

Building Kuwait's future, one small enterprise at a time



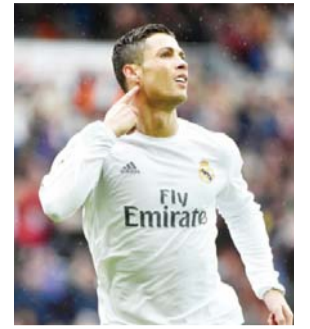
Trump reverses position on torture, targeting civilians



China aims to maintain growth pace, fend off unemployment



4-goal Ronaldo silences Madrid critics in Celta rout



## MORNING OPD VISITS ONLY FOR KUWAITIS AT AMIRI HOSPITAL

400,000 DIABETICS IN KUWAIT, \$2,000 SPENT ON EACH OF THEM



Min 14°  
Max 27°  
High Tide 10:48 & 21:20  
Low Tide 04:12 & 15:38

## SKIES LIGHT UP AS KUWAIT CELEBRATES



KUWAIT: A colorful Kuwait Towers is back-dropped by a fireworks display yesterday as Kuwait celebrates its 55th National Day, 25th Liberation Day and 10th anniversary of HH the Amir's ascension to power. — KUNA (More pics on Page 3)

By Meshaal Al-Enezi and Agencies

**KUWAIT:** Capital health zone director Dr Afrah Al-Sarraf announced commencing allocation of morning OPD visits at Amiri Hospital exclusively for citizens and receiving expats only in the afternoons. Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the 'Athletes' Nutrition' week, held under the auspices of Capital Governor Lt Gen Thabet Al-Muhanna, Sarraf said that following the success of this segregation policy at Rawda polyclinic, more Capital polyclinics would follow suit.

Notably, the OPD segregation policy was first implemented two years ago at Jahra Hospital, where OPDs only receive citizens in the mornings, when all specialists and consultants are in office, and receive expat patients and citizens who wish to do so during the afternoons.

Separately, internal medicine and diabetes consultant at the Amiri Hospital Dr Abdul Nabi Al-Attar said that recent statistics showed that the number of Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti diabetics amounted to about 400,000, and treatment of each of them costs about \$2,000 per year. Attar said in a statement yesterday during the 7th awareness campaign for the prevention of diabetes organized by the hospital under the auspices of Minister of Health Dr Ali Al-Obaidi at the Avenues Mall that all the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states are on the list of the top 10 countries with the highest prevalence of the disease. He urged citizens and residents to visit the awareness campaign for testing glucose, blood pressure, blood sugar, triglycerides, cholesterol and carrying out a retina exam.



JOAO PESSOA, Brazil: In this Feb 25, 2016 file photo, Caio Julio Vasconcelos, who was born with microcephaly, undergoes physical therapy at the Institute for the Blind. — AP

## LINK SEEN BETWEEN ZIKA AND FETAL BRAIN DAMAGE

**PARIS:** Scientists on Friday said they had found the first evidence of a biological link between the Zika virus sweeping Latin America and microcephaly, a severe deformation of the brain among newborns. Laboratory tests found that the virus targeted key cells involved in brain development and then destroyed or disabled them, they said. The findings are the first concrete evidence of a link between the mosquito-borne virus and microcephaly, which until now had been circumstantial, said Guo-li Ming, a professor of neurology at The Johns Hopkins Institute for Cell Engineering, and a co-leader of the research.

"Studies of fetuses and babies with the telltale small brains and heads of microcephaly in Zika-affected areas have found abnormalities in the cortex, and Zika virus has been found in the foetal tissue," he said in a statement. Scientist exposed three types of human cells in a lab dish to the Zika virus, a method called in-vitro experiment. The first - known as human neural progenitor cells (hNPCs) - is crucial for the development of the cortex, or outer layer, of fetal brains. Damage to these cells, which eventually differentiate into mature neurons, would be consistent with the

brain defects caused by microcephaly. The other two types of cells were stem cells and neurons. As predicted, Zika virus attacked the human neural progenitor cells. Within three days of exposure, 90 percent were infected, and nearly a third had died. Infected cells, meanwhile, had been hijacked to turn out new copies of the virus.

Furthermore, the genes needed to fight viruses failed to activate, which was a highly unusual outcome. By comparison, the other two types of human cells were relatively unharmed. "Our results clearly demonstrate that Zika can directly infect hNPCs in vitro with high efficiency," the study concluded. "It is very telling that the cells that form the cortex are potentially susceptible to the virus," Ming added.

The findings, published in the journal Cell Stem Cell, may help to identify drugs that protect these vulnerable cells or reduce infections after they occur. "Now that we know cortical neural progenitor cells are the vulnerable cells, they can likely also be used to quickly screen potential new therapies," said co-author Hongjun Song, also from the Institute for Cell Engineering, based in Baltimore, Maryland.

Continued on Page 13

## NO DEAL YET ON NEW POWER TARIFFS PANEL, GOVT TO MEET AMIR OVER SUBSIDIES

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** The National Assembly's financial and economic affairs committee and the government failed to reach an agreement yesterday on new charges for electricity and water as MPs insisted the proposed government charges would impact Kuwaiti citizens. Minister of Electricity and Water Ahmad Al-Jassar said after the

meeting that the proposed government reforms aim at convincing people to cut consumption rather than boosting revenues and hurting Kuwaiti citizens.

He said the aim of the meeting was to bridge the gap between the government and MPs on all the proposed consumption categories based on the type of residences.

Continued on Page 13

## SUDAN OPPN LEADER TURABI DIES AGED 84

**KHARTOUM:** Veteran Sudan Islamist opposition leader Hassan Al-Turabi, one of the fiercest critics of President Omar Al-Bashir's government, died of a heart attack yesterday aged 84, state television said. "The Islamist intellectual Hassan Al-Turabi has died," the state broadcaster said. It interrupted its



Hassan Al-Turabi

regular programming and broadcast Islamic verses from the Holy Quran that are recited for the dead. A medical source earlier told AFP that Turabi was taken to the intensive care unit of Khartoum's Royal Care hospital "after suffering a heart attack in the morning and died" there.

In the evening, an ambulance carrying his body left the hospital for the Turabi family home in the city, an AFP correspondent said. A key figure in Bashir's regime for a decade after his 1989 coup, Turabi later became one of its fiercest critics and led the opposition in urging a Tunisia-style uprising.

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KUWAIT: Members of the National Assembly's financial and economic affairs committee, the speaker and ministers are seen during a meeting yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## MOODY'S CUTS KUWAIT OUTLOOK

**DUBAI:** Moody's Investors Service has cut its outlook for the debt ratings of Kuwait and three other Gulf states while lowering Bahrain's rating to junk, citing concern over the impact of low oil prices on their finances. Saudi Arabia's Aa3 rating was placed on review for a possible downgrade, Moody's said late on Friday, adding that it would study whether Riyadh's efforts to expand its non-oil revenues and diversify its economy were likely to work.

"At around \$650 billion (or roughly 95 percent of forecast 2016 gross domestic product) at the end of September 2015, the country's foreign currency assets are large," it said.

"But potential calls on these funds are growing - emanating from the need to finance future current account and budget deficits, and from use in small-scale currency interventions to defend the currency peg amid ris-

ing speculation." Moody's also put Kuwait, United Arab Emirates and Qatar on review for downgrades - countries which are widely seen in the debt markets as more able to cope with an era of low oil prices because of

their huge financial reserves relative to small populations. It acknowledged that the UAE planned tax reforms and that its economy was more diversified than most in the region, but added: "The structural shock to the oil market is weakening the UAE's government balance sheet and its economy, and therefore its credit profile."

Moody's cut Bahrain's rating by one notch to Ba1, below investment grade. It kept the rating on review for a further downgrade; Bahrain has much smaller reserves of money and oil than its wealthy neighbors. Central to the agency's analysis was its view of oil prices. — Agencies

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## OIC'S PALESTINE SUMMIT BEGINS IN JAKARTA TODAY

**JAKARTA:** The Organization of Islamic Cooperation's (OIC) Fifth Extraordinary Summit on Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif will begin in the Indonesian capital Jakarta today with the participation of various world leaders. Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah will partake in the conference.

The summit, called upon by Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas, will focus on the situation in the Middle East and will touch on efforts to achieve a just solution to the Palestinian cause. The event will also address the Israeli violations against the Palestinian people in general and Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem in particular. The increase in settlement activities and the dire economic situation of the Palestinians will also be touched upon during the event.

Last October, Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah stressed in an urgent meeting for the OIC on the sideline of the 70th UN General Assembly that the international community should take a



**Cabinet Affairs Minister Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Sabah**

more active role in preventing Israel from continuing its aggression against the Palestinians. He stressed that the Palestinians have the right for an independent state within the 1967 borders with east Jerusalem as its capital. Indonesia hosted on December 14-15 the second international conference on Al-Quds Al-Sharif which was held under the sponsorship of the UN. — KUNA

## ITS ORGANIZES SMART KUWAIT CONFERENCE UNDER THE MOTTO 'LIFE PROMOTING CITIES'

IN COOPERATION WITH NOUFEXPO

**KUWAIT:** The International Turnkey Systems Group (ITS) will be organizing, in cooperation with NoufEXPO, the Smart Kuwait conference on March 8, 2016 in Aljahra Hall at JW Marriott Kuwait. The Conference will be under the patronage of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah who will be represented by the Minister of Commerce and Industry Dr Youssef Mohammad Al-Ali. Commenting on this occasion Fahd Al-Rashdan, the ITS Executive Manager for Strategy said: "The patronage of His Highness the Prime Minister of the Smart Kuwait conference represents a governmental and official support for an advanced and revived futuristic outlook for the State of Kuwait where modern technology plays the role of driver and motivator of growth and economic diversity as well as the nurturing of productive and efficient individuals who are capable of integrating with the world. This kind patronage also represents support for the private sector initiatives to carry out what it deems as its national duty in shouldering its responsibilities. ITS views the patronage of His Highness as a call for the exertion of greater effort."



**His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah**



**Minister of Commerce and Industry Dr Youssef Al-Ali**

offer in cooperation with our strategic partners in terms of experiences in developing smart cities systems in countries and cities around the world. We should not overlook the unprecedented pace of technological developments as can be seen in such phenomena as that of the Internet of Things (IoT) which opens up several undreamt of opportunities in the areas of education, health, industry, economy and services. The challenge today is not in setting up rigid plans to realize, but in developing effective ways to keep the plans alive and responsive to all that is new."

### Necessary experience

As for what ITS can offer in support of the smart cities plans, Rashdan said: "The company possesses the necessary experience in advanced information technology through its presence in most Middle Eastern countries over many years, as well as the presence of its customers in many Asian and African countries. The company's expertise is combined with the huge potentials of its strategic partners such as Microsoft, EMC and ESRI with each presenting a working paper to the con-

ference about their vision and contributions in applying the initiatives of smart cities around the world. We also have the participation of the Public Authority for Civil Information to discuss the reality and ambitions of smart cities in the State of Kuwait. We, at ITS, believe that the process of smart cities leading up to smart Kuwait can only be the result of honest effort integrating the efforts of the governmental agencies represented by the Central Agency for Information Technology, the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, information technology and governmental information centers with the local and international technology companies."

In conclusion, Rashdan said: "I must express my happiness with this joint effort with the conference organizing company, NoufEXPO, which provides effective contribution in the technological development of the State of Kuwait through the several forums and conferences it organizes, such as the E-Gov Forum. I am confident that our cooperation will continue in the future for the good of Kuwait and its progress."

### Information community

Rashdan added that "Smart Kuwait was a process aiming at developing the information community in Kuwait. It seeks to develop various services and life styles in the state and society through being the medium for putting the State of Kuwait on the map of the developed world and to contribute proactively to its progress, growth and prosperity. This is not to underestimate the efforts in many areas to support the development of the e-government programs and the communication services in the State of Kuwait, but to stress that our efforts are directed to supporting the policies of the state in this respect based on the profound experiences we accumulated at ITS over more than 35 years of progress and prosperity, and what we can



**KUWAIT:** Commemorative coins issued by the Central Bank of Kuwait to celebrate the 55th anniversary of the National Day (right) and 25th anniversary of the liberation. —KUNA

## CBK CELEBRATES NATIONAL DAYS WITH COMMEMORATIVE COINS

**KUWAIT:** To mark the 55th anniversary of the National Day and 25th anniversary of the liberation, the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) issued commemorative coins to celebrate both occasions, the bank said in a statement yesterday. The design of the new commemorative coins well illustrates each occasion.

Dr Mohammad Al-Hashel, Governor of the CBK, said that the bank was proud to issue the new coins in commemoration of the national celebrations. He congratulated

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and the Kuwaiti people on the advent of the national occasions.

The Central Bank announced that those who wish to buy the gold-plated or silver commemorative coins should visit the CBK's banking hall Sunday, March 6th, 2016. The selling price of the gold-plated and silver coins is at KD 45 and KD 35 respectively. — KUNA

## KUWAIT HOSTS ARAB MEDIA FORUM IN MAY: OFFICIAL

**KUWAIT:** The 13th Arab Media Forum will be held in Kuwait on May 1-2 under the patronage of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah with the participation of regional and international figures, an official said yesterday. The event will focus on several major media issues associated with the developments in the Arab region, Secretary General of the Forum Madi Al-Khamees said.

Some 16 sessions will be held during the event with several important figures delivering speeches on a variety of issues, said Khamees, adding that a session encouraging dialogue with and amongst the youth will be on the agenda of the forum. He noted that workshops, symposiums, and other activities will be held during the course of the forum with the major aim being the development of the Arab



**Madi Al-Khamees**

media sector. The forum will present several awards and prizes to outstanding media personnel, said Khamees, noting that prize for youth humanitarian initiatives will be handed out this year. An exhibition is expected to be held on the sidelines of the forum, said the official. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** KFH's public relations team honors the Kuwaiti champions.

## KFH SHOWCASES KUWAITI YOUTH'S SUCCESS STORIES

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Finance House (KFH) honored a group of national champions who hoisted Kuwait flag in international forums in recognition of their achievements, and as part of KFH's social responsibility and interest in highlighting the achievements of Kuwaiti talent.

KFH held a seminar hosting this distinguished galaxy of champions at the college of Business Administration at Kuwait University. The seminar themed "Kuwait Sun Shines over

the World" was moderated, amid huge student attendance, by KFH Public Relations Team leader Abdullah Al-Saif who found out about their achievements, experiences and success stories, while briefed on their international participations and outstanding global titles. The champions are: the Rider in Kuwait Motocross Meshari Bu Shayba, the Jest Ski World Champion Mohammad Bu Rubaiea, the Skydiver Mohammad Alrefaei, the inventor who received international recognitions

Mohammad Bin Awon and the Disabled Diver Faisal Almousawi. It is noteworthy that such initiatives confirm KFH's endeavors to optimally assume its social responsibility while commitment to supporting the youth and sports, not to mention recognizing the national talent. Meanwhile, the honorees praised KFH's support and keenness on appreciating them, which comprises an impetus for further success and achievements in their upcoming participations.



**TASHKENT:** Kuwaiti Ambassador to Uzbekistan Ahmad Al-Jeeran meets with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Economic Relations, Investments and Trade of Uzbekistan Elyor Ganiyev. — KUNA

## KUWAITI AMBASSADOR MEETS UZBEK OFFICIAL

**KUWAIT:** Kuwaiti Ambassador to Uzbekistan Ahmad Al-Jeeran met with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Economic Relations, Investments and Trade of Uzbekistan Elyor Ganiyev, discussing with him means to develop ties. A statement by the Kuwaiti Embassy in Uzbekistan said yesterday that the Ambassador welcomed all steps that would lead to further enhancing relations

between Kuwait and Uzbekistan. Ganiyev thanked the Kuwaiti government for its continuous support to his country, saying that various projects in Uzbekistan were funded by Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED). The official welcomed more steps to increase Kuwaiti investments, affirming that Uzbekistan was eager to boost relations with Kuwait on all possible domains. —KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Zain sponsored a carnival organized by the Ministry of Education's Special Education Department for students with special needs in Hawally. The event took place in celebration of Kuwait's National and Liberation Days.



KUWAIT: A colorful Kuwait Towers is back-dropped by a fireworks display yesterday as Kuwait celebrates its 55th National Day, 25th Liberation Day and 10th anniversary of HH the Amir's ascension to power. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat and KUNA

# FIREWORKS MARK NATIONAL ANNIVERSARIES



## HEALTH MINISTER ATTENDS COMMITTEE MEETING TO DISCUSS TREATMENT ABROAD

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** Head of the parliament's health, social affairs and labor committee MP Talal Al-Jallal said that he has invited Health Minister Dr Ali Al-Obaidi to attend the committee's meeting today and discuss the new charter of treatment abroad. Separately, Chairman of the parliament's budgets panel MP Adnan Abdulsamad said that the committee

discussed the social security authority's budget for 2016-2017 and noticed that the Audit Bureau had been very cooperative with the authority but recommended improving internal auditing to limit financial and administrative mistakes. The committee also stressed that the State Audit Bureau noticed that the social security had exceeded its 2014-2015 budget by KD 7 million. The committee also pointed that it

had previously warned that the suggested budget would lead to a KD 8.9 billion actuarial deficit in view of falling oil prices. The committee also stressed the need to fill about 300 vacant positions and change the regulations of accepting recruits, especially in terms of not appointing non-Kuwaitis in leading positions.



Health Minister Dr Ali Al-Obaidi



MP Talal Al-Jallal



MP Adnan Abdulsamad

**Weapons embezzlement**  
The court of appeal annulled the

criminal court's verdict sentencing a special forces agent to seven years with labor, dismissal and a KD 1,500 fine for embezzling weapons and ammunition worth KD 780,000 without a license or prior permission, and only sentenced him to one year in jail. The defendant's lawyer Mohammed Al-Mutairi argued that the previous verdict was void because the court passing it was not the same that heard the case from the beginning. He also argued that his client's confessions were made under threat and that he was framed.

**Ramadan donations**  
The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MSAL) has started receiving the names of charities' representatives who would be authorized to collect donations during Ramadan, so that the Ministry of Interior could be consulted about them security-wise. The ministry added that no written receipts would be given on collecting donations this year and that they would be substituted by electronic ones directly linked with MSAL in order to have more control over the process.

