (37-32). The Royals (38-32) had a three-game winning streak snapped. Hansel Robles, who entered after Colon was hit on the right thumb by a line drive off the bat of Kansas City leadoff batter Whit Merrifield, earned the win after allowing one run on five hits and one walk while striking out six over a career-high 3 2/3 innings. X-rays on Colon's thumb were negative. The 43-year-old, who had never recorded fewer than two outs in his first 481 big league starts dating back to 1997, is day-to-day.

### REDS 8, RANGERS 2

Jay Bruce and Zack Cozart provided the muscle, backing Anthony DeSclafani's arm in Cincinnati's victory over streaking Texas. Bruce and Cozart each went deep, combining to drive in seven runs in the opener of a two-game inter-league series. That was plenty of support for DeSclafani, who picked up his first win of the season. The Rangers (46-26) not only lost for the first time in eight games, but Colby Lewis suffered his first setback in seven decisions. Texas also had its string of series victories snapped at 10 in a row.

### TIGERS 4, MARINERS 2

Mike Aviles' nubbed single 40 feet down the first base line with one out and the bases loaded in the eighth inning scored pinch-runner Andrew Romine with the tie-breaking run to lead Detroit over Seattle. Bruce Rondon (1-0) pitched a scoreless eighth to earn the win in his second appearance since being recalled from the minors. Francisco Rodriguez gave up a pair of two-out singles before finishing his 20th save of the season. Justin Verlander went the first seven innings for the Tigers, striking out five and allowing six hits. Verlander stranded a Mariners runner at third with one out in the third, getting two straight strikeouts after a double plus a sacrifice. He also got three outs in a row following Cano's leadoff double in the fourth.

### PADRES 10, ORIOLES 7

Matt Kemp finished with four hits, and Derek Norris homered and drew a key bases-loaded walk as San Diego Padres rallied. Baltimore held a 6-3 lead heading into the seventh when its bullpen and defense faltered. Three walks, a wild pitch and an error helped the Padres score four runs and take a 7-6 lead. San Diego has won three straight and its bullpen helped slam the door on the Orioles after starter Luis Perdomo allowed six runs in five innings. Mychal Givens (5-1) faced five batters and didn't record an out, allowing four runs on three hits with two walks. Baltimore starter Tyler Wilson left after six innings with that three-run lead but Givens struggled.

### ROCKIES 8, YANKEES 4

Charlie Blackmon homered twice and Nolan Arenado hit a two-run homer as Colorado defeated New York. Arenado hit his 21st home run with one out in the sixth when he drove a 1-0 pitch from reliever Nick Goody inside the foul pole and over the left field wall. Before the third baseman hit his latest home run, Blackmon recorded his fourth career multi-homer game with solo shots in the first and fourth off Ivan Nova (5-5). Mark Reynolds drove in two runs, Carlos Gonzalez had an RBI single and Arenado added a sacrifice fly as the Rockies (34-36) won for the 10th time in 15 games.

### DIAMONDBACKS 4, BLUE JAYS 2

Yasmany Tomas and Peter O'Brien hit home runs, Patrick Corbin pitched into the seventh inning and Arizona defeated Toronto. Corbin (4-6) allowed eight hits, three walks and two runs in 6 1/3 innings. The left-hander struck out three as the Diamondbacks (34-39) extended their winning streak to five games as the Blue Jays (39-34) lost their third in a row. Blue Jays starter Marco Estrada (5-3) allowed two hits, including a home run, three walks and three runs while striking out eight in six innings before Jesse Chavez replaced him. It was the 11th straight start in which Estrada had allowed five or fewer hits while going six or more innings.

### BRAVES 4, MARLINS 2 (10 INNINGS)

Jace Peterson tied the score with a two-run homer in the eighth and knocked in the winning run with a single in the 10th as Atlanta continued

its mastery of Miami. The Braves (24-46), who have the worst record in the National League, have taken six of seven games from the Marlins (37-34) this season. Atlanta, which is riding a season-high six-game winning streak, is 29-12 at Marlins Park since it opened in 2012.

### TWINS 14, PHILLIES 10

Kurt Suzuki had four hits and knocked in a career high six runs as Minnesota outslugged Philadelphia. Suzuki roped a liner into the left-field corner in his final at-bat, but settled for his second two-run double instead of trying for what would have been his first career cycle.

Both pitching staffs were ineffective and each offense took advantage early and often. The Phillies pounded out 14 hits, including four home runs while the Twins also managed 14 hits

in winning their second consecutive game. Philadelphia lost its eighth straight contest despite scoring more than two runs for the first time in a week.

### ATHLETICS 5, BREWERS 3

Marcus Semien went 3-for-4 with a triple and drove in three runs as Oakland rallied past Milwaukee. The Brewers, who swept a two-game series from the Athletics at Miller Park on June 7-8, lost their fourth straight game and fell to 1-7 on their nine-game road trip, which ends Wednesday against Oakland. The A's ended their two-game losing streak and improved to 3-5 on their nine-game homestand. Oakland's Sonny Gray gave up two runs (one earned) on seven hits over six innings and got a no-decision. Gray hasn't won since April 22 at Toronto. — Reuters

## MLB results/standings

Colorado 8, NY Yankees 4; San Diego 10, Baltimore 7; San Francisco 15, Pittsburgh 4; Arizona 4, Toronto 2; Detroit 4, Seattle 2; Atlanta 3, Miami 2 (10 innings); Chicago White Sox 3, Boston 1; NY Mets 2, Kansas City 1; Cleveland 6, Tampa Bay 0; Cincinnati 8, Texas 2; St. Louis 4, Chicago Cubs 3; Houston 3, LA Angels 2; Minnesota 14, Philadelphia 10; Oakland 5, Milwaukee 3; LA Dodgers 3, Washington 2.

American League Eastern Division				National League Eastern Division			
W	L	PCT	GB	Washington	43	29	.597
Baltimore	40	30	.571	NY Mets	37	32	.536
Boston	39	31	.557	Miami	37	34	.521
Toronto	39	34	.534	Philadelphia	30	42	.417
NY Yankees	34	36	.486	Atlanta	24	46	.343
Tampa Bay	31	38	.449	Central Division			
Central Division				Chicago Cubs	47	22	.681
Cleveland	40	30	.571	St. Louis	37	33	.529
Kansas City	38	32	.543	Pittsburgh	34	37	.479
Detroit	36	35	.507	Milwaukee	31	40	.437
Chicago WSox	35	36	.493	Cincinnati	28	43	.394
Minnesota	22	48	.314	Western Division			
Western Division				San Francisco	45	27	.625
Texas	46	26	.639	LA Dodgers	40	33	.548
Seattle	36	35	.507	Colorado	34	36	.486
Houston	36	36	.500	Arizona	34	39	.466
LA Angels	31	40	.437	San Diego	30	42	.417
Oakland	29	41	.414				

Services

## Kick off your football passion with "Score and Win"

## VIVA LAUNCHES 'SCORE & WIN' EURO 2016 COMPETITION

**KUWAIT:** VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, launched the competition "Score & Win" Euro 2016 starting 10 June until 10 July 2016.

The competition "Score & Win" is an information service where VIVA's customers can subscribe to the service by sending "WIN" to the short-code 50441, and includes the following services: a subscription service includes the free trial period of 3 days, daily points and content about the Euro 2016 championships. In addition, subscribers have the chance to play in the game "Score 11" that grants the users the

opportunity to receive an instant prize (Play station 4 console) when answering correctly 11 questions about soccer.

Winners are eligible to win valuable prizes through draws: 2 LED screens and 2 iPhone 6S Plus. Mid-campaign's prize will be 2 tickets to attend Euro 2016 finals in Paris including traveling ticket and accommodation, and the final draw will allow users to win the big prize \$10,000.

To find out more about "Score & Win" Euro 2016, visit one of the 70 VIVA branches, or the VIVA website at [www.viva.com.kw](http://www.viva.com.kw), or call VIVA's 24-hour call center on 102.

## SEVE'S LEGACY LIVES ON WITH INFLUENCE ON NEWEST PROS

**BETHESDA:** The late Spanish legend Seve Ballesteros continues to influence golfers, including Spaniard Jon Rahm and American Jordan Niebrugge, who make their professional debuts today at the US PGA National tournament.

The newcomers received key advice from Sergio Garcia and Jose Maria Olazabal, both of whom were inspired by Ballesteros, while the five-time major winner is a role model for Rahm, the low amateur at last week's US Open. "I've really been studying Seve and how he had that charisma, that special thing to bring people closer," Rahm said. "That's something I

look up to, something I would like to do one day." Ballesteros, who died in 2011 at age 54 of brain cancer, won three British Opens and two Masters titles as well as a host of fans with his skill and passion, with Olazabal and Garcia following in his footsteps as Spanish champions.

"Those three guys are idols in Spain," Rahm said. "I really look up to Seve, most on his character, the way he brought people together. Because of them I play golf nowadays. Two major champions, Sergio coming in as a 19-year-old the way he did, it really is a reference to know if they did it, I can do it too." Rahm wore blue and white

at the US Open as a tribute to Ballesteros, who shared the lead entering the 1983 US Open final round at Oakmont but settled for fourth. "I put the colors on knowing he would be out there in heaven looking down on me and helping me out," he said. "They gave me some extra confidence that if I was wearing those colors I had to honor him. Hence the up and down on 18 to make the cut. It had some special meaning to me." Rahm, 21, won a world amateur title after Olazabal said he needed to improve his short game. Rahm also served notice of his skills by sharing 23rd last week at Oakmont and fifth at last year's

Phoenix Open, the best PGA result by an amateur since Chris Wood's fifth at the 2008 British Open. "That week gave me the confidence I needed to know I could compete with the best," Rahm said.

Niebrugge, 22, shared sixth at last year's British Open, the best finish and lowest score by an amateur at St. Andrews. His major memory from the week came when he strode up the final hole alongside Garcia, who passed along some Seve-esque advice.

"The thing that probably sticks the most was walking up 18 the last day with Sergio and everybody on all sides,"

Niebrugge said. "It was pretty special," he added. "He just told me to never forget this because you don't really get to see this type of stage too often. So I definitely won't forget that."

I get chills every time thinking about that so it was pretty awesome." Rahm is hoping little will change in the pro ranks, except for getting the paychecks. "It has never been about the money for me. Since I was a kid, I had the dream to become a great player," he said. "It really shouldn't make a difference. If you make the least amount of strokes, you're going to make the most amount of money." — AFP



**JAKARTA:** In this picture taken on June 16, 2016 Indonesia weightlifting athlete Deni conducts a daily exercise in Jakarta, during a holy month of Ramadan. Indonesian Olympic medalist Triyatno had a look of pained determination on his face as he hauled a 180 kilo barbell into the air — no mean feat for a weightlifter fasting during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan. — AFP

## INDONESIAN OLYMPIC LIFTERS SAY RAMADAN NO HEAVY WEIGHT

**JAKARTA:** Indonesian Olympic medalist Triyatno had a look of pained determination on his face as he hauled a 180 kilo barbell into the air — no mean feat for a weightlifter fasting during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan.

The 28-year-old and fellow weightlifter Eko Yuli Irawan were Indonesia's only two medal winners at the last Olympics, clinching silver and bronze respectively, and the pressure is on as they gear up for Rio this summer. But that has not stopped the athletes joining tens of millions of others in the world's most populous Muslim-majority country in forgoing food and drink during the daytime to mark Ramadan.

And they insist it has not affected their intensive preparations. "I don't find it a heavy weight, it's not difficult," Triyatno said of juggling the competing demands of fasting and getting ready for the Olympics. "My training remains the same." At a recent session at a gym in Jakarta's main stadium, the country's weightlifting team spent two hours grunting and groaning as they pumped iron under the watchful eyes of their coaches.

While most in Indonesia practise a moderate form of Islam, religion still plays a large role in many people's lives, and the training began with the team standing in a circle and saying a brief prayer.

Triyatno, who like many Indonesians goes by one name, claimed silver at the London 2012 Olympics in the -69kg class with a total of 333kg, while 26-year-old Irawan won bronze in the -62kg class, lifting a total of 317kg.

But the final medal tally of just two was Indonesia's worst at an Olympics for over 20 years, with the performance dragged down by a poor showing from the traditionally strong badminton players.

As the best performers in London, Indonesia's weightlifting team—which consists of five men and two women—are now carrying the country's hopes for success on their broad shoulders as they head into Rio.

## 'WARRIOR MENTALITY'

Triyatno and Irawan will face stiff competition from the likes of the Chinese and North Koreans, but they appeared relaxed at the recent training session.

And they insisted observing Ramadan

would not get in the way of their preparations, with the men typically training four hours a day, five days a week. "Praise be to God, up till now it has not affected me," Irawan told AFP of the fasting month.

"I am used to it, every time there is a championship, we must lose some weight so we must eat less anyway." But he conceded that at times it was tough and thirst in particular was a challenge.

"It is a bit difficult to stay focused but we don't have to train hard every day, some days we just work on our technique," he said. For his part, national team coach Dirja Wiharja did not believe the country's top medal hopes would be affected.

"Indonesian athletes have a warrior mentality, they will fight to give their best that is what a true champion is," he said.

The coach has made adjustments for training in Ramadan, Islam's holiest month when Muslims commemorate the divine revelations received by Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). For the pre-dawn breakfast that Muslims eat to set them up for a day of fasting, the weightlifters are given more supplements than usual and advised against eating unhealthy fried foods.

The training starts later, at 9:30 am instead of 9:00 am, to give them a little more rest. Triyatno and Irawan had modest upbringings in the province of Lampung, on western Sumatra island, and stumbled into weightlifting almost by accident.

Irawan said he originally wanted to join his local football club but could not afford the monthly fee so took up weightlifting, which was free, while Triyatno was attracted by the prospect of getting to travel and staying in nice hotels.

But they quickly went on to compete at the national level and have never looked back. After the Eid holiday at the start of July marking the end of Ramadan, the weightlifters will take part in a training camp in South Africa before heading to Rio.

While some have voiced concerns about the impact of fasting, others believe that such strong religious devotion could help Indonesia on the path to Olympic victory.

"If the faith is strong, we should do even better," said Avenash Pandoo, a former South African national coach who is helping the Indonesians prepare for the Olympics. — AFP

## INJURY-HIT WALES WON'T FEAR ALL BLACKS

**WELLINGTON:** Wales vowed yesterday to play "bold" rugby in their last chance this series to notch an elusive win against New Zealand, despite an ever-mounting injury toll in the touring squad.

The Welsh said in-form prop Gethin Jenkins (calf), lock Bradley Davies (knee) and flanker Josh Turnbull (shoulder) had all been sent home ahead of the third Test on Saturday, following winger George North's tour-ending hamstring injury earlier in the series. However, in a rare piece of good news from the team doctor, centre Jamie Roberts has passed concussion tests and is available to play in Dunedin.

Assistant coach Robin McBryde said the injuries would not change Wales' plans for a match expected to be played at a high tempo under the roof of Forsyth Barr Stadium.

He said despite being 2-0 down, the tourists would maintain the expansive style that had allowed them to challenge the world champions for long periods in the first two games.

"We've been pretty bold and the players have said they want to evolve and move the game on, so it's good to see them embracing that," McBryde said.

"In the last game we were willing to try different things and not everything came off, but we can't be scared of that." He added: "When you fear change too much you become paralysed."

Fly-half Dan Biggar said Dunedin was the tourists' final opportunity to end a 63-year losing streak against the All Blacks dating back 28 matches to 1953. He was convinced they could end the dismal sequence by avoiding the mistakes and concentration lapses that marred otherwise strong performances in Auckland and Wellington.

"We've shown how competitive we can be, but the next step for us on Saturday is winning and holding out for an 80-minute performance," he said. Biggar said Wales had improved their game on tour and would be disappointed to leave New Zealand without a win, after their 39-21 and 36-22 defeats so far.

"It's not about going down to Dunedin to finish off our season and serenade the All Blacks and say how good they've been," he said. "It's about getting in amongst them again and pushing them... one more push for beating New Zealand in New Zealand is worthwhile." — Reuters

## MCILROY PULLS OUT OF RIO OVER ZIKA FEARS

**LONDON:** Northern Ireland's four-times major winner Rory McIlroy has decided to pull out of the historic golf tournament at the Rio Olympic Games in August because of health fears over the Zika virus. "After speaking with those closest to me, I've come to realise that my health and my family's health comes before anything else," the world number four said in a statement yesterday. "Even though the risk of infection from the Zika virus is considered low, it is a risk nonetheless and a risk I am unwilling to take."

The 27-year-old McIlroy was due to represent Ireland, rather than Britain, at the Games and his withdrawal is the latest blow to golf, which is returning to the Olympics for the first time since 1904. A number of big names, including Fiji's Vijay Singh and Charl Schwartzel of South Africa, have also withdrawn because of the virus. Controversy over the Aug. 5-21 Games has grown as more becomes known about Zika. The mosquito-borne virus can cause crippling birth defects and, in adults, has been linked to the neurological disorder Guillain-Barre.

Last week, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said that the Games did not need to be moved or postponed because there is "a very low risk" that holding the event in Brazil will cause further spread of the virus.

An expert WHO panel on Zika concluded that staging the event during the Brazilian winter means the mosquito population will be smaller and intensified mosquito-control measures in place around venues "should further reduce the risk of transmission".

## MIXED RESPONSE

Medical experts had a mixed response to McIlroy's decision. Derek Gatherer, a virus expert at Britain's Lancaster University, said if the golfer was "contemplating becoming a father within a year or so, then it was a perfectly reasonable precaution to stay away from regions of active Zika transmission".

But Jonathan Ball, a professor of molecular virology at the University of Nottingham, said: "Obviously I don't know the reasons for this decision, but it does strike me as being extreme."

"The chances of being infected by the Zika virus is low, especially if you protect yourself from mosquito bites by covering up and using a good insect repellent." But there are clearly worries in the golf world. Earlier this month, world number one Jason Day expressed doubts for the first time over whether he would compete and



**OAKMONT:** In this Saturday, June 18, 2016 file photo, Rory McIlroy, of Northern Ireland, watches his tee shot on the ninth hole during the rain delayed second round of the US Open golf championship at Oakmont Country Club, in Oakmont, Pa. McIlroy says he will not be competing in the golf tournament at the Rio de Janeiro Olympics because of concerns over the Zika virus, it was reported yesterday. — AP

the virus was a hot topic of conversation among golfers at last week's U.S. Open. Masters champion Danny Willett, whose wife Nicole gave birth to their first child at the end of March, said he was excited about the Olympic Games but would not go if his family's health was at risk.

The list of absentees also includes Australian world number eight Adam Scott and South Africa's world number 14 Louis Oosthuizen, who both opted out of playing in Rio over scheduling conflicts.

## FROZEN SPERM

The connection between Zika and microcephaly first came to light last year in Brazil, which has now confirmed more than 1,400 cases of microcephaly that it considers to be related to Zika infections in mothers.

Britain's Olympic long jump champion Greg Rutherford has decided to have his sperm frozen before the Games. His partner Susie Verrill, who will not travel to Rio with their young son, said the couple had taken the precaution because

they wanted to have more children. McIlroy, who is engaged to American Erica Stoll, took a long time to decide who he would represent in Rio and threatened to skip the Olympics as he agonised over his choice between Britain and Ireland before opting for the latter in 2014. "I trust the Irish people will understand my decision (not to go). The unwavering support I receive every time I compete in a golf tournament at home or abroad means the world to me," McIlroy added.

"I will continue to endeavour to make my fans and fans of golf proud with my play on the course and my actions off it." Irish golf team captain Paul McGinley said McIlroy would have been a 100 per cent certain pick for the Games but fully understood the reasoning behind the player's withdrawal. "It's not for me to influence his decision, it's a health decision he has discussed with his family and wife to be," McGinley told Irish national broadcaster RTE. "Shane (Lowry) and GMac (Graeme McDowell) are the next two in at the moment." — Reuters



**KIEL:** Boats of the 470er class sail off the Baltic Sea harbor of Kiel, Germany, yesterday, as part of the Kiel Sailing Week. — AP

## GAGAI SCORES HAT-TRICK AS QUEENSLAND CLINCH SERIES

**BRISBANE:** Winger Dane Gagai scored a hat-trick of tries as Queensland fought off a strong New South Wales challenge to win their 20th State of Origin rugby league series in Brisbane yesterday. The Maroons triumphed 26-16, scoring four tries to two for their 10th win in the last 11 series to continue their domination of the Australian interstate contest.

Queensland wrapped up the three-match series with a match to play, after winning the opening game 6-4 in Sydney earlier this month.

Gagai bobbed up for three tries at crucial times, while opposite winger Corey Oates scored another for Queensland.

The team also owed their victory to their influential Test halves Cooper Cronk and Johnathan Thurston, with Thurston landing some spiralling conversions from the sideline in his haul of five

goals from six attempts. The Maroons, under first-year coach Kevin Walters, looked poised for a comfortable win with a 16-4 lead early in the second half before the Blues mounted a brave fight-back to trail 20-16 with 13 minutes left.

But centre Michael Jennings was centimetres away from scoring a scrambling try in Queensland's in goal before Oates sealed the game for the Maroons with his try in the corner after some sublime ball work from Thurston.

"Full credit to the Blues, they kept throwing it at us and they scored a long-range try which got them a bit of momentum but we kept our cool, stuck to the game plan and came up with it at the end," Thurston said. The Blues were more enterprising than in the opening game and troubled Queensland with their quick ball movement. Queensland back-rower Sam Thaiday was

put on referee's report for a dangerous tipping tackle on NSW skipper Paul Gallen.

The Maroons scored a try against the run of play late in the first half when winger Dabe Gagai seized on a loose pass and raced 70 metres down the right touchline to beat the cover and score. Thurston kicked an arcing conversion from the sideline to give Queensland a 10-4 half-time lead. But Gagai scored his second try just after the resumption before newcomer Tyson Fizzell scored for NSW.

Gagai landed his third try off a Thurston grubber kick as Queensland led by 10 points into the closing stages. The Blues refused to give in and stand-off James Maloney raced 70-metres to score before Oates made it safe for the home side. The final game of the series takes place in Sydney on July 13. — AFP



## DJOKOVIC, MURRAY SEEDED FOR WIMBLEDON FINAL SHOWDOWN

**LONDON:** Novak Djokovic and Andy Murray are on course for a Wimbledon final showdown after being confirmed as the top two seeds for the grass-court Grand Slam.

World number one Djokovic and second ranked Murray will be seeded in those positions, All England Club officials announced yesterday, meaning they can't meet until the final as they will be placed at opposite ends of Friday's draw.

Djokovic is bidding to win Wimbledon for the fourth time and third year in a row as the Serb chases a rare calendar Grand Slam.

Murray is aiming to win his third Grand Slam title and his first since he beat Djokovic in the 2013 Wimbledon final to become the first British male singles champion at the All England Club for 77 years. The Scot has lost 13 of his last 15 matches against Djokovic, including this year's Australian and French Open finals, but he has won their last two meetings on grass and is in fine form after lifting the Queen's Club title for a record fifth time last week. If the world's top two make the Wimbledon title match it would be a record-equalling eighth Grand Slam final

between them. Djokovic has defeated Roger Federer in the last two Wimbledon finals and the Swiss legend will be seeded third in his bid for a record eighth Wimbledon title. Federer, a 17-time Grand Slam winner, hasn't won a major title since lifting the Wimbledon trophy in 2012 and has endured an injury-plagued year that saw him miss the French Open.

Federer's compatriot Stan Wawrinka is seeded fourth and Japan's Kei Nishikori is the fifth seed. World number 10 Richard Gasquet has been moved up to the seventh seeding after reaching the Wimbledon semi-finals last year, while 2014 US Open champion Marin Cilic is lifted from a world ranking of 13 to a seeding of ninth. Defending champion Serena Williams will be top seed in the women's draw as the American looks to equal Steffi Graf's Open era record by sealing a 22nd Grand Slam triumph.

Williams, who has won Wimbledon six times, has failed at the last hurdle in her last two major tournaments, enduring surprise defeats at the Australian and French Open finals this year.

The world number one's conqueror at Roland Garros, Spain's Garbine Muguruza, is seeded second with Poland's Agnieszka Radwanska, the 2012 Wimbledon runner-up, named as the third seed. Johanna Konta is the first British female to be seeded at Wimbledon since Jo Durie in 1984.

The 25-year-old's ranking has shot up from 146th to 18th and she was named as the 17th seed following her shock run to the Australian Open semi-finals in January. Seedings at Wimbledon, which starts on Monday, are determined using a combination of a player's ranking points and their results in grass-court matches. — AFP



HARARE: India's players pose with the Prayag Series Trophy after winning the third and final T20 cricket match in a series of three games between India and Zimbabwe in the Prayag Cup at Harare Sports Club, in Harare, yesterday. — AFP

## INDIA WIN SERIES WITH 3-RUN VICTORY

**HARARE:** India's Kedar Jadhav blasted his highest score in Twenty20 internationals as they beat Zimbabwe by three runs in a tense finish to claim the three-match series 2-1 at the Harare Sports Club yesterday. Zimbabwe won the toss and chose to bowl first, restricting the tourists to 138 for six in their 20 overs on a slow wicket as Jadhav top-scored with 58 from 42 balls. But the hosts battled to keep up with the scoring rate and went into the final over of the match, bowled by Barinder Sran (2-31), needing 21 for victory.

When the first two balls of the over went for 12 runs a sensational victory looked on the cards, but Sran came back well and bowled Elton Chigumbura (16) off the last delivery of the innings to leave Zimbabwe agonisingly short of a series victory.

It was the first time on India's six-match limited overs tour that they batted first and, after starts for Lokesh Rahul (22) and Ambati Rayudu (20), Jadhav provided the impetus the innings desperately needed as he blazed seven

fours and a six. India's opening bowlers restricted the run-rate well as Zimbabwe reached 59-2 at the halfway mark of their innings, with Sran going for just 14 in his first three overs and Dhawal Kulkarni ending with figures of 2-23 in his allotted four. Vusi Sibanda (28 from 23 balls) top scored for the hosts as several batsmen made starts but could not match Jadhav's half-century heroics. India also won 3-0 in the one-day international series that preceded the 20-over games. — Reuters

### SCOREBOARD

**HARARE:** Scoreboard for the third Twenty20 international between Zimbabwe and India yesterday:

India	Zimbabwe
KL Rahul b Madziva 22	C. Chibhabha c Chahal b Sran 5
Mandeep Singh c Maruma b Tiripano 4	H. Masakadza lbw b Patel 15
A. Rayudu c Chigumbura b Cremer 20	V. Sibanda lbw b Kulkarni 28
M. Pandey run out 0	P. Moor c Mandeep Singh b Chahal 26
K. Jadhav c Chigumbura b Tiripano 58	M. Waller c Bumrah b Kulkarni 10
MS Dhoni b Tiripano 9	E. Chigumbura c Chahal b Sran 16
A. Patel not out 20	T. Maruma not out 23
D. Kulkarni not out 1	Extras (8lb, 3w, 1nb) 12
Extras (1lb, 3w) 4	Total (6 wkts, 20 overs) 135
Total (6 wkts, 20 overs) 138	Fall of wickets: 1-17 (Chibhabha), 2-57 (Masakadza), 3-60 (Sibanda), 4-86 (Moor), 5-104 (Waller), 6-135 (Chigumbura).
Fall of wickets: 1-20 (Mandeep Singh), 2-27 (Rahul), 3-27 (Pandey), 4-76 (Rayudu), 5-93 (Dhoni), 6-122 (Jadhav).	Did not bat: Graeme Cremer, Neville Madziva, Donald Tiripano, Tendai Chatara.
Did not bat: Jasprit Bumrah, Barinder Sran, Yuzvendra Chahal.	Bowling: Sran 4-1-31-2, Kulkarni 4-0-23-2, Bumrah 4-0-23-0, Patel 4-0-18-1, Chahal 4-0-32-1.
Bowling: Chatara 4-1-34-0, Tiripano 4-0-20-3, Madziva 4-0-32-1, Chibhabha 4-0-19-0, Cremer 4-0-32-1.	Result: India win by three runs.

## MORGAN SAYS ENGLAND 'OUT OF A HOLE' WITH SRI LANKA TIE



**NOTTINGHAM:** England's Liam Plunkett (L) celebrates with England's Chris Woakes after Plunkett hits a six off the final ball to draw the first one day international (ODI) cricket match between England and Sri Lanka at Trent Bridge cricket ground in Nottingham, central England, on Tuesday. — AFP

**NOTTINGHAM:** England captain Eoin Morgan praised Chris Woakes, Jos Buttler and Liam Plunkett for getting his side "out of a hole" as the first one-day international against Sri Lanka ended in a thrilling tie.

Set 287 to win, England collapsed to 30 for four and 82 for six in Nottingham on Tuesday. But a stand of 138 between Buttler (93) and man-of-the-match Woakes, who made 95 not out—the highest ODI score by any number eight batsman—revived the innings. England's hopes of victory disappeared in a final over where they needed 14 to win in front of a capacity crowd at a floodlit Trent Bridge. However, with six required to tie off the last ball, tailender Plunkett drove Nuwan Pradeep over long-off to seal the tie, in what was a stunning start to the five-match series.

This was Plunkett's first match at this level since September, but the fast bowler said he was confident his reputation as a big hitter in county cricket would be maintained on the international stage. "I was telling myself I have been hitting it well for Yorkshire—stay still and hope I get enough on it to get it out of the ground," said Plunkett. "You know when you have nailed the ball, it's like on a golf course off the tee, a similar feeling." Morgan added: "You can always win the game from any situation, and today proved that a little bit. "Getting out of the game with a tie is a big result," the former Ireland batsman said.

"Towards the end, it was in Sri Lanka's favour, there weren't a lot of boundaries being hit, and they bowled well."

### WOAKES V STOKES

At one stage on Tuesday, it looked as if Morgan's men, playing their first ODI of the English season, were in danger of a record defeat. "The general performance was poor-bat, ball, field, was really rusty," said Morgan.

"Jos Buttler, Chris Woakes and Liam Plunkett have got us out of a hole at the end. "We've got confidence with the guys coming in anywhere down past seven and eight—but we don't want to leave them too much to do." Woakes might not even have played Tuesday had injured fellow England all-rounder Ben Stokes been fit.

But he responded to England's slump with a career-best score, having earlier taken two wickets with some lively pace bowling. "It was outstanding—a lot of Woakes's story is that he is competing with Ben Stokes, and the two of them are incredible cricketers," said Morgan. Sri Lanka captain Angelo Mathews led from the front by top-scoring with 73 in his side's 286 for nine and then taking two early wickets with his medium-pace bowling. —AFP

### SCOREBOARD

**NOTTINGHAM, United Kingdom:** Completed scoreboard in the first one-day international between England and Sri Lanka at Trent Bridge yesterday:

Sri Lanka	England
K. Perera c Roy b Willey 24	J. Roy lbw b Mathews 3
D. Gunathilaka c Bairstow b Willey 9	A. Hales c Perera b Lakmal 4
K. Mendis c Buttler b Woakes 17	J. Root b Mathews 2
D. Chandimal c Woakes b Ali 37	E. Morgan c Chandimal b Pradeep 43
A. Mathews c Woakes b Plunkett 73	J. Bairstow c Gunathilaka b Lakmal 3
S. Prasanna c and b Woakes 59	J. Buttler c Shanaka b Prasanna 93
U. Tharanga c Buttler b Plunkett 3	M. Ali b Pradeep 7
D. Shanaka run out (Plunkett/Willey) 20	C. Woakes not out 95
F. Maharoo not out 31	D. Willey c Mendis b Maharoo 7
S. Lakmal run out (Willey/Woakes) 7	L. Plunkett not out 22
Extras (lb2, w3, nb1) 6	Extras (lb2, w5) 7
Total (9 wkts, 50 overs) 286	Total (8 wkts, 50 overs) 286
Did not bat: N Pradeep	Did not bat: A Rashid
Fall of wickets: 1-27 (Gunathilaka), 2-50 (Perera), 3-56 (Mendis), 4-120 (Chandimal), 5-188 (Prasanna), 6-197 (Tharanga), 7-225 (Shanaka), 8-266 (Mathews), 9-286 (Lakmal)	Fall of wickets: 1-3 (Roy), 2-7 (Hales), 3-17 (Root), 4-30 (Bairstow), 5-72 (Morgan), 6-82 (Ali), 7-220 (Buttler), 8-235 (Willey)
Bowling: Woakes 10-0-56-2 (2w); Willey 10-0-56-2 (1w); Rashid 10-0-36-0; Plunkett 10-0-67-2 (1nb); Ali 10-0-69-1;	Bowling: Lakmal 10-0-65-2 (4w); Mathews 6-0-22-2; Shanaka 3-0-21-0; Pradeep 10-0-64-2 (1w); Maharoo 10-0-59-1; Prasanna 10-0-43-1; Gunathilaka 1-0-10-0; Result: Match tied

## AUSTRALIA BEAT WINDIES TO REACH ODI TRI-SERIES FINAL

**BARBADOS:** Australia qualified for the final of the triangular one-day international series (ODI) with a six-wicket win over West Indies in Barbados on Tuesday. West Indies were sent in to bat and compiled 282 for eight off their 50 overs, with Marlon Samuels scoring 125 off 134 balls for his maiden ODI century against Australia. Wicketkeeper-batsman Denesh Ramdin chipped in with a brisk 91 in a 192-run fourth wicket stand as the hosts roared back after losing three early wickets. Australia made a wobbly start to their reply, with openers Aaron Finch (16) and Usman Khawaja (17) going early, but settled to chase down the target with eight balls to spare, Glenn Maxwell (46 not out) securing victory with a devastating late burst.