## PUBLIC SCHOOL GUARD ARRESTED FOR DRUG ABUSE

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** A public school security guard was arrested abusing drugs on the school premises in Saad Al-Abdullah along with two school students, said security sources, noting that one of the students managed to flee while the other was arrested. Commenting on the case, the Ministry of Education stressed that an investigation was in progress to determine whether this was an individual case or the suspect had other accomplices in other schools.

food security with competitive prices and high quality products, Undersecretary Dr Mutar Al-Mutairi stressed. Speaking during MSAL's fourth meeting to adjust the co-op sector's working systems, Mutairi stressed that it would be the auditors' task to follow up daily records of direct purchases from main local outlets and that any violations would be punishable by as far as dissolving co-ops' boards of directors.

**Direct purchase**  
The direct system of purchasing vegetables and fruits that the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MSAL) had been urging co-op boards to adopt aims at achieving

**Road project**  
The Ministry of Public Works' (MPW) Assistant Undersecretary for Road Engineering Affairs Ahmad Al-Hassan announced commencing work on a project to build and maintain road and bridges linking Sabah Al-Ahmad City and Khairan at a total cost of KD 45.75 million.



A vehicle impounded in Jahra for reckless driving.



Another vehicle impounded for the same charges.

## MINISTRY ANNOUNCES DETOUR, CLOSURE ON AL-GHAZALI ROAD



Engineer Ahmad Al-Hassan

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Public Works announced yesterday the permanent closure of the current ramp connecting Jahra Road to the Al-Ghazali bridge. A detour will be made available and users of this road will be able to access Al-Ghazali through the ramp on the intersection with Abdulaziz Al-Musaeed Road (Canada Dry Street).

This closure is of particular importance as it allows for the Jahra Road Development Project to continue works on Al-Ghazali.

The detour was opened in coordination with the General Directorate of Traffic. Following the site inspection and ensuring the necessary traffic safety conditions were met, permits for the opening of the detour were issued. The Ministry of Public Works requests all drivers to comply with traffic safe-

ty rules and follow the designated detour speed limits, to ensure minimum disruption, and maximum safety, during the construction work.

This mega project involves the construction of 17.7 km of viaducts (7.3 km of mainline Jahra Road, 2.4 km of bridges on linked roads and 8.0 km of ramps), including a trough at the 2nd Ring Road intersection, and 10 pedestrian bridges.

The at-grade road works include 3.4 km of mainline Jahra Road, connecting roads and 15 km of service roads. The Jahra Road project also includes major utility relocation and works, such as 3.5 km of storm water box culverts, 33 km of water lines, 8.0 km of sanitary sewer, 51 km of electric cables, and 12 km of communication ducts.



The scene after a fire was put out inside a Wafra farm's kitchen.



## ABK CELEBRATES NATIONAL, LIBERATION DAY WITH SENIOR CITIZENS

**KUWAIT:** On the occasion of National and Liberation Day, Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait's (ABK) Corporate Communications team visited the Elderly Home in the Ministry of Social Affairs compound, spreading the national spirit among the senior citizens of Kuwait and bringing the joy and festivities of this occasion to

them. The visit took place on 24 February, 2016.

The Bank's team distributed special themed gifts along with pins and flags to the residents of the home, reinforcing its commitment to playing an active role in the Kuwait community and engaging with its members on all levels.

ABK participated in a series of activities on this occasion, such as lighting the Bank's headquarters with the colors of the flag for the whole of February, celebrating with its staff members across all branches and sponsoring the Special Needs Operetta at the Ministry of Social Affairs.

## KUWAITIS EAGER TO COMPETE AT DUBAI-BASED EDUCATIONAL AWARD

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Education stressed the importance of taking part in the Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Award for Distinguished Academic Performance. Teams representing Kuwait in the Dubai-based Award, taken from among students, teachers, and school administrations, have been involved in an extensive process of vetting in preparation for the 19th holding of this highly-coveted educational award in the GCC region, said Award coordinator in Kuwait Mansour Al-Daihani said in a press statement yesterday.

He said the committee he supervises for the preparation of the Award is currently awaiting the announcement as to the winners of the 18th edition of the Award who will get their accolades in a ceremony in Dubai next April. He urged students, teachers, and school

administrators seeking to take part in the 19th edition of the Award to equip themselves well for the fierce competition ahead.

The Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Award for Distinguished Academic Performance is a government entity that is responsible for upgrading academic performance for all educational entities under the UAE Ministry of Education. It was created in March 1998, by Sheikh Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai and the UAE Minister of Finance.

The Award seeks to improve the quality of the educational system and encourage initiatives, innovation and excellence in all literary and scientific domains. Initially limited in scope to Dubai, the Award was expanded to cover all the emirates, followed by the GCC countries. —KUNA

## DEFENSE MINISTRY DENIES RUMORS

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Defense on Friday denied rumors that went abuzz on social media about salvaging a submarine off Ohah island. The ministry in a statement indicated that personnel lifted remnants of targets used in military drills, and not a submarine hulk belonging to a neighboring country. It urged the media to abstain from broadcasting reports about Kuwait Army, adding that Morale Guidance and Public Relations Department is reachable for any inquiry or checking on unsubstantiated reports. —KUNA

## RECKLESS DRIVERS ARRESTED IN JAHRA

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Responding to social media videos showing two reckless drivers driving vehicles dangerously in Jahra, police patrols were dispatched to the scene and identified the two vehicles, one of them with a GCC license plate number. Both vehicles were impounded while the drivers were arrested and referred to Taima police station for further investigations.

**Two injured in fire**

A Kuwaiti couple was injured in a fire in their Mahboula apartment, said security sources, noting that firemen from Mahboula Fire Station rushed to the scene where they managed to control the blaze

and rescue the couple, taking them to hospital. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress to find the reason for the blaze.

**Kitchen fire**

A fire broke in a Wafra farm's kitchen, said security sources, noting that firemen from Wafra brigade rushed to the scene and managed to control the blaze without reporting any casualties.

**Contrabands**

A citizen with a criminal record was arrested at a checkpoint in Ahmadi with 65 illicit pills, some witchcraft items and three blades. He was taken to the proper authorities for further action.



Contrabands found with a man arrested in Ahmadi.

Special Report

# Building Kuwait's future, one small enterprise at a time

The number of Small-to-Medium enterprises (SMEs) in Kuwait is high, particularly in retail and non-financial services, but their overall contribution to the economy is marginal—just 3 percent of GDP. This paradox is especially troubling when compared to high income and emerging economies, where SMEs comprise most of the economic activity in the private sector and contribute to 50 percent and 40 percent of GDP (respectively).

Kuwaiti SMEs only employ around 23 percent of the country's total workforce, which is less than half of SME employment figures for both high income and emerging economies.

## Key barriers

To understand key barriers to SME business growth in Kuwait, in 2014 the World Bank surveyed 502 SMEs there. More than 35 percent of respondents saw business licensing and permits as the main things blocking their growth. Answers concerning labor regulations, regulatory uncertainty, and administrative corruption also featured highly.

The lack of an adequately educated workforce was also cited by 24 percent of the survey's respondents as a barrier to growth. Obtaining an operating license takes, on average, 41 days in Kuwait, they said. And dealing with other government regulations consumes anywhere from 14 percent-20 percent of a manager's time.

Building a vibrant ecosystem for SME development is seen as critical to promoting long-term economic diversification in Kuwait. In the next 20 years or so, the private sector is expected to play a leading role in creating jobs for the next generation of Kuwaitis.

Its success will hinge largely on whether Kuwait creates an enabling environment in the form of an ecosystem for entrepreneurship.

The Government of Kuwait established a National Fund for SME Development in April 2013. An independent pub-

lic corporation with a total of 2 billion Kuwaiti Dinars (\$7 billion) in capital, it aims to help create productive jobs for Kuwaiti professionals, increasing private participation in the economy and the amount of income diversification.

The National Fund prides itself on being the first single entity for SMEs in the Gulf. "The equivalent of the National Fund in other countries involves four or five different government entities, one for financing, one for business support, etc.," said Mohammad Al-Zuhair, Chairman of the Fund.

## Assistance project

The World Bank is focusing its support on the institutional establishment of the Fund, a two-year technical assistance project. Since November 2013, the World Bank has supported three consecutive phases of the Fund's implementation: the development of its executive regulations, the strategy and action plan, and the organizational set-up of the Fund.

## The scope of Bank support continues across five main areas:

- The first is to the SME business environment, including support for the creation of a "one-stop-shop" to help clients register and acquire operating licenses.
- The second is SME business development, which includes business improvement and training, and helping businesses link-up with local and global value chains.
- The third is developing a culture of entrepreneurship, which includes an online space for interaction between entrepreneurs, and a list of community events.

The Bank is also supporting the Kuwaiti National Fund's progress with data collection and the monitoring and evaluation of its impact.

In October 2015, the Fund organized its first national

SME forum. The Bank's Trade and Competitiveness Senior Director, Annabelle Gonzalez, participated in an event organized by Wamda, which connects aspiring youth to established entrepreneurs and industry experts.

The "Mix 'n Mentor" event was attended by 70 Kuwaiti entrepreneurs and 28 local and regional mentors. They discussed the challenges facing their start-ups, including issues related to fundraising, business development, team building, and user and client growth. The event also held workshops on building and improving entrepreneurial skills.

It was well received amongst participants. About 78 percent of those surveyed afterwards thought it had helped energize them as entrepreneurs. Almost 90 percent said they would incorporate the information they had received from mentors, and more than three quarters of respondents believed their mentors would be responsive to them.

"They were really honest about the ideas we have. They gave us positive feedback, but more importantly, they shared with us the negative side of business, which I really wanted to hear and made me want to work harder," said a participant, a founding member from Dotz N Pixels.

## Go-to reference

The Bank Group has partnered with Wamda to support the National Fund's activities. Wamda's storytelling platform, Nuwait, celebrates stories from Kuwait as well as sharing, insights, trends, and resources. The platform serves as the virtual go-to reference for the local community of entrepreneurs.

"When entrepreneurs bring their passion to the table, they have to complement it with a lot of rigor," the Bank's Lead Private Sector Specialist, Parth Tewari, told Nuwait. He advised entrepreneurs to "work together to create a culture of collaboration, where success and failures are celebrated in certain ways."

By sharing stories and other information, Nuwait provides the SME ecosystem people need. It also aims to encourage others to launch their own startups.

"The momentum [for SMEs] now is picking up in the economy, but changes will take time to happen," the Bank's Senior Private Sector Specialist, Ali Abu Kumail, told Nuwait, "Entrepreneurs should take this opportunity to develop their business ideas and expose themselves to global trends in business."

— World Bank



Khaled Mahdi

## DEVELOPMENT PLANS FALTER IN ABSENCE OF PUBLIC SUPPORT: OFFICIAL

**KUWAIT:** It is not unusual for state-sponsored development plans to run into a brick wall because a wide swath of the society reject them, said a Kuwaiti official yesterday. Secretary General of the Higher Council for Planning and Development Khaled Mahdi made that statement following a workshop hosted by the Higher Council in conjunction with the Central Census Bureau and the World Bank.

A big challenge for governments everywhere, he said, has been coopting the society into accepting development policies that may be construed as counterproductive or biased for certain sectors of the society or simply lacking validity.

Mahdi said the Higher Council, in its efforts to concoct palatable and implementable growth and development plans amenable to the public, has decided to establish a "center for public policy" through which it could test the pulse of the society regarding certain development plans and ideas.

Also in remarks after the workshop, director of the World Bank's office in Kuwait Fray Ra'ad said the Bank supported the Kuwaiti government's steps aimed at ameliorating the performance of the public sector and incentivizing the private sector and focusing on improving human resources through training and professional instruction.

He sounded sanguine on government reform policies, including those regarding employment and job security for the private sector. Noting that usually implementation of reforms in the labor market is not easy, he nevertheless emphasized the validity of formulating development plans that resonate well with the market place. — KUNA

## REAL ESTATE LOANS HIT KD 26.8 MLN IN FEB: KCB

**KUWAIT:** The total number of real estate loans in February was 836, amounting to KD 26.8 million, while total portfolio loans were 23, with a value of KD 222,000, Kuwait Credit Bank (KCB) announced yesterday. In a statement, KCB revealed that the total number of property loans in February 2016 was 39, amounting to KD 2.4 million, while government-owned property loans stood at 186, with a value of KD 12.7 million.

Moreover, total number of residential property loans was 45 with a value of KD 3 million, while a total of 12 loans were registered for special housing, amounting to KD 384,000, the statement said, adding that total loans allocated for the handicapped was 358, with a value of KD 3.2 million. Total property expansion loans stood at 16, amounting to KD 160,000 while a total of seven renovation loans amounted to KD 62,000.

## Agreement

In other news, KCB announced yesterday the signing of an electronic link cooperation protocol with the Commercial Bank of Kuwait to enable customers to make direct transfers between the two banks and collect monthly deductions from beneficiaries of housing loans granted by KCB.

Director-General of the Credit Bank Salah Al-Mudhaf said in a statement that the agreement, which was signed by Commercial Bank's Chief Executive Ilham Mahfouth comes to complement the efforts of the KCB to expand the electronic link network with government agencies and institutions and the private banks sector in implementation of its strategy to shift towards the full completion of electronic transactions.

He added that cooperation between the KCB and private banks is an extension of the old and rooted partnership between the public and private sectors that began decades ago that contributed to the renaissance of Kuwait and its economic development.

He pointed out that the KCB had already signed similar protocols with the National Bank of Kuwait, Kuwait International Bank and Boubyan Bank reflecting its fixed conviction in the role of the private sector as a wheel of development in the country aimed to transform Kuwait into a financial and economic center. — KUNA



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Crime

Report

Woman stopped while attempting to drive through Interior Ministry gates

**KUWAIT:** A Kuwaiti woman in her thirties was arrested when she tried to drive her vehicle through the Interior Ministry gates in Subhan, said security sources, noting that guards fired warning shots in the air and used the tyre shredder device to stop her vehicle. According to security guards, the woman was not in a normal state as she murmured some strange words. She was referred to relevant authorities for further investigations.

Botched kidnap

A female citizen accused two people, one of whom she had an affair with, of trying to kidnap her from a parking lot in Salmiya. The woman explained that she went to the parking lot to pick up some of her belongings from her ex-boyfriend, but someone else was with him and they both tried to kidnap her, but their attempt failed when she resisted them and started screaming. A search is on for the two suspects.

Teen smash car windows

Three juveniles were arrested in Sabahiya for stoning and smashing the windows of vehicles driven by Asians around the area, said security sources.

Harasser caught

A Yemeni man was arrested in a Rai shopping mall for sexual harassment, said security sources, noting that the suspect is currently detained pending deportation.

Ear injury

A citizen was rushed to Adan Hospital when part of his ear was cut during a fight with a compatriot in Mangaf, said security sources. According to the injured man's brother, who took him to hospital, his brother argued with someone with whom he had had some unsettled scores and that the argument developed into a fight, during which his brother sustained the injuries and bruises mentioned in a medical report he provided. The man said doctors managed to attach the cut piece of his brother's ear. A case was filed and a search is on for the suspect.

Hashish smokers arrested

Two citizens and an Iraqi were recently arrested while smoking hashish in a parking lot in Qairawan, said security sources, noting that on searching the suspects, they had 12 pieces of hashish on them.

Neighbors fight

A citizen reported that his neighbor assaulted him and beat him with a sharp object to the head when they fought over parking rights. A case was filed and a search is on for the suspect.

Reckless driving

Four reckless drivers were arrested for dangerous driving in a Khaitan open yard where they endangered their lives and the lives of others. The vehicles were impounded and a case was filed.

Ransom

A security source said a roaming taxi driver told police that as he left a Shuwaikh restaurant, he was kidnapped by persons who taped his mouth and put a knife to his side. The suspects took the Bangladeshi man to Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh and forced him to call his father. They told the father if he did not transfer a certain amount of money, they will kill his son. He said the money was sent to the kidnappers' account, and he was released. Investigations are underway.

Security campaign

A security campaign in Kuwait City resulted in the arrest of a 30-year-old citizen who was in an abnormal condition. He also had drugs and drug paraphernalia on him, and was sent to the Drugs Control General Department. Two other citizens were also arrested for debts of KD 15,000 and KD 14,000, and were sent to concerned authorities. Meanwhile, Farwaniya security arrested nine persons in violation of residency law. They were sent to concerned authorities.

—Al-Rai, Al-Anbaa

News

in brief

Municipality, Council release 31 expats

**KUWAIT:** Thirty one expatriate workers in Kuwait Municipality and the Municipal Council have been given their notice, out of 100 to be relieved of their duties by the end of the year, a municipality official said. More employees, whose jobs are not compatible with their academic qualifications, will soon be released also, the source said. In other news, Kuwait Municipality's Financial and Administrative Department has detected a case in which nearly KD 10,000 in bank guarantees could have been embezzled. According to sources with knowledge of the investigations, bank guarantees pertaining with safety contracts are expected to be inspected in the near future. —Al-Rai

Employees laid off

**KUWAIT:** The executive committee of the Municipal Council is set to send a letter to the General Secretary that includes a request to relieve 50 percent of General Secretariat workers who are hired under the 'bonuses' clause of their duties by March 31st. —Al-Qabas

Jahra complex tender

**KUWAIT:** A tender for a project to build a ministries' complex in Jahra will be placed this month, a Ministry of Public Works said, adding that the registration of eight companies, including three local firms, have so far been approved. The tender of the KD 300 million project is being placed for a second time to give a fair opportunity for as much companies as possible to compete, said the source, noting that more companies are expected to register before the tender is placed. —Al-Anbaa



Al-Anbaa

POLITICAL PARROTS

By Thaar Al-Rasheedi

Arab societies seem to be very obsessed with politics and I will not be exaggerating if I say that every Arab citizen is literally obsessed with a genie called 'politics'. One never hesitates to raise political discussions and analyze political situations at each and every private or public gathering. He would even go as far as predict the future, even though if asked about certain political elements in a particular country he is talking about, he would open his mouth wide with shock without saying a word. He might even make some gestures and then 'shut' his mouth as fast as he had opened it in the first place or carry on with political analyses he makes based on information he might have got from Twitter or from brief news bulletins, not detailed ones!

Political talks dominate all diwanias, social media networks, workplaces and cafes where people tend to analyze the possible results of the coming US presidential elections. They hang Donald Trump by the ears on their criticism trees. Well, don't be taken by surprise if one of them even starts discussing his vision on overthrowing Trump. They also know about Boko Haram and what is going on in Africa, about Taleban, Al-Qaeda and IS.

They open their chests of secrets and start telling ones that only exist in their talks without any proof or evidence to back what they say. They might even surprise you by discussing the strategic military plan to strike Syria!

Arabs are more obsessed with politics than they are with football. They are very attached to it day and night, and start by discussing incidents in Arab countries at noon and end the day discussing international political concerns.

Some might overdo political analyses and discuss political views with cafe friends, though they forget talking about cleanliness in the streets they live on or around the corner from their own houses. They do not know that, as citizens and by powers of contracts signed with them, cleaning companies are mandated to clean their areas and cleaning workers are mandated to occasionally wash garbage containers and dustbins outside their houses according to a shocking article written by colleague Ghunaim Al-Zo'bi four years ago. We all realize that we know very much about Boko Haram, Syria and Iraq, and know nothing about our rights only three meters away!

—Translated by Kuwait Times

GOVT TO DECIDE ON BRANDING HEZBOLLAH AS 'TERRORIST' GROUP

**KUWAIT:** The ministries of foreign affairs and interior seem to disagree on the mechanism to be used to explain branding the Hezbollah as a 'terrorist organization', as previously decided by GCC, said high-ranking diplomatic sources, noting that the government would make its final decision tomorrow. The sources added that branding Hezbollah as a



terrorist organization was subject to the UN's Security Council. The sources also denied that Kuwait has so far banned dealing with Hezbollah or its members and denied that the Foreign Minister was currently discussing any measure to incriminate Hezbollah as long as the UN and

the Security Council have not decided to do so.

The sources confirmed Kuwait's full commitment to international resolutions banning terrorist organizations. They also called for wide-scale GCC efforts at the UN to declare Hezbollah a terrorist organization. The sources highlighted that GCC states only incriminated Hezbollah's armed militia and excluded its political wing because incriminating terrorist organizations should be done according to laws.

On the other hand, high-ranking security sources stressed that Mol's attitude was more decisive and that the ministry was currently preparing a report on the mechanism to follow to put the GCC decision into practice so that the report could be discussed by the Cabinet's meeting tomorrow.

In response to recent statements made by Chancellor Dherar Al-Assousi, MP Abdulrahman Al-Jeeran stressed that he would propose a bill within a fortnight to brand Hezbollah as a terrorist organization including both its political and military wings. MP Saleh Ashour said that the GCC decision would only enhance sectarianism in the region and give Israel an excuse to strike Lebanon. "Article 23 of Kuwait's constitution states that no crime or penalty should be addressed with a law - and this is what the public prosecutor did," he underlined. —Al-Jarida



Al-Anbaa

THEY ARE ALL DEMENTED

By Dr Nermin Al-Houti

Various types of crimes are on the increase nowadays, not only in our society, but also in various Arab ones. We have been hearing of and reading about murders, explosions and similar crimes on a daily basis and literally every morning. Towards the end of reading the story, we always find a statement that has been repeatedly used in criminology, stating that the culprit is 'mentally disturbed' and that he/she is receiving psychiatric treatment!

Well, by counting recent crimes and those who committed them, and by excluding the criminals subject to psychiatric treatment, we find that crime has become limited to a group of demented lunatics. Hence starts the problem and malfunction in such an important medical edifice - the psychiatric diseases hospital - that is supposed to have a scientific mission and duty towards treating its patients by diagnosing their complexes and probing the psychological stress they suffer from in order to eventually cure them. Unfortunately, according to what we hear and read every day, psychology has become a license to commit crimes!

Kindly excuse my sword-sharp words, but what we have been reading about is becoming a farce in our community, as whenever someone runs over another, murders somebody or blows up something, his folks immediately come out with medical reports claiming that he is under psychiatric treatment and did not realize what he was doing because he is 'demented'....well, stop fooling us!

It is high time for government bodies to set things right and meticulously check and monitor this medical edifice to check the grounds on which such reports are being given to be later on be used as legal licenses to commit crimes and escape legal accountability.

Let bygones be bygones, but let us talk about the present and the future. We need to know the rules and regulations of hospitalizing patients in that hospital, their treatment protocols and the rules followed in granting them such 'crime licenses'. It is also high time that government bodies legally rationalize the issuance of such 'licenses' (reports). The question now is: Would it not be better to keep such patients hospitalized to protect them and the society if they are that dangerous?

Finally, an insane person is someone who cannot tell the difference between good and evil. He is dangerous to the society, while an idiot or an imbecile is someone who cannot tell the difference between good and evil but poses no threat to others. A stupid person is someone who is easily fooled and beguiled by others and a vulgar person is someone who squanders his wealth on good and evil alike. Correct me if I am wrong!

—Translated by Kuwait Times



NEW METHOD TO ASSESS RESTAURANT'S LABOR NEEDS

**KUWAIT:** Well-informed sources said that the Public Manpower Authority has reached an understanding with a major restaurant chain to assess its needs of labor, based on each restaurant's activity, working hours, area, number of tables and services provided in addition to whether it also provides home delivery services. —Al-Anbaa

GCC INTERIOR MINISTERS AGREE TO CREATE JOINT DATABASE

**KUWAIT:** Well-informed security sources said that during their recent meeting in Tunisia, GCC interior ministers agree to accelerate the exchange of information between relevant authorities to help facilitate foiling terrorist operations. The sources added that it has become necessary to build a joint GCC database once the legislations needed to establish a unified GCC police were made.

The sources added that the database would include detailed accurate information about all suspects and would act as a reference for all GCC inhabitants. "The main aim is not to identify GCC citizens with dual citizenships, but to enhance GCC security cooperation," stressed the sources. Responding to a question whether GCC states would use a common list of people banned from entry, the sources highlighted that the right to decide whom to allow and whom to ban was up to each state and that no such list could be generalized due to political and other considerations related to each state's sovereignty. —Al-Qabas

HEALTH EFFECTS

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Health will soon run a 'comprehensive study' on the possible health effects that formaldehyde might leave on students and staff at Kuwait University's Faculty of Medicine. This step is based on a recommendation from a committee that comprises deans of colleges at Kuwait University's Health Sciences Center, with regards to the environmental situation at the Abdulmohsen Abdulrazaq Health Sciences Center, said sources familiar with the news. —Al-Anbaa



NBK SPONSORS LOYAC'S 'ECO QUEST' INITIATIVE

**KUWAIT:** National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) sponsors Loyac's Environmental Initiative 'Eco Quest'. This sponsorship comes in line with NBK's commitment to its Corporate Social Responsibility as well as the vital role it plays in supporting students, youths and self-building initiatives in Kuwait.

Eco Quest initiative invites 20 schools to play clue on Saturday 12th of March 2016 in Al-Shaheed Park. The main objective is to collect clues that are fun, educational and intellectually challenging for the students to ultimately

come up with an environmental initiative that they think can be a good solution to a perceived problem in our nation.

This sponsorship goes with NBK's continuous support to Loyac's activities and events. NBK always strives to empower Kuwaiti youth to realize their potentials, providing career and training opportunities. Also, NBK develops the professional skills of young Kuwaitis as part of its strategy to develop national human resources.

NBK continues to promote a range

of philanthropic missions and social welfare programs as part of its corporate social responsibility to assert its leadership in supporting Kuwait's social development, standing as a model in serving all aspects of the community.

LOYAC is a nonprofit organization that runs several programs for the youth to develop their professional skills, enhance their personal growth and help them find their sense of purpose by extending themselves to others.



Syria drivers count on truce to rev up Aleppo's taxi trade



KUALA LUMPUR: A man views a fleet of Malaysia Airline planes on the tarmac of the Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Malaysia. The head of one of the world's top air crash investigation agencies says not enough is being done to adopt already available technologies that can help prevent another plane with hundreds of passengers from simply disappearing like MH370. — AP

# HIJACKERS? ALIENS? THEORIES OVER FLIGHT 370'S FATE ABOUND

**SYDNEY:** From a hijacking to an alien abduction, countless theories have arisen about the fate of the Malaysian airliner that disappeared nearly two years ago. With search crews just months away from finishing their thus-far fruitless sweep of a remote stretch of seabed where Flight 370 is believed to have crashed, officials appear no closer to solving one of the most mind-boggling mysteries of modern times.

That stubborn lack of resolution has only increased speculation about what might have happened to the Boeing 777 after it vanished with 239 people on board on March 8, 2014. Some believe officials are simply looking in the wrong part of the Indian Ocean, while social media sites are peppered with comments suggesting they're looking on the wrong planet: "MH370 was abducted by aliens," reads a typical tweet.

"We knew this was a very high-profile, publicized event and because it was such a great mystery, there was going to be a lot of scrutiny," says the Australian Transport Safety Bureau's chief commissioner Martin Dolan, who is leading the search for the plane far off Australia's west coast. "We are always open to informed criticism. What we find a bit more difficult is when occasionally people criticize us on the basis of a misunderstanding or a misrepresentation of what we're doing or saying." Here's a look at a few of the theories that investigators have considered but view as unlikely:

### The plane went north

After veering off-course shortly after takeoff on its flight from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing, officials believe the plane flew south on a straight path into the abyss of the southern Indian Ocean. They arrived at that conclusion after analyzing exchanges between the plane's engine and a satellite. But some people insist the plane instead flew north into Asia, and that the satellite data indicating otherwise was tampered with. Dolan dismisses that theory, noting that British satellite company Inmarsat, which provided the satellite data to investigators, is a widely respected company with a solid track record. There's no reason to doubt their data, he says. "Those sorts of theories just seem to overcomplicate what's going on here," Dolan says. "We think that had any data been manipulated, there would have been a trace of it." Beyond that, a wing part from the plane washed ashore on Reunion Island in the western Indian Ocean in July, effectively eliminating the possibility that the rest of the plane ended up in the Northern Hemisphere. That said, a few people have suggested the wing flap was planted on the island by terrorists.

### It went west to Maldives

Some argue the plane must have traveled west to the remote Indian Ocean island nation of the Maldives after early reports emerged of locals spotting a low-flying plane in the area around the time Flight 370 vanished. The military in the Maldives told Malaysia that those reports of sightings turned out

to be false. Last year, Malaysian investigators traveled to the Maldives to examine possible debris that had washed ashore, but it was determined to be unrelated to Flight 370. Former Australian Transport Minister Warren Truss has said that while the plane may have had enough fuel to reach the islands, it wasn't detected by air traffic control or any other local authority. The flight path to the Maldives is also inconsistent with investigators' satellite and radar data. "It is not considered a likely possibility," Truss said last year.

### It was shot down

One of the earliest theories suggested the plane was headed toward Diego Garcia, a British atoll in the Indian Ocean where the US has a military base. The former head of the now-defunct Proteus

Airlines, Marc Dugain, voiced his own theory that US military, fearing a Sept. 11-style attack, may have shot down the plane as it approached the atoll. The US has denied the aircraft came anywhere near Diego Garcia.

### Hijacked by passengers?

Immediately after the plane disappeared, many speculated that one or more passengers hijacked the plane. This theory gained traction after it was discovered that two Iranians on board were traveling on stolen passports. Investigators cleared the two after finding nothing linking them to terror groups; it is believed they were trying to illegally immigrate to Europe. Police scrutinized the backgrounds of every passenger on the plane - but nothing suspicious was found. — AP

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## WORLD LEADERS HAIL 'REAL PROGRESS' IN SYRIA

**PARIS:** World leaders hailed "real progress" in Syria yesterday, but fresh air strikes showed the fragility of the week-old truce as the opposition cast doubt on its attendance at talks next week in Geneva. Warplanes struck a key rebel bastion east of the Syrian capital for the first time since the US-Russia brokered truce-which

excludes the fight against jihadists-began last weekend, a monitor said. "Two air strikes hit the edge of the town of Douma in Eastern Ghouta and one person was killed," said Rami Abdel Rahman, head of the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. He said either Syrian or Russian planes

carried out the strikes. Eastern Ghouta had been regularly bombarded by government forces, but has been relatively calm since the ceasefire came into force, which has also allowed the United Nations to begin delivering aid to three rebel towns in the area. British, French, German and EU foreign ministers met in Paris to discuss the truce, saying there had been "real progress." "This cessation of hostilities is by no means perfect but it has reduced the level of violence, it has created an opportunity for some humanitarian access," said British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond.

Protesters in opposition-held areas-buoyed by the ceasefire-also took to the streets for the first time in years to demonstrate against the regime under the slogan "The Revolution Continues!" Waving the three-starred tricolor flag that has become the uprising's emblem, demonstrators in opposition-held areas of Aleppo, Damascus, Daraa and Homs called for Assad's downfall. Late Friday, a group of rebel fighters seized control of a crossing on the Iraqi border, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. The border point at Al-Tanaf, which is controlled on the Iraqi side by the Islamic State group.

in Switzerland tentatively set for next Wednesday. "We want a speedy resumption of the negotiations in Geneva, but two conditions must be fulfilled: access for all Syrians to humanitarian aid, and full respect of the ceasefire," said French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault. But Riad Hijab, head of Syria's main opposition body, the High Negotiations Committee, said the opposition had not yet decided whether it would come to the talks.

Citing continued sieges and the fact that thousands still languish in regime jails, Hijab said President Bashar Al-Assad would have "no place" in a political transition because he has "blood on his hands". Speaking by phone on Friday, US Secretary of State John Kerry and his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov agreed on the need for a return to the negotiating table. "The two sides called for a speedy start to negotiations in Geneva between the Syrian government and the opposition under the UN's auspices," a Russian foreign ministry statement said. Turkish armed forces launched new artillery strikes on positions of the Islamic State (IS) group in Syria, the state-run Anatolia news agency reported. Russia however accused Turkey of continuing to bombard Kurdish positions and allowing jihadist groups to receive weapons across its border, putting "the

ceasefire in danger", the Russian defence ministry said in a statement.

### 'Totally unrealistic'

World leaders expressed a sharp divergence of opinion over Assad's plans to hold elections next month-way ahead of a roadmap agreed in November. "The idea that there could be elections (in April) is not just provocative but totally unrealistic," said French President Francois Hollande. But Assad's key backer, Russian President Vladimir Putin, shot back that the plan for elections "does not interfere with steps to build the peace process".

The UN envoy on the crisis, Staffan de Mistura, said that whatever the timetable, it had to be Syrians who decided their president's fate, not outsiders. Doctors Without Borders (MSF) said tens of thousands of displaced Syrians along Turkey's border have not returned home despite the truce. "Some 100,000 people gathered near the border-including 50,000 in past weeks after the spike in violence in early February from the Syrian government coalition-have not yet started to return home because it's too dangerous," MSF head Joanne Liu said. "We're in a transition period and I think it will take another few days for things to settle and for people to become convinced there really is a truce." —AFP



**SAQBA:** Syrians sit on bags of flour that they have unloaded after an aid convoy of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent entered the rebel-held town of Saqba, on the outskirts of the capital Damascus. —AFP

### Focus on Geneva

The quartet of foreign ministers said the focus now was on convincing all parties to return to UN-brokered peace talks

## PUTIN'S SYRIA CAMPAIGN IS A WIN-WIN FOR MOST RUSSIANS

### AIRSTRIKES DEMONSTRATE RUSSIA'S MIGHT

**MOSCOW:** For most Russians, there's little not to like about their country's military operation in Syria. The airstrikes have demonstrated Russia's might, turned the course of the war and made sure that Russia is once again treated as a world power on a par with the United States. And all at little cost. When Russia began its air campaign on Sept 30, there were fears that it would turn into a repeat of the disastrous Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in late 1979, which ended nine years later with thousands dead and a humiliating withdrawal. Those fears have been dispelled as President Vladimir Putin has kept his word that there will be no ground action.

Denis Kuzichov, a 36-year-old artist in Moscow, said he supports Russia's involvement in Syria as long as it is limited to airstrikes. "If we're talking about bombing terrorists and the fight against incorrect forms of Islam, then yeah," Kuzichov said. "If our ground troops move in, and by that I mean if they start giving weapons to people on the ground - tanks, heavy guns - then of course it's bad." Most Russians judge the situation in Syria based on what they see on state television, said Nataliya Zorkaya, who heads the social and political survey department at the Levada Center, an independent polling agency.

The news programs on Kremlin-controlled television have shown Russia's strategic bombers and new long-range cruise missiles making direct hits on targets described as assets of the Islamic State group. The reports have noted the terrorist

threat posed to Russia by the Islamic State, which has won the allegiance of Islamic militants operating in Russia and recruited thousands of Russian citizens to join the battle in Syria. The news broadcasts also have featured interviews with displaced Syrians who have been able to return home after Russian airstrikes helped the Syrian government army to liberate their town.

Foreign reports about Russian bombs destroying hospitals or killing civilians have been denied by the Kremlin and spurned as Western attempts to smear Russia. "The West has blamed us for something or other since ancient times," said Yulia Zhalbe, a 28-year-old Muscovite. "But if you notice, Russia has never been the first to strike. We just protect our own." Zhalbe said she supports Russia's intervention in Syria because she has trust in Putin and "our president is always right".

Russia has lost three men in Syria, including a pilot killed when his warplane was shot down by a Turkish jet in November and a marine who died on a mission to rescue the pilot's crewmate. Blame for the two deaths was put on Turkey, and Putin struck back hard by imposing an array of economic sanctions and deploying more weapons to Syria. In recent weeks, Russian television has provided heavy coverage of the flurry of diplomacy leading up to the new cease-fire for Syria reached by Russia and the United States.

In announcing the agreement in a televised address after speaking with US President Barack

Obama, Putin portrayed the cease-fire as the achievement of Russia and the US working together as partners. The deal has allowed Putin to cast Russia as indispensable to a settlement of the nearly five year-old conflict and a world power equal to the United States.