The result means the winner of Friday's match between West Indies and South Africa will advance to Sunday's final against Australia at Kensington Oval in Bridgetown. While captain Steve Smith (78) top-scored for Australia with his third successive

ODI half-century, the batting form of team mates Mitchell Marsh (79 not out) and Maxwell pleased the skipper. Maxwell's innings included a magnificent switch-hit sweep for six over cover-point off spinner Sunil Narine in the 46th over.

In the next over he bludgeoned 14 runs off three balls off Carlos Brathwaite to effectively seal victory. "An innings like that, I was speechless at the other end," said Marsh in an on-field interview. "Maxie has a lot of doubters but an innings like today shows why he's such a pivotal part of the team." Smith, who downplayed a question about apparent on-field sledging, had plenty of praise to share around. "I thought Mitchell Marsh played a very mature innings and Glenn Maxwell finished off nicely with a few of his trademark reverse slog sweeps, or whatever they're called," he said. West Indies captain Jason Holder limped off with a strained left hamstring after bowling just two overs and is doubtful for Friday's showdown against South Africa. — Reuters

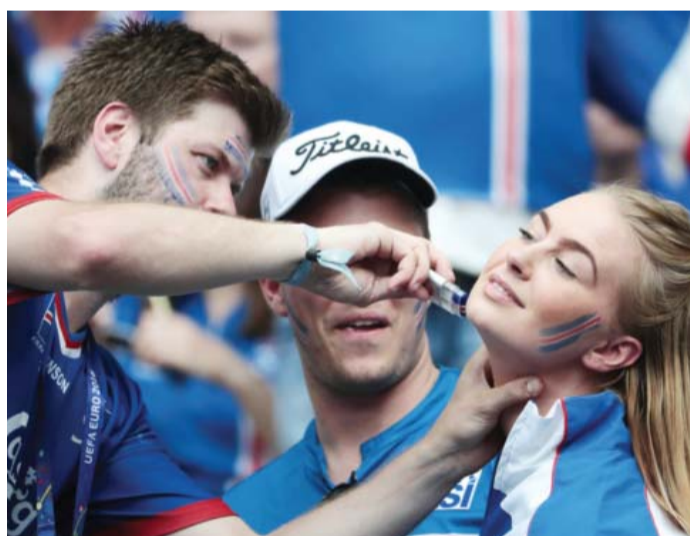
### SCOREBOARD

**BRIDGETOWN, Barbados:** Scoreboard of seventh match of the Tri-Nation One-Day International series between West Indies and Australia at Kensington Oval in Barbados on Tuesday.

West Indies Innings	Australia Innings
J. Charles c Smith b Starc 0	3-0-16-0, G. Maxwell 2-0-10-0 (2w).
A. Fletcher c Marsh b Starc 9	<b>Australia Innings</b>
D. Bravo c Smith b Hazlewood 15	U. Khawaja c wkpr Ramdin b Gabriel 17
S. Samuels c Marsh b Faulkner 125	A. Finch c Samuels b Brathwaite 16
D. Ramdin b Starc 91	S. Smith run out 78
K. Pollard c Marsh b Boland 20	G. Bailey c Pollard b Benn 34
C. Brathwaite b Boland 7	M. Marsh not out 79
J. Holder c Marsh b Faulkner 1	G. Maxwell not out 46
S. Narine not out 1	Extras (b-3, lb-4, w-6) 13
Extras (lb-4, w-9) 13	Total (48.4 overs, 4 wickets) 283
Total (50 overs, 8 wickets) 282	Fall of wickets: 1-35 (Finch), 2-35 (Gabriel), 3-99 (Bailey), 4-221 (Smith).
Fall of wickets: 0-1 (Charles), 2-29 (Bravo), 3-31 (Fletcher), 4-223 (Ramdin), 5-247 (Pollard), 6-269 (Brathwaite), 7-274 (Holder), 8-282 (Samuels).	Did not bat: M. Wade, J. Faulkner, M. Starc, S. Boland, J. Hazlewood.
Did not bat: S. Benn, S. Gabriel.	Bowling: J. Holder 2-0-20-0, S. Gabriel 9-1-43-1, C. Brathwaite 9-0-62-1, S. Benn 10-0-47-1, S. Narine 10-0-49-0 (3w), K. Pollard 5-4-0-42-0 (3w), A. Fletcher 3-0-13-0.
Bowling: M. Starc 10-1-51-3 (3w), J. Hazlewood 10-3-40-1, J. Faulkner 10-0-56-2, S. Boland 10-0-69-2 (3w), M. Marsh 5-0-36-0 (1w), A. Finch	Result: Australia win by six wickets.

# WALES BOSS STAYS AWAY EURO 2016 MINEFIELD

## FAN FERVOR



**DINARD:** Wales boss Chris Coleman insisted yesterday he is not yet trying to plot a path through the minefield of the European Championship knockout rounds.

And Coleman indicated he could make changes to the team that brilliantly beat Russia 3-0 for their last 16 match against Northern Ireland or Turkey in Paris on Saturday. With myriad routes possible in looming rounds before Wednesday's final games, Coleman said he was staying away from the guessing game.

"I'll tell you how I look at it-and players and staff-the only pathway I am thinking about is the first 45 minutes on Saturday and how we find our way through that.

"The second pathway is at half-time and those second 45 minutes. If it goes to extra time or penalties, whatever it is, beyond that I promise I'm not saying we can play this side or that side," Coleman said. "We have to have feet firmly on the ground here. Everyone's talking about this possibility or that possibility. "We have seen before that

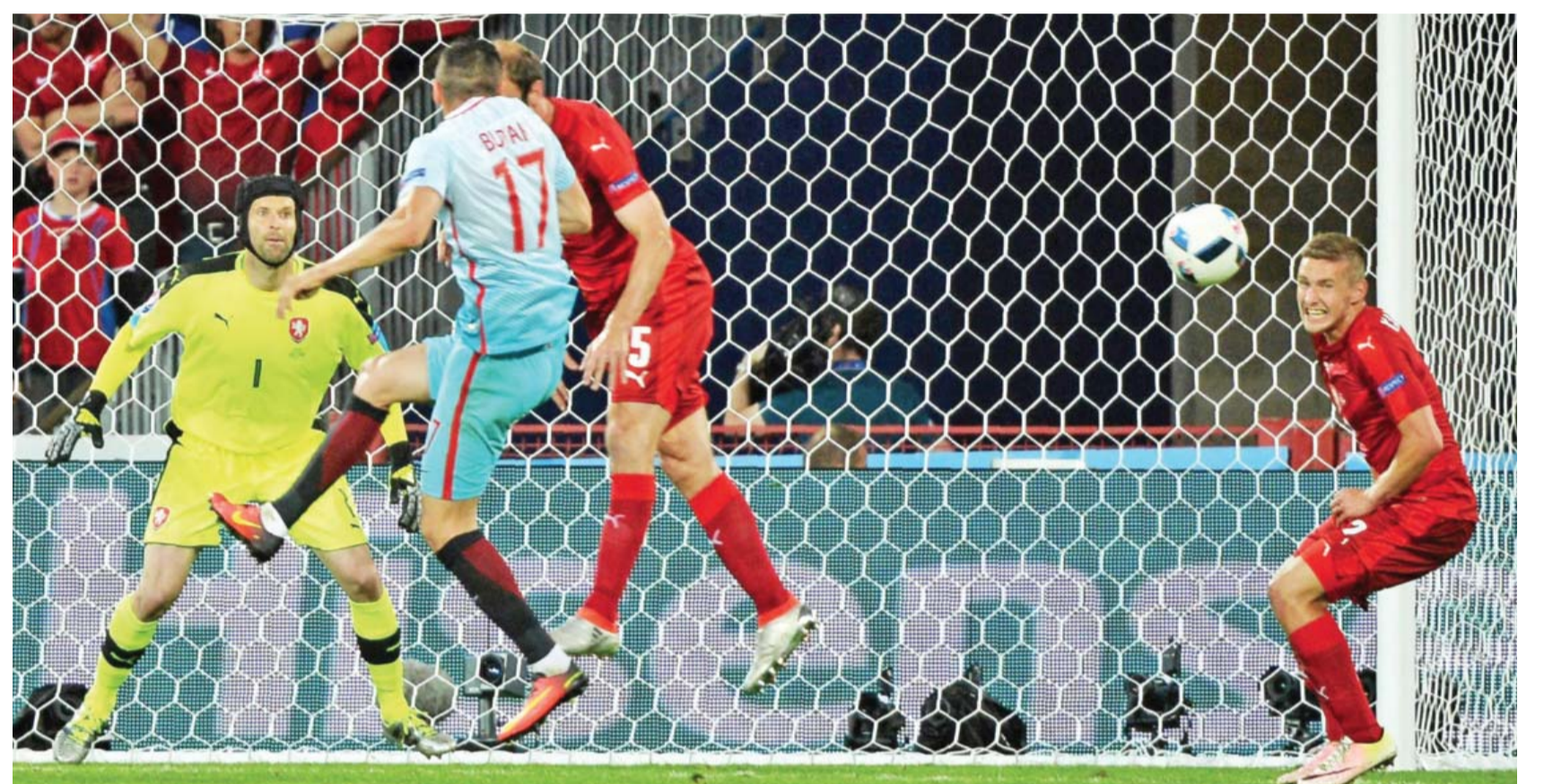
everything's possible in football, but one minute you're right there and everything's great, the next you take your eye off the ball and everything's fallen down. "Whoever is it down the line that's when you get on with it and take care of the business in front of you. There's no talk in my camp about who could be next after the last 16. No way, I wouldn't allow that. "There's not a team in this tournament who can think like that, not even Germany or Spain, we've seen the games are so tight. Once we find out who is next we'll focus on it and put everything into that challenge."

Wales' win over Russia saw them leapfrog England in Group B to advance into a last 16 clash with Northern Ireland or Turkey. A win then and Belgium and Croatia are the likely obstacles standing in the way of a remarkable run to the final in Paris on July 10. England, by contrast, face the runners-up in Group F in the next round and would need to negotiate their way past the likes of France, Germany, Italy or Spain to be in with a chance of winning the

tournament. Having waited 58 years to be part of a major tournament, this is uncharted territory for Wales and knock-out football will bring with the possibility of a penalty shoot-out. But Coleman has no plans to spend time specifically working on honing down a list of potential spot-kick takers. Several Wales players stay behind after training to work on free-kicks and practise penalties. The manager feels no need to do any more than that.

"I would say three days out of five naturally a few guys just grab a ball after training and take penalties," he said. "We could practise every day and the guys won't miss. But how do you recreate 50,000 people breathing down your neck and all the eyes on the world are on you when you need to put in the back of the net?"

"If it comes our way we'll try and deal with it the best we can." Wales' win over Russia in Toulouse on Monday ranks alongside the finest ever by a Dragons side in their 137-year international history. —AFP



**LENS:** Turkey's forward Burak Yilmaz (2nd L) heads the ball during the Euro 2016 group D football match between Czech Republic and Turkey at Bollaert-Delelis stadium in Lens on Tuesday. — AFP

## TURKEY REMAINS IN CONTENTION WITH 2-0 WIN OVER CZECHS

**LENS:** Turkey rebounded from two losses at the European Championship to beat the Czech Republic 2-0 on Tuesday and keep alive its chances of reaching the knockout stages from Group D.

With their team having failed to score in its defeats to Spain and Croatia, some Turkish fans celebrated with firecrackers and flares that landed on the pitch after the second goal at the Stade Bollaert-Delelis.

Turkey must now wait until the final group matches are played on Wednesday to discover whether it can advance as one of the four best third-place teams. Croatia won Group D after beating two-time defending champion Spain 2-1 to finish with seven points.

Spain has six points, Turkey has three and the Czechs are eliminated with one point, 20 years after their team reached the final and 40 years after becoming European champions as Czechoslovakia. Both teams in Lens on Tuesday needed a win to advance. Turkey coach Fatih Terim stuck by striker Burak Yilmaz, despite his disappointing performances in earlier matches, and the act of faith paid off. Yilmaz struck early, rounding off a swift counter attack just 10 minutes into the game. Emre Mor broke down the right flank before crossing for Yilmaz,

who beat Czech goalkeeper Petr Cech at the near post with a first-time right shot. "I am very happy, I scored a very important goal in a deciding game," Yilmaz said. "It's been a good night and a good goal for me. I hope we'll advance." As the Czechs pushed forward, they also opened up their defense for the Turkish attack.

Ozan Tufan doubled the lead in the 65th minute, hammering a rising shot past Cech from close range following a free kick by Selcuk Inan. "It's a huge disappointment for us," Cech said. Ahead of the tournament, the Arsenal keeper had said he would decide after Euro 2016 whether to retire from international football. He didn't immediately comment on it Tuesday. For Turkey, there is still hope.

### CONFIDENCE IS GROWING

"If we advance, we can do what we did in Euro 2008, because our confidence is growing now," Terim said. Eight years ago, Turkey came back from two goals down to beat the Czech Republic 3-2 in their final group game, a result sent the Turks on the road to an eventual spot in the semifinals, their best ever result.

"We still have some problems, but now it's easier for

us to find solutions," Terim said. "Now we've got our team spirit back. If we advance, I think we have a long way to go. I would be really frustrated if we are out."

The 18-year-old Mor looked particularly sharp for Turkey, smashing a shot wide from inside the area in the first half and cutting in before missing the target on another fast counter in the second.

"He was our saviour tonight," Terim said. "He made his presence felt." Volkan Sen's low drive just missed the target in another good chance of the first half, while captain Arda Turan headed over the bar 15 minutes from the end. For the Czechs, Tomas Sivok almost equalized six minutes after the opening goal. But set up by Borek Dockal's cross, his effort hit the post.

The Czechs clearly missed their creative force, injured captain and playmaker Tomas Rosicky, and squandered their chances. "The first goal really changed the match a lot," said Czech coach Pavel Vrba, whose side had drawn 2-2 with Croatia in its previous game. "We didn't manage to stop their breaks. We had some chances in the first half but we didn't score. "In the second half we started to play in a more simple way but lost it in midfield. Our tactics from the Croatia game didn't work this time." — AP

## CZECH REPUBLIC FACING NEED TO OVERHAUL AGEING SQUAD

**NICE:** For the Czech Republic, it's time to give youth a chance. Following its group stage exit from the European Championship, the Czech Republic has little option than to replace its aging starts with the next generation of players.

For this tournament, Czech coach Pavel Vrba stuck with an experienced group of players, many of whom came from the domestic league, such as 34-year-old Sparta Prague forward David Lafata, who failed to replicate his club form.

The Czech Republic was the third oldest team in France. Its youngest player was the 23-year old backup goalkeeper Tomas Koubek. Some of the squad, such as goalkeeper Petr Cech and midfielder Tomas Rosicky, even played at Euro 2004 when the team made the semifinals only to lose to eventual champion Greece.

There's speculation that Cech, 34, and Rosicky, 35, will follow Lafata and midfielder 34-year-old Jaroslav Plasil in announcing their retirement from international football.

The Czechs were eliminated from the tournament after earning only one point from their three Group D matches. The 2-0 defeat to Turkey on Tuesday, which confirmed its early exit from Euro 2016, was particularly disappointing.

"We were taught a great lesson at the European Championship and we will learn from it," Vrba said. "The three matches showed us that football is played in a different way than we play at home. The pace of the game and the quality of players at this level are unbelievable."

Turkey could be an example for the Czechs going forward. Its coach Fatih Terim fielded 18-year-old forward Emre Mor in the match.

Mor's speed posed constant difficulties for the Czech defense and it was the teenager who set up Burak Yilmaz for the opening goal after a quick counter down the right just 10 minutes into the game.

Others have used teenagers in France, too. Switzerland coach Vladimir Petkovic has three 19-year-



**LENS:** Czech Republic's defender Roman Hubnik (L) and Czech Republic's midfielder Josef Sural react at the end of the Euro 2016 group D football match between Czech Republic and Turkey at Bollaert-Delelis stadium in Lens. — AFP

olds in his squad and one of them, Brel Embolo was especially sharp in a 0-0 draw against France. And Roy Hodgson of England has deployed 18-year-old striker Marcus Rashford.

It's not as if Vrba doesn't have options. One prospect for the Czech Republic is 18-year-old forward Vaclav

Cerny. Vrba has said Cerny is not experienced enough to play for the national team, even though the forward is good enough to play and score for Ajax. Another promising striker, the 20-year-old Patrik Schick of Bohemians Prague, did at least get a chance to play in a warm-up match but didn't make the team. — AP

# CRITICISM FIRES UP ENGLAND FOR EURO'S LAST 16

## FAN FERVOR



**CHANTILLY:** England's under-fire goalkeeper Joe Hart is backing the Three Lions to prove critics of their goalless draw with Slovakia wrong in the Euro 2016 knockout phase. Hart acknowledged the "tension" caused by England's second draw which left the side waiting to meet the Group F runners-up either Iceland, Portugal, Hungary or Austria in Nice on Monday in the last 16. The Three Lions arrived at the European championship finals among the favourites after winning all 10 of their qualifying games.

But having finished second in Group B behind Wales, Roy Hodgson's England has been hammered back home for failing to turn any of their 29 shots into goals in Monday's goalless draw with Slovakia. Hart said the squad must suck up the attacks and focus on reaching the quarter-finals.

"It's going to create tension and stories have got to be written, but we've got to remain focused," said 29-year-old Manchester City goalkeeper. "We've got a job in hand and that's what's important to us."

"The questions come from the outside, not the inside. We are very confident of what we've got in the group. We're united, together and we want to go as far as we can." Following the Slovakia draw, several

British newspapers branded Hodgson's side "second rate" and "Toothless Lions" for their lack of finishing. Hart has been slammed on social media after each of England's performances in France.

He also could only stand and watch as Russia's Vasilii Berezutski headed in a 92nd-minute equaliser in the 1-1 opening draw with Russia.

### FRESH LEGS AND QUALITY

More flak came after Gareth Bale's free-kick beat him in the 2-1 win over Wales. Critics said Hart had been out of place. He irked England fans further after the Slovakia draw by saying he "hasn't had anything to do in the whole tournament to be honest". "It's football and I'm a goalkeeper: if the ball goes in, I'm going to get looked at," said Hart.

Hodgson was heavily criticised for making six changes against Slovakia, but Hart rejected the notion that the England boss gambled. "We have a 23-man squad and you could pick anyone," said the England shot-stopper. "Everyone deserves to be in the team on merit. To go far in the tournament you need fresh legs - and when you've got the quality that we've got then it was the right decision. I would love to be

standing here having won 2-0 and it would look an even better decision, but at the end of it, we'll be ready for the next game." Hart takes heart from England's performances so far. "We are going to look to build on three good performances. Result-wise they've not been great, but performance-wise I don't think anyone will be looking forward to playing us," he said. "But there's no point talking about ifs and buts - we've finished second. It's Monday in Nice and we're going to be ready for it." Like his manager before him, Hart says it is just a matter of time before England find their finishing. "We've come up against some really resilient defending, but everyone is well aware that there's going to be a game where we do start getting what we deserve," said Hart.

"And that's going to be a good day." With France lurking as potential quarter-final opponents, should both teams win their last 16 matches, Hart is relishing the possibility of facing a side who wants to attack.

"It depends. It will be nice because we'll get more room but at the same time it brings more danger," said the 29-year-old. "We're well drilled and well balanced in what we do, we feel good in defence and looking forward to the next game." — AFP

# PERISIC SENSATIONAL GOAL STUNS CHAMPIONS SPAIN

**BORDEAUX:** Ivan Perisic struck a sensational winner three minutes from time as Croatia ended Spain's 14-game unbeaten run at the European Championship finals to top Group D after a 2-1 victory on Tuesday.

Spain will now face Italy in the last 16 in Paris on Monday in a repeat of the 2012 final. Alvaro Morata's early strike got Spain off to a flying start. But despite the absence of Luka Modric through injury, Croatia battled back to equalise before half-time through Nikola Kalinic.

Spain captain Sergio Ramos saw a penalty saved by Danijel Subasic 18 minutes from time. And that miss proved vital when Perisic snuck the ball home at David de Gea's near post. Croatia meet one of the best third-placed sides in Lens on Saturday.

Spain could also have to face world champions Germany in the quarter-finals and hosts France in the semi-finals if they are to reach the final in Paris on July 10. "Now we have to dance with the favourites, but to be champions you have to beat everyone," said Ramos, who vowed Spain will learn from their mistakes. Coach Vicente del Bosque would rather have avoided an early meeting with the on-form Italians.

### ITALY CLASH

"It is not ideal, that would have been to finish first (in the group)," said Del Bosque.

"We have to recover well. We are prepared to turn this situation around." Morata's return to European champions Real Madrid from Juventus had been confirmed earlier on Tuesday.

And he moved level with club teammate Gareth Bale on three goals in the fight for the golden boot by finishing off a slick Spanish move after seven minutes. David Silva's cute reverse pass picked out Cesc Fabregas's run and the Chelsea midfielder's cross was tapped into an empty net by Morata.

Spain looked rarely troubled at the back in their opening two games, but were given plenty of problems by Croatia even without star midfielder Modric.

Kalinic stung the palms of David de Gea before forcing an error from the Manchester United 'keeper as he dallied. The loose ball fell to Ivan Rakitic and his brilliant chipped effort floated over Barcelona teammate Gerard Pique on the line before coming back off both the crossbar and post.

Morata had a great chance to double Spain's lead when he failed to control Fabregas's fine through ball with just Subasic to beat. However, Del Bosque's men were pegged back right on half-time when Perisic's cross from the left was flicked home by Kalinic.

It was the first time Spain had conceded in 11 competitive games stretching back to October 2014 and first time they had conceded in the Euros for a



**BORDEAUX:** Croatia's Darijo Srna, left, tackles Spain's David Silva during the Euro 2016 Group D soccer match between Croatia and Spain at the Nouveau Stade in Bordeaux, France, Tuesday. — AP

record 733 minutes. The goal knocked Spain out of their stride as Croatia pushed them onto the back foot at the start of the second period. De Gea saved from Tin Jedvaj to atone for his own error in flapping at a cross before Marko Pjaca sent an acrobatic effort just wide from the rebound.

Pjaca also had claims for a penalty waved away as Croatia threatened the goal that would have taken them top of the group.

Del Bosque withdrew front two Nolito and Morata for the more physical presence of Bruno Soriano and

Aritz Aduriz. Spain were then handed a great chance to retake the lead when referee Bjorn Kuipers adjudged Silva had been pushed by Sime Vrsaljko inside the area. Modric appeared to send on a message to Subasic when he saw his Real Madrid teammate Ramos step up to take the spot-kick.

And Subasic got lucky as his save was allowed to stand despite the fact he had encroached well before Ramos took aim. Croatia took full advantage to blow the tournament wide open as Perisic lashed home to round off a clinical counter-attack. — AFP

# DEL BOSQUE HAD WARNED SPAIN'S PLAYERS OF PERISIC THREAT

**BORDEAUX:** Spain coach Vicente del Bosque defended his players after a 2-1 defeat by Croatia on Tuesday that means they must face old rivals Italy in the round of 16. He pointed out, however, that they had been warned about the sort of break with which Ivan Perisic scored the winning goal.

"We had spoken about Perisic and how dangerous he was in counter-attacks," Del Bosque told Spanish television network Telecinco when asked about the Inter Milan striker.

"We are disappointed. The path now might be seen as more difficult but you never know where the danger is." Although it was a first defeat in 15 matches at the finals for Spain since they lost to Portugal in 2004, they did recover from an opening defeat by Switzerland to win the 2010 World Cup. "We've won the right still to be in the competition," said Del Bosque. "I'm not going to defend the performance excessively but we haven't played badly and I don't really have any complaints about the players."

### PENALTY TAKER

Asked about the choice of penalty taker for the spot kick captain Sergio Ramos missed, Del Bosque said there was a group of players and "the one who has the most confidence takes it".

Ramos acknowledged that his poor kick, saved by goalkeeper Danijel Subasic, had given Spain a harder path to follow if they are to win a record third straight European title.

"We dominated early and had chances to extend our lead," he said. "I had a chance to put my team ahead and unfortunately I couldn't convert. It wasn't to be. They had a counter-attack which ended up in a



**PARIS:** Croatia fans pose as they watch the Euro 2016 group D football match between Croatia and Spain at the fan zone near the Eiffel Tower in Paris on Tuesday. — AFP

goal. "Now we will face a more difficult rival than if we had finished first in our group. We need to turn the page. We have to learn from this game. I've always said that you have to beat the best if we want to be champions."

Neither the captain nor coach offered tiredness as an excuse after Del Bosque chose the same eleven who had played most of the previous two games. "We

had the game more or less controlled but we made some errors and they punished us," he said. "Unfortunately, we can't choose our own path now, which we could have done had we been first."

If Spain get past Italy then world champions Germany are potential quarter-final opponents while France and England also lie in wait as possible semi-final opposition. — Reuters

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## INDIA WIN SERIES WITH 3-RUN VICTORY

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LYON: Nani, right, of Portugal heads the ball next to his teammate Cristiano Ronaldo, centre, and Roland Juhasz, left, of Hungary during their soccer Euro 2016 Group F third round soccer match at Stade de Lyon in Lyon, France, yesterday. — AP

## RONALDO'S DOUBLE PUTS PORTUGAL INTO LAST 16

**LYON:** Cristiano Ronaldo scored two trademark brilliant goals yesterday to go into European Championship history and rescue Portugal in a 3-3 draw that took them into the last 16.

The 31-year-old opened his account in style with a deft backheel flick on 50 minutes, then a bullet header 12 minutes later to twice equalise at the Stade de Lyon. The result left Hungary on top of Group F. Portugal squeezed through as one of the best third-place finishers but now face a tough match against Croatia. The Real Madrid ace became the first player to score at four European championship finals and his 17th match in a Euro tournament was also a record. It was his 128th appearance for Portugal, further extending the record he set last Saturday, as he made a record 17th appearance at Euro finals. Following their draws with Iceland and Austria, Portugal's captain had been feeling the pressure. He threw a TV reporter's microphone in a lake on the morning of the game in Lyon. But he delivered when it mattered as Portugal equalised three times in a topsy-turvy match-not one for the faint-hearted.

Hungary captain Balazs Dzsudzsak matched Ronaldo by netting two second-half goals as the Mighty Magyars took first place in Group F winners. With three draws, Portugal advance as third behind Iceland.

Hungary took the lead in sweltering conditions at the Stade de Lyon when veteran midfielder Zoltan Gera unleashed a thunderbolt. There was nothing on when Portugal fail to clear a corner.

But the 37-year-old Gera belted a low left-footed drive

into the bottom-right corner which gave Portugal goalkeeper Rui Patrício no chance on 19 minutes. At the other end, a save from Hungary goalkeeper Gabor Kiraly, who has made grey sweatpants the must-have fashion back home, saved a swirling Ronaldo free-kick on 29 minutes. Nani had the ball in the Hungary net five minutes from the break, but his effort was ruled offside. The Fenerbahce forward was not to be denied and his crisp finish, after a lovely pass in from Ronaldo, put Portugal level on 42 minutes.

The game burst into life with four goals in the opening 20 minutes of the second-half. Hungary regained the lead just two minutes after the break when Dzsudzsak's well-struck free-kick took a slight deflection off the Portugal wall on 47 minutes.

The stage was set for Ronaldo. The Real superstar made sure he would leave the Stade de Lyon with two records when he flicked his shot past Kiraly on 50 minutes to make it 2-2. But Portugal's second equaliser only served to galvanise Hungary's resolve. Dzsudzsak drilled a free-kick off the wall, but pounced on the rebound and his left-footed shot deflected off Nani, past Rui Patrício, into the far corner on 55 minutes for a 3-2 lead.

There was, however, no denying Ronaldo. Just moments after coming on, Ricardo Queresma fired in a corner and Ronaldo drove his header past Kiraly on 62 minutes.

By now it was end-to-end stuff as Hungary's attacking midfielder Akos Elek hit the woodwork on 64 minutes as it stayed 3-3 at the final whistle. — AFP



SAINT-DENIS: Austria's forward Marcel Sabitzer (up) vies with Iceland's defender Ari Skulason during the Euro 2016 group F football match between Iceland and Austria at the Stade de France stadium in Saint-Denis, near Paris yesterday. — AFP

## TRAUSTASON WINNER SETS UP ICELAND-ENGLAND CLASH

**PARIS:** Substitute Arnor Ingvi Traustason's last-gasp winner fired Iceland past Austria 2-1 in their final Group F match at Euro 2016 yesterday to book a last-16 showdown with England. Jon Dadi Bodvarsson swept Iceland into an 18th-minute lead at the Stade de France, with Austria paying dearly for Aleksandar Dragovic's missed first-half penalty.

Substitute Alessandro Schopf levelled for Austria on the hour, but Traustason's 94th-minute strike condemned Marcel Koller's side to a premature exit.

Iceland, the smallest nation to appear at a major finals, will play England in the last 16 in Nice after finishing second in the group, behind Hungary but above Portugal, following a thrilling 3-3 draw in Lyon. Dragovic returned to a three-man Austrian defence after suspension, with captain Christian Fuchs and Florian Klein operating as wing-backs in what was a must-win game for the world's 10th-ranked side. Iceland stuck with the same starting XI from their first two matches and were almost ahead inside two minutes at the Stade de France. Gylfi Sigurdsson's intricate flick found Johann Gudmundsson in plenty of space and the Charlton Athletic winger hammered a 30-yard drive that crashed against the crossbar.

Marko Arnautovic nearly punished Hannes Halldorsson after Iceland's goalkeeper dallied on the ball, but the Stoke City player lost his footing with the goal gaping allowing Halldorsson to scramble clear. Iceland grabbed the crucial opening goal on 18 minutes as Aron

Gunnarsson's long throw was helped on into the path of Bodvarsson who steered past Robert Almer with Austria's defence slow to react.

Centre-back Kari Arnason sliced narrowly over after a corner was only partially cleared, but Austria began to threaten with Arnautovic testing Halldorsson before heading over from a Julian Baumgartlinger cross. And Marcel Koller's side should have levelled on 37 minutes when Ari Skulason was penalised for tugging the shirt of David Alaba inside the area. Dragovic stepped up but the centre-back fired the spot-kick against the outside of the post as Iceland breathed a huge sigh of relief. Birkir Bjarnason thought he had increased Iceland's lead on 38 minutes, only for his effort to be correctly ruled out for offside. Julian Baumgartlinger's curling strike from distance forced Halldorsson to tip over, and Koller rolled the dice by throwing on Marc Janko and Alessandro Schopf for the second half.

It almost immediately paid off as Alaba swept a low right-footed strike towards the corner, but Arnason's superb goal-line clearance denied the Bayern Munich star.