Nearly 60 percent of Russians support the Russian airstrikes in Syria, according to a Levada Center poll. Of the remainder, about 25 percent said they did not support them and 15 percent said they had trouble answering. The poll, conducted Jan. 22-25, had a margin of error of 3.4 percentage points. Critics of the Syria campaign have called it an unnecessary expense at a time of economic crisis. But by limiting its presence in Syria, the Kremlin has been able to keep spending on the military operations to an estimated \$2 million to \$4 million a day, an easily sustainable level even for the crisis-stricken Russian economy.

The military intervention, Russia's first outside the former Soviet Union since the 1991 Soviet collapse, also helps deflect attention from economic problems and build national pride at a difficult time. For most Russians, the worsening economy and inflation are more immediate concerns than a military operation far from Russia's borders. "What's important to me? It's important to bring up children, but probably the economy," said Sergei Kabatsyn, a 45-year-old resident of the southern Krasnodar region who was sightseeing in Moscow with his wife and teenage daughter. —AP



**BEIRUT:** A scrap collector pulls a teddy bear from a temporary garbage dump in an eastern suburb of the Lebanese capital Beirut. —AFP

## LEBANON TRASH CRISIS DRAGS ON, WORRYING DOCTORS EVEN MORE

**BEIRUT:** Lebanon's trash collection crisis, which sent thousands protesting into the streets last summer, is now in its eighth month with still no resolution in sight. Though it has prompted political debates and occasional heated discussions, Lebanese doctors and medical professionals are increasingly alarmed by its effect on health. At the emergency room at the Sacre Coeur hospital outside Beirut, doctors say they are seeing a spike in severe respiratory diseases and that it's tied to the ongoing trash disaster. The collection crisis erupted last July after authorities closed the primary landfill for Beirut and the surrounding coastal governorate without providing an alternative.

Thousands took to the streets and the demonstrations were a catharsis of discontent directed at the political class, which has walled itself off from popular opinion and failed to provide other basic services such as water, electricity and drainage. But the protests died down and politicians have been in no hurry to solve the disaster. Politicians have instead been occupied with containing the fallout of an abrupt Saudi Arabian decision to cancel \$4 billion in aid, most of it marked for the army.

It's not just Sacre Coeur that is under strain - hospital beds across Beirut have been full this winter, partly because of a panic over swine flu, which Health Minister Wael Abou Faour said took four lives through mid-February, but doctors say more patients are coming in because of the garbage. "We're seeing new profiles in the emergency rooms this year," said Joelle Khadra-Eid, an ER doctor at Sacre Coeur. "These are people who didn't have asthma or allergies when

they were young. They've been exposed to ... pollution that wasn't around before." Beirut streets are kept relatively garbage-free - which has helped pacify the public - and the trash is being pushed to the city's periphery, where it piles up along the roadside and the banks of the Beirut River.

"In some cases, they start burning the trash, and then we see widespread breathing difficulties and skin infections," said Rachid Rahme, the director of Sacre Coeur's emergency and critical care units. In the suburb of Jdeideh, to Beirut's east, local officials closed a winding road to create a rivulet of garbage, stuffed into large white sacks, which snakes down the hill. After a local newspaper, The Daily Star, published a photo, residents joked that it must be one of the country's much-hyped ski slopes, and the international press flocked to the vista.

But the international exposure hasn't shamed politicians into action yet. More than once, government ministers announced an imminent solution to crisis, which never materialized, and now there is talk of dissolving Prime Minister Tammam Salam's government. On Thursday, Salam told his Cabinet that "there is no need for the government to stay" if it can't resolve this crisis. Information Minister Ramzi Joreige said. A few municipalities launched their own recycling initiatives, but many others simply resorted to burning their garbage, often in residential areas. Air contamination in these areas became more than 400 times worse than pollution in the country's industrial areas, a study by the American University of Beirut revealed last year. —AP

## SYRIAN DRIVERS COUNT ON TRUCE TO REV UP ALEPPO'S TAXI TRADE

**ALEPPO:** Driving fearlessly under skies free of warplanes and bombs, taxi drivers in Syria's divided second city Aleppo are counting on a fragile truce to revive their trade. One week into the ceasefire in parts of Syria, the country's iconic yellow taxis are slowly filling the rubble-strewn streets in eastern neighborhoods. Ayoub, 27, lives in the rebel-controlled Bustan al-Qasr district, which falls along the front lines in the center of the city. "The bombardment and the fact that people were being displaced had a huge effect on our trade," said the father of two. With residents of Aleppo either fleeing for Turkey or staying at home in fear of air strikes, drivers could barely find any customers. Rebel-held territories in particular were regularly being hit by air strikes and barrel bombs, while government districts in the west faced daily rocket attacks.

When Syria's truce began on February 27, however, residents of heavily bombed streets began gradually descending on markets and parks. "Since the truce came into place, we started working again, thank God. People feel safe now because the truce has stopped the shelling and the air strikes," Ayoub said. Before the ceasefire, he used to linger on street corners hoping to pick up a customer. Other days, he didn't have enough money for petrol. Ayoub now energetically begins his day by dusting off his classic yellow taxi and drinking a small cup of potent coffee from a local brewer.

### 'No longer afraid'

Wahid, a driver in his 40s living in the Mashhad neighborhood of Aleppo, is thrilled that he can once again spend his days driving through his city. "Before the truce, I didn't dare leave my home during the day" because of the daily strikes from Russian warplanes on parts of Aleppo, Wahid said. Strikes would start from the early morning and last throughout the afternoon, forcing Wahid to work at night "when the skies weren't full of planes." Things have gotten better and the number of customers has increased. I've started to go to work



**ALEPPO:** Ayoub, a 27-year-old Syrian man, drives his taxi on a street in the rebel-controlled side of Aleppo. —AFP

every day from 8 am," he said proudly. With his young daughter beside him, Abu Mohammad, 26, weaves through the grey streets of the eastern Al-Sukari district. "I'm on my way to visit my brother. I'm no longer afraid after the shelling decreased" because of the truce, he said.

When fighting in Aleppo first broke out in mid-2012, the yellow cabs saw a significant drop in business as people stayed home or left the city altogether. And once the metropolis-Syria's former economic hub-split into government- and rebel-controlled halves, the taxi trade was hit even harder. Cars had difficulty crossing into neighborhoods controlled by opposing sides, and an economic crisis meant residents often opted for cheaper buses or shared cabs

instead of taxis. Access into and out of the city became dangerous, making it difficult to get fuel to drive at all.

### Economy trumps security

Cars became a luxury in Aleppo, both for taxi drivers and regular residents who drove themselves to work before the war. Abu Mohammad, a carpenter in the Zabbayah neighborhood, recently sold his car and has begun using taxis to get to work. "I was forced to sell my personal car out of fear there would be a siege on the city, because I thought money in my pocket would be better than a car in the street with no gas," he said. Like many other daily necessities throughout Syria's war, the price of a taxi ride has shot up.

Abu Mohammad said he pays 300

Syrian pounds (about \$1.50) to get to work every day, while a trip from one end of the city to the other cost 75 pounds before the conflict began. Although the truce has brought relative safety to her neighborhood, Mona, 19, said the financial burden of using a taxi hasn't changed. "We don't use taxis unless it's absolutely necessary or we're in a rush, like going to university on exam day," the student in the government-held Mokambo district said. Khaled Hamo, 33, works in a sweet shop in Aleppo's western districts. "Whether or not people use taxis depends on their economic situation, not on the security situation," Hamo said. "If they have more money, they use taxi cars, and others use shared cabs or private cars." —AFP

## THE ROAD TO ALEPPO: HOW THE WEST MISREAD PUTIN ON SYRIA

**BEIRUT:** Last July, Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad seemed to be losing his battle against rebel forces. Speaking to supporters in Damascus, he acknowledged his army's heavy losses. Western officials said the Syrian leader's days were numbered and predicted he would soon be forced to the negotiating table. It did not turn out that way. Secret preparations were already underway for a major deployment of Russian and Iranian forces in support of Assad. The military intervention, taking many in the West by surprise, would roll back rebel gains. It would also accelerate two shifts in US diplomacy: Washington would welcome Iran to the negotiating table over Syria, and it would no longer insist that Assad step down immediately.

"That involved swallowing some pride, to be honest, in acknowledging that this process would go nowhere unless you got Russia and Iran at the table," a US official said. At the heart of the diplomacy shift - which essentially brought Washington closer to Moscow's position - was a slow-footed realization of the Russian military build-up in Syria and, ultimately, a refusal to intervene militarily. Russia, Iran and Syria struck their agreement to deploy military forces in June,

several weeks before Assad's July 26 speech, according to a senior official in the Middle East who was familiar with the details.

And Russian sources say large amounts of equipment, and hundreds of troops, were being dispatched over a series of weeks, making it hard to hide the pending operation. Yet a senior US administration official said it took until mid-September for Western powers to fully recognize Russia's intentions. One of the final pieces of the puzzle was when Moscow deployed aircraft flown only by the Russian military, eliminating the possibility they were intended for Assad, the official said.

An earlier understanding of Russia's military plans is unlikely to have changed US military policy. President Barack Obama had made clear early on that he did not want Washington embroiled in a proxy war with Russia. And when the West did wake up to Russian President Vladimir Putin's intentions, it was short of ideas about how to respond. As in Ukraine in 2014, the West seemed helpless. French President Francois Hollande summed up the mood among America's European allies: "I would prefer the United States to be more active. But since the United States has stepped back, who should take over, who should act?" —Reuters



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# TRUMP BACKTRACKS ON TORTURE, TARGETED KILLINGS

**WASHINGTON:** Donald Trump has abruptly backtracked on vows to torture terror suspects and kill their families, saying he would not order the US military to break international laws if elected president. In a statement to the Wall Street Journal, the Republican White House frontrunner said he would "use every legal power that I have to stop these terrorist enemies." "I do, however, understand that the United States is bound by laws and treaties and I will not order our military or other officials to violate those laws and will seek their advice on such matters. I will not order a military officer to disobey the law."

Trump's new position stands in contrast to remarks he made at a Republican debate less than 24 hours earlier, when he doubled down on previous pledges that, if elected, he would do "a hell of a lot worse" than waterboarding and said he had "no problem" with the targeting of terror suspects' families. "Can you imagine these people, these animals over in the Middle East, that chop off heads, sitting around talking and seeing that we're having a hard problem with waterboarding?" he said at the debate, echoing several similar state-

ments he had made in recent months.

His tough talk resonated with supporters, tapping into frustrations over the pace and rules of engagement of the US-led campaign against the Islamic State group and other jihadists. But the rhetoric drew broad condemnation from elsewhere, with observers saying the Pentagon would probably refuse any illegal orders. "Those specific orders are illegal and you will not find lawyers to present a compelling case that will go the other way," Peter Feaver, a professor of political science and public policy at Duke University said.

Feaver, who served in national security positions under former presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, joined dozens of members of the Republican national security community signing an open letter this week slamming Trump's vision of American power. "His embrace of the expansive use of torture is inexcusable," the letter stated.

Former Central Intelligence Agency head Michael Hayden had also waded into the issue. "You are required not to follow an unlawful order, that would be in violation of all the international laws of armed conflict,"

he said in a televised interview. And earlier Friday, Republican Senator Lindsey Graham wrote to the Pentagon's top general asking for his legal opinion on Trump's pledges. "Would you view these orders as lawful? In addition, what advice would you provide to service members if such orders were issued?" Graham wrote.

### 'Flexible' positions

Trump's rivals challenged him during Thursday's debate over his changing political positions on several issues, and his latest U-turn will only fuel that criticism. The candidate responded during the debate by saying he was "flexible." Several other establishment figures have challenged Trump in recent weeks, including John Rizzo—a top CIA lawyer when the agency was waterboarding detainees—who said officials would rather quit than revisit the legal and political minefield associated with the technique. Congress has now banned the use of waterboarding and other harsh interrogation tactics. "Many of those who were connected to the (enhanced interrogation) program over its six



**NEW ORLEANS:** Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump holds up a child he pulled from the crowd as he arrives to speak at a campaign rally in New Orleans on Friday, March 4, 2016. — AP

years' span—and hundreds are still there—would resign or retire rather than have to go down that perilous road again," Rizzo told Newsweek. Trump's proposal to kill the fami-

lies of terror suspects was even more contentious. "It's murder," Eugene Fidell, a prominent expert in military justice at Yale Law School said. — AFP



**SAN FRANCISCO:** Fog covers the landscape in a view of a residential hillside Friday in San Francisco. The National Weather Service says California's withering winter dry spell will end this weekend as a series of storms move through the state. — AP

# WINTER MONTHS IN PHOENIX BRING UNPRECEDENTED HEAT

HEAT WAVE BREAKING RECORDS RIGHT AND LEFT

**PHOENIX:** Winter in Phoenix has been looking a lot like summer. Since February, a heat wave has been breaking records right and left. Instead of sitting outside on a balmy day, visitors in town for spring training baseball games are reclining in sweat-drenched clothes. David Tuason, of South Pasadena, California, took a break from a business conference to watch the Arizona Diamondbacks and the Colorado Rockies practice. He knew outside would be warm - just not this warm. "It was like noon when I played hooky for an hour, and I was sweating like crazy in my suit. I had sweat patches on my light blue dress shirt," Tuason said. "I stayed in my car and blasted the air conditioning to dry off before I went back to the meeting."

It will only get hotter before it gets better. The high temperature in Phoenix on Friday reached 88 degrees, tying the record. The high for Thursday was 91, tying a record set in 1921.

The average high around this time is in the mid-70s, according to the National Weather Service in Phoenix. "We're literally very, very above normal," meteorologist Bianca Hernandez said. In February, a daily high temperature record was broken six times. There were also two days where the low temperature for the day reached a record high of 59 degrees.

Tuason brought his wife and 16-month-old son to see the San Francisco Giants play the Los Angeles Angels in Scottsdale on Wednesday. The couple had anticipated temperatures in the 70s or even 80 degrees. "We didn't expect 91. That's for sure," Tuason said. "So we were going to the shade in the outfield even though our seats were behind home plate. We were walking around in the shade just to cool off." The warm conditions during the past month are thanks to different high-pressure systems that have been hovering over the Southwest,

Hernandez said. The high pressure creates a warm air mass high up in the atmosphere. "Literally, it's just circulating all this warm air. We aren't going to be able to cool down a lot," Hernandez said.

The heat has nothing to do with the weather patterns of El Niño. While El Niño can tilt the odds toward wetter weather, it's not a guarantee. Phoenix sees less than an inch of rain on average in February, meteorologist Mark O'Malley said. But there was zero precipitation last month - only the seventh time in recorded history. "In 2014, we went with no rain in the month of February," O'Malley said. "It's not completely unusual, but it's not normal either." A break is on the way. A Pacific storm system is expected to cool things down starting Sunday, forecasters said. The result will be high temperatures between the 60s and 70s and even a chance of light showers. — AP

# BRAZIL EX-PRESIDENT LULA DEFIANT AFTER DETENTION

**SAO PAULO:** Brazil's ex-president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva vowed to battle his opponents in the streets in a defiant speech late Friday, hours after being briefly detained as part of a probe into a massive corruption scheme. Wearing a red shirt with his leftist Worker's Party yellow star on his chest, Lula gave an emotional speech to supporters where the charisma and feistiness that characterized his 2003-2010 presidency were on full display. "If they want to defeat me, they will have to face me in the streets of this country!" he told hundreds of supporters at a Sao Paulo rally.

Lula, 70, even shed tears when he talked about how he lifted millions of Brazilians out of poverty during his two terms in office. Earlier in the day agents took Lula to a police station for questioning, raided his Sao Paulo home, the offices of the Lula Institute, and homes of family members and associates. Prosecutors said Lula was targeted as part of the Operation Car Wash investigation into a sprawling embezzlement and bribery conspiracy centered on the state oil giant Petrobras. The corruption scandal, which has already seen a Who's Who of Brazilian politicians and businessmen face charges, is believed to be the biggest ever in Brazil.

Lula was not arrested, but held for questioning over alleged "favours" received from corrupt construction companies implicated in a kick-back scheme, prosecutors said. In a press conference shortly after being released, Lula said the decision to take him forcibly into custody for questioning amounted to "judicial authoritarianism." "If they wanted to hear from me, they only had to call and I would have gone, because I owe nothing to anyone and fear nothing," he said. "They preferred to show power, arrogance, to make a show." He was supported by President Dilma Rousseff, a close ally in the ruling Workers' Party, who said she was "in complete disagreement" with the decision to detain Lula.

### Shockwaves

The drama sent shockwaves through Brazil's already turbulent political landscape. As officials, backed by camouflaged officers with automatic weapons, went through Lula's house, supporters and opponents demonstrated in the street, shouting and scuffling. Later, as Lula gave his press conference, supporters gathered outside with placards including one that read: "No to the coup." Lula remains one of Brazil's most influential and powerful figures, and his fate is closely linked to that of his successor Rousseff, and the future of the Workers' Party. Rousseff, deeply unpopular over her handling of a brutal recession, is already fighting for her political life against the threat of impeachment and a court case that could potentially see her 2014 reelection declared illegitimate. The risk consultancy Eurasia Group said that "today's detention of ex-

President Lula suggests that Rousseff is now unlikely to finish her term in office."

### 'Favors'

The allegations against Lula focus on a luxury seaside apartment and country house that authorities say appear to have been given to the ex-president as bribes. "There is evidence that former President Lula received assets arising from the Petrobras scheme through the allocation and renovation of a triplex apartment and a site in Atibaia," prosecutors said in a statement. Lula denies ownership of the apartment and any involvement in the scheme. Lula was also accused of receiving about 30 million reais (approximately \$8 million) in donations and speaking fees from Petrobras-tainted companies. "The favors to Lula from big construction companies involved in the fraud at Petrobras were many and hard to quantify," prosecutor Carlos Fernando dos Santos Lima told reporters.



**SAO PAULO:** Former Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva meets supporters gathering outside his house to show him their support, in Sao Bernardo do Campo yesterday. — AFP

Prosecutors say they are also examining Lula's allegedly wider role in a Petrobras-related web of corruption that enveloped the Workers' Party, the Lula Institute and election campaign finances. Acknowledging the extraordinary nature of a once hugely popular president being detained, prosecutors said in their statement: "It is not a value judgment about who he is... but an investigative judgment based on facts and certain acts which are under suspicion." "In a republic, even famous and powerful people must come under judicial scrutiny when there is a well-founded suspicion of criminal activity." — AFP

# WASHINGTON HOUSE FIRE KILLS 3 CHILDREN OF STATE LOBBYIST

**SEATTLE:** Three children of a Washington state lobbyist died in a house fire early Friday after thick smoke and flames blocked their mother from reaching the upstairs bedrooms where they were sleeping, authorities said. The woman was on the bottom floor of the split-level home in the city of Centralia, about 90 miles south of Seattle, when the fire woke her a little before 1 a.m., police and fire officials said.

The flames had started above her, in the living room near the front door, and she was unable to make it up the stairs to the top level where the school-age children slept in three separate bedrooms. "She just said it was impossible to get through the smoke and flames that was between her and her kids," said police Sgt Carl Buster. A police officer, Phillip Weismiller, 36, and two other first responders climbed onto the roof and tried to break a window to save the children, but they too were held back by the intense heat, Police Chief Carl Nielsen told a news conference. Weismiller, a three-year veteran of the department who previously served in the military, suffered a serious injury to his hand and was treated and released from a hospital.

Weismiller's wife, Norma, told The Chronicle newspaper of Centralia that two of his fingers were nearly severed, but that it appeared they would heal. "He is a strong man ... but situations like this are hard for anyone involved," she said. "He did all he could do, and he knows that. But he is sad that he couldn't save the kids." The mother escaped and had not reported any injuries. No one else was in the house, and

there were no indications of foul play, Buster said. Investigators said the cause of the blaze was not apparent, but they pinpointed where it started by the burn patterns it left.

The living room was large and open, providing the flames with plenty of oxygen - a problem that was compounded when the big windows "came out" under the stress of the fire, said Riverside Fire Authority Chief Michael Kytta. The stairwell leading up to the children's rooms "acted as if it were a chimney," he said. Authorities did not immediately identify the family, but colleagues of Brad Tower, a lobbyist in the state capital since 2000, said he is the father of the children. Centralia schools superintendent Mark Davalos said the children were in the second, fourth and sixth grades.

The news led to an outpouring of support, with both houses of the Legislature holding moments of silence and praying for the family. Lt Gov Brad Owen and several lawmakers addressed the tragedy. "It's a very difficult time," Owen said before asking the Senate to stand for a moment of silence. "One of our family members is in the greatest pain a person could ever have." Tower's colleagues wrote in an email Friday that the family requested privacy. "I can't even guess what the sorrow is for a loss times three," Senate Majority Leader Mark Schoesler said. "My thoughts, my prayers to the entire Tower family goes out today." Tower has represented the state's community bankers, its dental association and the Washington Christmas Tree Growers. — AP

# FLINT CRISIS A CAMPAIGN ISSUE FOR US DEMOCRATS, LESS SO FOR GOP

**FLINT:** Nakiya Wakes raised her hand in a church to ask Bernie Sanders what he would do to help the people of Flint if he is elected president. The city's lead-tainted water, Wakes said, is to blame for her miscarriage and her son's repeated suspensions from the first grade. About 2 1/2 weeks earlier, she and another mother met privately with Hillary Clinton during her stop in city to discuss solutions, not politics. "It's really not political with me," Wakes, 40, said after Sanders' forum. "When are you going to get something done for the

families and these children?"

This majority-black impoverished community in central Michigan is dealing with a months-long state of emergency over its contaminated drinking water. The crisis has become a hot-button issue for Democratic presidential candidates. The issue has become so dominant for these White House hopefuls that they scheduled a prime-time debate in the city on Sunday ahead of the state's primary Tuesday. Sanders has called for Michigan's Republican Gov Rick Snyder to resign,

saying an apology is not enough.

### Crisis 'immoral'

Clinton dispatched aides to the city of nearly 100,000 in January, raised the issue during a nationally televised debate and won the mayor's endorsement. A campaign ad with scenes from Clinton's Feb 7 visit to an African-American church in the city touts her resolve to "fight for you in Flint no matter how long it takes." She has called the crisis "immoral" and says it never would have taken so long to resolve such a problem in a wealthy, predominantly white city. Sanders vowed "never again" would a disaster like this occur if he is elected president. In a break from his large rallies, he listened to angry residents voice their frustrations and he pointed to Flint's aging underground pipes while pushing his \$1 trillion infrastructure spending plan.

### 'I care about Flint'

Political experts say Clinton's focus on Flint both before and since her loss in New Hampshire including her assertion that racism is a factor - has helped shore up her standing with black voters. "You can tell that from their perspective, it's a very important signal of affiliation with the African-American community nationally and in Michigan," said Matt Grossmann, director of the Institute for Public Policy and Social Research at Michigan State University.



**MICHIGAN:** Workers move dirt in front of a home in Flint, Michigan as they replace the old lead pipe with a new safer copper pipe. — AFP

"The fact that she consolidated that support despite a pretty aggressive outreach from the Sanders campaign and a change in focus by the Sanders campaign, too, suggests that the overall message - 'I care about Flint' - is working."

GOP candidates, meanwhile, are mostly avoiding talk of Flint along with mention of Snyder, whose administration has come under heavy criticism for the disaster. Elevated lead levels in children can cause adverse health effects, developmental delays, and emotional and behavioral problems. In the US Senate, Republican Mike Lee of Utah said Friday that he was blocking a bipartisan bill to provide federal aid to Flint because Michigan had a budget surplus and doesn't need the money.

Republicans accuse Democrats of politicizing Flint for their own gains and oversimplifying how the fiasco happened. Clinton said on Super Tuesday that kids "were poisoned by toxic water because the governor wanted to save a little money" when the city was under state emergency financial management. Snyder, who has apologized for his mistakes and a lagging initial response, says there also were failures by local and federal officials. Asked about Flint in Thursday's GOP debate in Detroit, Republican presidential candidate Marco Rubio said "all of us are outraged by what happened" but added that Snyder "took responsibility." — AP

## EU CHIEF SEES FIRST CONSENSUS ON MIGRANT CRISIS

**BRUSSELS:** EU president Donald Tusk struck an unusually upbeat note on the migrant crisis Friday as Turkey raised the possibility of taking back non-Syrian asylum seekers. Wrapping up a whirlwind diplomatic tour with a meeting with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Tusk predicted an agreement to shut down the Western Balkans route that most refugees and migrants have taken into the European Union. His prediction ahead of a crucial summit in Brussels on Monday came as new official figures showed that a record 1.2 million asylum seekers arrived in the EU in 2015 - more than double the figure from the year before. "For the first time since the beginning of the migration crisis, I can see a European consensus emerging," Tusk said in an invitation letter to leaders ahead of the summit, which will include Turkey.

He warned success depended largely on securing Turkey's agreement at the summit for the "large-scale" deportation from Greece of economic migrants who do not qualify as refugees and the curbing of the flow of new arrivals. Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said his government was mulling the possibility of taking back asylum seekers from countries other than Syria. "We have started looking at the possibility of re-admitting asylum seekers, notably from Morocco, Pakistan or Afghanistan," he said in a joint press conference in Athens with Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Kotzias. "We already have readmission agreements with Greece, Bulgaria and other countries and we are

preparing to sign others."

Cavusoglu said Greece had submitted 860 requests for Turkey to take people back, "99 percent" of which had been accepted. Also on Friday, Slovenia approved legislation toughening conditions for asylum seekers to curb the flow of migrants and to avoid the Alpine state becoming a bottleneck on the migrant route. Brussels meanwhile unveiled a plan for saving the passport-free Schengen zone, which has been jeopardized by several countries closing their borders in response to the huge influx of humanity from Syria and elsewhere.

### 'Same spirit, same will'

The Aegean crossing has been the scene of hundreds of deaths, and a Turkish court on Friday jailed two Syrian people smugglers over the death of Aylan Kurdi, the three-year-old boy who drowned and was washed up on a beach in September. The EU has been deeply divided on how to handle the biggest migration crisis to hit the continent since World War II, with a series of summits since the start of 2015 failing to produce a solution. French President Francois Hollande said at talks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Paris on Friday that they had the "same spirit and the same will" in handling the migrant crisis.

But Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras poured cold water on Tusk's optimism, saying his country, the main port of entry for migrants coming to Europe, could not stop

migrants heading to the richer northern countries like Germany. In the French port town of Calais, where police were working to demolish the "Jungle" camp where migrants have been living in the hope of crossing the channel to Britain, protests continued. A dozen Iranian refugees with their mouths sewn shut demonstrated for the third straight day, holding signs with slogans such as "Are you going to listen now? Wake up!"

### 1.2 million asylum seekers

The sheer scale of the crisis was underscored by the latest figures from the EU statistics agency. Syrians fleeing the civil war were the largest group of the 1.2 million who entered Europe, numbering nearly 363,000, followed by 178,200 Afghans and 121,500 Iraqis. Separate EU figures showed that an average of 1,943 people were still crossing to Greece every day in February, way above what Brussels wants. "We need to see the flows from Turkey drastically down soon," EU Migration Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos told a news conference as he unveiled the bloc's new "roadmap" for Schengen.

The plan calls for the end of temporary border controls and the restoration by the end of 2016 of full free travel across the 26-country Schengen zone. Brussels also called for the creation of an EU coastguard force by the summer. If Schengen collapses and border controls return it could cost the EU between five billion and 18 billion euros

(\$5.5-\$20 billion) a year-equivalent to 0.05 percent to 0.13 percent of the bloc's economic output, Brussels said. The crisis now poses an "existential" threat to the EU, challenging

its ideals of peace and solidarity that were formed in the ashes of World War II, former European Commission chief Jose Manuel Barroso said. —AFP



**IDOMENI:** A Syrian man plays with his one-year child as refugees and migrants wait to be allowed to cross the border to Macedonia in the northern Greek border station of Idomeni. —AP



**LAITHI:** A Libyan man inspects the damage in a destroyed building in Laithi district, a central area that was recently re-seized by forces loyal to Libya's internationally recognized government in the eastern coastal city of Benghazi. —AFP

## LIBYA'S FUTURE THREATENED BY TERRIFYING ISLAMIC STATE

**NOUAKCHOTT:** UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has warned that the future of Libya, and the stability of the whole Sahel region, is at stake as it faces the "terrifying threat" of the Islamic State group. But he warned international powers not to "stoke the fires of conflict" in the country. Ban was speaking in Mauritania before heading to Algeria on Saturday as part of a tour of West and North Africa. While meeting Mauritanian leaders, including President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz and Prime Minister Yahya Ould Hademine, in the capital Nouakchott on Friday he said he was "deeply concerned about the situation in Libya."

Chaos has engulfed Libya since the 2011 NATO-backed ouster of dictator Muammar Gaddafi and rival administrations are being urged to sign up to a UN-brokered national unity government to help restore stability. The internationally recognized government is based in the far east of the North African country. The Islamic State group and other extremist organizations have exploited the power vacuum, making gains along the oil-rich coastal regions and triggering concern among Western nations over jihadists controlling territory just 300 kilometers from Europe.

"There are alarming reports of widespread human rights violations, including serious abuses that may amount to war crimes," Ban said in his comments Friday. "All those with influence must use it to calm the situation and stop the fighting. It is utterly

irresponsible for any outside player to stoke the fires," he added. Ban said that his special representative Martin Kobler "is facilitating talks on a national unity government" as "we face the terrifying scourge of Daesh (IS) expanding in Libya and beyond its borders."

Delays would only worsen the dire humanitarian needs, he warned, adding that "Libya's future is at stake" and "the reverberations echo far." Success in stabilizing Libya would also benefit the whole Sahel region and "our world" in general, he added. The UN chief also called for Mauritania's help in a territorial dispute between Morocco and a Western Sahara separatist group that has displaced tens of thousands in decades of fighting. "Making progress on the situation in Western Sahara is also of importance here too," he said, referring to Mauritania. "Numerous refugees share the same culture and family ties with Mauritians."

The United Nations has been trying to oversee an independence referendum for Western Sahara since 1992 after a ceasefire was reached to end a war that broke out when Morocco sent its forces to the former Spanish territory in 1975. Tens of thousands of refugees from Western Sahara live in refugee camps in Algeria, which were built when the fighting began. Ban visited one such camp near Tindouf in western Algeria on Saturday and was due to hold talks with leaders of the Polisario Front, who are fighting for an independent homeland. Before visiting Mauritania, Ban held talks in Burkina Faso. —AFP

## POLICE FIRE PLASTIC BULLETS, TEAR GAS AT ANTI-ERDOGAN PAPER RALLY 'FREE PRESS CANNOT BE SILENCED'

**ISTANBUL:** Turkish riot police yesterday fired plastic bullets and tear gas to disperse protesters who gathered outside an opposition newspaper the day after it was seized by authorities in a violent raid. "Free press cannot be silenced," a group of demonstrators shouted outside the Istanbul premises of Zaman daily, staunchly opposed to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Police used large amounts of tear gas, water cannon and plastic bullets to disperse a crowd of around 500 protesters, an AFP photographer at the scene reported.

Before midnight on Friday, police had also fired tear gas and water cannon to move away a hundreds-strong crowd that had formed outside the newspaper following a court order placing the media business under administration. Turkey's top-selling Zaman newspaper, closely linked to Erdogan's arch-foe the US-based preacher Fethullah Gulen, was ordered into administration by the court on the request of Istanbul prosecutors, local media reported. The swoop against the paper caused immediate concern in Washington and Brussels over declining media freedoms in Turkey, a key EU ally. It came ahead of a visit by Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu to Brussels Monday for a crucial summit meeting with EU leaders.

### 'Darkest days'

Zaman newspaper published a defiant edition yesterday warning of the "darkest days" in the history of the press. "The Constitution is suspended," the newspaper said on its front page in large font on a black background. "Yesterday (Friday) was one of the darkest days in the history of press," it added. The newspaper, with an estimated circulation of 650,000, went to print earlier than usual on Friday evening, one of its journalists said. The number of its pages was reduced to 16 from 24 and it was printed before the police raid shortly before midnight Friday (2200 GMT). A team of police arrived with Turkish-made TOMA water cannon trucks and advanced military style towards the waiting supporters, firing freezing water directly at them.

Using bolt-cutters to unlock the

iron gate in front of the building, dozens of police then marched into the premises to seize the headquarters and formally place it under administration, pushing aside anyone who stood in their way, media images showed. Once the building was cleared, the court-appointed administrators-lawyers Tahsin Kaplan and Metin Ilhan and writer Sezai

blending judicial and law enforcement actions taken by the Turkish government targeting media outlets and others critical of it. "We urge Turkish authorities to ensure their actions uphold the universal democratic values enshrined in their own constitution, including freedom of speech and especially freedom of the press," State Department spokesman John Kirby

media and financial interests and a vast network of cramming schools. There have been numerous legal crackdowns on structures linked to the group and on Friday Turkish police arrested four executives of one of the country's largest conglomerates, accusing them of financing Gulen. The effective seizure of the news-



**ISTANBUL:** A woman assists another who has fallen as Turkish anti-riot police officers use tear gas to disperse supporters in front of the headquarters of the Turkish daily newspaper Zaman in Istanbul yesterday. —AFP

Sengonul-were bussed inside the complex to begin their work, local media reported. EU enlargement commissioner Johannes Hahn said he was "extremely worried" by the move "which jeopardizes progress" made by Turkey in other areas. He warned on Twitter that Turkey, which is a long-standing candidate to join the European Union, needs to "respect the freedom of the media" and rights were "not negotiable".

### 'Uphold democratic standards'

The United States said the court order was "the latest in a series of trou-

ble Ankara accuses Gulen of running what it calls the Fethullahci Terror Organization/Parallel State Structure (FeTO/PDY) and seeking to overthrow the legitimate Turkish authorities.

Local media said the court order was issued on the grounds that Zaman supported the activities of this "terror organization". Gulen has been based in the United States since 1999 when he fled charges against him laid by the former secular authorities. Despite living outside of Turkey, Gulen has built up huge influence in the country through allies in the police and judiciary,

paper by the state added to concerns over freedom of expression in Turkey under Erdogan's rule. The daily Cumhuriyet newspaper's editor-in-chief Can Dundar and Ankara bureau chief Erdem Gul were released on an order from Turkey's top court last week after three months in jail on charges of publishing state secrets. But they still face trial on March 25. Meanwhile almost 2,000 journalists, bloggers and ordinary citizens, including high school students, have found themselves prosecuted on accusations of insulting Erdogan. —AFP

## DISNEYLAND PARIS PICKPOCKETS TRACED TO SOURCE - ROMANIA

**PARIS:** A joint operation by Romania and France against pickpockets targeting visitors to Disneyland Paris and other French tourist sites has borne fruit, nabbing the ringleaders and exposing their methods. "Little by little, through observation and surveillance and thanks to critical assistance from Romania, we worked it out," said Lieutenant-Colonel Francois Despres, deputy director of the OCDLI, a French agency charged with fighting "itinerant delinquency". The OCDLI had a dozen investigators-including some who speak Romanian-assigned to the probe into a pickpocket network that Europol said "was organized on a family and clan kinship basis".

In around 1,000 thefts over a six-month period, the network amassed cash, expensive leather goods, cellphones and jewelry with an estimated total value of at least one million euros (\$1.1 million), Despres said, noting that most of their victims refused to make statements to police. A sweep early on February 9 involving teams of sniffer dogs and a helicopter was conducted simultaneously in Paris and Craiova, in southern Romania. A Romanian couple was arrested in northeastern Paris, accused of dispatching

youngsters to pick the pockets of tourists travelling to Disneyland and at the entrance to the amusement park 30 kilometers east of the French capital. They were among 17 people arrested, including six in Romania, and police seized nearly 25,000 euros in cash as well as gold, jewelry and luxury watches, Europol said in a statement. The underage pickpockets "produced criminal profits of up to 7,000 euros daily," it added.

### 'Big brothers train kids'

One police source said: "It is a very organized system, even a lifestyle... Big brothers trains kids seven or eight years old who are very talented. One of the minors was clearly very profitable-she could bring in 100,000 euros in a month." The ringleaders face up to 30 years in prison for "theft in organized gangs, aggravated money laundering, human trafficking, direct incitement of minors to commit crimes and neglect of minors under 15". Six Romanians were taken into custody in Meaux, near Disneyland, including two minors, while three children aged 12 or 13 were placed in temporary foster homes. —AFP

## WHAT WOULD THE 'BREXIT' LOOK LIKE?

**LONDON:** As Britons debate whether to stay in or leave the European Union at a membership referendum, one of the key arguments is what a British exit, or "Brexit", would look like? Below is an outline of the process which would be triggered by a British vote for "out", and some of the possible options suggested for the country's future relationship with the bloc.