Sigurdsson embarked on a marauding run through the heart of Austria's midfield but volleyed a difficult chance just wide. Austria had Iceland pegged inside their own half though and it took a piece of individual brilliance on the hour from Schalke midfielder Schopf to breathe life into the team. — AFP

## MESSI FIRES ARGENTINA INTO COPA AMERICA FINAL

**HOUSTON:** Lionel Messi became Argentina's all-time record goalscorer as the two-time world champions outclassed the United States 4-0 to reach the Copa America Centenario final here Tuesday.

Messi curled in a magnificent 32nd-minute free-kick to take his total to 55 goals as the United States' campaign ended with an emphatic defeat in front of a 70,858 crowd at Houston's NRG Stadium. The five-time world player of the year now has five goals in this Copa America as he aims to lead Argentina to their first major title in 23 years.

The Barcelona superstar also created Argentina's opening goal for Ezequiel Lavezzi and was involved in the build-up for their third, scored by Gonzalo Higuain in the 50th minute. Messi then laid on the pass for Higuain's second four minutes from time.

"We've been playing well from day one and we deserve to be in the final," said a delighted Messi, dedicating his goals tally to the work of his teammates.

"I'm happy to have the record, and I'm happy to play with the teammates that have made it possible. I owe it to them," said Messi, who is now one clear of Gabriel Batistuta's mark of 54 goals.

US coach Jurgen Klinsmann, meanwhile, said his team had showed Argentina "too much respect" after a display which saw them finish with zero shots on or off target.

"I think in general we had too much respect," Klinsmann said while hailing Argentina as the "number

one team in the world." "I told the guys there's nothing to be ashamed of. We have to learn and move forward," Klinsmann said. "We have to keep our heads up and swallow it. But Argentina are a special team."

Argentina will now face either Chile or Colombia in Sunday's final at East Rutherford, New Jersey—their third major final in three years after reaching the finals of the 2015 Copa America and 2014 World Cup. A disastrous start for the United States saw the hosts fall behind after only three minutes when they gifted possession to Messi on the edge of the area. The Argentina captain instantly spotted that Lavezzi was unmarked and lofted a first time pass through to the China-based midfielder to head home.

Argentina might have doubled their lead five minutes later, when Ever Banega backheeled to pick out Marcos Rojo, who crossed for Messi, only for the Albiceleste skipper to shoot over. Messi was again on the prowl in the 14th minute, seizing upon another American mistake to burst clear from near halfway before firing a shot which Brad Guzan managed to gather safely.

With Argentina monopolizing possession, it was only a matter of time before the South Americans scored again. The second goal almost came on 22 minutes when Messi released Higuain with a quick free-kick into the penalty area, only for Geoff Cameron to snuff out the danger with a desperate tackle. — AFP

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LONDON: Pedestrians walk across Waterloo bridge in central London with a backdrop of the towers of the City of London yesterday. — AFP

## BIG BUSINESS RAISES BREXIT ALARM 'REMAIN' CAMP HAS RAZOR-THIN LEAD OVER 'LEAVE'

LONDON: More than 1,200 business titans united yesterday to warn against Britain breaking with the EU, as rivals scrambled for the last votes on the eve of a tightly fought referendum that will shape Europe's future. The world's fifth-largest economy will suffer a powerful blow to growth and jobs, corporate chiefs warned, if Britain becomes the first state to defect from the EU in the bloc's 60-year history. The "Remain" camp has a razor-thin lead - 51 percent versus 49 percent for "Leave", according to an average of polls compiled by What UK Thinks - and surveys consistently show more than 10 percent of people are undecided.

"Britain leaving the EU would mean uncertainty for our firms, less trade with Europe and fewer jobs," said the chiefs of 1,285 companies employing 1.75 million people, ranging from Virgin boss Richard Branson to media tycoon Michael Bloomberg. "Britain remaining in the EU would mean the opposite: more certainty, more trade

and more jobs. EU membership is good for business and good for British jobs," they said in a letter to The Times newspaper.

World markets are on alert over the historic vote, with many markets edging gingerly higher on the expectation that Britons will finally decide to stay. If Britain decides to go its own way, however, financier George Soros has warned of a Black Friday plunge in sterling. With uncertainty rife, the world's leading central banks have consulted over how to react to the financial market reaction, according to the European Central Bank.

Leading Brexit campaigner Boris Johnson, a former mayor of London touted as a future prime minister, won a standing ovation from many people late Tuesday when he urged Britons in a public debate to declare "Independence Day" by voting to pull out of the EU. "This is our last chance to take back control of so much that matters in our lives," he told Sky News yesterday.

Though many voters fret over the financial consequences of a Brexit, others relish the prospect of taking back power from Brussels and reining in high levels of immigration. "I think we need to make our contribution to Europe and to the global economy. And the best way we can do that is by being in it, not by ignoring it," Chet Patel, a 44-year-old telecoms worker told AFP in central London. Pat Hand, a 50-year-old construction worker, said he would be casting a vote to leave the EU. "The country is in an absolute mess. I work in construction and every single person on my job is not English," he said.

Prime Minister David Cameron, whose job is on the line in case of a Brexit, predicted a "Remain dividend" for the economy if Britain stays but admitted: "It's very close, nobody knows what's going to happen." "I think on Friday that businesses, wealth creators, job creators will think: Britain has made a decision, let's pile back into the economy and cre-

ate jobs and opportunity," he told the Financial Times in an interview. Speaking to BBC television, he said: "Leaving the EU doesn't solve the challenge of immigration but it creates a massive problem for our economy." "There's no going back if we vote to leave" he said.

Two newspapers used their yesterday's front pages for last-minute endorsements of opposite sides of the campaign. "Lies. Greedy elites. Or a great future outside a broken, dying Europe," wrote the Daily Mail. "If you believe in Britain vote Leave." But the Daily Mirror urged readers to back EU membership "for your jobs... for your children... for Britain's future".

### 'Vile and Unpleasant'

The campaign has been fought over the two key issues of the economy and immigration, with both sides accusing the other of "scaremongering". The Mirror described it as "the most divisive, vile

and unpleasant political campaign in living memory." Around the world, events will be held to mark what would have been the 42nd birthday of lawmaker Jo Cox, who was shot and stabbed to death last week on a village street in her electoral district in northern England, stunning the campaign.

In his first court appearance on Saturday, her alleged killer, Thomas Mair, gave his name as "Death to traitors, freedom for Britain".

Cox's widower Brendan said his wife, a noted pro-EU campaigner who advocated for refugee rights, had been killed because of her political views. "She worried about the tone of the [referendum] debate... The tone of whipping up fears and whipping up hatred potentially," he told the BBC. Rival camps meet for a final television debate later in the day featuring anti-EU UK Independence Party leader Nigel Farage and former Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond for "Remain". — AFP



HONG KONG: A tourist holds a traditional fan as she stands in front of a view of Hong Kong's skyline from the Peak yesterday. — AFP

## HONG KONG BECOMES WORLD'S COSTLIEST CITY

PARIS: Hong Kong has overtaken Angola's capital to become the costliest city in the world for expats, Mercer's annual survey said yesterday. After topping the Cost of Living report for three consecutive years, Luanda was pipped by the Asian city in 2016, owing to a stronger Hong Kong dollar. The survey by the Mercer consulting group compares the cost of over 200 items in over 200 cities, including housing, food, transport and entertainment. It takes New York as its base for comparison

and measures currency movements against the dollar, which has appreciated significantly over the past year.

The Hong Kong dollar is pegged to the greenback. "Generally speaking, prices remained stable across the world," Bruno Rocquemont of Mercer France told AFP, attributing steep rises or falls in cities' rankings chiefly to exchange rate fluctuations.

A strong yen propelled Tokyo six places higher to become the world's fifth-most

expensive expat destination, behind Zurich and Singapore in third and fourth place respectively.

The cost of living in several US cities also rose on the back of the strong dollar. Conversely, cities in countries whose currencies have slumped became more affordable, with Moscow recording one of the most spectacular price slides, falling from 17th costliest city for expats to 67th. Bottom of the table of 209 cities was Namibia's capital Windhoek. — AFP

## GULF MIXED BEFORE BREXIT VOTE, EGYPT RESUMES SLIDE

### MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

DUBAI: Gulf stock markets were mixed in narrow ranges and moderate volumes yesterday, with investors cautious before Britain's European Union referendum. Egypt resumed sliding after it broke major technical support earlier this week. Saudi Arabia's index dropped 0.3 percent. Some banks were weak, with Saudi Hollandi Bank down 2.8 percent. Saudi Basic Industries, the Gulf's largest listed petrochemical producer, added 0.3 percent as oil prices rose.

Arabian Pipes jumped its 10 percent daily limit for a second straight day in its heaviest trading since early 2005. In Abu Dhabi, Union National Bank jumped 4.4 percent in a second day of strong gains, after Arqaam Capital said in a note on Tuesday that following the proposed merger between National Bank of Abu Dhabi and First Gulf Bank, "we expect UNB to be next".

It said Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank might offer a substantial premium to UNB shareholders in a merger; ADCB shares rose 2.8 percent on Wednesday. NBAD, which soared earlier this week, rose a further 1.7 percent while FGB fell 1.6 percent. The main Abu Dhabi index edged down 0.1 percent. Dubai's index climbed 1.0 percent with Dubai Parks and Resorts, the most heavily traded stock, surging 4.1 percent to 1.54 dirhams.

The company is in an uptrend before the opening of its first theme parks later this year in Dubai, but the stock now exceeds the 1.47-dirham median target price of three analysts surveyed by Reuters. Qatar's

index was flat, although Qatar International Islamic Bank added 2.3 percent in unusually heavy trade.

Cairo's main stock index dropped 1.3 percent to 7,156 points. It has been technically bearish since it broke earlier this week below its April and May lows, triggering a head & shoulders pattern pointing down to the 6,700 point area.

Asec Company for Mining sank 2.8 percent after reporting that it swung to a consolidated loss in the first quarter from a year-earlier profit. Its parent company Qalaa Holdings sank 6.3 percent.

### Yesterday's highlights:

- SAUDI ARABIA**
- \* The index fell 0.3 percent to 6,532 points.
- DUBAI**
- \* The index rose 1.0 percent to 3,376 points.
- ABU DHABI**
- \* The index edged down 0.1 percent to 4,498 points.
- QATAR**
- \* The index was flat at 9,919 points.
- EGYPT**
- \* The index dropped 1.3 percent to 7,156 points.
- KUWAIT**
- \* The index fell 0.5 percent to 5,409 points.
- OMAN**
- \* The index edged up 0.01 percent to 5,789 points.
- BAHRAIN**
- \* The index dropped 0.3 percent to 1,113 points. — Reuters

# OIL RISES ABOVE \$50, BRACED FOR BREXIT VOLATILITY

**LONDON:** Oil rose further above \$50 a barrel yesterday after an industry report showed a large drop in U.S. crude inventories, with analysts expecting volatile trading ahead of Britain's referendum on EU membership. US crude inventories fell by 5.2 million barrels, the American Petroleum Institute (API) said on Tuesday, far more than analysts expected. Official stocks data is due later on Wednesday from the US Department of Energy.

"What we have is basically the leftovers of the reaction from the API report," said Olivier Jakob, oil analyst at Petromatrix, of oil's rally. "There is a risk that the DOE will not show a stock draw of the same magnitude." Brent crude was up 33 cents at \$50.95 a barrel on 0859 GMT. U.S. crude climbed 46 cents to \$50.31, marking its first rise above \$50 since June 10. Oil also benefited from a boost in risk appetite in global markets as

investors were cautiously optimistic about a "Remain" vote in the EU referendum on Thursday. "Though some may be forgiven for thinking that the outcome is a foregone conclusion, the inconsistency between the betting money and the polls mean that conditions are ripe for a fresh bout of volatility," said Stephen Brennock of oil brokers PVM. Riskier markets also drew support from Federal Reserve Chair Janet

Yellen's cautious comments on the US economy the previous day, in which she virtually ruled out a July rate rise. The dollar fell against a basket of currencies. A weaker dollar makes oil cheaper for other currency holders and tends to support oil prices. The drop in US crude inventories, if confirmed by the DOE figures at 1430 GMT, would be the fifth straight weekly decline and adds to signs that a supply glut which has halved oil

prices in the last two years is easing. Other signs include lower US shale oil production due to reduced investment in the wake of the price collapse, underpinning a wider drop in non-OPEC supply in 2016. A spike in unplanned supply losses has also supported prices this year. Nigerian rebels who have been sabotaging the country's crude exports denied on Tuesday they had agreed to a ceasefire, lending support to prices. —Reuters

# APPLE FREE TO TAKE BITE OUT OF INDIA AFTER RULE CHANGE

## TANTALIZING PROSPECT FOR TECH GIANT

**NEW DELHI, India:** The gleaming glass atriums and blue-clad "geniuses" that herald the arrival of an Apple store could soon be landing in India, after the government cleared the way for it to open in the rapidly growing smartphone market. Before now, the Silicon Valley giant has been just a bit-player in the country of 1.2 billion, selling through local shops with none of its own. It applied to open stores in January, but was reportedly rebuffed because of a diktat that states foreign retailers must source 30 percent of their products locally.

But on Monday New Delhi relaxed the rules, just weeks after Apple chief Tim Cook toured India on a breathless charm offensive where he was pictured using Prime Minister Narendra Modi's gold iPhone to launch the premier's own app. Companies making state-of-the-art technology - understood to include Apple - now have up to eight years to meet the sourcing requirements under a waiver, part of a push by India's pro-business government to attract foreign investment and create jobs.

For Apple, which saw iPhone sales dip for the first time ever in the second quarter due to slowing demand in China and the United States, India is a tantalizing prospect. While analysts say it currently accounts for only around one percent of global iPhone sales, its giant population and low number of smartphone owners relative to its size mean it is a huge potential market. "Apple has not really seen India as an important enough market in the past, but somewhere, the penny has dropped," Devangshu Dutta, chief executive of retail consultancy Third Eyesight, told AFP.

Apple's vast, hands-on stores are designed to become destinations in their own right, analysts say, luring potential customers with the promise they can play without buying. "The store is not just a place to do business - it acts as a live billboard for the brand," Dutta said.

### 'Cost-Conscious Market'

Browsing mobile accessories in FutureWorld, a technology retailer in New Delhi's Connaught



In this file photo, Apple chief executive Tim Cook greets onlookers as he leaves the Taj Mahal Palace hotel in Mumbai.

Place, Aryamaan Chauhan said he would "definitely" visit an Apple store if one opened in the city. The 19-year-old IT student owns an Android smartphone, bought for about 20,000 rupees (\$295), but is considering switching loyalties. "Money is what's stopping me. My budget is low, I can't afford it," Chauhan said. "Now, I think most Indian people prefer Android but they are shifting. After graduation I will buy an iPhone."

With a basic iPhone starting at almost \$600 - more than in many countries, thanks to India's high taxes - they are wildly unaffordable for most in a nation where average incomes are less than \$1,600 a year. Handsets costing under \$100 dominate the market, many of them made by Chinese manufacturers such as Xiaomi

or Huawei. "It won't become mass-market, (Apple) will always be a niche player. This is a very cost-conscious market," Vishal Tripathi, research director at Gartner, a technology research firm, told AFP. "But there is a growing number of consumers who like Apple."

By pricing itself exclusively at the luxury end, Apple has distinguished its brand from arch-rival Samsung which has both low-cost and high-end phones. "Indian consumers are always under the notion that more expensive means better and consider carrying an iPhone as more of a status symbol than anything," said Bhasker Canagaradjou, the head of Ipsos Business Consulting in India. "The brand enjoys a very strong aspiration value, especially among the young population."

### 'Make in India'

For now, Apple has given no indication when or if it plans to open its own stores. But if it does, it will eventually have to meet strict sourcing rules as the government exhorts companies to manufacture in India. The company will require factories that can produce its exacting, cutting-edge products - something India largely lacks. "To create a local supply chain, it takes time. They will be able to operate stores and benefit from stores in the meantime," said Dutta.

Foxconn, the major Taiwanese Apple supplier which also assembles products for Sony and Dell, is spending billions of dollars setting up factories in India. The iPhone is not yet on the production line, but Canagaradjou says he believes Apple could start manufacturing in India "in the next one or two years". However, while its stores may arrive in India soon, analysts don't expect to see legions of Apple superfans camping out to buy new releases as they do in other countries any time soon. "If someone is expecting a replication of how it is in other markets, people queuing up outside the stores from 3:00 am, I don't think that's going to happen," said Tripathi of Gartner. "In India, people prefer to sleep until late." —AFP



TOKYO: People walk past an electronic stock indicator of a securities firm yesterday. —AP

# WORLD STOCKS MOSTLY RISE ON EVE OF BRITISH REFERENDUM

**LONDON:** Global equities mostly rose and the pound clawed higher yesterday - the eve of Britain's referendum which markets expect to result in the country voting to remain in the European Union. London's FTSE 100 index gained 0.3 percent in morning deals, with less than 24 hours before voting kicks off to decide Britain's future in the EU. In the eurozone, Frankfurt won 0.6 percent and Paris added 0.3 percent in value, with all eyes on the referendum outcome due Friday. Asian stocks mainly held in positive territory, despite the head of the US Federal Reserve warning that a vote to leave could hammer world markets.

The "Remain" camp has a razor-thin lead - 51 percent versus 49 percent for "Leave", according to an average of polls compiled by What UK Thinks. But financial markets and betting indices have Remain clearly in the lead. "Although the poll predictions are still making the EU referendum results too close to call, global equity markets have maintained their positive Remain stance over the past few days and this has continued in European trade today, with equities pushing further forward," said Rebecca O'Keeffe, head of investment at online broker Interactive Investor.

"With less than 24 hours before voting starts, markets are now pricing in virtually no risk of an exit vote, which begs the question as to whether the euphoria is being overdone and how much upside still exists for investors - or whether this is irrational exuberance and investors are ignoring the risks?" Britain, which is the world's

fifth largest economy, will suffer a powerful blow to growth and jobs, corporate chiefs warned, if the country becomes the first state to defect from the EU in the bloc's 60-year history.

While bookmakers say there is around a 75 percent chance the country will stick with the status quo, opinion polls predict a dead heat, with about one in ten voters still undecided. Following a three-day rally fuelled by hopes the country will stay in the 28-nation bloc, analysts said traders were pausing to see what happens in today's poll.

### Markets Pause

"Equity indices are mixed... having lost some of yesterday's bullish momentum," said Mike van Dulken, head of research at Accendo Markets. "A pause is... to be expected as we creep ever closer to the UK's referendum result tomorrow, polls continuing to suggest it is too close to call. "Markets also have a tendency to hunker down into any major risk event, preferring to avoid leaving excessive risk on the table, especially when the outcome could be so ground-breaking - politically, economically and of course for financial markets," he added in a note to clients.

In foreign exchange, the pound climbed yesterday to \$1.4665, having hit a five-month peak at \$1.4783 the previous day on expectations that Britain would stay in the EU. "Several polls this week have seen an increase in Remain votes, and consequently sterling has rallied," said Currencies Direct dealer Callum McGruther. —Agencies

# GOLD SLIDES TO TWO-WEEK LOW AS BREXIT FEARS ABATE

**LONDON:** Gold eased to a two-week low yesterday after its biggest one-day drop in four weeks, as growing expectations that Britain will vote to remain in the European Union calmed risk aversion and lent a steadier tone to stocks. The metal fell nearly 2 percent on Tuesday after two opinion polls suggested it was increasingly likely that voters would opt today to stay in the EU. Fears of a Leave vote had sent gold to a near two-year high last week.

Spot gold was down 0.2 percent at \$1,265.95 an ounce at 0930 GMT, off an earlier two-

week low of \$1,261.01, while US gold futures for August delivery were down \$4.00 an ounce at \$1,268.50. "Brexit is still the biggest threat. Markets are already celebrating premature victory (for the Remain side) and that is a major concern for us," Naeem Aslam, chief market analyst at ThinkForex, said. "A Remain vote is highly priced into gold now. The Leave vote is the one we have to watch out for, because that is not priced in."

Stocks rose while traditional safe-haven assets like bonds fell on Wednesday on cautious anticipation of a Remain vote. A vote to

leave the 28-member bloc could tip Europe back into recession, putting more pressure on the global economy and increasing the appeal of bullion as a counter-cyclical asset, analysts said. "I think there is a lot more room on the upside (for gold) should there be a Leave vote, rather than the downside on a Remain vote," Marex Spectron said in a note. "If the former, gold has the potential to rally as far as \$1,350 in the medium term. If the latter, then I really don't see prices dropping much more than \$20-\$25 as a quick knee-jerk reaction."

Investors are also keeping an

eye on the path of US interest rates. Federal Reserve chair Janet Yellen said on Tuesday that the Fed's ability to raise interest rates this year may hinge on a rebound in hiring. Holdings in the world's largest gold-backed exchange-traded fund, SPDR Gold shares, rose 0.39 percent to 912.33 tonnes on Tuesday, the highest since September 2013. Among other precious metals, silver was down 0.5 percent at \$17.21 an ounce, while platinum was 0.4 percent higher at \$980.80 an ounce and palladium was up 0.5 percent at \$553 an ounce. —Reuters

# STERLING AND EURO FIRM AHEAD OF BREXIT VOTE

**LONDON:** Sterling and the euro edged higher on the last day of campaigning before Britain's referendum on European Union membership, the pound trading just off its highest this year after a swing in polls towards the "Remain" camp this week. Most analysts still see the vote as too close to call and the mood remains shaky among financial investors worried that a British exit from the 28-country bloc could derail growth and spell trouble for banks and global asset markets. Still, a swing in bookmakers' odds towards

"Remain" victory since the shooting of a British lawmaker last week has helped sterling to recover 5 percent from lows around \$1.40. "We're really just seeing the tail end of the rally we saw from the start of this week," said Stephen Gallo, head of European FX Strategy at BMO in London. "There is a bit of nervousness in markets. (But) the bookmakers have been right ahead of all of these votes that have been key for markets over the past few years and the polls have not swung back (towards a Brexit) this week." —Reuters

## EXCHANGE RATES

### AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
<b>ASIAN COUNTRIES</b>		
Japanese Yen	2.888	
Indian Rupees	4.462	
Pakistani Rupees	2.880	
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.055	
Nepali Rupees	2.797	
Singapore Dollar	226.060	
Hongkong Dollar	38.915	
Bangladesh Taka	3.849	
Philippine Peso	6.493	
Thai Baht	8.570	
<b>GCC COUNTRIES</b>		
Saudi Riyal	80.550	
Qatari Riyal	82.974	
UAE Dirham	784.563	
Bahraini Dinar	802.180	
UAE Dirham	82.180	
<b>ARAB COUNTRIES</b>		
Egyptian Pound - Cash	30.050	
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	34.387	
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.213	
Tunisian Dinar	140.680	
Jordanian Dinar	425.600	
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.013	
Syrian Lira	2.153	
Morocco Dirham	31.514	
<b>EUROPEAN &amp; AMERICAN COUNTRIES</b>		
US Dollar Transfer	301.900	
Euro	341.900	
Sterling Pound	445.760	

Canadian dollar	237.160
Turkish lira	104.160
Swiss Franc	316.620
Australian Dollar	227.780
US Dollar Buying	300.700

	GOLD
20 Gram	255.580
10 Gram	130.710
5 Gram	66.200

### DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	302.000
Canadian Dollar	234.464
Sterling Pound	434.202
Euro	341.445
Swiss Frank	290.851
Bahrain Dinar	799.169
UAE Dirhams	82.449
Qatari Riyals	83.689
Saudi Riyals	81.250
Jordanian Dinar	426.263
Egyptian Pound	33.912
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.082
Indian Rupees	4.476
Pakistani Rupees	2.880
Bangladesh Taka	3.844
Philippines Peso	6.520
Cyprus pound	580.953
Japanese Yen	3.892
Syrian Pound	2.390
Nepalese Rupees	3.806
Malaysian Ringgit	74.623

Chinese Yuan Renminbi	46.220
Thai Bhat	9.532
Turkish Lira	0.504

### BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
<b>Europe</b>		
British Pound	0.436329	0.446329
Czech Korune	0.004540	0.016540
Danish Krone	0.041640	0.046641
Euro	0.0334517	0.0343517
Norwegian Krone	0.032320	0.037520
Romanian Leu	0.074844	0.074844
Slovakia	0.008981	0.018981
Swedish Krona	0.032459	0.037459
Swiss Franc	0.307633	0.318633
Turkish Lira	0.098766	0.109066
<b>Australasia</b>		
Australian Dollar	0.217471	0.229471
New Zealand Dollar	0.209473	0.218973
<b>America</b>		
Canadian Dollar	0.230715	0.239715
US Dollars	0.297550	0.302250
US Dollars Mint	0.298050	0.302450
<b>Asia</b>		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003377	0.003961
Chinese Yuan	0.044407	0.047907
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036819	0.039569
Indian Rupee	0.004202	0.004612

Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002800	0.002980
Kenyan Shilling	0.002977	0.002977
Korean Won	0.000251	0.000266
Malaysian Ringgit	0.070634	0.076634
Nepalese Rupee	0.002846	0.003016
Pakistan Rupee	0.002736	0.003026
Philippine Peso	0.006395	0.006695
Sierra Leone	0.000073	0.000079
Singapore Dollar	0.219471	0.229471
South African Rand	0.014484	0.022984
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001576	0.002156
Taiwan	0.009264	0.009444
Thai Baht	0.008228	0.008778
<b>Arab</b>		
Bahraini Dinar	0.794095	0.802595
Egyptian Pound	0.027289	0.032407
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000180	0.000240
Jordanian Dinar	0.421730	0.430730
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000150	0.000250
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020037	0.044037
Nigerian Naira	0.000455	0.001090
Omani Riyal	0.777606	0.783286
Qatar Riyal	0.082099	0.083549
Saudi Riyal	0.079407	0.080707
Syrian Pound	0.001279	0.001499
Tunisian Dinar	0.137556	0.145556
Turkish Lira	0.098766	0.109666
UAE Dirhams	0.080757	0.082457
Yemeni Riyal	0.001364	0.001444

## REBEL GROUPS THREATEN CHILE LOGGING INDUSTRY

**ANGOL, Chile:** A few moments of relaxation for Chilean logger Nelson Hidalgo were shattered one day last month when 12 armed men piled out of a pick-up truck and demanded he step outside his worksite dining trailer. At rifle-point, the masked men forced Hidalgo and a handful of colleagues to the ground, according to the workers' accounts. Over the next hour, the armed men burned a minibus, an excavator, and other equipment belonging to Nylumar Forestry - Hidalgo's employer and a subcontractor for Chilean timber giant Celulosa Arauco.

As they left, the men scattered leaflets claiming allegiance to Chile's indigenous Mapuche people, many of whom assert that logging companies are trespassing on their territory and draining the natural resources that are their birthright. No one was injured. But Nylumar estimates losses that afternoon came to \$600,000, and the company's workers were shaken. "Since then, I've been tense. My muscles are in pain, as if they've been shrinking," the gruff, middle-aged Hidalgo said.

Such experiences have been multiplying lately, industry and government data show, and weighing on Chilean logging, the country's second-largest industry after copper mining. Mostly focused on southern Chile, it is the source of 10 percent of the country's exports. Twenty-five attacks by saboteurs claiming to represent Chile's Mapuche were registered in the first five months of 2016 by

forestry subcontractors' union Acoforag. That resulted in an estimated 9 billion pesos (\$13.5 million) in damage, up from 3 billion pesos in all of 2015 and 638 million in 2014, according to the union.

Latin America's two largest forestry firms Empresas CMPC and Empresas Copec subsidiary Arauco have been among the worst affected. Both declined interview requests. Behind the attacks - according to politicians and law enforcement authorities - are two small, mysterious groups who say they want an autonomous Mapuche state. They are becoming increasingly well organized and sophisticated in their tactics, law enforcement, loggers, and politicians say.

The groups complain that the logging industry's introduction of water-hungry radiata pine and eucalyptus trees since the 1980s has damaged the ecosystem. In the southern Araucania region, the percentage of land now used for forest plantations has risen to almost 20 percent of all surface area. Academics say agriculture has become more difficult as plantations have dried up the land, and according to many government measures, the towns in the most heavily logged zones are the poorest in the nation.

"Before, we had many water resources and natural spaces that were the center of our cultural lifeblood, our food, our spirituality and our strength," said Jose Osvaldo Millanao, a Mapuche leader, while sitting in a traditional,

wooden Ruka hut. "And today, the big forestry companies have destroyed it."

### Conflict Escalates

Around 600,000 Mapuche live in Chile, concentrated in Araucania and Bio Bio, lush and hilly provinces roughly 640 km south of the nation's capital Santiago. Ever since the Chilean army invaded Mapuche territory in a brutal campaign in the late 1800s, relations with the state have been fractious. When timber companies began replacing native forest with industrial plantations in the 1980s, some Mapuche fought back, setting plantations, trucks and machinery ablaze.

But such occasional incidents were not a major operational threat to companies. That has changed in the last 18 months, as attacks have accelerated. Chile's southern trucking union said damage from trucks that were hijacked and destroyed rose to \$2 million in January and February of 2016, from \$500,000 for the same period last year. Intentional forest fires, meanwhile, jumped in logging regions to 3,081 in 2015 from 1,826 in 2013, according to the government.

Between those years, according to regulatory filings, CMPC's reported net loss to "forest-related disasters and other damages" rose to \$40.5 million from \$6.6 million, as a long drought fanned fires that arose both intentionally and naturally. A high-ranking CMPC manager, who asked not to be identified as

he is not authorized to speak to the media, said 4 billion pesos worth of its subcontractors' equipment had been burnt in 19 attacks between January and May of 2016. That was up from 16 attacks in all of 2015. Valuable time is also being lost as insurance claims are processed, loggers say. The average Acoforag member bills 200 million pesos monthly, but replacement equipment does not arrive for months after an attack.

### Mystery Groups

The recent spike in violence has been attributed to two key groups with perhaps as few as 60 members. Calling themselves the Coordinadora Arauco-Malleco ("Arauco-Malleco Group") and the recently formed Weichan Auka Mapu ("Fight of the rebel territory" in the Mapudungun tongue), they have claimed responsibility for dozens of recent attacks, but there have been few successful convictions and questions remain about their identity.

A senior law enforcement source said the groups take precautions against being tracked, such as collecting shell casings after firing weapons and wearing bags over their shoes to hide footprints. Officials also question to what extent the activists speak for the wider community. "We know these groups are small, and knowing that, the question becomes whether they really represent the Mapuche cause," said Humberto

Toro, the governor of logging-intensive Arauco province.

While it is difficult to gauge Mapuche sentiment overall as each community has an autonomous governing structure, two leaders in the town of Ercilla - at the center of the conflict zone - said arson against equipment was not justified. They considered other forms of direct action acceptable, such as occupying company-owned land. They also say they are frustrated that their people are under increased scrutiny due to the attacks. "We don't know that it's Mapuche burning these trucks," said Millanao.

In an effort to combat the spike in forestry attacks, the contractors' union has recently installed a sophisticated airborne balloon camera above the worst affected zone of Araucania, though it has resulted in no convictions so far. According to the CMPC source, the company has put restrictions on riskier operations, such as night transport on certain roads. Authorities have pledged increased security. Many police officers are heavily armed and signs along the main highway in Araucania warn that the route is video-monitored.

But authorities struggle to protect the often remote logging sites. "There's this sense of latent fear," said Hidalgo, the threatened Nylumar logger, whose crew now works with a police detail. "I'm always looking around to see if anyone is following me, to see if anyone is coming." —Reuters

## MAVERICK POLITICIAN GUNS FOR AIDE OF INDIA FINMIN

**NEW DELHI:** Fresh from claiming the scalp of Reserve Bank of India Governor Raghuram Rajan, a Hindu-nationalist politician has turned his fire on a top finance ministry adviser who once worked with Rajan at the International Monetary Fund. The attack by lawmaker Subramanian Swamy fuels concern that his real target is Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, whose relationship with Rajan, while never warm, helped steady public finances, cut inflation and keep Asia's third-largest economy on the move.

Swamy, a maverick lawmaker from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling party, took a potshot on Wednesday at Arvind Subramanian, an economist formerly based in the United States who is Jaitley's top economic adviser. "Sack him!!!" the 76-year-old politician said in a volley of tweets to his 2.8 million followers, accusing Subramanian, before he joined the Indian government, of backing Washington in a row over intellectual property rights and mocking Modi's role as chief minister of western Gujarat state.

Responding, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley stood by his aide and upbraided Swamy for attacking an official who was not in a position to defend himself publicly. "The government has full confidence in chief economic adviser Arvind Subramanian," Jaitley told a news conference. Finance ministry officials who spoke to Reuters on condition of anonymity, because of the sensitivity of the situation, said they feared Swamy enjoyed the tacit backing of senior fig-

ures in Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and government.

### Policy Ferment

Rajan dropped a bombshell last week-end when he announced that he would not make himself available for a second term as RBI chief, raising questions over whether India's newfound commitment to sound money and low inflation would outlast him. His departure followed a vitriolic public campaign waged by Swamy, whose rough-house politics is backed by a fierce intellect - he obtained a doctorate in economics and taught at Harvard. Swamy has also advertised his own credentials to become India's finance minister.

In an open letter to Modi a month ago Swamy, just appointed to a seat in the upper house, accused Rajan of being "mentally not fully Indian" and demanded he be terminated immediately. Swamy did not respond to calls and text messages sent to his mobile telephone. The broadside comes amid uncertainty over who might succeed Rajan at the central bank when his term expires in September. Arvind Subramanian, the economic aide, and Shaktikanta Das, economic affairs secretary at the finance ministry, have featured in market speculation on possible contenders for the top RBI job. Both were, however, notable by their absence from a long list of candidates obtained by Reuters after Rajan withdrew his name, an indication of concern in the Modi camp that hiring a finance ministry insider could lead it to exert undue influence over the RBI as an institution. —Reuters



**TEHRAN:** An Iranian baker shows traditional bread, known locally as "barbari", yesterday during the holy month of Ramadan. —AFP

## OIL PRODUCERS KEEP OUTPUT FREEZE REVIVAL ON STANDBY

OPEC, NON-OPEC PRODUCERS MAY CONSULT AT SEPT FORUM

**LONDON/DUBAI:** Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak has a contrarian message for those who question the wisdom of freezing global levels of oil output. Despite the collapse of talks on restraining production among OPEC and non-OPEC members earlier this year, he thinks the discussions were a success that might soon be repeated. "It (the build-up to the meeting) paved the way for a reversal of negative trends in the oil markets," Novak told reporters last week after meeting OPEC member Venezuela's oil minister Eulogio del Pino.

"We have seen a large amount of short positions being closed while long positions have been opened," Novak said in reference to speculative bets - shorts - in the market that prices will fall, and the opposite - longs - that they will rise. The statement is important as oil ministers often talk about oil supply, demand and balance but rarely touch on how market speculators - dominated by hedge funds - build their positions.

Oil has risen to \$50 a barrel, up 85 percent from a 12-year low reached in January as supply outages in Nigeria and Canada reduced the need to prop up prices. At its most recent meeting, in June, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries made no change to its pump-at-will output policy. As del Pino begins another campaign to freeze global output later this year, watching price levels and the market mood will be key to gauging when top producers might step up cooperation - even if only verbally - despite mutual distrust.

So far, OPEC's de facto leader Saudi Arabia has signalled it wants to avoid another drop in oil prices. Energy Minister Khalid Al-Falih has said the kingdom will prevent shocks by adding extra barrels to an already oversupplied market. The rationale behind the move is simple. Sources familiar with the matter say Riyadh does not want prices to fall again because of fiscal pressures at home and as it fears that a drop in oil investment around the world could lead to acute shortages and price spikes.

### 'Winter Risks'

The world's top oil exporter is likely to keep its output relatively stable in coming months in what one source called "a confidence-building exercise" with Iran and non-OPEC producers - in case a joint deal is needed. Saudi Arabia kept its crude production steady in May, while supply figures were higher as it pulled out more barrels from storage to meet seasonal domestic demand.

OPEC member Iran has been the main stumbling block for a freeze as it insists it will be ready for joint action only once it regains output levels seen before the imposition of now-ended Western sanctions. Del Pino told Reuters last week that Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh had told him Iran should reach desired output levels of 3.8-4.0 million barrels per day by September, making a deal on production restraint more likely.

The International Energy Forum, which groups producers and consumers, meets on Sept 26-28 in Algiers. Qatar said OPEC members had agreed to hold talks on the sidelines. Iranian sources say cooperation is possible but depends on where the market stands in September when OPEC and non-OPEC producers meet in Algeria, two months before OPEC's next formal discussions in Vienna on Nov 30. "We should look at the magnitude of the surplus in the market. At the moment, it is ambiguous because of the production disruptions in various countries. Maybe in a couple of months it will be more clear," said a source familiar with Iranian thinking.

A senior OPEC delegate said: "Gulf countries will support any cooperation between OPEC and non-OPEC. (But) it's too early to say now whether anything will happen in Algeria." A number of OPEC delegates are concerned prices could weaken during the rest of the year as some of these barrels return. This came a step closer on Tuesday as Nigerian officials said militants and the government had agreed a ceasefire. "The problem is with the supply side - it will depend on Iranian production, US shale,

Libya and Nigeria," said another delegate. "If the production of all these four goes up, then the second half will be a lower-price session."

Russia's Novak, whose country is not in OPEC, also said he feared price weakness this winter. "Demand growth is falling and some volumes could return to the market after outages ... If prices begin to fall steeply again, then we will be able to and should continue consultations," Novak said. Most observers believe though that even if agreed, any

deal to freeze output would be a weak agreement compared to previous attempts by OPEC to cut output.

For veteran OPEC watcher Jamie Webster, the group would need more incentives than just a low oil price in order to reduce production. The period of strong output growth among OPEC countries must be complete and the US shale sector has to show it is inadequate at raising or lowering supply in accordance with short-term market needs, Webster said. —Reuters

## MOBILE MONEY TO POWER AFRICA FINANCIAL GROWTH

**PARIS:** Mobile phones and rising connectivity in Africa will give rise to a new market in mobile financial services, creating explosive opportunities for business on the continent, research has found. The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) estimated that in three years, 250 million Africans without access to traditional banking services "will have mobile phones and a monthly income of at least \$500". That could translate to projected revenues of \$1.5 billion from mobile financial services, the group said in a report released Tuesday.

That's the key for a continent where the banking system is as yet hugely underdeveloped, but where strides have already been made in mobile banking. In Kenya, for example, the mobile money system has nearly 18 million users thanks to the M-Pesa service run by British telecom giant Vodafone's subsidiary Safaricom. In Ethiopia, Africa's second most populous country and one of its fastest growing economies, mobile phones are now being used to push an electronic payment service by phone called M-Birr.

This is all good news for Africa, where a mere 25 percent of Africans have a regular bank account because "financial service providers haven't made the continent a priority," the group's report said. The "high cost to serve and low margins of traditional bank accounts in Africa" are the main reasons for the oversight. However, sub-Saharan Africa leads the world in mobile money accounts, according to the World Bank. "While just 2 percent of adults worldwide have a mobile money account, 12 percent in Sub-Saharan Africa have one," the Bank said in a separate study based on 2015 data.

That number is projected to grow now that more than 50 percent of Africans over the age of 15 own a mobile phone and since mobiles are a low-cost way to reach a huge market. "For most of these consumers," said the BCG report, "mobile banking will be their first experience with financial services." Most Africans currently use mobile phones to transfer money but also to prepay utilities and purchase small items, as well as make debit-card transactions, BCG said.

### 'African Middle Class'

The survey of 11 countries in sub-Saharan Africa found that four in 10 Africans access the Internet using a smart phone, while three-quarters use a computer to get on the web. Since 2013, the number of Africans with access to the internet has grown by 8 percent. In Ivory Coast, access to the Internet has gone from 200,000 in 2008 to 8 million in 2016 thanks to 3G. This connectivity, coupled with rising consumer classes and Africans' increasingly optimistic outlook, will translate to over 1.1 billion consumers by 2020, the group said - "more than the populations of Europe and North America combined".

"The concept of a middle class is taken from the Western society model and has led to confusions when we talk of Africa," said Lisa Ivers, director of the BCG bureau in Casablanca. "The African socioeconomic reality is vastly different across African countries and from more established markets," she said. "But that absolutely doesn't lessen our confidence over the potential of the African domestic consumption."

The group projected that by 2020, Africa will be home to twice as many affluent consumers as the UK - and they "are very optimistic and eager to spend". Of the more than 11,000 people surveyed between February and March 2015, 88 percent said they were optimistic about the future. In Egypt, Kenya, and Nigeria, more than 90 percent said they were optimistic. According to the survey, 85 percent also agreed with the statement "It seems like every year there are more things I want to buy".

Domestic companies have started to tap into this by merging consumer demand and web access. Jumia, Africa's version of Amazon.com, sells a wide range of products and offers a mobile purchasing app. The e-tailer, started in 2012 by the Africa Internet Group in Nigeria, is among the top five online-shopping websites in five African countries: Ivory Coast, Egypt, Kenya, Morocco, and Nigeria. BCG defined a consumer as between 18 and 75 with at least \$50 to \$7,000 in regular monthly earnings. —AFP

## COLD GAZPROM RECEPTION FOR US SUPER-COOLED GAS

**MILAN/LONDON:** Liquefied natural gas (LNG) from the United States is set to do battle in Europe but Russia's Gazprom is setting the stage, preparing a cold reception for the super-cooled gas set to cross the Atlantic. A weakened rouble has lowered Gazprom's production costs by a fifth while its profits on dollar-denominated gas sales to Europe last year doubled in rouble terms. Gazprom has managed to increase sales despite a push by the European Union to curb Russian energy imports, using discounts, renegotiation of unpopular oil-linked contracts and gas sales via auctions.

Spurring Gazprom's charm offensive is a looming showdown as a wave of US gas is set to reach Europe's shores beginning next year. US exporters led by Cheniere Energy are expected to have 83 billion cubic metres (bcm) of gas ready for sale by 2019. That's about 20 percent of Europe's current annual gas needs. That threatens to exacerbate already significant global gas oversupply, with new producers squaring up against established players for market share and driving prices lower. "We are at the start of a new chapter in European gas markets," Fatih Birol, executive director at the International Energy Agency said recently, as US and other supplies fight to gain access.

But Gazprom, for now, appears confident it can see off the challenge and even raise its European market share, which stood at 31 percent in 2015, helped by declining output in Europe, primarily in the Netherlands and Britain. As US producers crank up exports, more than a dozen LNG cargoes have been exported, yet so far just one has reached Europe as other markets offer better returns. "Longer term, Asia will remain more attractive for US gas. No US businessman in the right state of mind - being already heavily indebted and having put all his assets as collateral with banks - will deliver gas to Europe at a loss," Gazprom's Deputy Chief Executive Alexander Medvedev told Reuters last week.

However, Gazprom has been wrong before. A few years ago it was similarly sceptical about the threat posed by the rise of US shale gas and oil. Chief Executive Alexei Miller at the time said unconventional gas was expensive to produce and would not be a game changer in the global energy market. That was a serious miscalculation and proved costly as Gazprom was forced to shelve development of one of the world's largest gas fields, Shokoman, as shale rapidly wiped out US needs for gas imports. —Reuters

# FED CAUTIOUS DUE TO BREXIT, US HIRING SLOWDOWN

WASHINGTON: The Federal Reserve's ability to raise interest rates this year may hinge on a rebound in hiring that would convince policymakers the US economy is not faltering, Fed Chair Janet Yellen told lawmakers on Tuesday. In testimony before Congress that expressed general optimism about the economy and played down the risk of a recession, Yellen nevertheless said the Fed will be cautious about interest rate increases until it is clear the job market is holding up.

Immediate risks, like the potential fallout from Britain's June 23 vote on whether to

leave the European Union, could darken the US economic outlook, she told the Senate Banking Committee, as could a downturn in productivity growth that may prove a permanent drag on the economy. "Without a doubt, in the last several months a number of different metrics suggest ... a loss of momentum in terms of the pace of improvement," Yellen said. "We believe that will turn around, we expect it to turn around, but we are taking a cautious approach and watching very carefully to make sure that that expectation is borne out before we proceed to raise

interest rates further." Her comments suggest the US central bank is unlikely to raise rates at its next policy meeting in late July, since it will only have one additional monthly employment report in hand by that time. They also demonstrate how a new sense of uncertainty has taken root as Fed policymakers come to grips with a broadening realization that the economy's potential appears to be weaker than previously thought.

In a generally civil 2-1/2-hour hearing, Yellen was questioned less about those long-run economic issues and more about the

immediate economic and political concerns of panel members: why agricultural prices were so low, why there were so many white men in charge of the Fed's regional reserve banks, and why there was so much income inequality.

Asked about presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump's suggestion the United States could lower its national debt by buying back securities at a discount, Yellen said any move that smacks of a default for a security generally viewed by the world as risk-free would have "severe" consequences. Her comments largely tracked the Fed's policy statement last week and the press conference that followed.

"It's a rehash. The underlying message is a continuation of the trend that the Fed is moving toward a more cautious stance to support this economic expansion with the fragility of the economic backdrop," said Robert Tipp, chief investment strategist at Prudential Fixed Income in Newark, New Jersey. US Treasury yields had risen to session highs by the end of Yellen's testimony, while stocks on Wall Street were trading higher. US rates futures implied traders saw a 12 percent chance of the Fed raising rates in July, little changed from Monday. The dollar was stronger against a basket of currencies.

ble implications of the "Brexit" vote, which she said could have "significant repercussions". Asked if Britain's departure from the EU could trigger a recession in the United States, Yellen said: "I don't think that is the most likely case, but we just don't really know what will happen and we will have to watch very carefully." Although the outcome of the British referendum will be known this week, the job issue may take longer to sort out.

Fed officials have said they expected US job growth to slow from the average 200,000 per month typically seen during the post-financial crisis recovery. But the drop to an average of 80,000 in April and May was particularly sharp and put the economy below the level of job creation the Fed considers necessary to accommodate new labor force entrants. In her testimony, Yellen called the slowdown likely a "transitory" phenomenon. But concerns the hiring slowdown may be longer-lasting, coupled with a lowered sense of US economic potential, mean the Fed's benchmark overnight interest rate is likely to remain low "for some time" Yellen said.

Current Fed policymakers' projections foresee two rate increases this year and three each in 2017 and 2018, a slower pace from what was forecast in March. Yellen was to appear before a House committee yesterday to complete her semi-annual testimony before Congress. —Reuters

## Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report

Wednesday 22 June 2016

Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low
Price Index	▼ -28.45	5,409.17	5,437.62	5,440.44	5,408.20
Weighted Index	▼ -2.15	354.27	356.42	357.31	354.27
KSX 15	▼ -5.77	815.07	820.84	825.02	815.07

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
MARIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	▼ 0.0
IKARUS	40.5	40.5	38,900	1,575	2	40.5	▼ 0.0
IPG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	335	▼ 0.0
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	730	▼ 0.0
ENERGYH	48.5	48.5	500	24	1	48.5	▼ -0.5
GPI	42.0	41.5	382,130	16,024	15	41.5	▼ -1.0
ABAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	99	▼ 0.0
<b>Oil &amp; Gas</b>			<b>421,530</b>	<b>17,624</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>776.61</b>	<b>▼ -2.65</b>

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
KFOUC	178	174	24,000	4,236	4	178	▼ 0.0
BPCO	500	500	556,789	278,395	9	500	▼ -10.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	650	▼ 0.0
ALQURAIN	204	198	457,576	91,271	24	204	▼ -4.0
<b>Basic Materials</b>			<b>1,038,365</b>	<b>373,902</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>964.01</b>	<b>▼ -10.21</b>

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
KCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	390	▼ 0.0
REFRI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	300	▼ 0.0
CABLE	415	400	296	123	8	415	▲ 5.0
SHIP	156	154	67,066	10,402	5	154	▼ -4.0
PCEM	990	990	20,000	19,800	1	990	▼ 0.0
PAPER	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	285	▼ 0.0
MRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	59	▼ 0.0
ACICO	295	290	5,060	1,468	5	295	▼ -5.0
GMCM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	285	▼ 0.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	142	▼ 0.0
KBMMC	240	240	915	220	1	240	▼ -10.0
NICBM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	202	▼ 0.0
EQUIPMENT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	62	▼ 0.0
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	12.5	▼ 0.0
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	102	▼ 0.0
SALBOOKH	70	68	354,811	24,534	34	69	▼ 0.0
AGLTY	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	485	▼ 0.0
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	190	▼ 0.0
CLEANING	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	39.5	▼ 0.0
KGL	44.0	44.0	2,402	106	1	44.0	▼ -2.0
KPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	178	▼ 0.0
HUMANSOFT	1,420	1,420	60	85	1	1,420	▼ -80.0
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	174	▼ 0.0
SAFWAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	305	▼ 0.0
GFC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	34.0	▼ 0.0
MAYADEEN	26.0	25.5	1,130,894	29,028	15	25.5	▼ -0.5
CGC	770	770	14,000	10,780	3	770	▼ 0.0
MTCC	65	65	35,540	2,310	1	65	▼ -2.0
UPAC	680	680	2,000	1,360	1	680	▼ -10.0
ALAFCO	206	204	250,000	51,080	6	206	▼ 0.0
MUBARRAD	60	60	135,000	8,100	3	60	▼ -1.0
LOGISTICS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	79	▼ 0.0
SCEM	78	78	850	66	2	78	▼ 0.0
GCEM	74	73	80,000	5,904	4	73	▼ -1.0
QIC	72	72	48	3	1	72	▼ -1.0
FCEM	74	72	725,000	52,495	14	74	▼ 0.0
RKWC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	▼ 0.0
SPEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	76	▼ 0.0
<b>Industrials</b>			<b>2,823,942</b>	<b>217,864</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>1062.85</b>	<b>▼ -15.17</b>

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
KSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	190	▼ 0.0
NSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	64	▼ 0.0
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	▼ 0.0
CATTL	190	186	10,750	2,007	6	190	▲ 4.0
DANAH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	124	▼ 0.0
POULT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	180	▼ 0.0
FOOD	2,500	2,500	1,396,482	3,491,205	91	2,500	▲ 100.0
<b>Consumer Goods</b>			<b>1,407,232</b>	<b>3,493,212</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>1175.92</b>	<b>▲ 15.58</b>

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
MHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200	▼ 0.0
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	920	▼ 0.0
YIACO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	210	▼ 0.0
<b>Health Care</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>▼ 0.00</b>

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
KCIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,700	▼ 0.0
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	210	▼ 0.0
SULTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	58	▼ 0.0
CABLETV	25.0	21.5	19,900	437	9	25.0	▲ 2.0
EYAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	385	▼ 0.0
OUAHR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	198	▼ 0.0
QULAFUEJ	112	110	31,328	3,506	3	112	▲ 2.0
MUNTAZAHAT	85	85	138,170	11,744	4	85	▼ -1.0
JAZEERA	900	890	70,416	63,074	8	900	▼ -10.0
SOOR	110	110	1,014	112	2	110	▼ 0.0
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	112	▼ 0.0
ALRAI	162	160	10,100	1,616	2	162	▼ 0.0
ZIMAH	42.0	39.5	1,514,140	61,912	38	41.5	▲ 2.0
UFIG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	140	▼ 0.0
Mezzan	1,140	1,120	335,497	379,584	17	1,120	▲ 20.0
<b>Consumer Services</b>			<b>2,120,565</b>	<b>521,986</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>999.80</b>	<b>▲ 1.58</b>

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
ZAIN	350	340	1,187,796	408,923	28	340	▼ -5.0
OOREDOO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,160	▼ 0.0
HITSTELEC	38.0	37.5	1,860,682	69,851	34	37.5	▼ 0.0
VIVA	940	930	57,766	54,260	23	940	▼ 0.0
<b>Telecommunications</b>			<b>3,106,244</b>	<b>533,034</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>605.94</b>	<b>▼ -1.46</b>

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
NBK	600	600	2,444,003	1,466,402	69	600	▼ -10.0
GBK	236	232	1,457,656	340,768	36	232	▼ -2.0
CBK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	410	▼ 0.0
ABK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	340	▼ 0.0
ALMUTAHED	405	395	101,000	40,155	4	405	▲ 5.0
KIB	190	190	1,223,500	232,465	16	190	▼ -2.0
BURG	325	320	945,760	302,668	21	320	▼ -5.0
KFIN	460	455	435,651	198,407	18	455	▼ -5.0
BOUBYAN	390	385	33,193	12,918	5	390	▼ 0.0
AUB	190	190	25,000	4,750	2	190	▼ 0.0
ITHMR	36.0	35.5	540,026	19,171	7	36.0	▼ 0.0
WARBANK	172	170	402,903	69,259	32	170	▼ -2.2
<b>Banks</b>			<b>7,608,682</b>	<b>2,686,963</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>797.20</b>	<b>▼ -4.22</b>

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
KINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	290	▼ 0.0
GINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	700	▼ 0.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	465	▼ 0.0
WINS	104	104	50,000	5,200	4	104	▲ 2.0
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	190	▼ 0.0
FTI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	50	▼ 0.0
WETHAQ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	29.5	▼ 0.0
BKIKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	▼ 0.0
<b>Insurance</b>			<b>50,000</b>	<b>5,200</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1018.99</b>	<b>▲ 2.25</b>



Volume	55,047,542
Value (KWD)	10,591,437
Number of Trades	1,464

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
SOKKOK	35.5	35.5	389,697	13,834	13	35.5	▼ -0.5
KRE	55	54	3,107,094	167,924	26	54	▼ 0.0
URC	92	92	10,000	920	1	92	



## DIVIDEND TAX SCANDAL: HOW BANKS SHORT-CHANGED GERMANY

**BERLIN:** German banks exploited a legal loophole that allowed two parties to claim ownership of the same shares, the financial watchdog will tell lawmakers this week, in schemes that could have cost the state billions of euros in tax over many years. This double ownership allowed both parties to claim tax rebates. It has provoked public anger in Germany and is an embarrassment for the Berlin government, which has campaigned for years to root out tax evasion around the world.

The loophole was closed in 2012, with the means of claiming double ownership banned. But an analysis of documents related to a lawmakers' investigation - seen by Reuters but not publicly available - suggests the finance ministry may have missed a chance to end the practice several years earlier, instead accepting a banking lobby proposal that allowed it to continue. The finance ministry told Reuters that it had done all it could to end what it regarded as a criminal practice.

Such schemes centred around "short sales" - the sale of borrowed shares. A bank would loan out the stock in a way that made both the bank and the eventual buyer appear briefly to be simultaneous owners of the shares. This allowed both parties to receive a dividend tax rebate. The financial watchdog BaFin

estimates "a small double-digit number" of German banks were involved in such schemes, but has not named them. Many Germans have been particularly angered that Commerzbank - bailed out in the financial crash and still partly state-owned - has said it used the arrangement.

Commerzbank said there had been "some violations" but said it had not been involved in "systematic participation in such business". The debate over the so-called "Cum Ex" trades has gained fresh momentum following a German regional court ruling in February that found there was no legal basis for the double claiming of rebates, even before it was banned in 2012. Public prosecutors have embarked on more than a dozen investigations in Frankfurt, Munich and Cologne to pursue banks for any rebates received through this loophole. Lawmakers on a special parliamentary committee convened in February are investigating the practice and whether the government responded quickly enough to close the loophole. Industry experts say the practice had been going on for decades and had cost the state billions of euros. Officials from the regulator will appear before the committee on Thursday. Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble and three predecessors dating back to 1998 will appear in

the coming months and will likely face questions on who profited from Cum Ex deals and why the authorities let them continue until 2012.

### Loophole

"Cum Ex" deals were known by state officials to be problematic more than a decade ago but the finance ministry accepted a banking industry plan to change the law - a plan which opened another loophole, documents seen by Reuters show. The documents, which track the conception in 1997 of the rule changes, through the drafting process, to a final law passed in 2007, show the ministry picked up and eventually implemented the proposal.

A document has been presented to the parliamentary committee, dated May 21, 1997, from Deutsche Bank's tax department to industry lobby group, the Federal Association of German Banks (BdB). In it, Deutsche proposes an extra levy to make up for any tax shortfall created by such Cum Ex transactions, but with one significant exception: foreign banks and clients would not be included. Deutsche said this week that it had not participated in an organized Cum Ex market but could not rule out that its clients had engaged in such transactions. The Deutsche Bank proposal was taken up by the lobby group. The German federal

finance office wrote to its superiors at the finance ministry on Oct. 6, 2005, saying: "The legislation proposed by the Federal Association of German Banks is ... fully suitable for governing the problematic cases of short-selling".

In 2007, the amendment proposed by the lobbyists became law. This allowed banks to continue using such trades for another five years, so long as their clients involved were foreign - for example a hedge fund in London or Paris. "The proposal made was specifically aimed at being good for the banks and bad for the tax authorities," Green party lawmaker Gerhard Schick has told the committee. In a letter to clients dated Aug 29, 2008, and seen by Reuters, French bank BNP Paribas said it had attended a meeting at the lobby group to determine who was obliged to pay the new levy. "The obligation to withhold tax on short sales only affects German banks selling securities by order and on behalf of their clients," the letter read. "Non-German financial institutions ... are not liable to monitor and withhold tax." BNP declined to comment.

### One Owner

Former BdB director Hans-Juergen Krause told the parliamentary committee that it was not the lobbyists' aim to find gaps in the law. "We never looked for loopholes," Krause said. But at least one

official was sceptical of their motives from the outset. In the western state of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany's industrial hub, a civil servant in the regional finance ministry took aim at the lobbyists' proposal in an internal report in Oct 2005. There could only be one owner of a stock at any one time, she argued. "The wish of the (banking) associations to develop a legal fiction is to be rejected," she wrote in the document, adding that the new complicated rules proposed would serve to legalize a practice which was "without a civil law basis".

Her concerns went unheeded as the finance ministry decided to follow the BdB proposal. Now German authorities are poring over the validity of that decision and the wider legality of the Cum Ex schemes. In a case in February this year, a court in the state of Hesse - home to Germany's financial capital Frankfurt - ruled there was no legal basis for the double claiming of rebates, as occurred with the trades. Banks have already paid hundreds of millions of euros in back taxes and tens of millions to settle disputes with German authorities. For one, Maple Bank GmbH in Frankfurt, the scandal has proven disastrous. It was plunged into insolvency in February after tax officials demanded over 300 million euros in repayments, and is closed for business. —Reuters

## VW CHIEF TELLS SHAREHOLDERS SORRY FOR EMISSIONS SCANDAL

**HANOVER:** The boss of embattled German auto giant Volkswagen yesterday issued an apology to angry shareholders over the emissions cheating scandal that has plunged the group into an unprecedented crisis. Facing an annual general meeting for the first time since the scandal erupted in September, Matthias Mueller said: "On behalf of the Volkswagen Group and everyone who works here, I apologize to you shareholders for your trust in Volkswagen being betrayed."

"This misconduct goes against everything that Volkswagen stands for," he



**HANOVER:** VW CEO Matthias Mueller attends German carmaker Volkswagen shareholders' annual general meeting yesterday. —AFP

added nine months after the start of the "Dieselgate" affair, when it emerged VW had installed emissions-cheating software into 11 million diesel engines worldwide. Volkswagen is still far from drawing a line under the scandal, with the costs of the affair still incalculable while it remains unclear if VW's own internal investigation will pinpoint the major culprits behind the scam.

And the auto giant, which owns 12 brands ranging from Volkswagen and Porsche to Audi and SEAT, still faces a myriad of regulatory fines and lawsuits from customers and shareholders. Shareholders are expected to use the AGM in the northern city of Hanover to let off steam at the way management has handled the affair. Two days ahead of the meeting, prosecutors provided more fodder to the irate shareholders when they said they were investigating former VW boss Martin Winterkorn for having allegedly manipulated the market by holding back information about emissions cheating at the car giant.

A second former member of the board

was also under probe, prosecutors said, without giving the individual's name, but a Volkswagen spokesman told AFP that the suspect was Herbert Diess - who is in charge of the VW brand. Listed companies are required to disclose information that could affect market prices immediately. But VW complied with its disclosure obligation only on September 22, 2015, prosecutors said, four days after US regulators went public that they were charging the company for emissions cheating.

### 'Crisis has Opened Doors'

The allegations struck at the heart of shareholders' misgivings, as they have since early on in the scandal also accused management of dragging their feet in informing them about the scam, which led to a stunning 40-percent drop in the company's share price last autumn. The stock has since recovered somewhat, but is still 26 percent below the levels before the scandal broke last September, and the company's finances also remain weak.

After it was forced to set aside €16 billion (\$18 billion) in provisions to cover the costs of the affair so far, it sank to a net loss of €1.6 billion, its first loss in two decades. Giving an update of the company's internal investigation into the affair, chairman Hans Dieter Poetsch said some 550 interviews had been carried out by the US consultants charged with the probe, Jones Day.

Nevertheless, a number of shareholder lobby groups are demanding special enquiries into who should be held responsible for the affair, arguing that Jones Day is not sufficiently independent. Seeking to reassure shareholders of management's commitment to regain their trust, Mueller said the crisis could eventually prove to be "beneficial." "The crisis has also opened doors. It forced us to strengthen and speed up overdue changes, and to set new priorities. To turn this crisis into an opportunity has been my goal from the beginning," he said.

Mueller hinted in a newspaper interview on Tuesday that the car giant could abandon diesel engine technology in the wake of the scandal. "We have to ask ourselves whether... we want to spend more money on the further development of diesel," Mueller told the business daily Handelsblatt, promising that VW would take a "fundamental" look at the issue. The move appeared to be in line with the group's plans to reposition itself as a leading player in environmentally sustainable modes of transport, with more than 30 all-electric models to be unveiled by 2025. —AFP

## PRO-EU OR NO EU? LONDON HAS EXTREMES OF OPINION

**LONDON:** When Britain decides today whether to leave the European Union, London's voice may prove decisive. But for which side? Britain's capital, home to almost 9 million people, encompasses some of the most pro-EU places in the country - and the least. In the cosmopolitan City financial district, where almost half a million people from around the globe work in Europe's biggest financial center, pro-EU sentiment predominates. But just a few miles away the borough of Havering, stronghold of working-class East Enders, topped a national survey of the most anti-EU places in Britain.

The two districts represent the opposing views at the heart of Britain's EU debate. One sees the bloc's free flow of people and money as a benefit. The other sees it as a threat. Fishmonger David Crosbie, working on a drizzly morning in Havering's outdoor Romford Market, is an emphatic "leave" supporter. For Crosbie, the decision has a lot to do with borders, on land and sea. He says he is tired of European fishermen trawling waters around Britain under the EU's Common Fisheries Policy.

"French, Portuguese, Swedish, Dutch - whatever. They can all come. They go right up on the beach," he said. "Plus there's no immigration control. Anybody can come

over here, skilled or unskilled." Immigration has become the most emotive issue of the campaign leading up to Thursday's referendum, stirring fears of instability among voters and drawing allegations of xenophobia from "remain" supporters.

The EU is built on the principle that citizens can live and work in any of the 28 member states. Since the bloc expanded to include former communist countries in eastern Europe more than a decade ago, hundreds of thousands of people have moved west to Britain and other wealthier EU nations. The perception that EU migrants come to take jobs - and, somewhat paradoxically, to live on welfare benefits - is driving "leave" sentiment in Havering and other Euroskeptical areas.

But 24 km to the southwest in the historic heart of financial London, policy chief Mark Boleat argues that thousands of jobs, and London's standing as a financial center, depend on the EU. "The European Union has been good for the country generally, very good for financial services," said Boleat, who heads the policy committee at the City of London Corporation, which runs the financial quarter. "Many jobs depend on it, and we think that leaving the European Union will be taking a significant risk." —AP



**LARNACA:** Cobalt airline Chief Executive Officer Andrew Pyne, walks past a Cobalt aeroplane at Larnaca airport on May 30, 2016, during a blessing ceremony ahead of the launch of the new Cyprus-based airline. —AFP

## NEW AIRLINE SET FOR TAKEOFF AS TOURISM SOARS IN CYPRUS

### COBALT WANTS TO TURN LARNACA, INTO REGIONAL HUB

**LARNACA, Cyprus:** As Cyprus emerges from a deep financial crisis, a new low-cost airline will launch next month to tap into the Mediterranean island's resurgent tourism market. The country has been without a national carrier since the collapse of Cyprus Airways, the victim of a credit crunch that brought the country close to bankruptcy in 2013. But numbers of visitors to the island's popular beach resorts soared in 2015, prompting optimism for the vital sector's prospects.