### Article 50

Article 50 of the 2009 Lisbon Treaty sets out the process of withdrawal for an EU member state. It has never yet been triggered. While Greenland left the bloc's predecessor, the European Economic Community, in 1985, no state has left the EU.

### What happens?

After Prime Minister David Cameron notifies the European Council that Britain plans to withdraw, negotiations would begin on the arrangements for leaving and for Britain's future dealings with the remaining 27 member states. Negotiations are conducted by the European Council. Britain would not be involved in the EU side of the discussion and would not have a vote on the terms of the agreement it offers. Any deal must be agreed by both sides. On the EU side it requires the backing of the remaining EU leaders via qualified majority vote, as well as the European Parliament. Depending on what is included in the agreement, it

may also need to be ratified by the national parliaments of all 27 member states. Amendments would need to be made to EU treaties to take account of Britain's withdrawal, while Britain would have to prepare new national legislation to substitute for EU acts.

### How long could it take?

The treaty allows for up to two years of negotiations. If no agreement has been reached by this point, all 27 other member states either have to unanimously agree to extend the negotiation period, or Britain exits with no deal in place. During that time, EU laws would still apply to Britain. What would Britain's future relationship look like?

### Greenland example

Greenland left the EU's predecessor, the EEC, in 1985 after a referendum three years earlier. After leaving the bloc, the Danish territory continued to receive EU funding and have tariff-free access to the market for fisheries products in return for allowing the EU fishing rights over its waters. Most commentators argue there is little read across from the example of Greenland as it was not a member state in its own right, but joined as part of Denmark, and has a much smaller population of just 57,000. Given there are around 2 million Britons living abroad within the EU, and 2.5 million EU citizens living in Britain, one element of the Greenland deal which may be

copied however are its transitional arrangements. Greenland's deal allowed for EU migrants who had acquired rights under EU law, such as free movement, to retain those rights for a transitional period.

### The Swiss model

Switzerland, along with Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, is a member of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). Its goods exporters enjoy tariff-free access to EU markets, while it is also free to negotiate its own trade deals with non-EU countries. It has a free trade deal with China for example, whereas the EU does not. It has only limited access to the EU's services market however, and almost none for financial services-a significant contributor to the British economy.

While Switzerland has freedom over its own social and employment policies, something many in Britain would like, it also pays contributions to the EU budget and accepts free movement of people-two elements of EU membership "out" campaigners want to get away from. Switzerland experiences far higher levels of net EU migration per head of its population than Britain. In a February 2014 referendum it voted to introduce quotas on EU migrants from 2017, something that would violate its bilateral pact guaranteeing free movement. The EU has so far refused to agree to this curb and has threatened to suspend all other EU-Swiss agreements and market access if Switzerland imposes the quotas unilaterally. —Reuters

## INDIA DENIES VISAS TO US RELIGIOUS FREEDOM MONITORS

**WASHINGTON:** A US government team that monitors religious freedom around the world has been denied visas to India, New Delhi's embassy in Washington confirmed Friday. The US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) visits countries to report on violations of religious freedom and make policy recommendations to US officials. The group said Thursday that India had

refused its request for visas for a long-planned trip, saying it was "deeply disappointed." USCIRF chairman Robert George said the group's members had traveled to nations that "are among the worst offenders of religious freedom," including Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam and China.

It comes as Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist gov-

ernment faces accusations it has fostered an atmosphere of rising intolerance and emboldened religious hardliners. In its response, the Indian embassy in Washington questioned the right of a "foreign entity like USCIRF to pass its judgment and comment on the state of Indian citizens' constitutionally protected rights." "There is no change in the policy of the government of India with

respect to such visits," it said in a statement, adding that the Indian constitution guarantees the right to freedom of religion.

The US group has been denied visas to visit India in the past, a spokesman for the Indian foreign ministry said, without giving specific dates. The religious monitors will still try to visit India, "given the ongoing reports from reli-

gious communities, civil society groups and NGOs that the conditions for religious freedom in India have been deteriorating since 2014," George said. A recent spate of violent attacks on secular intellectuals and Muslims suspected of killing cows, which Hindus consider sacred, have heightened concerns of mounting intolerance under Modi's two-year-old government. —AFP

## CHINESE DEFENSE SPENDING PACE SLOWS, TO IMPROVE INTELLIGENCE

### CHINA'S POPULATION TO GROW 45 MILLION BY 2020

**BEIJING:** China said yesterday it will raise military spending by 7.6 percent this year, its lowest increase in six years, but vowed to protect its maritime rights amid disputes in the East and South China Seas and improve intelligence gathering. The 954.35 billion yuan (\$146.67 billion) figure is only around a quarter of the US Defense Department budget for 2016 of \$573 billion, but comes at a time of rising concern over China's intentions in territorial disputes. The increase is the first single-digit rise since 2010, following a nearly unbroken two-decade run of double-digit jumps, and comes as China's economy slows.

It was announced yesterday at the start of the annual

leadership and command structures and launch reform of the military's size and structure as well as its policies and institutions."

#### Economic headwinds

The official Xinhua news agency attributed the slowdown in the pace of defense spending to "rising economic headwinds and last year's massive drawdown of service people". China's Defense Ministry, in a commentary on its website, described the slower pace as "appropriate". "It certainly doesn't mean the Chinese people's dreams of a strong country and military will be impacted upon," it

defense has been taking shape."

The five-year plan also said China would improve its national security "technology and equipment construction" and raise the country's intelligence gathering abilities. China, the world's second-largest economy, is increasingly exposed to international crises like the Middle East but has little experience at dealing with them, unlike established powers like the United States and Russia. Underscoring the sensitivity of China's defense spending, about a dozen senior officers approached by Reuters on the sidelines of parliament declined to comment on the matter.

#### China's population

China expects its population to rise by around 45 million-almost the number of people in Spain-in the next five years, it said yesterday, as it confronts a growing demographic crisis in the wake of the one-child policy. A draft five-year plan published at the opening of the National People's Congress, the country's Communist-controlled parliament, projected that the population-long the world's largest-would grow to "around 1.42 billion" by 2020.

That contrasted with the previous document, issued in 2011 when population controls limiting most couples to a single offspring were still in force, which pledged to restrict the population to "within 1.39 billion" by last year. Authorities insist that the family planning rules have been a key contributor to the country's economic boom, but they were often brutally enforced and have left China with a shrinking workforce and severe gender imbalances. The government this year loosened the hugely controversial one-child policy to allow all couples to have two children. But many parents say they are reluctant to have more because of the cost.

"We will adhere to the basic national strategy of family planning and comprehensively implement the policy of allowing each couple to have two children," said the draft five-year plan, which is due to be approved during the NPC. Its expectations for 2020 would represent a significant growth acceleration from the last five years, during which China's population rose by 33 million. The total stood at 1.37 billion people at the end of 2015 - when total births fell by 320,000 - official data showed. China's working-age population, which it defines as 15-59, has been in decline since 2012 while the number of people above 60 is ballooning, placing enormous pressure on the country's pension system.

The country will raise its retirement age to address the issue, the plan said, "gradually postponing" it in order "to comprehensively deal with the falling working-age population". It also pledged to address "the problem of skewed gender ratio at birth"-a result of sex-selective abortions or infanticide targeting girls because of centuries-old social preferences for boys. China started implementing the one-child policy in the late 1970s and the average ratio of boys to girls at birth was 114.7 in the 1980-2014 period, state media have reported previously, leaving more than 30 million Chinese men at the risk of ending up without a wife. The ratio still stood at 113.51 last year, the National Bureau of Statistics said in January. —Agencies



**BEIJING:** Members of the Chinese military band arrive at the Great Hall of the People for the opening session of the annual National People's Congress in Beijing yesterday. —AP

meeting of parliament, but had been flagged by an official who gave a rough figure the previous day. President Xi Jinping is seeking to drag the People's Liberation Army, the world's largest armed forces, into the modern age, cutting 300,000 jobs and revamping its Cold War-era command structure. However, the reforms have run into opposition from soldiers and officers worried about job security and few details have been released as to what will happen to those laid off.

Premier Li Keqiang told the opening of China's largely rubber-stamp parliament that the country will "strengthen in a coordinated way military preparedness on all fronts and for all scenarios". "We will work to make the military more revolutionary, modern and well-structured in every respect, and remain committed to safeguarding national security," he said. "We will make steady progress in reforming military

added. Beijing is feeling public pressure to show it can protect its claims to the South China Sea after the United States began conducting "freedom of navigation" operations near islands where China has been carrying out controversial reclamation work and stationing advanced weapons.

A draft of the five-year plan, a blueprint for the country's aspirations from this year through to 2020, said China would strengthen its capabilities in maritime law enforcement and "appropriately handle" infringements of its maritime rights, though it gave no details. The Global Times, a widely read tabloid published by the ruling Communist Party's People's Daily, said that for many Chinese the smaller increase "was a bit of a disappointment", but called for understanding. "There is no need to spend hugely to catch up with the US, which seeks to keep its global military presence. China's regional military deterrence aimed at national

## JAPAN TO SUSPEND WORK ON RELOCATING US BASE

**TOKYO:** The Japanese government has accepted a court-mediated settlement plan to halt construction work related to the relocation of a US airbase on Okinawa and resume talks with local authorities who want the base off the island. The Tokyo government and authorities in Okinawa have long been at loggerheads over relocation of the US Marines' Futenma airbase, which is in an urban area of the southern island. Tokyo wants to move the base to a less populated area, called Henoko, but Okinawa Governor Takeshi Onaga wants the base off the island altogether.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's government had already suspended construction work voluntarily for a month last year to allow time for talks with island authorities, but failed to achieve a meaningful solution. Okinawa, the site of a bloody World War Two land battle, hosts the bulk of US military forces in Japan, and many residents resent what they see as an unfair burden. US installations take up about 18 percent of Okinawa's land. The United States and Japan agreed in 1996 to close Futenma and move its facilities elsewhere on Okinawa, but the plan stalled due to opposition from residents worried about noise, pollution and crime.

In 1995, a 12-year-old Japanese schoolgirl was raped by three US servicemen on Okinawa, sparking huge protests. Despite agreeing on a new round of talks, both Abe and Onaga were quick to stress their determination to stick to their respective stances on the base relocation, underscoring tough negotiations ahead. "There is no change to the government's stance that the relocation to the Henoko area is the sole choice for the restoration of the Futenma base," Abe told reporters. "But, if the current situation, in which the government and Okinawa prefecture are suing each other, continues, the Futenma base ... might very well remain fixed there for years to come," he said.

US State Department spokesman John Kirby said both the US and Japanese governments remained committed to the plan to construct the replacement facility. "It is the only solution that addresses operational, political, financial and strategic concerns; that permits the operational readiness of our forward-positioned Marine forces and avoids the continued use of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma," Kirby told a regular news briefing. Onaga, who once accused Abe of looking down on Okinawa, said after their meeting: "I was elected governor on the platform of not allowing a new base in Henoko. ... I will keep pursuing this policy with confidence." —Reuters



**BEIJING:** National People's Congress (NPC) delegates from Tibet wear pins depicting five current and former Chinese leaders and Chinese President Xi Jinping as they arrive at the Great Hall yesterday. —AP

## TIBETAN DELEGATES TO CHINA CONGRESS WEAR LOYALTY PINS

**BEIJING:** Along with their traditional robes, Tibetan delegates to the annual meeting of China's ceremonial parliament are sporting unique lapel pins displaying their loyalty to the Beijing leadership at a time of simmering tensions in their Himalayan homeland. New this year and not seen on any other group of delegates, one of the inch-wide round pins shows a Chinese flag and busts of five Chinese leaders, from revolutionary founding father Mao Zedong to current President Xi Jinping. The other shows a smiling Xi visiting a Tibetan family.

"We want to express our gratitude to the Communist Party leadership and State Council, so it's only natural we wear the pin of the leaders of five generations," Hongwei, one of the 18 delegates from the Tibetan Autonomous Region said at yesterday's opening session of the National People's Congress. "There have been so many great changes in Tibet," said Hongwei, who like many Tibetans uses just one name. "If we don't thank the party leadership the State Council, if we don't thank the socialist system, who else should we thank?" The State Council is China's Cabinet, headed by Premier Li Keqiang.

Images of Communist leaders are common in Tibet, which is under much tighter party control than the rest of China following a history of political volatility, and is generally off-limits to foreign journalists.

The remarks by Hongwei came days after US government-backed Radio Free Asia reported the death of 18-year-old Buddhist monk Kalsang Wangdu after he set himself on fire Monday in the Tibetan area of Ganzi in the western Chinese province of Sichuan, which adjoins Tibet. The area also is known as Kardze in Tibetan. The monk reportedly called for Tibetan independence while he burned. Yesterday, Yeshe Dawa, governor of Ganzi prefecture, denied the report. "No, no, this is a false allegation," he said. "There is nothing, we are a peaceful area."

The International Campaign for Tibet says that 144 Tibetans have self-immolated in China since early 2009 in protest of Beijing's rule. Some cases have been confirmed in China's state media, which depict them as acts of terror instigated by the Dalai Lama, the Tibetans' exiled spiritual leader. Authorities have vowed to punish the self-immolators, their family members

and sympathizers. Tensions in Tibet have occasionally flared into violence in the decades since communist troops entered the region in 1950. The Dalai Lama fled the regional capital of Lhasa in the wake of a failed uprising against Chinese rule nine years later. Although the Dalai Lama insists that he seeks only authentic autonomy for the region and Tibetans, Beijing accuses him of being a separatist.

To win over Tibetans, Beijing has poured more than \$100 billion into the region to improve living standards and bring modernity. Critics, however, question whether the investments have truly benefited Tibetans or flowed mainly to Beijing and migrants from the majority Han ethnicity. Violence broke out in Lhasa in 2008, and many Tibetan cities and towns remain under heavy security. Foreign journalists are barred from the region, apart from the rare tightly scripted reporting trip organized to showcase Tibet's development. In his address to the congress' opening session, Li made no direct mention of Tibet, but said China would "stick to the Chinese way - the right way - of managing ethnic issues." —AP

## News

in brief



**BANGKOK:** Passengers hold on to a rope as they ride the Saen Saeb canal boat in central Bangkok, Thailand. Several dozen people were injured yesterday when the engine of a Bangkok water taxi exploded as it approached its dock. —AP

#### 65 passengers hurt; Bangkok water taxi engine explodes

**BANGKOK:** At least 65 passengers were injured yesterday when the engine of a Bangkok water taxi exploded as the boat approached its dock, police said. Among the injured were three foreigners, including a Japanese male and two women from Myanmar, according to the city's Erawan medical emergency center. The rest were identified as Thai nationals. The boat was ferrying about 70 people on an early morning route through Bangkok's canals in a neighborhood on the eastern outskirts of the city, said police Lt Col Chaitanan Jirapiyaset. The explosion occurred as the boat reached the Wat Thepleela Pier, in one of the capital's working-class neighborhoods, causing panic that prompted several passengers to jump to the pier or into the water for safety. The Erawan center said that at least 65 people were treated for injuries at several of Bangkok's hospitals, with varying degrees of burns.

#### Boko Haram cattle rustling prompts market shut-down

**MAIDUGURI:** The Borno state government in northeast Nigeria has suspended trading in four cattle markets to prevent the sale of stolen livestock to raise funds for Boko Haram Islamists. Governor Kashim Shettima said "all trading activities have been suspended until further notice in line with (the) government commitment to ensure that no public place is turned into an avenue for funding activities of the terrorists". The affected markets are in the towns of Gaboru, Dushman, Shuwarin and Ngom all outside the provincial capital Maiduguri. Sales of dried meat such as "kilishi"-a popular delicacy in northern Nigeria made from roasted thin strips of spiced beef, lamb or goat-have also been banned, he added on Friday. A military counter-offensive that began last year has recaptured territory lost to Boko Haram in Borno and two neighboring states and the government in Abuja believes the group is "technically" defeated. Hit-and-run raids on remote villages in the mainly agricultural region-a trademark tactic of the group-have increasingly seen Boko Haram fighters make off with cattle and foodstuffs.

#### HK police dismantle World War II bombs

**HONG KONG:** Hong Kong police said yesterday they disposed of eight World War II explosives, after a hiker found the unexploded devices on a trail. Unexploded bombs are usually found by unsuspecting hikers or at construction sites in the southern Chinese city, which was the scene of fierce fighting between Japanese and British allied forces in 1941. "The bomb disposal squad received the report and travelled to the scene where what was believed to be six World War II-era grenades and two mortar shells were found," a police statement said. Police said they "safely handled" the eight explosives at the site, near the Happy Valley region of Hong Kong, adding that no evacuation of nearby residents was needed. "We found two Japanese 50 millimeter mortar bombs and then we found six Japanese hand grenades," Stuart Woods, who reported the explosives to the police, told official broadcaster RTHK. "There seems to be a lot around this area, but there's a few less now, which is good," Woods, who was looking for historical artefacts with a metal detector, told RTHK.

#### Missouri city stops some arrests because jail full

**KANSAS CITY:** Missouri's third largest city is unable to serve more than 12,000 outstanding arrest warrants to people accused of crimes such as shoplifting, traffic infractions and misdemeanor assaults because there is no room for the offenders in the county jail as a result of a bitter dispute between the sheriff and local officials. The situation is so bad in Springfield, population 165,000, that a local judge told city officials recently that she had one docket of cases with 82 people on it and only eight bothered to show up. Springfield Police Chief Paul Williams said offenders are thumbing their noses at police. "They're tearing tickets up in front of people," Williams said. "Officers are frustrated because they can't arrest anyone, judges are frustrated that they can't see people, prosecutors are frustrated. It has just kind of spun out of control." The chaos stems from a disagreement between Greene County Sheriff Jim Arnott and municipal officials over use of the county jail, which opened in 2001.