Andrew Pyne, CEO of new airline Cobalt, wants to turn the island's main airport, Larnaca, into a regional hub serving Europe and the Middle East. "We want to be the new national airline of Cyprus," he told AFP. "We are betting on Cyprus because we see the potential for the island to be so much bigger a destination than it currently is." Cobalt, a collaboration between local and Chinese investors, plans to run a modest fleet of five planes by the end of summer, and double that by 2017.

Starting from July 7, it will fly in visitors from eight destinations in Britain, Ireland and Greece. Further down the line it plans to open routes to Tel Aviv, Tehran and into Asia. The new carrier, with 150 staff - many of them former Cyprus Airways employees - faced a slow start because of delays getting its commercial licence. That pushed back its launch by more than a month, hitting revenues. But the launch is a timely intervention in an economy that only last year emerged from recession after 14 consecutive quarters of contraction.

"There was a realization after the financial crisis that there was a sector they weren't making the most of," said Fiona Mullen, director of Sapienta Economics. The lack of cheap, convenient air links between Cyprus and other parts of Europe - and the lack of passenger ferries to the island - has held back the sector. "The strategy is extra airlines, but also trying to extend the tourism season," she said. "Cobalt has made a lot of effort to increase airlines coming from other places as well."

### Tourism Potential

With revenues of €2.11 billion (\$2.38 billion) in 2015, tourism represents 12 percent of Cyprus's gross domestic product. But the World Travelling Tourism Council estimates that the total impact, including retail and real estate,

could be as much as a fifth of the entire economy. Cyprus welcomed 2.65 million tourists in 2015, the highest figure in 14 years. May this year saw more visitors than ever before - with particularly high numbers from Britain and Russia - and the Cyprus Tourism Organization (CTO) predicts 2016 will see record numbers. The Mediterranean island lies just a hundred kilometres from the coast of Syria. It is seen as a safe destination compared to other traditional holiday hotspots in the region, such as Egypt and Turkey, where political unrest and attacks on tourist targets have hit the industry hard. Cyprus has also been spared the migration crisis that has affected many popular destinations in the Greek islands.

Doros Georgiades, who works for CTO to attract tourists from Europe and Russia, said his organization was optimistic about Cobalt. "We expect a lot from the new airline. First because it will open new routes. But an additional benefit is that the income will be much higher for Cyprus, because having an airline operating in Cyprus, that means that the whole price of the package is going to Cyprus," he said.

### Longer Season

While Cyprus has long hosted British and Russian tourists seeking some sun, officials are now working with Cobalt to develop new forms of tourism and extend the season. "Our aim is to have similar numbers (of visitors) during off seasons as we have during summer. Cyprus has a lot to offer in October, November, March, April," said Georgiades. The government, which has actively supported the launch of Cobalt, recently announced a strategy for improving the quality of its services.

It also plans to promote alternative tourism to attract new visitors and improve its high-end offerings such as yacht harbors and casinos. Pyne, who started his career at British Airways and has headed up budget airlines in Russia and Macau, was upbeat about the sector's potential. "We have antiquities here, we have forests, mountains, skiing in winter," he said. "People come to Cyprus for the beaches, for the sea and for the sunshine, but we want to make it multi-faceted. We don't want to be focusing only on that market." —AFP



**People relax on Mackenzie beach, three kilometers from Larnaca city center, on May 14, 2016.**

## THE NEW GENERATION MERCEDES-BENZ SLC AND SL MODELS ARRIVE IN KUWAIT

**KUWAIT:** The latest additions to the Mercedes-Benz high performance and luxury family have arrived in Kuwait. Available at Abdul Rahman Albisher & Zaid Alkazemi Company, the authorised General Distributor of Mercedes-Benz in Kuwait, the new generation SLC and SL roadsters present an iconic design that celebrate present-day open-air luxury and sportiness. Well received globally and progressive in design, the dream cars continue an illustrious heritage of breath-taking looks and sensational performance.

### The new SLC: Unleash your senses

Just in time for the 20th birthday of its segment, the archetypal compact roadster enjoys a new evolution with a new name, optimised technology and an enhanced look. The new Mercedes-Benz SLC (previously SLK) takes the roadster's driving pleasure to a new level thanks to an unrivalled combination of sportiness and comfort. Comprehensively refined, and with a model lineup ranging from the entry level SLC 200 to the top-of-the-line Mercedes-AMG SLC 43, the renamed compact roadster will appeal to today's confident individualist determined to experience life's exclusive pleasures.

"Designed to slice through the wind and corners, the new SLC offers a pure sports car soul

without the sports car price tag. Compact, powerful and a leader in the technology segment, its retractable vario roof folds in to the trunk delivering open air perfection and unbridled enjoyment no matter the weather," said Michael Ruehle, Chief Executive Officer, Abdul Rahman Albisher & Zaid Company.

As part of the facelift, the Mercedes-Benz designers have further honed the roadster's sporty look. The new front section, where the steeply raked radiator grille elongates the appearance of the arrow-shaped bonnet, is particularly striking. All SLC models feature a diamond radiator grille as standard and narrower tail light units which are divided horizontally and feature LED technology.

The interior of the facelifted SLC highlights include new light or dark aluminium trim parts with a carbon fibre finish and a new design for the instrument cluster. A large, multifunction, colour TFT display with a screen diagonal of 4.5 inches (11.4 cm) is incorporated between the two dials as standard and ambient lighting has been extended to the footwell, creating a more generous sense of space. As well as solar red there are now two additional colours - polar blue and polar white.

The SLC's vario-roof combines open-top driv-

ing pleasure with uncompromised comfort, with an even smoother electrohydraulic roof that allows easy opening or closing, even while driving at speeds up to 40 km/h. Unique to the SLC, the panoramic vario-roof with MAGIC SKY CONTROL - a glass roof that lightens or darkens at the touch of a button - provides an open-air feeling at any time, as well as welcome shade under a hot sun. The classic strengths of the SLC also include its well-designed boot, which at 335 litres has easily the highest capacity in this segment.

A new feature for the SLC is the standard-fit Active Brake Assist, known in other model series as COLLISION PREVENTION ASSIST PLUS. In addition to radar-based proximity warning and braking assistance by Adaptive Brake Assist, this Active Brake Assist system carries out autonomous braking to reduce the danger of rear-end collisions. Both Parking Assist PARKTRONIC and reversing camera comes as standard in the GCC, making parking significantly safer and more straightforward.

### Mercedes-Benz SL: The legend - now even more dynamic and modern

More powerful engines, automatic transmission, 9G-TRONIC, DYNAMIC SELECT with five transmission modes and Active Body Control with the curve tilting function all take the legend to a new dynamic level. Taking the meaning of the well-known abbreviation "SL" - Super-Light - literally at its word, the new generation has implemented an all-aluminium bodyshell as part of large-scale series production, for the first time. Only relatively few components are made using other materials. High-strength steel tubes are integrated in the A-pillars to increase safety and the aluminium bodyshell weighs around 110 kg less than if it had been produced using steel technology.

"The SL range has long delivered on performance and promise, inspiring desire among car enthusiasts," said Michael Ruehle, Chief Executive Officer, Abdul Rahman Albisher & Zaid Company. "Its classic two-seat cockpit embraces its passengers like the SL hugs the road, while its reduced mass tips the scales in favour of greater safety, comfort, and most of all, athletic performance."

The new SL debuts a revised front end, with the standard, unique diamond radiator grille extends downwards. Two power domes accentuate the long, drawn-out bonnet while the new standard-fit LED Intelligent Light System with headlamp housing extends far to the outside. The sporty wellhouette is emphasised by the enlarged cosmetic air outlets with wing-like chrome inserts in the dynamic, broad vehicle wings and the exterior mirrors positioned on the beltline. Brilliant blue and designo selenite grey magno are available to choose from by way of new colours, plus the range of light-alloy wheels in the size 48.3 cm (19 inches) has also been extended significantly.



## ALL-NEW NISSAN MAXIMA REDEFINES SALOON SEGMENT

**DUBAI:** Nissan's all-new Maxima, which has redefined the large saloon segment with its sporty aesthetics and engaging driver appeal, has seen sales increase by 180 percent since start of sale in Nov 2015 up to May 2016 comparing to the same period from the previous fiscal year. "The eighth generation Maxima is completely redesigned and is the most powerful and sportiest model in its history," comments Nissan Middle East's Managing Director, Samir Cherfan. "It appeals to drivers with a requirement for practicality, state-of-the-art technology, beautiful design and an engaging experience behind the wheel."

"The all-new Maxima is redefining what the large saloon car segment can do - and this is evident across the Middle East. To see such a dramatic upswing in sales across the region is proof that a modern four-door can be exciting, beautifully designed and performance oriented without sacrificing quality and reliability."

The 2016 Maxima has also been named the top scoring full-size car in the Strategic Vision Total Quality Impact (TQI) Awards. The 2016 Maxima

had a total evaluation score of 720 - out of a possible 1,000 - besting the other competitors in the full-size car segment and well above the segment average. More than just counting problems, the TQI rating allows owners to fully reflect their experiences with their vehicles, including tangible aspects such as acceleration and visibility, intangible aspects such as vehicle image, emotional aspects and involvement, as well as a comprehensive survey of the number and severity of the vehicle problems reported.

According to the study results, Maxima stood out in all key factors - including safety, durability, NVH (noise, vibration and harshness), comfort, workmanship, style, power and pickup, and thoughtful engineering. Maxima also ranked highly in excitement and individuality measures. The recently launched all-new Nissan Maxima has redefined its segment as it brings head turning design, enhanced performance and state-of-the-art technology to Middle East customers. Together, these attributes make the new Nissan Maxima a unique combination of sports car style with premium elegance.

## AL TIJARI ANNOUNCES OFFER FOR ATLANTIS RESORT IN COOPERATION WITH MASTERCARD

**KUWAIT:** Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) has announced its partnership with MasterCard International for their promotion with the famous Atlantis Dubai the Palm, where customers can use their CBK MasterCard credit or prepaid cards to book their getaway at Atlantis resort in Dubai and enjoy an exclusive offer for family fun packages from only AED 1,595.

The offer includes a variety of benefits ranging from spa sessions to a full breakfast, a choice of lunch or dinner in 15 Atlantis restaurants and unlimited access to Aquaventure Waterpark, the lost chamber and many more benefits. Customers can take advantage of the

exclusive offer that is valid for stays until Sept 30, 2016. For more information, customers can check the latest promotion section on bank website on [www.cbk.com](http://www.cbk.com), booking can be made directly on the link in the website where customers can avail the offer by using their credit or prepaid CBK MasterCard. MasterCard has always collaborated with Commercial Bank of Kuwait on creating the most innovative, and dynamic campaigns to ensure their customers are always satisfied. CBK recommends its customers to take advantage of this special offer, and enjoy the wonderful world of Atlantis resort in Dubai.

## GULF BANK WINS TWO AWARDS FROM INTERNATIONAL BANKER

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Bank recently announced that it received two coveted awards from International Banker for 'Best Commercial Bank' and 'Best Innovation in Retail Banking' in Kuwait for 2016. The 'Best Commercial Bank' and 'Best Innovation in Retail Banking' awards reinforce Gulf Bank's commitment to offering excellence in its customer service. The Bank's innovative use of technology to provide tailored solutions to clients, such as the launch of Middle East's first facial recognition mobile banking app and its dedication to enhancing the customer experience through its simple, transparent and trustworthy approach, are two of the main factors that position the Bank in the forefront.

Commenting on this achievement, Cesar Gonzalez-Bueno, Gulf Bank CEO said: "We are honored with the recognition Gulf Bank

has received from International Banker for the second consecutive year. These awards are endorsements the strong reputation and leading position of Gulf Bank. At the Bank we strive to achieve the highest standards, to offer our customers exceptional customer service and innovative, easy-to-use products. We are proud to know that these efforts are being independently acknowledged by the banking industry."

The '2016 Banking Awards' distinguish those institutions that have excelled in providing an unparalleled service to their clients whilst also continuously maintaining a high level of regulatory compliance. The awards identify the best organizations and individuals in the sector, measured not only by growth, liquidity and profitability but also taking into consideration issues such as

product innovation, use of IT, corporate governance, transparency and sustainability.

In the past year, Gulf Bank has launched a number of exciting products and customer propositions. These include 'Gulf Rewards', which is Kuwait's fastest and most rewarding loyalty program. The program includes Gulf Points for free flights and hotels redemptions, as well as access to Gulf Bank Entertainer, Kuwait's first geo-locator mobile application offering exclusive deals in Kuwait, UAE, and London. The bank has also introduced the VISA Signature Credit Card, in addition to the other premium credit cards offered, allowing it to present Priority Banking customers with a range of new, exciting benefits.

Also, in the last year, the bank has revamped its salary and red accounts,

adding new benefits and incentives to customers, while the famous Al Danah account remains a strong driver of growth, presenting customers with the chance to win the single biggest cash prize of KD 1 million.

Most recently, Gulf Bank has announced the launch of Middle East's first facial recognition mobile banking app. This allows customers to access their personal accounts on any number of services by logging into through one of two methods: by blinking their eyes at their smartphone camera ('Blinking to Bank') following their fingerprint recognition (Touch ID), or through the use of a traditional password registration. This bilingual Arabic and English app is available for download onto smartphone devices through the Apple App store and the Android Play store.

## ETIHAD AIRWAYS WINS TOP HONORS AT PRESTIGIOUS ADAM SMITH AWARDS

**ABU DHABI:** Following a string of recent awards for its funding activities and treasury practice, Etihad Airways swept top honours at the Treasury Today Adam Smith Awards in London. Etihad Airways' treasury team collected the highest honour, winning the Top Treasury Team Award for overall excellence. The team also picked up the awards for Best Financing Solution and Best Cash Management Solution.

Winning the Top Treasury Team Award, against a field of strong international competition, Etihad Airways' Treasury Department was recognised for its innovative transformation and centralisation programmes that have made an outstanding contribution to the airline.

Presented at a gala luncheon in The City of London's historic Gibson Hall, the awards were collected by Ricky Thirion, Etihad Airways' Group Treasurer; and Deputy Treasurer, Adam Boukadida.

James Hogan, Etihad Aviation Group President and Chief Executive Officer, said: "Innovation is at the heart of everything we do at Etihad Airways. These latest awards are a testimony to the talent in our finance team. Our strategy is clear and finance is a core enabler of that strategy - a business model that focuses on organic growth and minority investments in airlines around the world. Our equity partner strategy is creating a total which is greater than the

sum of its parts, a grouping working together to improve revenues, reduce costs and uncover exciting new business synergies."

James Rigney, Etihad Aviation Group Chief Financial Officer, said: "The performance of our treasury team this last year has been remarkable. These highly coveted awards, especially the team of the year award, are very well deserved. The success they have had is a catalyst for Etihad Aviation Group's plans for further growth and investment."

Angela Berry, Co-founder and Group Publisher at the Treasury Today Group, said: "The Adam Smith Awards are the ultimate industry benchmark for achievement in corporate treasury. Etihad Airways is to be congratulated for sweeping so many of this year's awards."

The Best Financing Solution Award was in recognition of the landmark Etihad Airways Partners' (EAP) US\$700 Million debt capital markets transaction completed in September 2015. Seen as the first joint financing deal of its kind in the airline industry, the ground-breaking transaction was aimed at funding EAP's expansion. A further US\$500 million has since been raised in a second transaction completed last month - reflecting the financial markets' continued confidence in the Etihad Airways Partners story.

The implementation of an innovative global cash management solution that unlocked liquidity, introduced cost savings, and allowed Etihad Airways to manage, control and report global cash centrally, was recognised with the Best Cash Management Award. The new solution brought about greater economies of scale, increased operational efficiency, enhanced financial returns and immediate solutions to local needs across the airline's worldwide operations.

## IS YOUR HONDA READY FOR THE SUMMER?

**KUWAIT:** In one of the biggest offers of the season, Honda Alghanim Service Center launched its best maintenance campaign yet, offering Honda owners a slew of free services and discounts that will guarantee them a pleasant summer and peace of mind. Indeed, as temperature rises, customers are earnestly encouraged to ensure the safety of their vehicle as to avoid malfunctions and breakdowns on the road.

Luckily, thanks to the free checkup offer by Alghanim Motors, the exclusive distributor of Honda products in Kuwait, including cars, bikes power equipment, power generators and more, customers can benefit from a number of free and discounted maintenance services that will meet all their needs. Customers can book their appointments in advance by calling the service center directly at 1822777.

Performed by a maintenance team of specialists and technicians of the highest order, Honda's free summer checkup promotion will entail a number of inspection points that includes a car's cooling system (radiator, water pump, hoses, thermostat, fan, fan clutch and belts), AC system (compressor, accumulator, dryer, condenser and AC piping) and tires and brakes (visual check for brakes and tire pressure adjustment).

Upon inspection, the maintenance team will prepare a detailed report evaluating the car's performance and stability as well as offer their professional recommendations for maintenance and replacement. If customers decide to have their Honda vehicle serviced, the service center will instantly offer up to 30 percent discount on parts with 1-year warranty, up to 10 percent discount on labor and up to 50 percent discount

on the widest range of accessories, availing owners the freedom to customize and personalize their vehicles as they see fit. Furthermore, if customers decide to have their Honda vehicle checked-up, then they will instantly get a gift from the service center: free cars wash that commemorates their visit and trust with Honda.

The free checkup offer is a reflection of Honda Alghanim's never-ending commitment toward its customers - a commitment honored by offering the highest standards of service and products that are guaranteed to paint a smile on customers' faces. In addition, by availing amazing offers and unbeatable prices and discounts all yearlong, Honda Alghanim continues to cement its reputation as one of the most reliable, trusted and loved car brands in the world.

Honda Alghanim invites all its customers to visit the latest showroom at AlRai to take advantage of this offer and learn more on the models, features, and prices of the new Honda lineup. The new showroom, which is considered to be the largest in the Middle East and North Africa region, is situated as part of Safat Alghanim on an area covering 9,000 square meters; it has been built by integrating Alghanim Industries brand values in order to achieve a prestigious status that the leading global brand Honda deserves. This showroom accentuates on architecture and design while offering high-quality services of which customer satisfaction is of the highest priority. It boasts 3 floors that offer versatile services including a service center that is able to receive 70 vehicles through 16 stations daily.

## BURGAN BANK OFFERS EIDEYA DELIVERY SERVICE TO PREMIER BANKING CUSTOMERS FOR FREE

**KUWAIT:** Burgan Bank announced that it is continuing to offer Premier Banking customers with the complimentary Eideya Delivery service in collaboration with Qiblah company for concierge services to cater to their overall banking expectations. This service enables Premier Banking customers to receive banknotes before the Eid holidays at their offices or homes, avoiding the burdens of waiting in line at that time of the year.

To request this service, Premier customers can simply contact Qiblah concierge services starting 9 am until 4 pm, by calling 22317755 or emailing [Burganpremier@qiblah.com.kw](mailto:Burganpremier@qiblah.com.kw) to request the amount of Eid money required and state their address in order for the concierge messenger to deliver it accordingly.

It is worth mentioning that the Eideya delivery service comes as part of the bank's wide range of valuable privileges and benefits that is especially designated

for its Premier customers. Additionally, the bank's collaboration with Qiblah for concierge services stems from its commitment of supporting its customers' everyday requirements with unmatched personalized experience.

Burgan Bank's premier customers can avail instant concierge services from a selected list of more than 20 services. These services include; travel coordination, airport transfers, visa assistance, themed party planners, valet parkers, gift purchasing, courier service, tickets to major events, payment of school fees, car registrations, car service, traffic fine payment, car wash, limos for occasions, restaurant reservations and others. The free concierge services has been introduced as part of the bank's wide range of valuable privileges and benefits that is especially designated for its Premier customers.



(From left) Adam Boukadida, Etihad Airways' Deputy Treasurer; Ricky Thirion, Etihad Airways' Group Treasurer - at the Treasury Today Adam Smith Awards in London.



## GITEX SHOPPER 25TH ANNIVERSARY PROMISES SALES BONANZA

**Dubai:** Exhibitors at the 25th anniversary of GITEX Shopper are promising exciting new product launches and unbeatable offers across the full range of technology, communication and entertainment sectors. The eight-day sales extravaganza scheduled to take place from 3 - 10 October at Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC), is expected to be the most thrilling edition yet.

In celebration of this milestone anniversary edition, the organizers of the Middle East's largest and most anticipated consumer IT and electronics show have announced an unprecedented line-up of entertainment features, competitions and prizes this year. Opening hours will run for a full 12 hours a day, from 11:00am to 11:00pm, with the metro station close by to offer visitors convenient access to and from the show.

With the consumer electronics market in the UAE continuing to benefit from strong private consumption and high business confidence in the local economy, the country will remain one of the leading consumer technology markets in the MENA region. According to BMI Research, the UAE has the highest rate of household consumption in the

MENA region and this is expected to rise to US\$30,000 by 2017. This is why GITEX Shopper continues to be the most important event in retailers' business calendars offering a perfect platform to meet tech-savvy consumers.

"GITEX Shopper has enjoyed extraordinary success from the show's first edition, and with this year marking the 25th anniversary of the show, anticipation among retailers and consumers is at all-time high. Exhibitors will be unveiling incredible deals and prizes on all the latest tech products for work, home or school," said Trixie LohMirand, Senior Vice President, Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC). "Shoppers to the 25th anniversary edition of GITEX Shopper are guaranteed to find the best deals on the latest consumer electronics this October."

The world's top consumer IT and electronics brands have confirmed their presence, with more than 35,000 products on show. Global players such as Dell, HP, Huawei, Lenovo, Samsung and Toshiba, will be among the many brands showcased. Top regional distributors and retailers, including E-City, Emax, Jacky's, Jumbo, Max Electronics, Plug Ins and Sharaf DG, will all be running special promotions exclusively during GITEX Shopper.

C. Purushothaman, Head of Marketing (Sr. Manager), Imaging & Mobility at Samsung Gulf Electronics commented: "We are delighted to be able to celebrate the 25th anniversary of GITEX Shopper. This is our eighth year exhibiting at the show, and it never fails to be one of the most rewarding experiences that we have all year. As the region's largest consumer electronics expo, GITEX Shopper has put us in touch with the consumers from around the region and has allowed us to introduce them to our newest products and technologies and our most enticing promotions. Thanks to the GITEX Shopper platform, we take away new inspiration from shoppers to create meaningful products tailored to the region. This October, GITEX Shopper visitors should expect to see a whole new range of Samsung cutting-edge products and technologies to meet each and every need."

Mahesh Chotrani, Assistant Vice President, Jacky's Electronics, one of Shopper's biggest power retailers said: "We are very excited to be a part of GITEX Shopper yet again, and especially on its 25th anniversary. This year we promise shoppers an enjoyable shopping experience and pleasant surprises



while shopping with us at the show."

Neelesh Bhatnagar, CEO of Emax said: "The fact that GITEX Shopper celebrates its 25th anniversary this year is testament to the vital importance of the show for both the tech retail industry and consumers. We have been participating in GITEX Shopper for nine years and have always been proud to be associated with such a tech-shopping extravaganza. Shoppers to the 25th edition of GITEX Shopper can look forward to

exciting deals at exceptional value. As a unique technology carnival, GITEX Shopper will continue to be a driver of growth of the tech retail industry and the local economy, and will continue to enable consumers in the region to be early adopters of tech innovations."

GITEX Shopper 2015 will take place from 3-10 October and will open from 11:00am - 11:00pm every day. Tickets are priced at AED 30 per person and entry is free for children below the age of five.

## WHITE HOUSE CLEARS SMALL, COMMERCIAL DRONES FOR TAKEOFF

**WASHINGTON:** Routine use of small drones by real estate agents, farmers, filmmakers and countless other commercial operators was cleared for takeoff by the Obama administration Tuesday, after years of struggling to write rules that would both protect public safety and free the benefits of a new technology.

The Federal Aviation Administration announced the creation of a new category of aviation rules designed specifically for drones weighing less than 55 pounds. The long-anticipated rules mean commercial operators can fly drones without special permission.

Industry and government officials describe commercial drones as the biggest game-changing technology in aviation since the advent of the jet engine. "This is a watershed moment in how advanced technology can improve lives," said Brendan Schulman, a vice president at DJI, the world's largest civilian drone-maker.

Jason Miller, an Obama economic adviser, said the rules are the first step toward full integration of drones in the national airspace system. Until now, commercial operators have had to apply for a waiver from rules that govern manned aircraft, a process that can be time-consuming and expensive.

Since 2014 the FAA has granted more than 6,100 waivers and another 7,600 are waiting for approval. Many more small companies have been using drones without FAA permission, say industry officials. Unless those operators make a serious mistake that brings them to the FAA's attention, there's not a lot the agency can do to track them down. The new rules would provide an easier way for those businesses to operate legally.

The rules also would effectively lift the lid on flights by other potential operators who have held off using the technology - ranchers who want to count cattle, research scientists, and companies that inspect infrastructure like bridges, oil platforms and smokestacks, to name a few.

Under the new rules, operators would register their drones online, pass an aviation knowledge exam for drone pilots at an FAA-approved testing center and then

they're good to go. That's a big change since operators currently have to have a manned aircraft pilot's license.

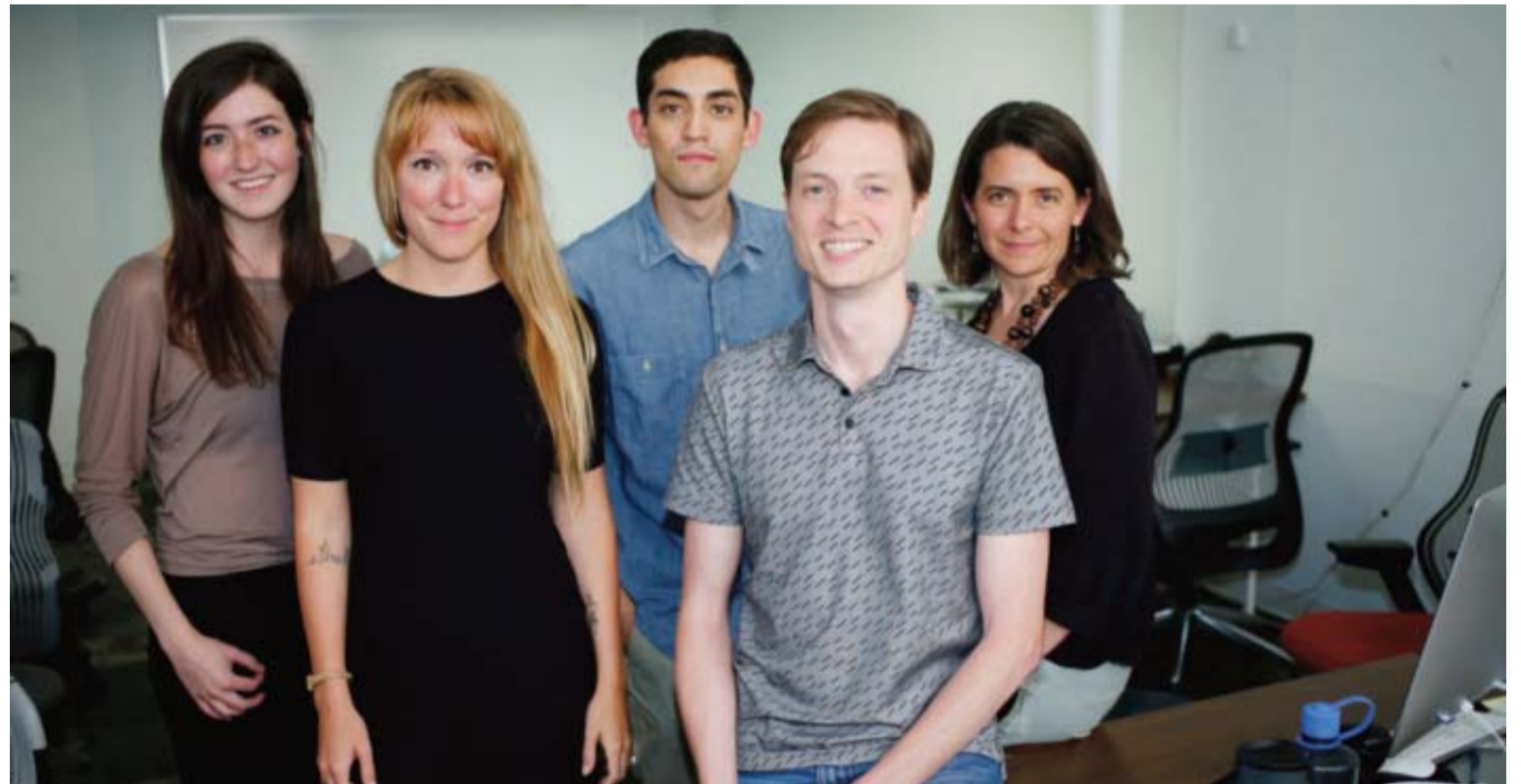
Operators also would have to follow many of the rules that apply to model aircraft hobbyists like keeping drones within sight at all times and not flying over people or higher than 400 feet.

Other important limitations also remain in place. Drone flights will be permitted only during the day and at twilight. Drone industry officials have long complained that restricting drone flights to daytime precluded a great many uses like some search and rescue operations, agricultural operations best done after dark and roof inspections of commercial building roofs that use heat sensors.

Operators could still seek waivers to restrictions like nighttime flights, flights beyond sight of the operator and flights over people. The rules permit commercial transport of goods by drones for the first time, but the other restrictions on flights beyond sight of the operator and over people still apply.

That precludes delivery drones flying across cities and suburbs clasp small packages as envisioned by Amazon. Amazon and Google are working on drone delivery systems for goods purchased online. Google officials have said they expect deliveries to begin sometime in 2017. FAA Administrator Michael Huerta said the agency is researching how drone deliveries might safely be accomplished, but he declined to set a timetable for such rules. What's missing from the rules is an enforcement mechanism, said Sarah Kreps, a Cornell University professor. "It is hard to see how the (FAA) actually can ensure that these rules are followed," she said.

Congress has been prodding the FAA for more than a decade to write rules to provide civilian drones broad access to the national airspace. Initially, the agency put its emphasis on finding ways to enable larger drones like those used for military missions to safely fly at the same altitudes as other manned aircraft. Later, the agency shifted its focus to small drones when it became clear that the market for their uses was developing much faster.—AP



**DENVER:** Members of the Denverite, a news startup based in Denver, pose for a picture in the venture's office. Editor Dave Burdick, front, is flanked by some of the site's co-workers, from left, Chloe Aiello, Ashley Dean, Adrian Garcia and Erica Meltzer.—AP

## ONLINE STARTUPS TACKLE LOCAL NEWS

**NEW YORK:** A handful of new startups are tackling a thorny problem that AOL couldn't solve with zillions of dollars: How to cover local news in different cities without going broke.

Some see a news hole left behind by the shrinking newsrooms of traditional city newspapers and alt-weeklies. Others want to woo smartphone-addicted millennial readers. They're using newsletters and social media like Instagram to build an audience for their sites.

The latest entrant is the brainchild of three media executives who want to launch a string of sites in mid-size cities, starting with Denver. Their first site, Denverite, launched on June 14 with a staff of nine and an expected annual budget of \$1 million - large for a local-news site.

Posts are earnest, with zippy photos and video. Goals are lofty: The site aims to cover development and how Denver is changing as a city, says editor Dave Burdick. It runs both original stories and posts that basically rewrite pieces from other outlets (with links), a model inspired by the online business-news site Business Insider. All three Denverite investors were also Business Insider investors (one, Kevin Ryan, was a Business Insider founder). The business site, known for its snappy style, chart- and image-heavy articles and sheer volume of posts - including many speedy rewrites of news from competitors - sold last fall for nearly \$400 million to a German publisher, Axel Springer.

### The shadow of patch

Local news still seems like an unlikely area of growth. The sector labors under the failure of Patch, an AOL-funded string of "hyperlocal" news sites that reportedly lost at least \$200 million before its owner mostly sold it off in 2014. It grew too fast and relied too much on national advertisers rather than local businesses, says Michele McLellan, a Chicago-based digital-news consultant.

Patch still exists, although its workforce is far smaller and its ambitions have scaled back considerably. (The company says its staff and net-

work are expanding, traffic is growing - and that it even turned a profit in the fourth quarter last year.) There are still hundreds of tiny online news outlets - many with budgets well below \$1 million a year - that have built small but loyal audiences over the years, McLellan says. One wave arose after the Great Recession devastated newsrooms with layoffs; another formed when Patch editors struck out on their own following the site's sale.

But Denverite and others like Billy Penn, a site that launched in 2014 in Philadelphia, and Charlotte Agenda, which started in North Carolina last year, have mini-Patch ambitions: To serve up local news in several cities at once. (DNAInfo, a billionaire-backed company founded in 2009, already does this. It's in Chicago and New York and apes traditional newspapers by covering crime, politics and local events at the neighborhood level.)

These startups join deeper-pocketed operations such as Voice of San Diego and Texas Tribune, prominent nonprofits with substantial budgets that focus on local public policy and investigative reports.

But outfits catering to millennials have a breezier approach. Ted Williams, Charlotte Agenda's publisher, says Instagram is the site's "most important channel." He plans to expand to Raleigh this summer.

### Subtracted ads

Challenges, of course, are everywhere. Digital advertising is a \$60 billion business in the U.S., but tech companies like Google and Facebook pull in a growing majority of that revenue. Research firm eMarketer predicts Facebook alone will account for 31 percent of all display-ad revenue, traditionally a mainstay of online publishers, in 2016. Ad-blockers are also increasingly popular among readers.

Big advertisers tend to rely on national websites and ad networks. That's why Patch didn't work, says Rich Gordon, a professor of digital innovation at Northwestern's Medill journalism

school. But the alternative - selling ads to local businesses - requires finding a good salesperson with that expertise, which also isn't easy.

Many local-coverage niches are already crowded. Free weekly papers in many cities focus on arts and culture; passion-project blogs cover niche topics deeply. And many people turn to social media to learn about concerts, museum exhibits and plays from the venues themselves.

### Going native

Several new local-news sites are looking beyond traditional boxy web ads. One popular alternative: native ads that resemble news stories much the way old magazine "advertorials" did. McLellan says her most recent annual survey of local publishers showed a big increase of such ads this year. Charlotte Agenda, for instance, does ad deals that put corporate logos on its site along with native ads and promoted job postings. Billy Penn draws 86 percent of its revenue through sponsored events and by charging admission to gatherings such as happy hours. Its owner, Spirited Media, is launching another site in Pittsburgh in September and plans to expand in other cities after an investment from USA Today owner Gannett.

Subscriptions aren't dead, either. The Frontier, launched last year in Tulsa, Oklahoma, by the former publisher of the Tulsa World, charges \$30 a month for the investigative stories on its site. It has about 650 members and is aiming for 850 in its first 12 months, says publisher Bobby Lorton. He says he's sold sponsorships to support the site for the short term.

Denverite, meanwhile, won't show ads at all for at least the first six months, says Gordon Crovitz, one of its backers and a former Wall Street Journal publisher. Down the road, the company is considering other possible revenue sources including subscriptions.

"We don't think the problems of local journalism are going to get solved in a day," Crovitz says. "We're patient."—AP



**PHILADELPHIA:** A drone operated captures videos and still images of an apartment building.—AP

## DOUBLE HAPPINESS AS CHINA'S GIANT PANDA TWINS ARE BORN

**CHINA:** Two healthy baby giant pandas were born at a Chinese breeding research base on Monday, the first twins of the endangered species born this year, media said. The two females, weighing 144 grams and 113 grams, are the first offspring of mother Yali, who gave birth at the Chengdu giant panda breeding research base in southwest China's Sichuan province.

The unnamed twins are being kept in an incubator and taken out periodically to be fed, according to state broadcaster CCTV. "The twins are quite healthy, their voices are quite clear, relatively speaking

their fur and physical traits are all quite healthy," said one of their feeders, Tang Juwen.

Giant pandas have seen their numbers hit by human encroachment on the highlands where they survive almost entirely on a diet of bamboo. But world nature organization WWF said a survey in 2014 found 1,864 giant pandas living in the wild, almost double the number of the late 1970s. While pandas struggle to reproduce in captivity, better knowledge of their needs has seen an increase in births in recent years with seven born at the Chengdu base last year.—Reuters



**CHENGDU, CHINA:** A keeper feeding one of two newborn giant panda twins at the research base's facility on Monday. —AFP



**CHENGDU, CHINA:** A newborn giant panda twins sleeping in an incubator at the research base's facility on Monday. —AFP

## HUNDREDS OF BIRDS, TURTLES REHABILITATED

**BELLMORE, New York:** Authorities say more than 400 animals were removed from a squalid Long Island home less than a year after a 4-foot alligator was removed from the property. The Nassau Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals says the rescue - dubbed "Operation Noah's Ark" - lasted eight hours.

It says the Bellmore home had a free-roaming skunk and turtles in slimy water in addition to bird cages filled with

feces. More than 250 birds and more than 150 turtles were seized Tuesday along with four reptiles and a dozen mammals, including rabbits, chinchillas, sugar gliders and prairie dogs.

Authorities say homeowner Gary Gruber has been cited for having endangered turtles. Defense attorney Nathan DeCorpo says people bring his client animals for rehabilitation, but that Gruber's own health has deteriorated.—AP



**MIAMI:** Clinic worker Carla Zepeda releasing a pelican back into Biscayne Bay at the Pelican Harbor Seabird Station on Monday. —AFP

## EXOTIC PET TRADE SENDS FLORIDA BIRD RESCUES SOARING

**MIAMI:** In this small animal hospital perched on Miami's sun-splashed harbor, some of the most exotic creatures fly in and out of Carla Zepeda's life.

From peacocks to pelicans, opossums to owls, Zepeda is part of a six-member staff that cares for both the furry and the feathered at the Pelican Harbor Seabird Station, one of south Florida's oldest wildlife rescue centers. Though it began in the 1980 as a place for injured wild pelicans, pet birds are increasingly common, like one of the newest arrivals, a fluffy green quaker parakeet.

The bird landed on a man's shoulder, appearing malnourished and with bruises around its beak, so it was brought to the Pelican Harbor Seabird Station for care. "Here in Miami we deal a lot with the exotic pet trade," says rescue and release coordinator Zepeda, 22. "A lot of escaped pets or released pets." "We now have a very high population of quaker parakeets, which weren't here before and are doing great in the wild."

Also known as monk parrots or quaker parrots, quaker parakeets (*Myiopsitta monachus*) are native to South America, but have established their own wild colonies here, forming loudly chattering flocks that fly over Miami and its mango tree-lined suburbs. "Now the problem with that is they are not native species and they are taking up nesting space from blue jays, red-bellied woodpeckers and even eastern screech owls," says Zepeda.

"Released pets or escaped pets make a big impact on the environment," Zepeda says the center will try to find a new caretaker for the recent arrival, whose friendly nature could pose a danger to its survival in the wild.

### Record caseload

With more than one thousand patients already this year, the center is barreling toward another record, according to executive



**MIAMI:** Clinic worker Victoria Perez feeding a sparrow at the Pelican Harbor Seabird on Sunday. —AFP

director Christopher Boykin. "The number grows every year. We treated 1,968 in 2014 and 2,010 in 2015," he said. "We anticipate another record breaking year."

More local residents are becoming aware of the rescue facility, which helps drive the numbers, he said. A total of 146 different species came into the center last year. Increasing conflicts with humans also bring in many patients, including peacocks that were hit by cars and had to be euthanized due to the severity of their injuries.

For Zepeda, the most surprising arrival was a prairie dog, a rodent native to the grasslands of the midwest. "Apparently they are part of the pet trade," says Zepeda, who has seen three prairie dogs in the past three years.

The locals need care, too. The clinic is currently housing a handful of tiny baby opossums that need feeding every few hours. They lost their mother somehow, and now cling to a stuffed animal opossum while Zepeda plucks them off, one by

one, to feed them formula via a small tube.

### Injured ambassadors

Pelicans were once the sole reason for the center's existence, but now they make up only five to 20 percent of its patients, depending on the year, says Boykin. However, they still represent the center's greatest success. After arriving entangled in fishing lines or with hook injuries, three out of four are released back to the wild after treatment, he says.

On a sunny day in May, Zepeda releases a young pelican that arrived two months earlier with line wrapped around his beak and two hooks embedded in its neck and wing. The bird flies a short distance, then plunks down in the gentle waves, preferring to bob back to its life in the wild.

Some pelicans never leave the center, if wing injuries prevent them from flying, or if they are partially blinded and could not hunt on their own. These and other resident birds, like eastern screech owls, sometimes accompany staff to schools and public events to educate the public about how to deal with wildlife.

Zepeda says one old myth has proven particularly tough to dispel—that a mother bird will not care for her baby bird after a human has touched it. "That is completely false," she says. "They have a really poor sense of smell." If people find a baby bird that seems healthy, they should just put it back in the nest, she says.

Zepeda, who often takes home baby rescue animals and wakes in the middle of the night to feed them, has permanently adopted four creatures that were left at the center—two cockatiels, a white-bellied caique and a Siberian husky.

She says she once thought she might go into zoo medicine, but that was before she tried wildlife rehabilitation. "I ended up loving it too much and now I cannot leave." —AFP

## NYC LAWMAKERS PASS A NOVEL REQUIREMENT FOR FREE TAMPONS

**NEW YORK:** New York City is on track to become the nation's first city to require free tampons and sanitary pads in public schools, homeless shelters and jails after lawmakers approved the idea Tuesday amid a national discussion of the costs of having a period.

The proposal, which Democratic Mayor Bill de Blasio's administration supports, marks a new direction in activists' push to dismantle what they see as unfair financial barriers between women and needed sanitary products. New York state lawmakers voted last month to become the sixth state to eliminate sales tax on the items.

City Councilwoman Julissa Ferreras-Copeland's proposal would make pads and tampons free in restrooms that serve 300,000 schoolgirls, and it would guarantee the products' availability to 23,000 women in homeless shelters and add the force of law to jail standards about sanitary supplies.

Supporters say New York would lead cities by having a law, rather than more changeable policies, in a wide range of locales. "They're as necessary as toilet paper," so they ought to be just as freely accessible,



**WASHINGTON:** This May 30, 2016, photo shows Diva Cups at Whole Foods. —AP

able, Ferreras-Copeland, a Democrat, said before Tuesday's 49-0 vote.

During the discussion, the council's female speaker waved a wrapped tampon aloft in the spirit of bringing a once-taboo subject into the open. Even a male lawmaker who found the subject a bit uncomfortable praised the propos-

al. It's unclear when the mayor will take up the measure, which would provide an estimated 2 million tampons and 3.5 million pads per year in shelters alone. Once dispensers are installed, it's expected to cost about \$2.5 million annually in the city's \$82 billion budget. To some extent, schools, shel-

ters and lockups in New York and elsewhere already provide the supplies for free, and the issue has started bubbling up in various lawmakers' chambers. The Dane County Board in Wisconsin, for instance, voted late last year to experiment with providing free tampons and pads in some buildings in the capital county,

an idea adapted from a test project that Ferreras-Copeland helped spearhead in 25 New York City schools last year. A Wisconsin state legislature proposal to require the products to be free in public schools and state buildings has stalled so far.

Advocates say the measure also would make the free sanitary supplies more readily available by putting them in restrooms, instead of nurses' offices, in schools with female students in sixth grade and up. Girls who need pads or tampons now have to scramble to try to get to the nurse and then the restroom in breaks between classes, says Lineyah Mitchell, a graduating senior at Brooklyn Technical High School.

Rather than do that and risk being late, girls learn to "know the friend in that class who has extra pads," Mitchell, 17, said at a rally before the vote.

Homeless shelters and jails already provide free menstrual supplies on request, according to the city administration. Women's advocates suggest the supplies are inadequate, but officials say they provide what's needed.

Social Services Commissioner



**NEW YORK:** This May 2, 2016, photo shows Thinx that are reusable "period-proof" underwear. —AP

Steven Banks, who oversees homeless shelters, applauded the proposed requirement Tuesday, saying it "expands on and enshrines into law" existing policies.

Meanwhile, New York's statewide sales tax exemption on menstrual supplies is awaiting Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo's signature, which is expected. Several states have weighed eliminating the tax this year, with mixed results. While New York said yes, a Utah legislative committee voted down the idea in March. —AP

## FASTING WITH DIABETES: WHAT SHOULD YOU KNOW

By Dr Rabee Harb, Family Medicine  
Fawzia Sultan Rehabilitation Institute

Fasting for diabetics is approached differently by doctors and usually poses a challenge for patients and physicians. In many cases, especially with patients who suffer from type 1 diabetes, physicians advise against fasting. However, when diabetic patients make the decision to fast, there are a few key things to keep in mind, in order to stay healthy and avoid any major complications.

### What are the risks of fasting for people with diabetes?

Three essential risks associated with fasting should be clearly explained to diabetes patients:

**Low blood sugar:** Symptoms include tremors, sweating, numbness in the fingers, lips or tongue, heart palpitations, hunger, headaches, difficulty concentrating and speaking, abnormal behaviour, lack of consciousness

**High blood sugar:** Symptoms include thirst, increased urination, headaches, fatigue

**Dehydration:** Symptoms include headaches, dry mouth and skin, dizziness, low urine output

### Should diabetic patients fast during Ramadan?

Patients with diabetes should meet with their doctor prior to Ramadan, in order to receive an assessment of their condition and to determine the patient's risk level in terms of fasting. There are three main risk levels:

**High risk patients:** (strongly advised against fasting)

Those with severe and recurrent episodes of hypoglycaemia.

Those with poor glycaemic control.

Those with ketoacidosis in the three months before Ramadan.

Diabetic patients with ongoing infections.

All pregnant diabetic patients.

Elderly patients.

Those who perform intense physical activities.

Those with comorbidities such as renal disease on dialysis, uncontrolled hypertension, cognitive dysfunction or uncontrolled epilepsy.

**Moderate risk patients:** (advised not to fast)

Well controlled patients treated with short acting insulin, sulphonylurea, insulin, or taking combination oral or oral plus insulin treatment.

**Low risk patients:** (can fast with precautions)

Well controlled patients treated with diet alone, monotherapy with metformin (Glucophage), dipeptidyl peptidase-4 inhibitors (Januvia) or thiazolidinediones who are otherwise healthy.

**How can diabetes be managed when fasting?**

Following the initial assessment, and once you have been given an ok from your doctor for fasting, there are a number of guidelines that you need to be aware of:

Arrange a pre Ramadan consultation with your family doctor. Following the initial assessment where you will be able to review your control and determine the feasibility of fasting safely.

Consult a dietician. The diet during Ramadan should be a healthy balanced diet and preferably contains slow energy release foods (like rice) and high fibre foods (like grain cereals and brown rice). Avoid excessive overeating, or compensatory eating of carbohydrates and fatty foods. Benefits from Ramadan fasting are greater in those who maintain appropriate diets.

Monitor your blood sugar before and 2 hours after Iftar, before Sohur, and at midday. Also, if symptoms of hypoglycaemia are suspected, or if you are feeling unwell in general, then break the fast if hypoglycaemia is confirmed on blood glucose testing.

Recognise possible complications and ways to manage them. Patients should be aware of the warning symptoms of dehydration, hypoglycaemia, and hyperglycaemia and should stop the fast as soon as any complications or acute illness occur.

Record weight daily. Make sure to inform your doctor of any change of more than 2kg.

Continue to exercise. Regular light and moderate exercise is safe in type 2 diabetes patients. Rigorous exercises are not recommended because of the risk of hypoglycaemia.

Take medication regularly.

Do not overeat and minimise eating sweet and fatty foods.

Record daily diet intake. This is important to help prevent excessive or very low consumption.

Revisit your doctor after Ramadan.

Health tips for diabetic patients:

The type of insulin may need changing from your usual type.

Pre-mixed insulin is not usually recommended during fasting.

If you are on insulin, you will require less insulin before the start of the fast.

At Sohur, you should include slower absorbed food such as basmati rice, in your meal - along with fruit and vegetables.

Check your blood glucose levels more often than usual.

When you break the fast, have only small quantities of food, and avoid eating sweets or fatty foods.

Give up or reduce smoking 2 weeks before Ramadan starts.

Plan your schedule and meals ahead of time in order to make sure you get the nutrients, fluids, and rest needed.

Eat Suhoor as late as possible, ideally just prior to dawn, this will compensate for the missed usual morning breakfast.

Do not overeat, break the fasting with water or yogurt and divide the amount you are going to eat into small servings during the evening.

Decrease your caffeine intake and switch to decaffeinated drinks at least a week before Ramadan to help your body adjust.

At the end of fasting you should drink plenty of sugar-free and decaffeinated fluids to avoid being dehydrated.



## GREAT ORMOND STREET HOSPITAL CELEBRATES RAMADAN IN LONDON

### FORTY FAMILIES FROM THE MIDDLE EAST ARE AT THE HOSPITAL

**LONDON:** Every year Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children (GOSH) in London prepares for Ramadan with its staff and families. As a multicultural city, many of the staff and UK families fast over Ramadan along with families from the Middle East, and the hospital works hard to accommodate people of all faiths and cultures. "Ramadan is a beautiful month," says a mother from Kuwait, "we plan to celebrate it exactly the same in the hospital as we would normally." To help families do this GOSH is putting on extra services and facilities.

Recognising the long hours required for fasting over Ramadan in the UK summertime, and the importance of Iftar, the hospital is offering food facilities until 11pm, as well as providing vending machines with halal food options across the hospital. The catering team are also providing extra halal food options, including new snacks such as dates, yoghurt and baklava. "It's important to understand and support our colleagues and patients in such times, and promote an understanding within teams." Said Simon Clark, Head of Catering at GOSH.

The hospital is also providing extra room to facilitate prayer over Ramadan, with an extra prayer area put aside inside the hospital including a segregated area for women, as well their normal multi-faith room. The hospital's multi-faith Chaplaincy team is always available for all staff, families and children, and there are two Muslim chaplains in the team. "My experience of Ramadan at the hospital is very good," said Aboubakr Elsayed, Arabic Patient Liaison Manager, "all the staff and my colleagues are really supportive of me and it makes me happy inside, and is really helpful to me when I am fasting for a long time. I also have the support of my managers and I really appreciate it."

Every month GOSH hosts a Mother's Tea Party run by one of the hospital's female Muslim Arabic Interpreting Assistants. "It is

used in the posters and invitations for the Eid al Fitr party as well as being given a prize. Great Ormond Street Hospital in London is recognized as one of the few truly world-class hospitals for children. As a global leader, GOSH has top clinical and research experts working every day to find new and better ways to treat children. While breakthroughs and medical expertise are essential to the treatment of



very good," a mother commented "the soup and rice dishes were excellent." The mothers shared the food with their husbands and children back on the ward and feedback was given to the catering team.

The hospital is also planning an Eid al Fitr party in July and are running an Eid al Fitr colouring competition for all children in the hospital across Ramadan. The winner of the competition will have their winning art work

patients, GOSH also places great emphasis on the support and care provided for children by nurturing an open and supportive atmosphere, ensuring that parents and patients are well informed and closely involved in the treatment process. Children receive the highest standards of care and attention from the expert team of medical and support staff during their stay at GOSH, and are always treated with respect, trust, concern and openness.

# CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times  
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## OOREDOO SHARES THE JOY CELEBRATIONS OF GERGE'AN WITH KIDS AND PARENTS

A series of activities in cooperation with the Guardians of the Disabled Association and at Mubarakiya Souk Ooredoo Kuwait, member of international Ooredoo group, kicked off its series of gerge'an activities, distribution boxes of candy and sweets that are assembled by members of its volunteer program and employees from the company's Corporate Communications team. The first activity in the series of festivities

took place in the headquarters of the Guardians of Disabled Association in Bayan, where members of the volunteer program distributed boxes of gerge'an during a festive celebration with folklore music, competitions and games for kids and parents alike. The second activity took place in Mubarakiya Souk, in the square in front of Kuwait's historic Mubarak Kiosk that is central to the old market. Ooredoo stated that the company is con-

tinuously working on expanding its presence especially in events of celebration with members of the society in all their segments. Gerge'an is a tradition that exists in most Muslim countries, where children receive parcels or boxes filled with sweets, candy and nuts. The gerge'an period spans over three to four nights in the middle of Ramadan. Ooredoo's participation in this event comes as part of its wide-ranging plan for its corpo-

rate social responsibility activities, which aside from celebrating gerge'an include a number of key activities, all operated fully by the members of its volunteer program which runs for the second consecutive term this year. Earlier this month, Ooredoo announced that it will be distributing 17,000 iftar meals during the Holy Month of Ramadan through a distribution centre outside its head office and in its iftar tent, which which Ooredoo is run-

ning for the second consecutive year. The tent is located opposite Ooredoo's head office on Soor Street in Kuwait City. The meal distribution drive is fully operated by Ooredoo's volunteer program members, after the great success of the program last year.



## DR. ALI ABBAS AL-NAQI'S GHABKA "A MINI KUWAIT SOCIETY"

Dr. Ali Al-Naqi Ramadan Ghabka at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel - Kuwait embraced the presence of a large gathering of the citizens of all stripes, personalities of the Royal family, heads of

diplomatic missions accredited to the State of Kuwait and business and government leaders, as well as social and cultural prominent figures

The Ghabka embodied sublime mean-

ings of national unity and cohesion and solidarity among the people of Kuwait, presented a beautiful artistic view of Kuwait culture and architecture, conveying expressive national messages and Holy meaningful

prayers of Ramadan reflected the spiritual and intellectual-oriented atmosphere. " Ramadan Karim" messages.. spread peace on Ghabka, a Holy month of Ramadan that renews prosperity every year on Kuwait

with love and well-being, unity and human harmony.

## THE SULTAN CENTER CELEBRATES GERGEAN ACROSS ITS STORES

In celebration of the Kuwaiti traditions during the Holy month of Ramadan and out of its commitment to share the spirit of the month, The Sultan Center organized across its stores Gergean events spreading joy and happiness amongst children and parents.

Over 3 days, TSC's customers were greeted with a range of activities which included: Abu Tbeila, folkloric show, and Ramadan inspired songs. Children were delighted to participate in the fun-filled competitions for which they were awarded with Gergean treats.

TSC stores were themed for the occasion reflecting the true meaning of the generous month. During the month of Ramadan TSC has been active within in the community through numerous initiatives underscoring its social commitments to society in which it operates.

The Sultan Center celebrates the Holy Month of Ramadan with its customers and is committed to providing them with all their shopping needs.



## TAMDEEN GROUP LAUNCHED "MY BOOK MY FRIEND" PROGRAM AT 360 MALL



The program is designed to revive interest in reading and to increase the awareness of the impact of reading on communities, families and children. Embodying an aim to open to different cultures, and help them reach highest levels of success in their future lives, through reading "Our objective is to create a nation of readers." Muath Al-Roumi, General Manager - Corporate Marketing Group at Tamdeen.

During his speech, Roumi stated Tamdeen Group's vision is to change the world for the better and make 'My book, my friend' program to be a national activity for everyone. He expressed his sadness for the Arab world lags far behind when it comes to a culture of read-

ing, especially the Kuwaitis' community where he hoped to be known as nation of well-read individuals in the near future.

"The Arab world was known for its story-telling culture which does not exist anymore. We are not encouraging our children enough to be imaginative and adventurous with their thoughts and ideas. We can only do this if children love to read, but for that to be happen we need their parents to also love reading by saving this tradition by sharing the stories with our young children and the wider community," Roumi explained.

He added "We will host weekly reading sessions from July 23 for everyone to participate at 360 Mall. The themes will cover science, fic-

tion, history, geography, sports, arts, culture amongst others. We also encourage everyone to take the reading pledge at #MyBookMyFriend and encourage your family and friends to join."

The event was attended and addressed by prominent Kuwaiti authors and poets Dr. Naif Al Mutawa, Hayatt Al Yaqout, Amal Randy, Yousef Khalifa, Nejoud Al-Yagout and Heba Mendany. The six Kuwaiti authors endorsed the program which aspires to engage at least 5000 Kuwaiti adults to read to 20000 children in the age group of 5 to 12 years old by the end of 2017.

Tamdeen group asked all the Kuwaiti authors and poets to contact them to be part

of 'my book my friend' program. There will be also a book donation drive at 360 Mall where people can deposit old books in good condition. Since the acquisition of Tamdeen Real Estate Company in 1996, Tamdeen Group has grown dynamically into the regional powerhouse that it is today.

Consisting of Real Estate Development, Investment and Entertainment arms the group has consistently delivered growth for its partners and shareholders alike. The success of Tamdeen Group is defined by its continuous evolution, and outstanding track record of innovation in its offering. Several international awards and recognition have followed for innovative design, state-of-the-art architect-

ture, outstanding marketing and pioneering use of technology.

TAMDEEN's vision has had positive impacts on the urban and social landscape of Kuwait through significant projects that add prestige to the community it serves. Tamdeen Group's subsidiaries are the engines that promote the growth and development of the group. These entities include: Tamdeen Real Estate, Tamdeen Investment, Kuwait National Cinema, Tamdeen Shopping Centers, Tamdeen Entertainment Co.



## KUWAIT RED CRESCENT SOCIETY CELEBRATES GERGEAN



Mr Musaed Al-Enezi and volunteers

AMC
04:10 Sweet Revenge
05:30 The Willy Conspiracy
07:15 Big Screen
07:30 What Did You Do In The War Daddy?

ANIMAL PLANET HD
03:25 Natural World
04:15 Gator Boys
05:02 Treehouse Masters
05:49 Restoration Wild

COMEDY CENTRAL
03:00 Hungry Investors
03:50 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
04:40 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol

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

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

Discovery Science
03:00 Disappeared
03:48 Redrum
04:36 Deadly Affairs
05:24 The Perfect Murder

Discovery Science
03:00 Mighty Ships
03:48 Secret Space Escapes
04:36 Strip The Cosmos

05:45 The Hive
05:50 Mouk
06:00 Hank Zipzer
06:25 Sofia The First
06:50 Gravity Falls

Disney Junior
03:10 Henry Hugglemonster
03:20 Calimero
03:35 Zou



SNOW DOGS ON OSN MOVIES FAMILY

06:35 Super Matrak
07:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
07:25 K.C. Undercover
07:50 Supa Strikas



SAVE YOUR LEGS ON OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

Discovery Channel HD
03:40 Dirty Money
04:05 Storage Wars Canada
04:30 Storage Hunters UK

food network
03:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
03:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
04:00 Man Fire Food

itv HD CHOICE
03:25 Masterpiece With Alan Titchmarsh
04:20 Sunday Night At The Palladium
05:15 Pick Me!



JERSEY BOYS
The story of Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons
JERSEY BOYS ON OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL

NAT GEO WILD HD
03:45 Dangerous Encounters
04:40 Ultimate Animal Countdown
05:35 Africa's Creative Killers

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD
03:50 Outsiders: Living Off The Edge
04:45 Naked Science 2.5
05:40 Genius By Stephen Hawking

nickelodeon HD
03:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
03:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
03:48 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles

18:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
19:00 100 Things To Do Before High School
19:24 Game Shakers

OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY
04:00 Romy And Michelle's High School Reunion
06:00 Indian Summer
08:00 My Girl 2

OSN MOVIES HD FESTIVAL
03:40 Merchants Of Doubt
06:30 Walk The Line
09:00 Steve Jobs: The Man In The Machine

OSN MOVIES HD KIDS
04:15 Blackie And Kanuto
06:00 The Adventures Of Don Quixote
07:30 The Flintstones & WWE: Stone Age Smackdown



# CLASSIFIEDS

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## KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO SATURDAY (23/06/2016 TO 25/06/2016)

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

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**CHANGE OF NAME**  
 I, Kottakonda Udhiah Kumar holder of Indian Passport No. G1153961 hereby change my name as Kota Udhaya Kumar S/o Kota Krishna Murthy, post K.V Palli Mandal Chittoor District, AP. (C 5187) 19-6-2016

**EMERGENCY**  
 112

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**PRAYER TIMINGS**

**Fajr: 03:14**  
**Shorook: 04:49**  
**Duhr: 11:50**  
**Asr: 15:24**  
**Maghrib: 18:51**  
**Isha: 20:23**

## Flight Schedule

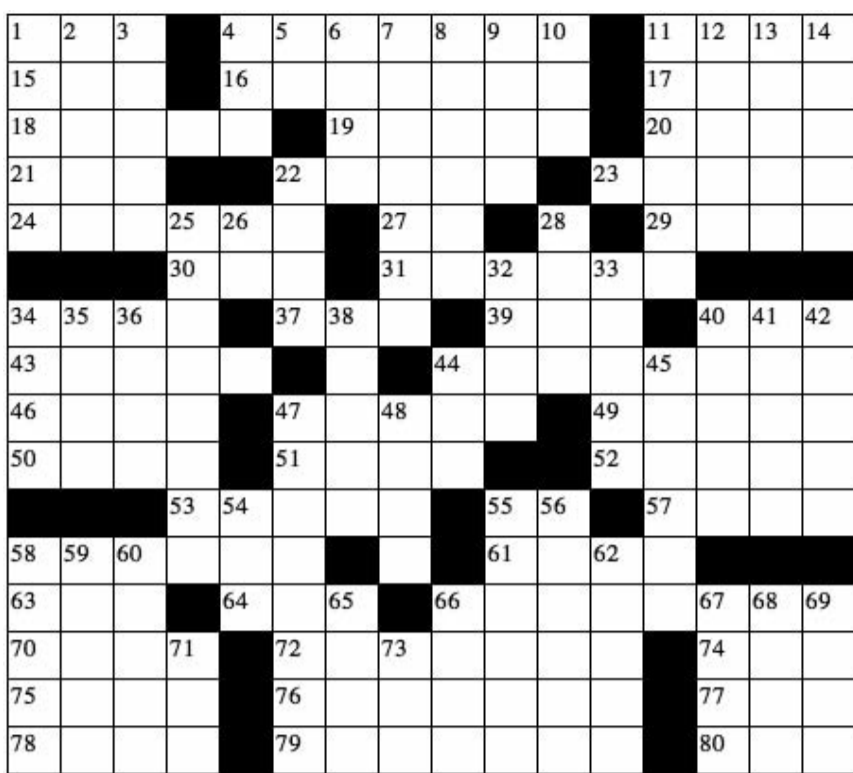
**In case you are not travelling, your proper cancellation of bookings will help other passengers to use seats**

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Arrival Flights on Thursday 23/6/2016				Departure Flights on Thursday 23/6/2016			
Airlines	Fit	Route	Time	Airlines	Fit	Route	Time
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10	KAC	058	Dubai	15:05
MSC	415	Sohag	00:10	KAC	673	Dubai	15:05
JZR	239	Amman	00:20	AXB	394	Kozhikode	15:10
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
DLH	635	Doha	01:00	KAC	617	Doha	15:15
JZR	539	Cairo	01:20	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:35
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30	JZR	801	Taif	16:00
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:40	SVA	505	Jeddah	16:00
RJA	642	Amman	01:45	KAC	613	Bahrain	16:00
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45	SYR	342	Damascus	16:05
AXB	395	Kozhikode	01:50	BON	102	Sarajevo	16:05
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	OMA	646	Muscat	16:10
KAC	418	Manila	02:15	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
UAE	853	Dubai	02:25	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	RJA	641	Amman	16:55
RJA	644	Amman	03:10	KAC	675	Dubai	17:00
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:15	FDB	052	Dubai	17:00
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	JZR	266	Beirut	17:10
QTR	1076	Doha	03:25	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
KAC	544	Cairo	03:40	KNE	532	Jeddah	17:25
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
JZR	555	Alexandria	04:15	NIA	252	Alexandria	17:50
FEG	931	Alexandria	05:00	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
QTR	8511	Doha	05:05	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	JZR	538	Cairo	18:30
JZR	529	Asyut	06:00	CCE	342	Alexandria	18:35
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	06:25	FDB	8054	Dubai	18:40
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	06:30	KAC	563	Amman	19:00
BAW	157	London	06:40	JZR	238	Amman	19:15
IRA	673	Ahwaz	07:15	JZR	124	Bahrain	19:20
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15	KAC	285	Dhaka	19:40
JZR	503	Luxor	07:25	JAV	622	Amman	19:45
KAC	382	Delhi	07:30	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	07:35	ABY	124	Sharjah	19:55
KAC	206	Islamabad	07:40	KAC	1788	Jeddah	19:55
KAC	204	Lahore	07:40	MSR	621	Cairo	20:20
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50	FDB	060	Dubai	20:30
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:15	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
KAC	344	Chennai	08:15	JAI	571	Mumbai	20:35
KAC	352	Kochi	08:20	THY	6634	KHL	20:45
KAC	362	Colombo	08:20	KAC	331	Trivandrum	20:45
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	DLH	634	Doha	20:50
KAC	784	Jeddah	08:50	KAC	353	BLR	20:55
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:00	KAC	343	Chennai	20:55
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	KAC	351	Kochi	21:00
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	KAC	543	Cairo	21:00
IRA	667	Esfahan	09:05	KNE	232	Riyadh	21:10
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20	JZR	554	Alexandria	21:15
RJA	648	Amman	09:30	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	OMA	648	Muscat	21:15
CCE	341	Alexandria	10:00	MSR	619	Alexandria	21:30
UAE	873	Dubai	10:40	QTR	1089	Doha	21:45
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
MEA	404	Beirut	11:00	FDB	5054	Dubai	21:55
JZR	561	Sohag	11:25	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	21:55
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:30	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25	UAE	860	Dubai	22:25
FEG	933	Sohag	12:55	KLM	417	Dammam/Amsterdam	22:25
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	KAC	381	Delhi	22:25
KAC	620	Doha	13:10	KAC	301	Mumbai	22:30
BON	101	Sarajevo	13:55	KAC	205	Islamabad	23:00
KNE	231	Riyadh	14:00	GFA	220	Bahrain	23:00
KNE	529	Jeddah	14:05	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
QTR	1078	Doha	14:05	NIA	152	Cairo	23:10
KAC	672	Dubai	14:05	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
AXB	393	Kozhikode	14:10	KAC	411	Bangkok/Manila	23:25
FDB	057	Dubai	14:20	MSC	502	Alexandria	23:30
GFA	221	Bahrain	14:20				
JZR	779	Jeddah	14:25				

**DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION**

CROSSWORD 1293



ACROSS

- (British) A linear measure of 16.5 feet.
- Cause to be more favorably inclined.
- The head of a branch of an organized crime syndicate.
- The compass point midway between northeast and east.
- Tropical plants.
- A stock exchange in New York.
- Type genus of the Cebidae.
- A river in southeastern France.
- Freedom from difficulty or hardship or effort.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- An analytic or interpretive literary composition.
- The 3 goddesses of fate or destiny.
- A highly unstable radioactive element (the heaviest of the halogen series).
- United States tennis player who was the first Black to win United States and English singles championships (1943-1993).
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
- Someone who leads a wandering unsettled life.
- The sixth month of the civil year.
- A federal agency established to regulate the release of new foods and health-related products.
- Someone who is morally reprehensible.
- Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
- Consisting of one of two equivalent parts in value or quantity.
- A republic on the island of Malta in the Mediterranean.
- A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
- A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- (of complexion) Blemished by imperfections of the skin.
- Genus of tropical plants with creeping rootstocks and small umbellate flowers.
- Swift timid long-eared mammal larger than a rabbit having a divided upper lip and long hind legs.
- Of or relating to apnea.
- Tear or be torn violently.
- The cry made by sheep.
- The site of an archeological exploration.
- A straight line through a body or figure that satisfies certain conditions.
- Large crested Old World plover having wattles and spurs.
- A small piece of cloth.
- A title of address formerly used for a man of rank and authority.
- The trait of lacking restraint or control.
- A defensive missile designed to shoot down incoming intercontinental ballistic missiles.
- A feeling of strong eagerness (usually in favor of a person or cause).
- Very small species of shrubs of southern hemisphere.
- A metric unit of volume or capacity equal to 10 liters.