#### Taliban rejects peace talks with Afghan government

**KABUL:** The Taliban yesterday refused to resume long-stalled peace talks with the Afghan government, reiterating their preconditions for holding dialogue, a statement said. "We want to repeat our stance once again that until the occupation of foreign troops ends, until Taliban names are removed from international blacklists and until our detainees are released, talks will yield no results," it said. The statement comes as direct face-to-face talks between the militant group and the Kabul government were expected to start in Islamabad this week.

# DETENTIONS, DEATHS RAISE ALARM OVER EGYPT POLICE

**BENI SUEF, Egypt:** The 32-year-old Egyptian government engineer disappeared in mid-January when, according to witnesses, masked police burst into his office in the southern city of Beni Suef and dragged him off in handcuffs in front of his co-workers. Mohammed Hamdan's family searched for him for 15 days, filing a formal complaint over his detention and asking at police stations - only to be told by every official that he was never arrested.

On Jan. 25, he turned up dead. But police gave a very different story: The Interior Ministry announced that security forces killed Hamdan in a gun-battle that day while raiding a farmhouse where he was hiding. It said Hamdan, a Muslim Brotherhood member, was behind previous killings of policemen. His family was summoned to the morgue, where they found his body riddled with bullets. "They arrested him, killed him, sent the body to the morgue, wrote the report, sealed the case and gave me a body to bury," Hamdan's father, Qenawi Hamdan, told AP, speaking in his mud-brick house in the village of Beni Suleiman outside the city of Beni Suef. "I can't fight the government," the 67-year-old

said. Allegations of abuses by police are raising fears that Egypt's security agencies are growing out of control. For two years, they have had a largely free hand in cracking down against the former ruling Muslim Brotherhood and against Islamic militants - a threat the government says is one and the same. Police have also targeted secular activists critical of the government, something which prompted little criticism from a public more concerned with security.

But in recent weeks, incidents of abuse against regular citizens have sparked public anger that is unusually vocal, given that media have for two years effusively praised the police and avoided any criticism and tough laws have all but eliminated street protests. In recent weeks, doctors held large protests after two hospital staffers were beaten by police; when a policeman shot and killed a driver in a dispute over a fee, protests broke out by residents from the driver's Cairo neighborhood; several staunchly pro-government TV commentators have said police are going too far.

The Interior Ministry has repeatedly denied that abuses like torture and forced disappearances are systematic, saying any instances are isolated acts. After the shooting of the driver last month, the government promised reforms that would hold abusive policemen accountable. Those reforms, however, focused on low-level policemen in the street, whom officials depicted as the source of all problems. Rights activists, however, say abuses are an intentional tool used by all levels in the security forces.

"Practices of forced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, and torture are on the rise," said Sherif Mohy Eldeen, a researcher in human rights and terrorism with the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights. He said police "act with total impunity." Some officials seem to publicly encourage tough police action. Two days after Hamdan's body surfaced, Justice Minister Ahmed El-Zind vowed on TV, "My fire will only be quenched when 10,000 Muslim Brothers are killed for every martyr" from the security forces.

Human Rights Watch said in a January report that while the militant threat in Egypt "is real," the "heavy-handed response" by authorities creates more divisions. It said the government "has made it clear dissenting opinions will be crushed." "Egypt's government should learn from the country's own decades-long experience that grinding oppression can plant seeds for future upheaval," the group's deputy Middle East director, Nadim Houry, said in the report.

Police abuses were one of the complaints fueling the 2011 uprising that ousted autocrat Hosni Mubarak. His elected successor, Islamist Mohamed Morsi, was removed by the military in 2013 after massive protests against Morsi and his Muslim Brotherhood. The head of the military, Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi, then left his post and was elected president in a landslide. Since Morsi's ouster, militants have stepped up their insurgency, killing hundreds of police and soldiers. — AP



**BENI SULEIMAN, Egypt:** In this Feb 16, 2016 photo, Qenawi Hamdan and his wife Um Muhammad, the parents of slain Islamist Mohammed Hamdan, pose for a portrait at their home in this village south of Cairo. — AP



A hot air balloon is silhouetted against the evening sky as the sun sets north of Phoenix on March 2, 2016. — AP

## LINK SEEN BETWEEN ZIKA AND FETAL BRAIN...

Continued from Page 1

By itself, Zika is typically no more threatening than a bad cold or a mild case of the flu. Sometimes there are no symptoms at all. But the rapidly expanding virus - present in nearly four dozen countries, according to the World Health Organization (WHO) - was suspected of causing microcephaly and other severe conditions. Last month, Brazil - the country hardest hit by the Zika epidemic - reported 583 confirmed cases of babies with the irreversible birth defect since October 2015, four times the previous annual average.

The spike in cases has led to worries over the Olympic Games to be held in Rio de Janeiro this summer, and the American Olympic Committee on Friday announced the creation of an advisory group on infectious diseases for the national team. Also on Friday, researchers in Colombia reported the country's first cases of Zika-linked birth defects, according to the Nature science group's news service. Scientists not involved in the research welcomed the findings. "This is exactly the kind of research that we need to demonstrate a causative link and mechanism

between the Zika virus and microcephaly," said Alyssa Stephenson-Famy, an assistant professor of obstetrics and gynaecology at the University of Washington in Seattle.

Mark Schleiss, director of the division of infectious disease and immunology at the University of Minnesota, described the research as a "big step in the right direction." "Most scientists have not had any doubt that the Zika virus is responsible for the brain injury," he noted. But he and other experts said many questions remain. Results from cells in a lab dish may not be applicable to patients, "in vivo" in scientific terms. "This study is just the beginning, and many more studies are needed to understand the relationship between Zika and microcephaly," commented Amelia Pinto, a professor of molecular microbiology and immunology at Saint Louis University.

A study published earlier this week provided similarly solid evidence that Zika can also cause a rare syndrome, called Guillain-Barre, which attacks the nervous system. Zika is spread among humans by the Aedes aegypti mosquito, which is found in 130 countries. But recent evidence suggests that it can also be sexually transmitted by men carrying the virus. — AFP

## NO DEAL YET ON NEW POWER TARIFFS

Continued from Page 1

The minister said the ministry will submit final figures to the Assembly before the next session on March 15, adding that the ministry looks forward to submitting a comprehensive scheme that does not harm citizens, under which citizens who cut consumption will not pay any additional charges.

Last week, the ministry submitted proposals dividing residences to four groups with expatriates being targeted to pay the most. The categories include private houses - a term meaning mostly Kuwaitis - investment houses, a term that refers to buildings, a majority of which are inhabited by foreigners, and commercial and industrial users.

Current electricity charges are 2 fils per kilowatt for all purposes and uses. The ministry team proposed to raise the charges for investment houses (mostly expatriates) to be as follows: First 1,000 kilowatts: 5 fils per kilowatt; second 1,000 KW: 8 fils per kilowatt; third 1,000 KW: 10 fils per kilowatt. As for private houses (mostly Kuwaiti citi-

zens), the proposed increases are as follows: First 3,000 KW: 3 fils per kilowatt; second 3,000 KW: 8 fils per kilowatt; third 3,000 KW: 10 fils per kilowatt. The ministry team also proposed to increase the charges for commercial use to 19 fils per kilowatt and leave it at 2 fils per kilowatt for industrial use.

Rapporteur of the committee MP Mohammad Al-Jabri said the differences between the government and MPs on the issue has not been resolved and more meetings are needed to select an appropriate mechanism for cutting consumption that does not impact citizens. He said the government proposed specific figures and MPs expressed their views when they felt the government figures could harm low and middle-income citizens.

The government has a plan to raise various electricity categories by a specific percentage and MPs are trying to reduce the hike to a level where it does not impact citizens, Jabri said. He said the committee and government ministers will meet HH the Amir today to discuss the issue but said he is unaware of the proposals that will be discussed during the meeting.

## SUDAN OPPN LEADER TURABI DIES AGED 84

Continued from Page 1

He was detained in May 2010, a month after Sudan's first competitive polls since 1986 for denouncing the election as fraudulent.

Turabi was the only Sudanese politician to support a warrant issued for Bashir's arrest by the International Criminal Court (ICC) on charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide over the regime's conduct of the conflict in Darfur. After breaking ranks with Bashir he formed his own party, the Popular Congress Party. Turabi was detained several times over a career spanning four decades, including in January 2009 two

days after he urged Bashir to surrender to the ICC.

An ideologue with influence beyond Sudan's borders, Turabi was one of the driving forces behind the introduction of Islamic sharia law in Sudan in 1983, which sparked a devastating 22-year civil war with the mainly Christian, African south that cost an estimated two million lives. The Western-educated Turabi held a master's degree in law from London and a doctorate from Sorbonne University in Paris. He spoke English, French and German fluently as well as Arabic, and his language skills helped him gain access to foreign news media through which he issued repeated calls for an international Islamic revolution. — AFP

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Washington Watch

WILL GOP IMplode?

By Dr James J Zogby

This has been one crazy political week. It has been so tumultuous and, in some ways, so calamitous for the Republican party, that we may be witnessing a fatal rupturing of the GOP. The week began with Donald Trump disastously equivocating before making an outright repudiation of the Ku Klux Klan and ended with elements of the Republican establishment declaring war on Trump. In between: on Tuesday, Trump won primary contests in seven more states; on Wednesday, the GOP's 2012 nominee, Mitt Romney, delivered a blistering attack against Trump declaring that he had to be stopped from winning the 2016 nomination; and, on Thursday, the four remaining Republican candidates met in Detroit for what can only be called "the ugliest, dirtiest, meanest, and, at times, most childish presidential debate" in recent history.

There is no question that the GOP establishment is alarmed. Their leading candidate is most certainly not a conservative. In fact, he has taken positions during this campaign that not only violate conservative orthodoxy, many of them also fly in the face of common sense (building a wall and forcing Mexico to pay for it, imposing a 35 percent tariff on Chinese imports, to name a few). More than that, Trump is an embarrassing vulgarian whose lifestyle, values, and language offends the sensibilities of the Republican elite. And so, they are panicking. And their panic is compounded by the fact they see no clear path forward. Early on, the GOP leadership tolerated Trump. His no-holds barred "tell it like it is" style excited crowds, especially appealing to economically insecure and politically vulnerable white working class voters. There were no alarm bells going off since the establishment had seen this dynamic play out in past elections with the likes of Sarah Palin, Michele Bachmann, Herman Cain, and the entire Tea Party enterprise. The GOP knew how to play this game. First, they fired up the white working class with a combination of social issues (abortion, gays, "Christian values") and fear of the "other" (blacks, illegals, and Muslims) and then they co-opted this energy to help their establishment-supported candidates win. One Republican strategist told me early on that he feared confronting Trump because he didn't want to lose the support of the voters Trump was bringing into the GOP. Much the same was said this week by former Education Secretary William Bennett - "We've been trying to get white working class into the party for a long time. Now they're here in huge numbers because of Trump and we're going to alienate them? I don't get it. Too many people are on their high horse".

Momentum

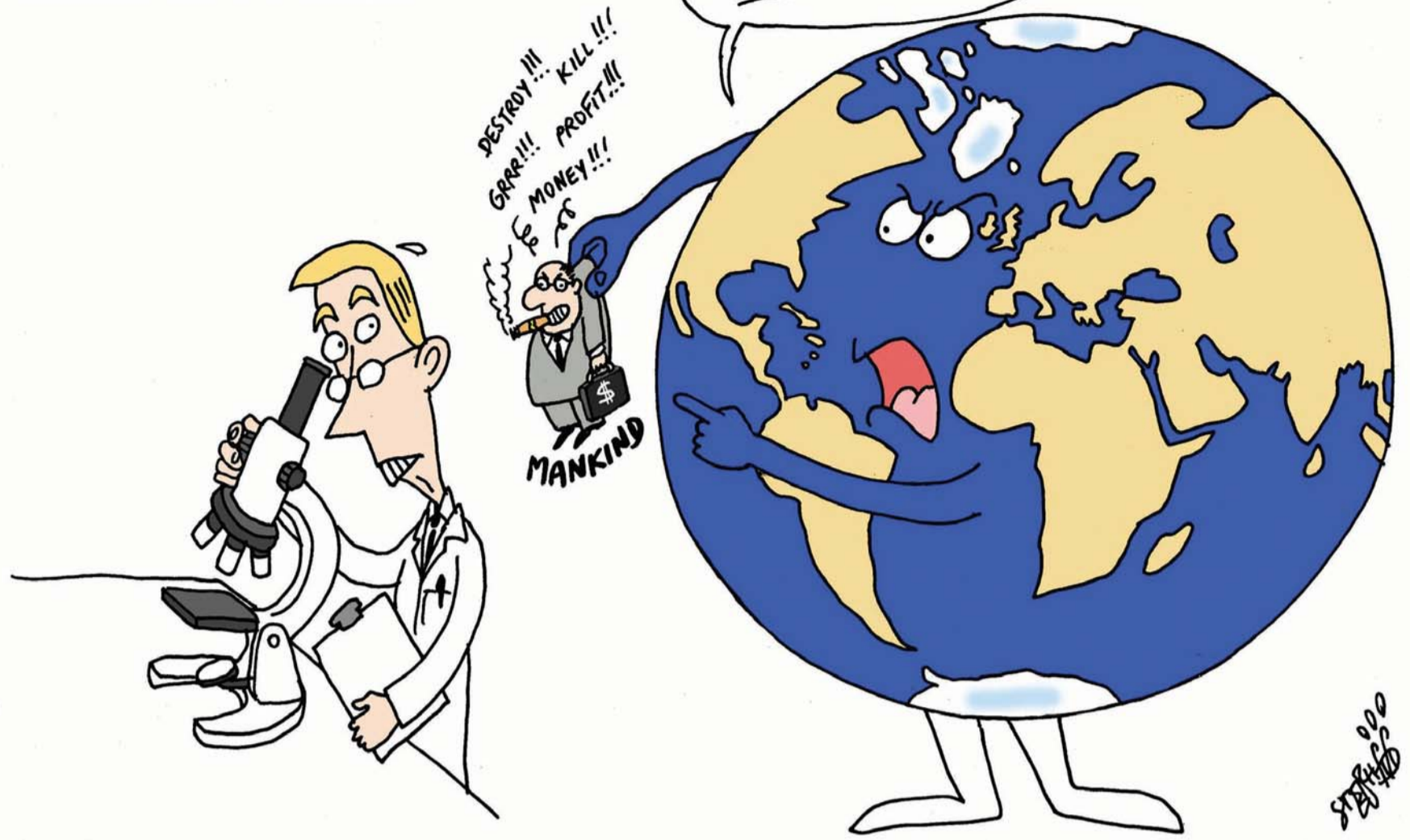
The problem, of course, is that the Trump movement has gained such momentum and its leader has such a massive ego that he can't be so easily co-opted and may even win the nomination outright. The next source of the establishment's panic is that they have no alternative candidate. Many had hoped Jeb Bush would emerge. He didn't. Others placed their money on Chris Christie. Not only didn't his campaign go anywhere, but his contempt for his competitors so outweighed his loyalty to the establishment that after withdrawing from the race he endorsed Trump. Those who backed Marco Rubio have looked askance at his demeaning and sometimes crude anti-Trump antics - which have diminished him as a serious candidate. John Kasich, the most serious of the contenders, has offended the conservative wing of the party with his unorthodox positions on immigration, healthcare, and gay rights. This has left Ted Cruz, whom the party leadership dislikes almost as much as they dislike Trump, since Cruz has also made his reputation by railing against the establishment.

With no clear alternative in the field, the task of taking on Trump fell to Mitt Romney. Not only did the former Republican nominee deliver a withering attack on the current front-runner, Romney also laid out scenarios that would deny Trump the nomination. Romney suggested that if all remaining candidates remain in the race and continue to accumulate delegates, Republicans could go to their convention with no single candidate having the delegates needed to win the nomination on the first ballot. In such an "open contested convention", new candidates could emerge (even Romney himself) and multiple ballots could take place until one candidate would receive the needed majority. There are two problems with this scenario. In the first place, Romney, though respected by the leadership, is not the ideal messenger for this anti-Trump crusade since he represents the face of the very same establishment that Trump and Cruz have been campaigning against. And should the anti-Trump forces see their candidate defeated by what they will view as a "GOP establishment fix", the concern Bill Bennett has expressed will no doubt play out. Polls of Republican voters have shown that while 20% will not vote for Trump if he's the party's nominee, another 20 percent say they will not vote Republican if Trump is not the nominee. And so, mid-way through this primary season, the GOP is in a "damned if they do, damned if they don't situation". How it plays out isn't clear, but one thing is clear - Republicans have a serious Trump problem that will redefine their party in 2016 and beyond.

NOTE: Dr James J Zogby is the President of the Arab American Institute

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'BREAKTHROUGH' IN FIGHT AGAINST CANCER



RUBIO, CRUZ FORGE ALLIANCE TO BLOCK TRUMP

By Julie Pace

For months, Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio tried to tear each other down in a bid to become Donald Trump's top challenger. The senators are now unlikely allies in an effort to stop Trump's march toward the Republican nomination. The strategy shift was on full display in Thursday's Republican debate. Rubio and Cruz ignored each other almost entirely, choosing to instead fully focus their attention on the billionaire businessman whose surprising dominance of the 2016 race has shaken the Republican Party to its core.

Cruz and Rubio's moves underscore the desperate situation in which they find themselves. A clear path to winning the nomination through the traditional primary process seems increasingly out of reach. Instead, they're eyeing a deeply complicated, long-shot plan to stop Trump at a contested convention. It's a blueprint that probably works only if Rubio and Cruz, along with John Kasich, the Ohio governor, stay in the race, siphoning delegates away from Trump as the primary process weaves its way across the country for months to come.

So when Rubio and Cruz took the stage in Detroit in Thursday, they shelved their well-practiced attacks on each other's immigration policies, national security views and campaign tactics. Instead, Rubio hammered Trump for manufacturing his branded clothing in China and Mexico, not the United States, and challenged the practices of a Trump-branded educational company that's facing lawsuits. Cruz questioned why the Republican frontrunner had donated to

Democrats, including Hillary Clinton, and accused him of having "used government power for private gain."