DOWN

- A summary that repeats the substance of a longer discussion.
- Lake in northwestern Russia near the border with Finland.
- Bar temporarily.
- A syndrome that occurs in many women from 2 to 14 days before the onset of menstruation.
- A trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.
- The largest continent with 60% of the earth's population.
- Dried bark of the cascara buckthorn used as a laxative.
- One of the three Furies.
- A three-tone Chadic language.
- The compass point midway between east and southeast.
- Conqueror of Gaul and master of Italy (100-44 BC).
- Collect or gather.
- (Judaism) A Jewish festival (traditionally 8 days) celebrating the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt.
- Any North American shrubby perennial herb of the genus Heliopsis having large yellow daisylike flowers.
- Lacking or deprive of the sense of hearing wholly or in part.
- Medicine consisting of a tablet (trade name Carafate) used to treat peptic ulcers.
- The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
- A Christian holiday celebrating the birth of Christ.
- An inflammatory disease involving the sebaceous glands of the skin.
- Swelling from excessive accumulation of serous fluid in tissue.
- Dearly loved.
- (usually followed by 'to') Having the necessary means or skill or know-how or authority to do something.
- English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).
- The capital and largest city of Lithuania.
- (prefix) Between or among or in the midst of.
- English economist noted for his studies of international trade and finance (born in 1907).
- (informal) Of the highest quality.
- (Old Testament) The second wife of Jacob and mother of Joseph and Benjamin.
- Formed like a bacillus.
- Any of various strong liquors distilled from the fermented sap of toddy palms or from fermented molasses.
- A resource.
- Alloy of copper and tin and zinc.
- Used as an Italian courtesy title.
- A selective-serotonin reuptake inhibitor commonly prescribed as an antidepressant (trade name Paxil).
- The basic unit of money in Nigeria.
- Genus of vines or erect herbs having trifoliate leaves and yellowish or purplish flowers.
- An amino acid that is found in the central nervous system.
- Having awns i.e. bristle- or hair-like appendages on the flowering parts of some cereals and grasses.
- Toward the mouth or oral region.
- A metabolic acid found in yeast and liver cells.
- (computer science) A standardized language for the descriptive markup of documents.
- A fractional monetary unit of Japan and Indonesia and Cambodia.
- A number of sheets of paper fastened together along one edge.

Yesterday's Solution

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

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Join in and assist with a group project this day, especially if you are given a choice. Supervisors or higher-ups are watching and making decisions. Your expertise will be greatly appreciated and who knows, these higher-ups may decide that you are the right one for the raise or the change in job. This afternoon you may be more than a little eager to buy things. You seem to have an appreciation for just about everything and this may lead you to overspend or indulge too much-careful. Everything reveals you at your most elegant this evening, particularly in social situations. Networking is always a good idea; the more people you know, the more people you can help! A special amount of time devoted to a young child will be appreciated this evening.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Right now, the key to getting through this day involves attending to nagging details-perhaps, something neglected. Everything external and business-oriented should prosper, if your attention does not sway. There will be events today that will make it easy for you to have breakthroughs and find new solutions to old problems. This afternoon may be the time to put a finish to those nagging details. You may find yourself able to put some new ideas into practice this afternoon. Independence, originality and eccentricity can be recognized. This drive to achieve your ambition for your career is very powerful and may strengthen your social standing and vice versa. Now is the time to plan a hot air balloon ride or learn to fly a plane.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Getting personal with you can be a problem. You are polite but you give away no secrets. This rule applies to work but sometimes it takes a while for you to warm up to people outside of work. One big plus for you is that when you become friends, your friends are lifetime friends. Today's work is focused and when work demands you team up with a group... You are a good team player. A co-worker enjoys a few minutes to take a break and you notice the sketchpad that is bursting full of this person's sketches... This is art. You may think that you could help but they may not be ready to display the work just yet. You may be able to help eventually, and could invite this person to an art showing. You are focused and positive; you become contagious.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Opportunities appear all around you but sometimes seem to challenge your position. You must decide whether the risk is worth the change it will bring about in your situation. The clear choice may go against your better interests. Job requirements may stifle your sensitivity and hold you back from growing-tread this one with care. No matter the type of relationship, relationships are very important during this time and can have a very decided influence on your career and workplace. You may find that a more impersonal attitude is the key. You enjoy life yourself and value gusto and enthusiasm in those around you. Feelings are something you express with ease and you appreciate others doing the same.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your employment situation is due for reorganizing and reconstruction. Positive changes are happening. You are at your most practical and what happens now may have a lasting effect on your life direction. If anyone needs help, you are the first to step up and help. Others help you when you need help. This could be with some mathematical difficulty or some transportation situation concerning supplies. Your most essential quality has to do with the very real love and compassion you radiate. Your sense of values and sheer appreciation for life are communicated to all who come to know you. Beyond whatever external considerations may be present, you exude a contagious thankfulness. You spend special time with friends tonight.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Although conservative and sensitive on the outside, you are tough as nails on the inside-as anyone can testify who gets to know you very well. The fact is that you like attention and have a real need to be at the center of any group. Your business grows because of your passion and belief in your type of work. Your more sensitive style hides a strong, aggressive and quite confident nature. You are at home in a crowd and enjoy the attention of others. You expect others to come to you and they certainly seem to do that this afternoon and evening. If you do not state your business, however you may find yourself more involved than you really want to be just now. You may enjoy a loved one or close friends telling you of their success.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your sense of discrimination, when it comes to practical issues, is excellent, as usual. You value clearheaded thinking in others and may find yourself working with several, very sharp individuals today. You express enthusiasm toward your work. You love large-scale organization and your success in your career or business will always be close to your heart. You will find that the young people you come across will add new energies to your plans or ideas. You love to work with young people and gain from their insights as well. You understand and encourage talents, emotions, feelings, creativity and character issues. You value drive and the ability to get things completed in an organized manner. There is a great deal of mental energy now.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

For today, emotional drama is valued rather than avoided. Your appetite for action is probably well known and well noted. Acting, sports, outdoor activities and everything physical are high on your list of favorites. Consider organizing a baseball, hockey, bowling or other group sports team. This is a good time to gather those that are interested into some sports activity. Perhaps some team competition with another group would be fun, perhaps a church, school or neighborhood group. This is the sort of energy where you can organize an idea and let others develop the project. Your outward seriousness and no-nonsense approach to things is obvious to all. This deliberate sense of responsibility comes across and is central to your personality.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

There is a question of some lost item but with very little research it may be found that someone on vacation just forgot to turn in some work project before leaving at the beginning of the week. This afternoon you might bring family members together to decide the next vacation; that is, if you are not already boarding a ship. Leisure activities after work can help keep your mind and physical well-being in a positive place. Whatever is fun for you will actually refurbish or renew your enthusiasm. This could be challenging or passive activities. Reading, games, music, gardening, etc., are all good ideas for some fun activities. Real estate may be a topic of interest to you later today-driving through the neighborhoods may help form your own ideas.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

There is a tendency to be too strict with yourself, to insist that whatever does not contribute to security and other long-term goals is trivial. Your outward seriousness and no-nonsense approach to things is obvious to all. This deliberate sense of responsibility comes across and is central to your personality-others can see that you are an achiever. Everything is run through your checkpoint to see if it holds up and can pass the test. You can be a stickler with details. Someone needs your help this evening and using your mind to negotiate obstacles and handle dilemmas is something you do well. You could be very much in demand as a counselor. You are certainly a problem-solver today. Take a break this evening and enjoy a bicycle ride or walk after dinner.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You will not be able to remain impersonal today. You are a great doer and others accept your commanding nature-you always seem to have the right answers. You are a good leader and higher-ups do not forget this quality. Your life path involves cutting through appearances and superficialities and laying bare the reality of a situation. You will make much progress in the business world. You may be guiding someone younger than you in matters of importance without even realizing it. You may not want to, but if you provide more answers than what is asked of you, it will help others to understand your abilities. Tonight's guys and gals night. You are with your group of friends and may enjoy a card game with friends.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Your mind is ever on career and family. This may not make some of you the most communicative and social animals as you may prefer to avoid crowds and large gatherings. You must realize that teaching, lecturing or guiding others can be most rewarding, and you have a talent in that area. Given to grand gestures and dramatic scenes, you love teaching in any form; you are very real. You can also be most generous to a fault. A request for a loan today would be better to decline. You will find ways to encourage creative thinking and problem-solving for this person. Children and animals are high on your list of priorities. If you are not visiting a zoo today, you might be making plans to visit one soon and perhaps plan a picnic menu as well.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Sci-Fi Movies 2 - Word Search

Find the words hidden in the grid of letters.

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

- ALIENS
- CLOVERFIELD
- DEEP IMPACT
- EQUILIBRIUM
- FLATLINERS
- FREEJACK
- GODZILLA
- HULK

- JURASSIC PARK
- KNOWING
- MAD MAX
- MEN IN BLACK
- OUTBREAK
- PUSH
- RED PLANET
- SIGNS

- SLEEPER
- SLITHER
- SPHERE
- STAR TREK
- SUNSHINE
- THE ABYSS
- TIMECOP

Yesterday's Solution

Large Print Word Search Puzzles

Sci-Fi Movies 1 - Solution

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

- ALIEN
- AVATAR
- BLADE RUNNER
- BRAZIL
- COCOON
- CONTACT
- CUBE
- DARK CITY

- DUNE
- GATTACA
- INCEPTION
- METROPOLIS
- MOON
- ROBOCOP
- SERENITY
- SOLARIS

- STAR WARS
- STARGATE
- SUPERMAN
- PREDATOR
- THE MATRIX
- TRANSFORMERS
- TRON

Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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



### Angkor Wat, Cambodia

**A**ngkor Wat is a temple complex in Cambodia and the largest religious monument in the world, with the site measuring 162.6 hectares. It was originally constructed as a Hindu temple for the Khmer Empire, gradually transforming into a Buddhist temple toward the end of the 12th century. It was built by the Khmer King Suryavarman II in the early 12th century in Yaodharapura the capital of the Khmer Empire, as his state temple and eventual mausoleum. Breaking from the Shaiva tradition of previous kings, Angkor Wat was instead dedicated to Vishnu. As the best-preserved temple at the site, it is the only one to have remained a significant religious center since its foundation. The temple is at the top of the high classical style of Khmer architecture. It has become a symbol of Cambodia, appearing on its national flag, and it is the country's prime attraction for visitors.

Angkor Wat combines two basic plans of Khmer temple architecture: the temple-mountain and the later galleried temple. It is designed to represent Mount Meru, home of the devas in Hindu mythology: within a moat and an outer wall 3.6 kilometers long are three rectangular galleries, each raised above the next. At the centre of the temple stands a quincunx of towers. Unlike most Angkorian temples, Angkor Wat is oriented to the west; scholars are divided as to the significance of this. The temple is admired for the grandeur and harmony of the architecture, its extensive bas-reliefs, and for the numerous devatas adorning its walls.

**History**  
According to legend, the construction of Angkor Wat was ordered by Indra to act as a palace for his son Precha Ket Mealea. According to the 13th century Chinese traveler Daguean Zhou, it was believed by some that the temple was constructed in a single night by a divine architect.

The initial design and construction of the temple took place in the first half of the 12th century, during the reign of Suryavarman II (ruled 1113 - c. 1150). Dedicated to Vishnu, it was built as the king's state temple and capital city. As neither the foundation stela nor any contemporary inscriptions referring to the temple have been found, its original name is unknown, but it may have been known as "Varah Vishnu-lok" after the presiding deity. Work seems to have ended shortly after the king's death, leaving some of the bas-relief decoration unfinished. In 1177, approximately 27 years after the death of Suryavarman II, Angkor was sacked by the Chams, the traditional enemies of the Khmer. Thereafter the empire was restored by a new king, Jayavarman VII, who established a new capital and state temple a few kilometers to the north.

Toward the end of the 12th century, Angkor Wat gradually transformed from a Hindu center of worship to Buddhism, which continues to the present day. Angkor Wat is unusual among the Angkor temples in that although it was somewhat neglected after the 16th century it was never completely abandoned, its preservation being due in part to the fact that its moat also provided some protection from encroachment by the jungle.



### SUDOKU

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

Solution

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

### Color me!

### JOKES

**Q: When does a doctor get mad?**  
**A:** When he runs out of patients!

**Q: Why did the pillow go to the doctor?**  
**A:** He was feeling all stuffed up!

**Q: Why did the doctor lose his temper?**  
**A:** Because he didn't have any patients!

**Q: Where does a boat go when it's sick?**  
**A:** To the dock!

**Q: What did on tonsil say to the other tonsil?**  
**A:** Get dressed up, the doctor is taking us out!

**Q: Patient: Doctor, sometimes I feel like I'm invisible.**  
**A:** Doctor: Who said that?

### Word Search

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

SCRAPBOOK  
 DIGITAL  
 PAPER  
 PREVIEW  
 ELEMENTS  
 FLOWERS  
 LEAVES  
 CREATIVE  
 SUZYQ  
 HYBRID  
 PRINTER  
 RIBBONS  
 BRADS  
 MEMORIES

### ACTIVITY

### KIDS RECIEPE

**Ingredients**

- 1 apple
- 1 banana
- 1/3 c. red seedless grapes
- 1/3 c. green seedless grapes
- 2/3 cup pineapple chunks
- 1 cup nonfat yogurt
- 1/4 c. dried coconut, shredded

**Directions**

- Prepare the fruit by washing the grapes, washing the apples and cutting them into small squares, peeling the bananas and cutting them into chunks, and cutting the pineapple into chunks, if it's fresh. Put the fruit onto a large plate.
- Spread coconut onto another large plate.
- Slide pieces of fruit onto the skewer and design your own kabob by putting as much or as little of whatever fruit you want! Do this until the stick is almost covered from end to end.
- Hold your kabob at the ends and roll it in the yogurt, so the fruit gets covered. Then roll it in the coconut.
- Repeat these steps with another skewer.

Show Dennis the way to his kennel

$$\begin{array}{r} 9 \\ - 8 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 7 \\ - 4 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 8 \\ - 6 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 8 \\ - 4 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

### Did you know..?

- Brazil is the largest country in South America.
- The name Brazil comes from a tree named brazil wood.
- It is called Brazil in Portuguese, the official language spoken in Brazil.
- Brazil is the only country in South America that speaks Portuguese.
- Portugal claimed the land of Brazil in the year 1500. Independence was declared in 1822.
- Brazil is the 5th largest country in the world by both land area and population.
- South America, stretching 7491 kilometers in length.
- Brazil shares a border with all South American countries except for Chile and Ecuador.
- Brazil covers 3 time zones.
- Brazil has one of the largest economies in the world.
- Brazil is one of the 77 founding members of the United Nations.
- The Amazon River flows through Brazil, it is the 2nd longest river in the world (after the Nile).
- Around 60% of the Amazon Rainforest is located in Brazil.
- The climate in the majority of Brazil is tropical.
- Brazil is home to a wide range of animals, including armadillo, tapirs, jaguars and pumas.
- Human activities such as logging, mining fishing and agriculture are important to the Brazilian economy but are also a serious threat to Brazil's diverse environment.
- There are around 2500 airports in Brazil.
- Football (soccer) is the most popular sport in Brazil with the national team consistently among the best in the world, winning the World Cup a record 5 times.
- The population in 2012 was around 194 million people.
- The capital city is Brasilia, while the largest city is Sao Paulo.
- Other major cities include Rio de Janeiro, Salvador and Fortaleza.
- In Brazil they drive on the right-hand side of the road.
- Brazil has a large coastline on the eastern side of

### Button Napkins and Placemats

**Placemats**  
Use buttons to rejuvenate an old set of placemats and napkins, or purchase a new set for this project. You'll need:

- \* Buttons
- \* Fabric glue
- \* Placemats
- \* Needle and thread

- First, take your time deciding where you want the buttons, then use the fabric glue to adhere them to the fabric.
- Sew in place.

**Napkin rings**  
To make these adorable accessories, you'll need to have a rudimentary knowledge of crocheting.

**You'll need:**

- \* Elastic thread
- \* Napkins
- \* Crochet needle Buttons

- Start by stringing approximately 35 to 40 buttons onto the thread.
- Take your crochet hook and make a chain about 3 inches long. The buttons will be in between the hook and the spool.
- Form a circle by connecting the two ends with a slipstitch. This is the base of your napkin ring.
- Single stitch crochet around the circle. As you begin each stitch, slide one button up to the hook, and "capture" it as you insert the hook into the chain. Continue until you've gone around the circle twice.
- Bind off.

# 'Saq Al Bamboo' and 'Been Galbin': Episode 16

By Nawara Fattahova

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Times is publishing daily recaps of two of the Kuwaiti soap operas airing on Al Rai TV and MBC Drama. Here are the recaps of the 16th episode:

## 'Saq Al Bamboo' (Bamboo Stalk)

Awatef asks Ghanima to let Khawla marry her son whose name is also Eisa. Noor heard the conversation and tells Khawla and they both are surprised as she was supposed to talk about Nooriya's son. Ghanima refused saying Khawla is still young.

Noor goes to Eisa's room to talk to him and he tells her stories from the Philippines and his childhood and Luzviminda sees her going out. Awatef told Nooriya that Khawla refused the proposal as she considers her son as her brother. Khawla told Jaber that she got rid of Eisa as Ghanima refused this marriage to avoid family problems after she knew that both cousins wants to marry her.

Ghanima calls Eisa to come to her room and lets him massage her feet. She tells him that he has the same voice as his father and the same touch as his mother. Khawla covers her hair quickly when Eisa enters. He asked her why as she is his sister. She says she needs time to get used to it. Nooriya came to Ghanima to ask why did she refused her son, and Ghanima says it's because Khawla is still young, but Nooriya knows that her mother is hiding something.



## Been Galbin (Between Two Hearts)

Yasmin misses her kids so she goes to visit them but the maid tells her that they all are travelling. She went up to her room and finds women's clothes in her closet. She asked the maid about it and by the time Bashar calls her to tell her about Noora, so she leaves.

Marzouq asks Aryam to meet him to tell her something important. He asks her again if she wants to return to him but

she refuses, so he tells her he is getting married with a woman that he knows from the bank, and that their son Rashid will live with him. She starts to regret as she thought he will always be waiting for her. Dana goes to her doctor for a check-up and she tells her that the baby died.

Yasmin goes to Mihsen's house and the maid said they will return by evening. So she packs her things from her apartment and gives the key to the haris telling him she is going to

live in her husband's house. She buys gifts for her husband and kids and waits for them in the house. But Mihsen comes with his mother, kids, and new wife from their trip. The kids refused to hug her and she leaves the house crying. On her way she meets with an car accident.



In this file photo taken from video, members of the hip hop group Arrested Development, from left, JJ Boogie, Tasha LaRae, Za', background center, Speech, Fareedah and 1 Love perform at Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn. — AP

## Rap's Arrested Development still making music on their terms

The hip-hop group Arrested Development is still making music on their own terms by releasing two new albums this year, one that is a free download and another one for sale. The group's 1992 debut, "3 Years, 5 Months, and 2 Days in the Life of...", sold over four million albums due to their hit singles "Tennessee," "Everyday People" and "Mr Wendal," which stood out in the rap genre with their spiritual and socially conscious lyrics about God, poverty and family. That message hasn't changed for Speech, the frontman of the six-piece collective, although the music industry definitely has.

"The music industry has been sick and sales have been dismal for everybody," said Speech, whose real name is Todd Thomas, during a recent interview in Nashville, Tennessee. "Nothing was happening and we were collecting all this music that we felt really passionate about. So we decided to just release it, just drop it."

Since their debut, Arrested Development has been considered an outlier in the genre. They were critical favorites for their mix of pop, funk, rap and R&B samples and earned two Grammy Awards for best rap performance by a duo or group and best new artist - one of the few rap acts to take home the honor. But Speech said their overtly positive messages didn't always resonate with other rappers or record labels.

"A lot of our peers felt like we weren't really hip-hop and they would say that," Speech said. "So to be called alternative hip-hop was sort of a slap in the face to me. Because I understand it's an alternative in its subject matter from the gangster stuff, but

we're hip-hop. It's just another viewpoint." Their second album in 1994 was not nearly as popular and the band disbanded for several years before reuniting in 2000. The two new albums, "Change the Narrative" and "This Was Never Home," were released in February. Their single, "I Don't See You At the Club," references the Black Lives Matter movement and the 50th anniversary of marches in the South for civil rights, but also marriage and the lack of commitment in hip-hop music.

"The messages are like, 'I just want to have sex with you and leave you,'" said Speech, who lives in Atlanta with his wife and children. "I know that's been the underlying point of rock 'n' roll and a lot of different music. But it's very blatant and very blunt." Speech, who sits on the board of the International Black Film Festival, performed with Arrested Development for dozens of grade school kids in Nashville as a part of the festival's community program "Imagine Me" Children's Summer Film Series in collaboration with Belmont University, Metro Nashville Police Department, Metro Nashville Parks and Salama Urban Ministries. The group performed a couple of hits and then encouraged the kids to rap and dance onstage with them. "I feel like the young generation has so much in their hearts and so much in their minds that they need to express and need to get it out," Speech said. "There's a future Prince or there's a future Michael Jackson that we're all going to be talking about." — AP

## Police report shows 'dark side' of Michael Jackson

A newly surfaced police report related to a 2003 raid on Michael Jackson's Neverland Ranch shows the late pop star's penchant for pornography and attraction to children. Jackson was acquitted in 2005 of child molestation following a 14-week trial, and the report published on Tuesday by the celebrity and gossip website Radar Online was related to evidence submitted in that case. The report contains details about various books, magazines and documents seized at Jackson's secluded California home in November 2003.

The police report states that though the documents were not considered illegal, "this type of material can be used as part of a 'grooming' process by which people (those seeking to molest children) are able to lower the inhibitions of their intended victims and facilitate the molestation of said victims." The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department said it had not publicly released the documents, which had been submitted to the prosecution and the defense during the 2005 trial.

"Some of the documents appear to be copies of reports that were authored by sheriff's office personnel as well as evidentiary photographs taken by sheriff's office personnel, interspersed with content that appears to be obtained off the Internet or through unknown sources," it said in a statement. "The sheriff's office did not release any of the documents and/or photographs to the media." Some of the material seized during the raid shows pictures of nude young adults, children's faces on adult bodies, as well as images of animal and child torture, Radar Online said, citing an investigator in the case.

### 'Michael remains innocent'

"The documents collected by the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department paint a dark and frightening picture of Jackson," the unidentified investigator is quoted as saying. "The documents exposed Jackson as a manipulative, drug-and-sex-crazed predator who used blood, gore, sexually explicit images of animal sacrifice and perverse adult sex acts to bend children to his will." The King of Pop was acquitted in 2005 following a 14-week child molesting trial during which a jury heard lurid testimony about his life and relationships with young boys.

He was charged after Gavin Arvizo, a 13-year-old boy Jackson had befriended, came forward. Jackson's Estate lashed out at the celebrity website's article, saying it was clearly timed to coincide with the upcoming seventh anniversary of his death on June 25. "Those who continue to shamelessly exploit Michael via sleazy internet 'click bait' ignore that he was acquitted by a jury in 2005 on every one of the 14 salacious charges brought against him in a failed witch hunt," a statement said. "Michael remains just as innocent of these smears in death as he was in life, even though he isn't here to defend himself. Enough is enough." Jackson's nephew Taj Jackson also denounced the report. "Not only is there absolutely no truth to this story whatsoever, but I'm truly sick of this crap. #getalife and stop living off ours," he said in a tweet. — AFP



File photo shows musician Prince presets an award on stage at the 57th Annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles February 8, 2015. — AFP

## Prince lost consciousness on flight days before death

Prince was having dinner on a flight home from his final public concert when he suddenly lost consciousness, according to the first published account Tuesday of the pop icon's health crisis six days before his death. The April 15 episode prompted an unscheduled landing of his private plane and an emergency room visit, raising a sudden alarm over the state of Prince's health. Judith Hill, an artist and protégé of Prince who worked closely with him during the past two years, said in a New York Times interview that the two were chatting over pasta and vegetables as they flew from Atlanta to his home near Minneapolis.

Hill, 32, noticed that "his eyes fixed" just before he seemed to nod off shortly after 1 am (0500 GMT). "Thankfully, I happened to be looking into his face," and realized he was unconscious and not asleep, Hill was quoted as saying. Hill and the only other passenger on the jet, Prince's friend and aide Kirk Johnson, tried unsuccessfully to wake up the 57-year-old. They alerted the pilot, who radioed air traffic controllers in Chicago to report an unresponsive man on board.

"We knew it was only a matter of time; we had to get him down," Hill was quoted as saying. "We didn't have anything on the plane to help him." The plane landed in Moline, Illinois, met by an ambulance on the tarmac. Prince was revived with an injection of Narcan, a drug used to treat opioid overdoses, the report said. He was taken to a hospital for several hours before being released and traveling home. Publicly, Prince blamed the emergency landing on a bout of flu. Although initially reluctant to seek help following the scare, Prince undertook tests with a local doctor and connected with an addiction specialist in California, The New York Times said.

"He did it because he was concerned, and he wanted to do the right thing for his own body," Hill said. "And that's the part that breaks my heart, because he was trying. He was trying." Prince was found dead at his Paisley Park estate on April 21. His death was ruled an accident caused by an overdose of fentanyl, a powerful opioid used to treat severe pain. He had appeared healthy and was legendary for his marathon performances. But the artist underwent hip surgery in 2010. Hill said that despite her close relationship with Prince, she had no idea he was in pain, calling the circumstances of his death "very shocking." — AFP



## Led Zeppelin singer recounts how he composed 'Stairway'

Led Zeppelin singer Robert Plant denied on Tuesday having stolen the opening of the rock group's iconic song "Stairway to Heaven," telling a jury he had written the anthem decades ago in the English countryside. The 67-year-old musician told a Los Angeles federal court that the song at the center of a copyright case was clearly his work as well as that of Zeppelin guitarist-songwriter Jimmy Page.

The song was played to jurors as arguments wrapped up on Tuesday. Plant testified that he wrote the lyrics more than 45 years ago while sitting by a fire at a recording and rehearsal venue in Britain. He said he was inspired to write the lines after he heard Page play the opening notes of what would become one of the most famous rock songs of all time. "That particular evening, I sat with Jimmy by the fire, and I had this first couplet that fit with what he was playing," he testified.

"I was really trying to bring the remote, pastoral Britain... the old, almost unspoken Celtic references into the piece," he added. Asked by his attorney to remember what the couplet was, he sighed before reciting the famous lines. "There's a lady who's sure all that glitters is gold and she's buying a stairway to heaven," Plant said. "When she gets there she knows, if the stores are all closed with a word she can get what she came for." The genesis of the song is a key element in the case as Page and Plant fight off accusations they stole the anthem's melancholy opening guitar arpeggio from "Taurus," the first album of long-dead LA psychedelic rock band Spirit. Page, 72, who testified when the trial opened last week, took the stand again on Tuesday, listening to 46-year-old recordings made at Headley Grange, the retreat used by the band in Britain, and explaining in detail to the jury the song's creation.

### Substantial similarities

His attorney then played the entire near eight-minute finished version of the song to the jury before advising the

judge that the defense had no more witnesses. Closing arguments were set for Wednesday before the jury of four women and four men begin deliberations. The five-day trial, which is being watched closely as it could potentially set an important precedent, has included testimony by musicologists who said there were substantial similarities between "Stairway" and "Taurus."

Spirit guitarist Randy California, who penned "Taurus," long maintained he deserved a songwriting credit for "Stairway" but never took legal action and drowned in Hawaii in 1997. A lawsuit filed by his trustee and friend Michael Skidmore two years ago seeks damages and claims California deserves a songwriting credit so that he can "take his place as an author of rock's greatest song."

However, experts who testified on behalf of the defense in the trial said the chord pattern used in the intro to stairway was so "commonplace" that it couldn't be copyrighted. Page testified last week that his chord progression had more in common with "Chim Chim Cher-ee," from the 1964 musical "Mary Poppins" than anything else. At stake in the case are potentially millions of dollars in royalties collected in the three years prior to the filing of the suit through this month.

Zeppelin opened for Spirit when the hard rockers-Plant, Page, John Paul Jones and the late John Bonham-made their US debut on December 26, 1968 in Denver. But the surviving members have submitted testimony that they never had substantive interaction with Spirit or listened to 1967's "Taurus" before recording "Stairway" in December 1970 and January 1971. The lawsuit lists disputes over 16 other Led Zeppelin songs, many of which were settled by giving the complainant a songwriting credit and royalties, including classics "Whole Lotta Love" and "Babe I'm Gonna Leave You." — AFP



Cuban dance teacher Maria Torguet (left) teaches a classical ballet lesson at a hall in Johannesburg landmark township of Soweto. — AFP photos

South African ballet dancers attend a class thought by Cuban dance teacher Maria Torguet (not in picture).

Cuban dance teachers are giving lessons in order to provide students with enough knowledge and experience to open their own ballet school.

# Black ballet: Classical dance stirs up Soweto

In a Soweto dance studio with yellowing mirrors, enthusiastic ballet students practice their first positions and plies in socks at the barre. Classical dance, for decades confined to South Africa's white minority, is finding its feet in the country's black townships. Twenty-two years after the end of apartheid, "We have beautiful contemporary dancers but not classical dancers," said Dirk Badenhorst, head of the South African International Ballet Competition, seeking out rising stars across the continent.

The dearth of black talent is at least in part because historically "ballet was only for white people .. and the ballet was only taught in the traditional white areas," said Badenhorst, who is trying to shake things up with a new project to train township dance teachers in classical ballet.

### 'Up, up, up. Stomach!'

Lessons take place in the heart of Soweto, a hop and a skip from the Hector Pieterman Museum dedicated to a key moment in the fight against apartheid, the uprising led by high school students in 1976. "Up, up, up. Stomach, more, back," says classical teacher Maria de Torguet, pointing at a less-than-perfectly-poised back or a lazily-held head among her eight students, all black adults. "When I grew up .. there was no ballet in townships. We had to go out in the town and pay for the lessons," says one of them, Mmule Mokele, taking a break between exercises at the barre.

"I am happy for my kids because ballet is coming to the township," she added. Aged 34, Mmule teaches contemporary dance and Afro-fusion in Soweto in a run-down school, whose yard has been turned into a



South African ballet dancers attend a class thought by Cuban dance teacher Maria Torguet (not in picture).

car wash. But she decided to get trained to teach classical. "Once you get to learn ballet, it disciplines you mentally, physically, it is easier for you to learn other dances," added Mmule, short-cropped hair dyed red, with a baggy T-shirt and muscled legs beneath her black leggings. Every Tuesday morning, she endlessly repeats the first position, plies and works on holding her arms under Maria's attentive but relentless gaze. In the afternoon she teaches her 10-year-old students what she learned in the morning.

'Without love nothing succeeds'  
"The fact that they experience the pain

themselves right now and tomorrow they teach it, they have a better empathy with the children they are working with. They have a better understanding as how to explain and encourage the kids in what to do and how to do it," said Badenhorst. "It is often said that if you are a brilliant scientist you are not necessarily a brilliant science teacher .. The same with ballet," he added.

With his project, which aims to train a thousand teachers over the next three years, teachers and students are taking the same path together, he added. Maria-brought in from Cuba, a country with close ties to South Africa in areas including poli-

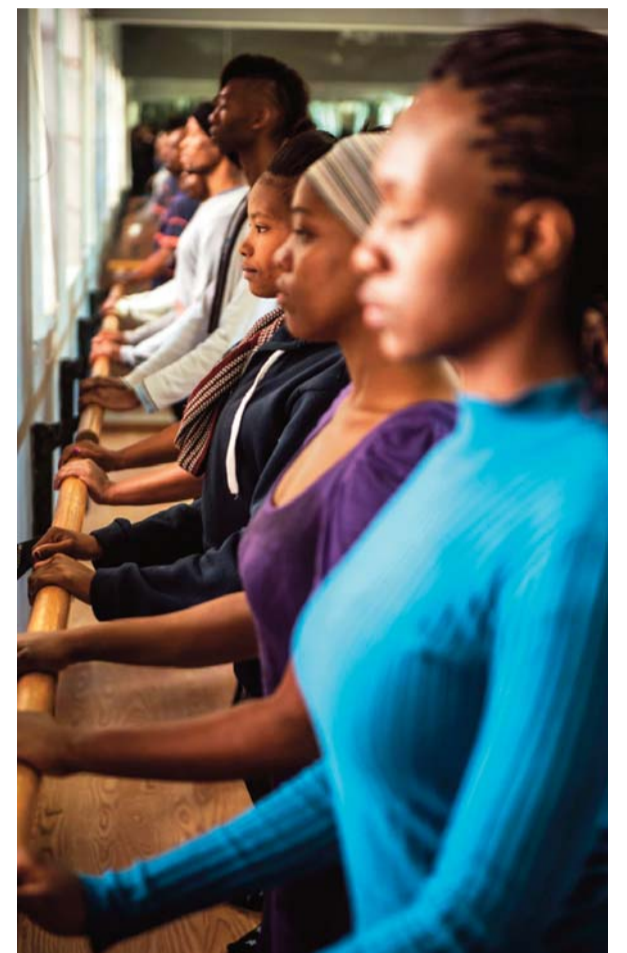
tics and dance-is a patient instructor. With a firm voice, she asks one student to take off a scarf, another to remove a hood.

"It's very difficult to teach them classical. In Cuba, teachers have studied classical dance for at least eight years," added the petite 58-year-old brunette. "Not here. I teach them to hold their bodies well. Concentration is also important, as much as passion. Without love nothing succeeds."

### Ballet for men?

Her task is not easy, all the less so since her English vocabulary is limited. Mmule says she and her fellow students have got used to understanding Maria's commands. Others have defied expectations even to be here. "My friends are, like, why are you doing ballet? Why don't you find something that would suit you as a man? But I love dancing," said fellow student Ncepa Sitokwe, whose body is already toned by years of African dancing.

"Our traditional dancers did not expose us, with our African dances, we only do gigs to be seen when there is something celebrated. With this methodology, you are going to be seen outside South Africa," he added. Badenhorst has a dream. "When Benjamin Millepied was the director of the Paris Opera, he was talking about the lack of transformation in the Paris Opera," he said, referring to the dearth of non-white dancers. "So I would love in 8 years or 10 years the young kids from this project to land up in the Paris Opera." — AFP



South African ballet dancers attend a class thought by Cuban dance teacher Maria Torguet (not in picture).



A sign advising pedestrians of the dangers of using smartphones while walking is displayed at an intersection in central Seoul. — AFP photos



A sign advising pedestrians of the dangers of using smartphones while walking is displayed at an intersection in central Seoul.

# Heads up! Seoul launches campaign to keep smartphone users safe

Pedestrians glued to their smartphones were given something else to look at this week, as officials in Seoul launched a safety campaign to keep them from walking into busy traffic. Smartphone-related collisions between pedestrians and vehicles in South Korea have more than doubled in five years to around 1,000 reported incidents in 2014, according to the Transportation Safety Authority. The problem is especially acute in a country where smartphone penetration currently stands at around 80 percent of the population, most of whom seem intent on mastering the art of walking and texting.

In a bid to reduce the number of people either stepping carelessly into oncoming traffic or slamming into each other on the sidewalk, officials in Seoul—one of the world's most wired cities—have begun installing the first batch of 300 warning signs this week in five locations across the capital. "We picked locations with the highest number of young pedestrians since the majority of smartphone users are in their

teens to their 30s," Kim Ooc-Kyeong, a Seoul city official in charge of the project, told AFP yesterday. Some signs are attached to traffic light poles and depict a person looking at his smartphone as he is about to be hit by a car. But given that the target audience are people who wouldn't look up from their screens to see such warnings, other signs have been plastered on the actual sidewalk.

"We put 250 signs on the pavements because they will actually be seen by the pedestrians that are looking down at their smartphones," Kim said. But neither type of warning seemed to have registered with locals interviewed at lunchtime by AFP. "I'm always on my smartphone, and I've never seen the signs before," said Kim Hyun-Chul, 29. "They need to make them stand out more." Koo Sung-Hoi, 27, was also unaware of the efforts to keep him from a smartphone-related injury. "I think the signs on the pavements are too small to be noticed," Koo said. South Korean smartphone users spend an average of four hours a day tweeting, chatting or

playing games, with about 15 percent showing symptoms of addiction, according to state data.

Seoul plans to monitor the effectiveness of the signs until the end of the year before deciding whether to expand the project. Similar campaigns have already been trialed in Europe. Antwerp has introduced designated walking lanes in a handful of busy shopping streets so smartphone users can look at their mobiles without bumping into other pedestrians. The German city of Augsburg even installed traffic lights in the pavement at tram crossings for smartphone gazers. A 2014 simulation found that if 1,500 people looking at their phones tried to cross Tokyo's notoriously crowded Shibuya intersection, only about a third would make across without bumping into others, falling or dropping their mobiles. — AFP

# In 'Wilderpeople,' a manhunt for Kiwi farce

"Flight of the Conchords" went off the air in 2009 but the beat has gone on in the films of Taika Waititi. Waititi, who was a writer and director of that cult HBO series, has carried on the show's New Zealand deadpan and childlike whimsy with varying success. Often collaborating with "Conchords" star Jermaine Clement, Waititi has previously seesawed too far into quirk (2007's oddball romance "Eagle vs Shark") and risen to heights of comic understatement (2015's vampire mockumentary "What We Do in the Shadows").

In "Hunt for the Wilderpeople," a huge hit in Waititi's native New Zealand, also delights in teetering - clumsily but charmingly - between fantasy and reality. The film is a fable about a heavy-set foster kid, Ricky Baker (Julian Dennison), and a reluctant foster parent, "Uncle" Hector (Sam Neill), who, evading child services, go on the lam and spark a manhunt. As far as buddy comedy pairings go, few can match the unlikeliness of that in "Hunt for the Wilderpeople."

Having run through foster families, Ricky, introduced as "a very bad egg," is dropped off at the remote home of Aunt Bella (an excellent Rima Te Wiata who leaves the film too soon) and Hector. At first glance, Ricky is terribly unsuited for country life. On his first night, he tries to run away but gets no further than halfway up the nearest hillside. Just as Ricky begins warming to life with Bella (the gruff Hector largely evades him), tragedy comes out of the blue, and Ricky is to be retrieved by child welfare. But Ricky and Hector, each fed up with society, resolve to "go bush." They totter into the mountains, and an increasingly absurd chase ensues, led by a militant child services worker (Rachel House).

The tale, told in chapters, comes from Barry Crump's 1986 novel "Wild Pork and Watercress." In Waititi's hands, it's a jerky ride. There are passages that take after "Psycho" (a gratuitously bloody wild pig slaughter) and wintery poetic moments that reference "McCabe and Mrs. Miller." In their journey, the pair's encounters are both tender and cartoonish, ranging from an alluring young girl to a recluse named Psycho Sam (Rhys Darby, the fabulous bug-eyed MVP of "Conchords"). The grab bag of styles, awkward as they are, also supplies "Wilderpeople" its strange off-kilter energy. It's nimble enough to never be quite pinned down by its familiar concept before eventually going out in a blaze of farce.

"Wilderpeople" is ultimately winning, like all buddy comedies, because of the chemistry of its leads. Neill (the Sundance of the two) and Dennison (our younger and portlier but no less cocksure Butch) make an endearing pair of runaways. On the heels of his recent successes, Waititi has been picked by Marvel to direct the considerably more massive "Thor: Ragnarok." As a test case of an indie director making a giant leap in scale, it should be interesting. If Waititi can handle the Norse god with the same low-key modesty that he's approached vampires and outlaws, Marvel may yet be brought down to size.

"Hunt for the Wilderpeople," an Orchard release, is rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association of America for "thematic elements including violent content and for some language." Running time: 101 minutes. Three stars out of four. — AP



This image released by The Orchard shows Julian Dennison, left, and Sam Neill in a scene from 'Hunt for the Wilderpeople.' — AP



Photo shows the reading room at the Library of Congress in Washington DC's Capitol Hill neighborhood. — AP photos



Photo shows Riverby Books, a small independent bookstore located in the Capitol Hill neighborhood of Washington DC.



This undated photo provided by Folger Shakespeare Library shows action figures representing William Shakespeare and Jane Austen on display in the library in Washington.

## Capitol Hill: Not just for politicians, it's a neighborhood



Photo shows Cynde Foster preparing a sandwich from behind the counter at Jimmy T's Place, an old-school diner that's been open for decades in the Capitol Hill neighborhood of Washington.



This June 16, 2016 photo shows an exterior view of the Capitol Building in Washington.

Quick, what's Capitol Hill? Is it a place where politicians argue? A backdrop for TV news? Or a real Washington, DC, neighborhood, with homes, an old-school diner and even a couple of bookstores? Truth is, it's all those things. But if you're not from the Washington area, you'd be forgiven for thinking that Capitol Hill is a place where the US Congress meets and not a place where real people live. Of course, most tourists who visit this section of Washington are heading to the domed US Capitol, one of the most recognizable buildings in the world, or to the nearby Library of Congress. But just steps from these attractions, a community awaits with quiet, tree-lined streets, row houses, mom-and-pop shops and the historic Eastern Market and Barracks Row. Here are some details.

### US Capitol, Library of Congress, Folger Shakespeare Library

The US Capitol Visitor Center, at First Street and East Capitol Street near the Capitol South Metro station, gets 2.2 million visitors a year. Its exhibits showcase the history and breadth of more than 200 years of democracy. Statues honor individuals like Jeannette Rankin of Montana, the first woman elected to Congress. Documents currently on display highlight the early 20th century Progressive Era, when Congress set consumer standards for food and drugs. Artifacts include a table used by Abraham Lincoln, made from iron used to construct the Capitol dome. Emancipation Hall honors enslaved African-Americans who helped build the Capitol. And when Congress is in session, you can watch live feeds of the House and Senate in action.

The Library of Congress, a block away at 101 Independence Ave SE, offers a stunning interior with stained-glass windows, skylights, marble staircases and columns. Displays include 15th century Bibles and books from Thomas Jefferson's library. Take a peek at the grand main reading room from an overlook. A scavenger hunt brochure lists animals to be found among the building's many carvings, mosaics and designs. Good luck spotting the hedgehog! Free admission.

The Folger Shakespeare Library, 201 E Capitol St SE, has an exhibition about the history of Shakespeare's plays in America, on view through July 24. Opening Aug 6, "Will & Jane: Shakespeare, Austen, and the Cult of Celebrity" examines the "literary afterlives" of Shakespeare and Jane Austen,

looking at how adaptations, parodies and pop culture (like bobblehead dolls) have helped keep their work alive through the centuries. Free admission.

### East Capitol Street

Stroll along East Capitol Street past small, charming homes set back from the sidewalk with gardens and alleys. Humble storefronts here have the small-town feel of another era. Don't miss



Jimmy T's Place, 501 E Capitol St, a cash-only, old-school, breakfast and lunch diner where vintage signs list sundaes for 30 cents. Meals cost a bit more now, but still won't break the bank. A BLT sandwich with avocado is \$6.55, salsa-cheddar omelets are \$6.45. (Another sign says the charge for whining is \$5.) The place opened more than 40 years ago and the founder's daughter, Cynde Foster, still mans the counter. Closed Mondays. Riverby Books, at 417 E Capitol St, is a cozy, inviting place specializing in used books and Washington history. Another used bookstore is a few blocks away, Capitol Hill Books, 657 C St SE.

### Eastern Market and barracks row

Eastern Market, which dates to 1873, houses indoor stalls selling colorful displays of produce, baked goods, flowers, seafood, meat, pasta and cheese. The brick building, which is on the National Register of Historic Places, was restored following a devastating fire in 2007. At the Market Lunch counter in back, grab a burger, soft shell crab or fish sandwich. Weekends the site hosts an outdoor farmers market, along with arts, crafts and food vendors; a Tuesday farmers market runs 3 pm - 7 pm.

Bayou Bakery, 901 Pennsylvania Ave SE, makes simply perfect beignets. And good luck getting a table at Rose's Luxury, 717 Eighth St SE, where diners line up hours in advance. Eighth Street, also known as Barracks Row, is home to restaurants ranging from chains like Starbucks and Subway to fine dining at Ambar and Cava Mezze. New on the scene is Betsy, a rooftop speakeasy at the popular Belga Cafe. Barracks Row gets its name from two nearby historic sites, the Washington Navy Yard and the Marine Barracks, the original headquarters for the US Marine Corps. — AP

Photo shows an exterior view of the Capitol Building in Washington.

## Wella Professionals host first stylist Ghabqa in Kuwait

Ali Abdulwahab Al-Mutawa Commercial Co (AAW) and Wella, one of the world's leading beauty and styling suppliers, today hosted a Ramadan ghabqa catered to stylists and beauty-enthusiasts in Kuwait. Highlighting cutting-edge summer coloring and trends, the evening introduced both classic and upcoming Wella products alongside a cat-walk styled ghabqa dinner.

Held at Symphony Style Hotel, Wella presented four emerging styles of this year's summer trends, including instamatics and ecaile technique (new summer pastel colors), freelights (free hand technique in ombre and sombre), illumina (ash colors), and a new hair treatment line which is free from sulfate and paraben, Elements by Wella Care. Ghabqa guests included fashion, beauty, and makeup Instagram sensation, Ahood Al-Enezi alongside hair stylists, beauty-enthusiasts and salons in Kuwait.

Wella Professionals Education Manager, Ghassan Hanna said: "For over 130 years, Wella has been delivering innovations and services that enable hairdressers' creativity. Our story in Kuwait began in 2008, and tonight we are excited to dedicate this ghabqa to stylists and beauty-enthusiasts in Kuwait, showcasing the latest trends through what Wella has to offer."

The ghabqa, hosted by Wella Professionals featured a catwalk and showcase into old, present, and new Wella products up-to-date with the latest global hair trends for summer such as color and care.

Activities during the evening included an oriental band, cat-walk, traditional ghabqa dinner, and stylist teachings through product presentations and a hands-on workshop.





Tourists stroll along the Diagon Alley movie set at The Making of Harry Potter Warner Bros Studios experience in London. — AP photos



Tourists gathering at The Tower of London for a guided tour by a Yeoman Warder, of Beefeater, in London.



The Citadines Kensington apartment hotel appears on Gloucester Road in London.

# Harry Potter's a must on London trip with teen as consultant

By Ross D Franklin

Every summer, our family vacations somewhere different. We've done theme parks, a classic road trip and the Caribbean. This year, with our son hitting his teens, we went international with 10 days in London. The planning was a team effort: My wife was in charge of the budget and activities schedule. I was in charge of airfare and hotel. Our son played consultant, voting yes or no. We saved \$1,000 on airfare by taking connecting flights rather than flying direct. Then,

So how did it all work out?

Our flights involved a series of unfortunate events, including plane trouble in Chicago, lost luggage on the way home and overhead drop-down screens on our trans-Atlantic leg instead of individual entertainment screens. We had to keep reminding ourselves, "but we saved \$1,000!" An expensive cab ride from airport to hotel marred our arrival in London. Next time we'll take the train from the airport.

But our hotel, Citadines South Kensington, did not disappoint. The location was ideal, four blocks

Potter was essential. We saw props, costumes and sets, including Platform 9 3/4, the Night Bus, Harry's cubbyhole at Number 4 Privet Drive and a miniature Hogwarts campus. You can get filmed riding your very own Nimbus 2000, or pile the family into the Weasley invisible car for a group photo. At the massive gift shop you can easily drop a few hundred quid. But skip the butter beer at the food court - oh, it's horrible.

For a real-life adventure, try biking through London. Besides navigating throngs of wandering tourists, we dodged buses, cabs, motorcycles and delivery lorries while trying not to lose our guide, who biked ahead of the straggling group on our three-hour tour. The only leisurely part was a pedal through St James's Park, Green Park and Hyde Park. We hadn't planned a firsthand look at the UK National Health Service, but I added to the bike adventure with an ambulance ride after hitting the pavement head first and suffering a concussion. Our son was enthralled by the history lesson at the Guy's and St. Thomas' Hospital on Westminster Bridge: Florence Nightingale set up a nursing school there, and it was bombed by the Germans during World War II. So the emergency room visit was not a total loss.

Fortunately our other travels were mostly by Tube, using the convenient London Underground Oyster Cards. After two days, we delegated figuring out routes and platforms to our son. We also did several walking tours: one on "Dr. Who" locations; a Jack the Ripper tour at dusk - not for the squeamish - in the modern-day Whitechapel neighborhood; and a Beatles tour with a stop at Abbey Road. Kids who know the Beatles are might like it. If not, be prepared for eye rolls. Our son calls us the "history geek" family, so we enjoyed our day at the Imperial War Museum. And since no London trip would be complete without a little royal pomp, we watched the "Changing the Guard" ceremony at Buckingham Palace.

We also enjoyed London at night, walking around Piccadilly Circus, Leicester Square and the West End theater district, where we took in "The Audience" and "The Curious Incident of the Dog In the Night-Time." All in all, we loved our trip. Involving our son in planning and research was key, and can be an effective way to engage teenagers who might otherwise never look up from their screens. One additional word to the wise: If you go biking in London - or anywhere else - wear a helmet. — AP



A London City Cruises boat tours the River Thames past the Big Ben clock bell and Elizabeth Tower and the Houses of Parliament in London.

using Booking.com, we spent hours researching hotels. The map icon interface was great: Pick a neighborhood, zoom in, click on the hotel. We wanted a Tube station within walking distance, but saved money by picking a one-bedroom with pullout couch over a two-room suite.

With flights and lodging booked, we moved on to the itinerary. Our son had two must-sees: the Imperial War Museum and Harry Potter studio tour. We bought advance tickets for Potter, two theater shows, a bike tour, the London Eye, several walking tours and a hop-on, hop-off bus. With rain jackets and electric converters packed, we were ready.

from the Gloucester Road Tube station, with plenty of restaurants nearby. An Italian eatery, Da Mario, became a favorite. We even knew somebody dining there our first night - the airport cabbie who'd charged a fortune. We took the double-decker sightseeing bus on our first morning as a no-stress introduction to the city. Our bus passes included the Tower of London tour and a Thames River cruise. Big Ben, Parliament, 10 Downing Street and Westminster Abbey were a few minutes' walk apart. Cross the river and we were at the London Eye, getting a bird's-eye view of all we'd just seen.

With a teen who grew up reading Harry Potter, the Warner Bros. Studio Tour - The Making of Harry



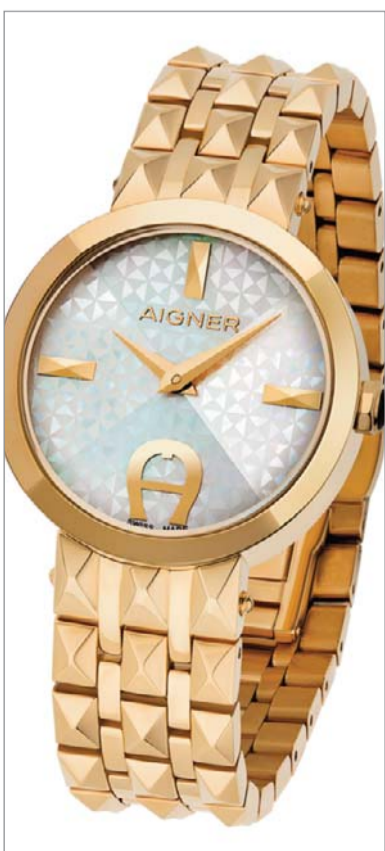
London City Cruises boat tours the River Thames near the Tower Bridge in London.



A bike tour pauses in front of Ronnie Scott's jazz club in London.



A sign for the London Underground system appears next to the Big Ben bell clock and Elizabeth Tower in London.



## Experience the joy of giving with AIGNER

A global trendsetter in the world of Haute Horlogerie, AIGNER debuts a refreshing update to its collection by presenting a range of timepieces and accessories that celebrate the spirit of giving during the holy month. Bedecked in metallic splendor, the exclusive collection of timepieces and accessories highlights designs, techniques, and materials that imbue sophistication with ample charisma. Gold appears to be the favored color of the Maison with timepieces featuring beautiful guilloches and intricate sunrays on radiant mother-of-pearl dials. The legendary AIGNER horseshoe also profoundly traces the collection with its creative and elegant representation.

Meticulously crafted to reflect the essence of the season, the latest edition of opulence from AIGNER displays the superior fineness of German precision with contemporary strokes of Tuscan craftsmanship. This Eid, delve into AIGNER's exquisite range, available at select outlets across Kuwait to discover the perfect token of love for your dear ones.

**A German brand with an Italian soul - AIGNER:**

From bookbinding to the forefront of Haute Couture - the story of the eponymous brand, AIGNER is a spell of passion, creativity and craftsmanship. An AIGNER watch is considered by many to be a modern classic, but this contemporary brand has a history that can be traced back to Hungary in 1904, when its founder and original designer was born. Etienne

Aigner was a bookbinder by trade, but by the 1940s was creating bespoke high-end leather goods for haute couture boutiques in Paris. During the 1960s, the designer formed a partnership with businessman Heiner H Rankl, and the AIGNER brand was properly established.

The company was based in Munich, where the mood was one of excitement and a euphoric belief in progress. The free-spirited nature of the time influenced the company's direction and Aigner went on to become a cult brand by virtue of its reflection of a life of pleasure and savoir vivre. The company was based in Munich, where the mood was one of excitement and a euphoric belief in progress. The free-spirited nature of the time influenced the company's direction and Aigner went on to become a cult brand by virtue of its reflection of a life of pleasure and savoir vivre.

The company chose wild horses as its symbol, as it chimed with the atmosphere, materials and designs that defined the company, as well as the luxury of upmarket horse culture. The horseshoe became more than just a decorative symbol - it represented everything that the company believed in. Products carrying the famous horseshoe shaped AIGNER 'A' logo are timeless expressions of German precision and Tuscan tradition. The master touch of AIGNER resonates in every product of the brand, making AIGNER a class apart.



Malaysian Muslim women pose for a picture at the Wilayah mosque during the holy month of Ramadan in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. — AFP

## Young Syrians get 100 pct praise at 'Refugees Got Talent' contest in Iraq camp

**B**elting out an emotional song in honor of Kurdish military forces under a full moon, Syrian refugee Mizgin Rumi's shyness transformed to confidence as he captivated his audience. Rumi, 19, was one of 10 acts on stage at the dusty Arbat refugee camp in the semi-autonomous northern region of Iraqi Kurdistan competing in the highly-anticipated final of the talent contest "Refugees Got Talent". Surrounded by a band of professional musicians, Rumi's singing dazzled hundreds of refugees, all of whom have fled the war in Syria, and he took the lead in the competition at Arbat where families live in rows of cinder brick homes.

The show, run along the lines of British music impresario Simon Cowell's global franchise "Got Talent", was organized by the United Nation's refugee agency UNHCR to mark World Refugee Day on Monday and was a major highlight for many in the camp. Rumi was stunned to be the favorite of the four judges, prompting a rare display of cheers and celebration among the more than 7,500 Syrian refugees housed at the sprawling camp.

From the war-torn city of Kobane in northern Syria, Rumi

and his family have been living at Arbat for two years. Only his brother stayed behind, choosing to fight instead of fleeing. "When we left we thought we'd be coming back," an exuberant Rumi, dressed in a smart white shirt, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

### Night to remember

UNHCR representative to Iraq, Bruno Geddo, said the talent contest was an opportunity for refugees to unite for a night with the sounds of traditional Kurdish music, pop ballads, and Hindi rhythms echoing across the dark, warm evening. He said World Refugee Day wanted to highlight the plight but also the resilience of the 20 million people globally living as refugees, with many youngsters in those ranks. An estimated nine million Syrians have fled their homes since the outbreak of civil war in March 2011, with over three million fleeing to neighboring countries and some 240,000 finding refuge in the neighboring Kurdish region of Iraq.

The UNHCR estimates there are nearly 8,000 Syrian children and youth living in Sulaymaniyah and most do not attend

school. For while some primary education is provided for children up to ninth grade, it is hard for youngsters to get places in secondary schools and universities mainly because their families do not have enough money to pay for fees, supplies or transport. Being locked out of education leaves many young people bored in the camp and "Refugees Got Talent" was devised as a way to showcase their skills, ranging from singing to dancing to break dancing. "(This contest) keeps them focused on something positive. We witnessed the electricity and the joy in the eyes of the youth," said Geddo.

"It was enormously empowering. We saw last night the tremendous talent and energy of young Syrian refugees. We want to help them unleash their potential." In second place came the quirky Hindi dance ensemble ABCD - Anybody Can Dance - with five teenage refugee girls led by 17-year-old Rojbin Baroodo, dressed in jeans and a T-shirt.

"Dance is my life," said a jubilant Baroodo who relocated to Iraq's Kurdish region two years ago after fleeing the Syrian city of Hassakeh with her family. "Hindi music is not popular in Syria, but when I started doing this [dancing and teaching] it became

popular," she said in flawless English with an accent that gave away her love of Bollywood films. "I want to be a dancer but my family says I cannot because I am a girl. It was difficult to tell them about my dancing - they said this is the last time [I can dance] then I will dance at home."

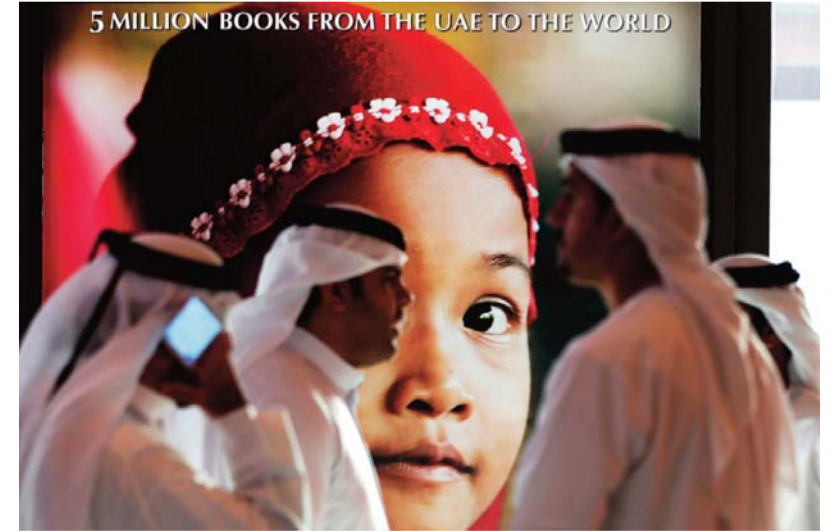
ABCD member and friend Amal Mohammad nodded in agreement, recounting her parents' reaction to her passion for dance. "At first my parents said it was shameful - but if we keep dancing I believe people will imitate us and it will become more normal," said Mohammad. As committed as ABCD to their Hindi routine, so was 17-year-old Wasila Hassan to her Kurdish dance, coming in third place with her dance group Rojava. "We dance all day long, almost every day. When I dance I forget the world. I just want to keep dancing," said the teenager, adamant that through dance she could introduce Syrian culture to the world. Amal Sleman, a member of the Khalat dance troupe, said the talent show had been a real boost in the camp. "I like that all of my friends can gather together and find a moment to be happy," she said. — Reuters



An Emirati man raises his hand to bid for the "R Dubai 10" license plate in its glass case, which was one of many items displayed in the Emirates Auction to be sold for AED 9.7 million (\$ 2.65 million) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.



An Emirati woman takes a photo of an item displayed during the Emirates Auction in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.



Emirati men chat in front of a poster ahead of the Emirates Auction for supporting the Reading Nation Campaign, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

## Dubai auction of Islamic treasures raises \$11m for refugees

**A**n auction to raise money for books for refugee children has raised more than \$11 million in Dubai, including the sale of a more than 100-year-old covering from the cube-shaped Kaaba that Muslims pray toward in Makkah. The piece, woven with gold and silver, sold Tuesday evening for \$572,000 and came from the private collection of Dubai ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. An early 19th Century

Indian-Mogul manuscript of the Quran and a 17th Century handwritten copy each sold for \$68,000. Five unique Dubai car plate numbers sold for a total of \$7 million.

The Reading Nation Ramadan campaign, organized by Dubai as a charity initiative during the Muslim holy month, aims to donate 7.3 million books and establish 2,000 school libraries in Arab countries and refugee camps.—AP



An Emirati man talks on his mobile phone next to the "R Dubai 10" license plate in its glass case, which was one of many items displayed in the Emirates Auction to be sold for AED 9.7 million (\$ 2.65 million) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.



Emirati men look at a rare copy of the Quran in its glass case, which was one of many items displayed in the Emirates Auction in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. — AP photos