"Do you understand the principles that made America great in the first place?" Cruz asked Trump, knocking the billionaire's now-famous campaign slogan. At several points during the two-hour debate, Trump appeared to be trying to pivot toward the general election, a strategy often employed by a party's presumptive nominee. He never flinched when asked about his campaign contributions to Clinton, embraced a "softening" of his position on allowing visas for highly skilled overseas workers, and suggested he would be willing to negotiate on his broader immigration policy, as well as on other areas.

"You have to show a degree of flexibility," Trump said. "If you're going to be one way and you think it's wrong, does that mean the rest of your life you have to go in the wrong direction because you don't think you want to change?" If Rubio and Cruz succeeded at anything Thursday with their constant barrage of attacks, it was blocking Trump from fully evolving into a more palatable general election candidate. Their needling rattled the first-time candidate, sending him back to his deep reserve of biting personal insults.

Chaos

He repeatedly belittled "Little Marco" and "Liar Ted." And in a stunning moment on a presidential debate stage, he rebuffed Rubio's mocking of his hand size - widely viewed as an insult about his sexual prowess - by declaring, "I guarantee you, there's no problem" in that area. The prospect of Trump, with his over-the-top persona and vague, shifting

policy positions, winning the nomination has plunged the Republican Party into chaos and sent Republican elites on a desperate search for ways to stop him.

They're motivated by a belief that Trump would lose a general election to Clinton and hurt down-ballot candidates in competitive races, and a fear that his nomination would split the party so deeply that it could take decades to make it whole again. After strong showings in the first rounds of primary contests, Trump has claimed 329 delegates, with Cruz capturing 213, Rubio 110, and Kasich 25. The three candidates chasing Trump are now in a fight to keep him from getting the 1,237 delegates needed to secure the nomination.

Cruz did his part by winning his home state of Texas on Super Tuesday. Rubio and Kasich will need to win at home as well when Florida and Ohio vote on March 15. Under this admittedly challenging scenario, the field would press on through the spring, with all of the candidates picking up delegates, but none reaching the number needed to clinch the nomination. The Republican nominee would then be decided upon at the party convention in Cleveland in July.

The strategizing over a contested convention has been layered with angst-filled discussions among some conservative leaders about whether they could rally around a third-party candidate if Trump does become the nominee. But Rubio and Cruz made clear they wouldn't join those seeking an alternative option if they can't stop Trump. After two hours of pummeling Trump's character and castigating his readiness to be president, both said unequivocally that they would fall in line behind the businessman and support his candidacy if he becomes the Republican nominee. —AP

BEFORE TRUMP, THERE WAS PAUL LEPAGE

By David Sharp

Before there was Donald Trump, there was Paul LePage, a brash businessman with a blunt style who bonded with blue-collar workers in an economically lagging state that previously was a reliable bastion of Democrats and moderate Republicans. "I was Donald Trump before Donald Trump became popular," LePage joked after throwing his endorsement behind Trump last month. Indeed, the two-term governor has taken credit for providing a template, saying he and Trump are cut from "the same cloth."

Maine, in many ways, represents just the kind of state where Trump has resonated. "It's a rural state and it's suffering through the process of post-industrialism, and that's leaving a lot of people behind," said Mike Cuzzi, a Democratic strategist and Maine resident. "A lot of people are feeling angry, like both the political parties have let them down."

The Maine GOP caucuses yesterday coincide with Republican voting in Kansas, Kentucky and Louisiana. With no public polling, there are few indicators how well Trump might fare, but he won neighboring New Hampshire. Trump has proven especially resonant with white, working-class voters who feel left behind by an economy that has shifted away from manufacturing jobs.

In Maine, Trump and LePage have drawn from voters who've watched as paper mills, textile mills and shoe factories have closed because of overseas competition, said Allen Holmes, a Trump supporter from Rockland. Their blunt language and promises to shake up the establishment make sense to those voters. "They're tapping into the frustration of Mainers," said Holmes, a certified public accountant. He said ruffling a few feathers "is not such a bad thing."

Like Trump, LePage started his career in business, launching a consulting firm and eventually becoming the general manager of a local chain of discount stores. But unlike Trump, he comes from humble roots. LePage grew up poor, and ran away from home when he was young, briefly living on the street. He shined shoes and washed dishes, and struggled with college because his first language was French. Trump, in contrast, grew up the son of a highly successful New York real estate developer.

Yet both have shaken the GOP establishment, developed reputations as sometimes crude speakers and shown a deep disdain for the media. LePage once said he'd tell President Barack Obama to "go to hell," and told the Portland chapter of the NAACP to "kiss my butt". He recently said drug dealers with names like "D-Money,

Smoothie, Shifty" were coming into Maine to sell heroin and "impregnate a young white girl before they leave." He later apologized, calling the racially charged statements a slip of the tongue.

"Donald Trump is a little bit like I am. He says what needs to be said," LePage said Thursday as he introduced Trump at a Portland rally. "Most of all folks, he's not afraid of the United States liberal media," LePage said, adding: "They dislike him nearly as much as they hate me." LePage had originally endorsed New Jersey Gov Chris Christie, who dropped his bid after a disappointing showing in New Hampshire. After Christie shocked supporters by endorsing Trump, LePage followed the same day.

Justin Baggs, a young father from South Berwick who

attended Trump's rally, said LePage and Trump resonate because they say what others might think but are unwilling to say aloud. "They know what they're going to say is going to offend others, but they're saying what the majority of people believe to be true," said Baggs, 34. Josh Tardy, a Republican activist and former lawmaker from Newport, said voters appear infatuated with the outspoken style the two share. "They're both bare-knuckle brawlers," said Tardy, who supports Trump rival Marco Rubio. "They're not ambiguous about what they say. ... That's both good and bad. But you never have to question where they're coming from." —AP



In this March 3, 2016 photo, Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump is welcomed onstage by Maine Gov Paul LePage at campaign stop in Portland, Maine. —AP

### HIRSCHER 'VIRTUALLY' WINS WORLD CUP CROWN



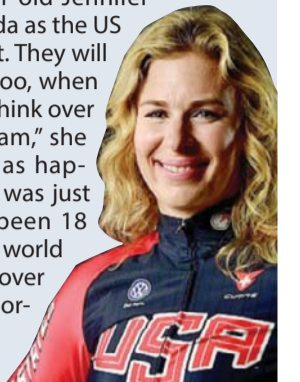
**KRANJSKA GORA:** Marcel Hirscher is the virtual overall World Cup champion after claiming giant slalom victory in Kranjska Gora, Slovenia yesterday. The Austrian leads Norway's Henrik Kristoffersen by 333 points with seven races left, but his 21-year-old rival told AFP he will not take part in any of the four remaining speed disciplines, meaning he can only claim a maximum of another 300 points. That means Hirscher, 27, is certain to win a record fifth successive overall World Cup crystal globe. His overall time of 1min 13.92secs on Saturday saw him beat in-form Frenchman Alexis Pinturault by 0.53secs, with Kristoffersen coming in third, 1.59secs back. That victory landed Hirscher the World Cup giant slalom title for the second year in a row as he leads Pinturault by 111 points with a single race left-winners pick up 100 points. — AFP

### MEXICO WANTS TO HOST RECORD THIRD WORLD CUP

**MEXICO CITY:** Mexico's football federation announced on Friday that it will launch a bid to host the World Cup for a record third time in 2026. The bidding process was suspended last year amid the furore over FIFA's corruption scandal, but the world football body's new president, Gianni Infantino, has vowed to relaunch it within his first three months at the helm. "Mexico will be present as a candidate when the bidding process for the 2026 World Cup opens," Mexican federation president Decio de Maria said at a news conference to unveil the national squad's new jersey for the 2018 tournament's qualifiers. "Hosting the biggest party in the world is a very important organizational commitment, and the majority of Mexicans would feel very proud to have a third World Cup," De Maria said. Mexico hosted the 1970 and 1986 World Cups, which were won by Pele's Brazil and Maradona's Argentina, respectively. The United States and Canada are also expected to bid for the 2026 World Cup, which will come four years after the 2022 tournament in Qatar, which has been tainted by corruption allegations.— AFP

### HAMMER PROUD TO LEAD NEW GENERATION TO GOLD

**LONDON:** Sarah Hammer was racing around velodromes when her US pursuit team mates were still on tricycles and she used all that experience to guide them to world championship gold on Friday. The 32-year-old had already slipped on the rainbow jersey seven times in a dazzling individual career, but at the London velodrome she had some company on the podium. Kelly Catlin, 20, Chloe Dygert, 19, and 21-year-old Jennifer Valente all produced brilliant rides too against Canada as the US celebrated a first world title in women's team pursuit. They will prove a formidable force at the Olympics this year too, when Californian Hammer will again be the chaperone. "I think over the three rides here we showed we are a solid team," she told reporters after the medal ceremony. "This has happened overnight. We knew we were coming and it was just when we were going to put it all together. "It's been 18 months in progress." There had even been talk of a world record for the Americans, who averaged 56.074kph over the 4,000m race. It did not happen and was not important for Hammer.—Reuters



Group photo of officials with men trap shooters.—Photos by Sherif Ismail



Group photo of officials with women skeet winners.

## KUWAIT BAGS TWO GOLD IN AMIR'S SHOOTING COMPETITION

By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait continued its success in HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah 5th International Annual Grand Prix as shooter Eman Al-Shamaa won the bronze medal in women skeet event yesterday, as the gold medal went to Kazakhstan's Olga Panarina, and the silver went to New Zealand's Chloe Jane Holden Tipple.

The competition was very stiff, and the third place was determined by a shoot off round between Kuwait's Afrah Adel and Eman Al-Shamaa.

This brings the total medals Kuwait won to five, two gold medals to Abdelrahman Al-Faihan and Shahad Al-Hawal, one silver to Sarah Al-Hawal, while Talal Al-Rashidi and Eman Al-Shamaa won bronze.

Meanwhile, winner of the men's gold medal in the trap event said that the win came after strong preparations and unlimited support by the Kuwait Shooting Sport Administration led by Eng Duajj Khalaf Al-Oaibi. The administration provided all that is possible to ensure all means of success to the shooters, and this made it possible to continue making the achievements and seek better results, adding that winning the

gold medal should be credited to his teammates and the club administration.

Meanwhile, winner of the trap bronze medal Talal Al-Rashidi, said he is very happy to win third place following strong competition, adding that intense training and preparation contributed to his winning the bronze.

Al-Rashidi committed himself to more winning, as they will go to Egypt in two weeks time to participate in the Arab championship.

Lebanese trap shooter Walid Al-Najjar, who won the silver medal, said he won the second place in the trap event with great difficulty, adding that competing with Kuwaiti players is very hard as they are known for being outstanding in the shooting sport.

Head of Egypt's delegation Maj Gen Shareef Al-Samahi lauded the distinguished standards HH the Amir 5th Grand Prix is witnessing by all shooters be them Arabs or foreigners. He said the championship is considered a strong addition to any shooter due to its higher standards.

He said the championship is considered an opportunity for the shooters to prepare themselves for the upcoming events both internationally and at the Olympic level.



Women skeet event winners Kuwait's Al-Shamaa, Kazakhstan's Olga Panarina, and New Zealand's Chole Tipple.



President of ASC Sheikh Ali Al-Khalifa with President of ASF and KSF Eng Duajj Al-Otaibi.



Essa Butaiban

### 'STEADY STEPS TOWARDS SUCCESS'

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Shooting Sport Club (KSSC) Secretary General Essa Butaiban lauded the outstanding technical level of HH the Amir 5th International Grand Prix. He said the Gulf, Arab and International participation reflects the good status Kuwait shooting is enjoying.

Butaiban welcomed all participating delegations and their keenness to join Kuwait Shooting in this annual sports celebration, which has become one of the most notable internal shooting sports gathering around the world.

Butaiban said the 5th Grand Prix which attracted 350 shooters from 31 countries is continuing its steady success, and is reflecting Kuwait's International message of peace and humanity.

Butaiban expressed his thanks to his colleagues in the organizing committee under the leadership of Eng Duajj Khalaf Al-Otaibi and their efforts that contributed to the success of this event.



Eng Duajj Al-Otaibi with New Zealand shooter Chloe Tipple.



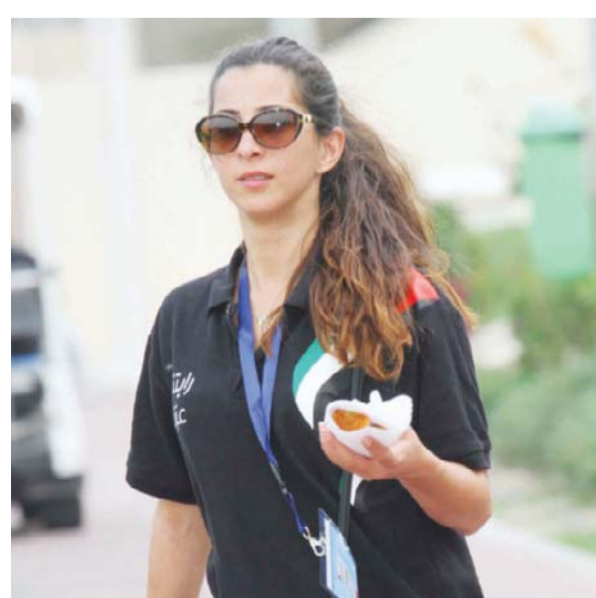
Al-Faihan in action.



Eng Al-Otaibi and Eng Hussam Al-Roumi discussing a technical issue.



Talal Al-Rashidi and Abdelrahman Al-Faihan celebrating with Kuwait flag.



Jordan's Nour Al-Khairi



Kuwait's shooter Eman Al-Shamaa

## UCI CONSIDERING IN-RACE BIKE TESTING

**LONDON:** Cycling bosses are investigating the possibility of testing riders in the middle of road races as they continue to combat the threat of mechanical doping in the sport. Belgian teenager Femke Van den Driessche was discovered to have a motor inside the frame of her bike at the recent cyclo-cross World Championships, a revelation that sparked speculation that the problem may be more widespread. UCI president Brian Cookson insists that the world governing body is on the ball when it comes to "technological fraud" and even considering drastic new testing procedures.

"The technology that we have now allows testing perhaps not literally on the move, but it's very flexible, it's very lightweight," said Cookson, who is at the track World Championships in London.

"It can even be attached to an iPhone, certainly an iPad. We will be testing before, after and, if necessary, during (races) from time to time. "We have an open mind at looking at the opportunities for that. We will maybe have a commissaire on a motorbike who will stop with a rider who is changing a bike.

"We'll look for suspicious and intelligence-led solutions, as we are doing in the anti-doping field. We have a small anti-doping intelligence testing function, looking at connections between anti-doping agencies' information, from customs, governments, police authorities. "That approach we're spreading to mechanical, technological fraud as well."

### 'STIFF PENALTIES'

Cookson insisted that the UCI's inves-

tigations will cover all disciplines of the sport. "At the moment we're looking at a random system, but all of the events, all of the bikes will be checked as they go on," he said. "I'm not saying 100 per cent, every bike will be tested, but I think you can be assured every medallist here will have had their bike tested." Van den Driessche is still to have her punishment handed out for the offence, with Cookson calling for her to be dealt with in the strongest possible way.

"The UCI has requested extremely stiff penalties. It's fair to say that, in something like this, not just the rider can be sanctioned and will be involved."

Cookson also admitted he is concerned about delays in the construction of the velodrome that will host track cycling at the 2016 Olympic Games in

Rio de Janeiro.

Rio organisers have already cancelled one test event with an alternative date set for late April, although Cookson describes that target as a "challenge".

The Great Britain track team, winners of seven track golds at London 2012, has already pulled out of the test event because of doubts over whether it will actually take place.

The UCI were informed that contractors were scheduled to start laying the timber track in Rio this weekend which, with the track programme scheduled to start on August 11, presents problems given the complications involved in bedding a new track into a facility.

"The test event has been deferred already. We are assured by the Rio organising committee that the dates

April 29 to May 1 are deliverable but I think that's a challenge," said Cookson.

"But the building still hasn't been finished and obviously I would encourage the organising committee, the city and the mayor to do a great job for us and we will do everything we can to help them." Cookson's faith in the Rio organising committee delivering on their commitments is based at least in part on the fact that there is no alternative plan in place should the building not be ready.

"I have no doubt there will be a velodrome ready and functional to the required standards for the Olympic Games," he said.

"The contingency plan is to have the Olympic Games in Rio and to have a track ready and finished. There is no alternative." — AFP

## LIONS SHUT DOWN LATE CHIEFS RALLY

**HAMILTON:** The Golden Lions went two from two on the boot of Elton Jantjies when they withstood a late Waikato Chiefs rally to win a nail biter in Hamilton yesterday 36-32.

In the closing two minutes the Chiefs twice won penalties on the Lions line but were unable to convert them into points. Being four points in arrears they were forced to go for lineout drives but they could not break the well-drilled Lions pack.

The Lions led for most of the game, apart from a brief period at the start of the match and in the middle of the second half as they made light of their arduous travel itinerary.

They are the first team in the expanded competition to head from South Africa to Japan where they beat newcomers the Sunwolves 26-13 last week before travelling south to New Zealand.

"I'm a bit speechless at the moment," elated captain Warren Whiteley said when the final whistle blew.

"They put so much pressure on us right until the death and we managed to pull it off in the end."

But while forward power ensured the win, Whiteley said it was the backs who deserved the credit.

"We weren't happy with last week's performance, so we worked really hard on our string to spread it from side to side and I think it worked."

With a superior pack and a lethal 8-9-10 combination of Whiteley, Faf de Klerk and Jantjies, the Lions dominated territory and fly-half Jantjies feasted on penalties as the Lions raced to a 19-11 lead by half-time.

Tom Sanders scored a try for the Chiefs and Malcolm Marx scored for the Lions with Jantjies' three penalties and a conversion making the difference in the first half while the Chiefs' extra points came from two Damian McKenzie penalties.

A Courtnall Skosan try early in the second half put the Lions out to a 24-11 lead before the Chiefs struck back to hit the front 25-24 when quick tries by McKenzie and James Lowe, both converted by McKenzie, produced 14 points in two minutes.

However, it was a short-lived advantage with the Lions adding a further two tries of their own by Whiteley and Ruan Combrinck.

With eight minutes remaining, the Chiefs reduced the deficit to four with a Brad Weber try converted by McKenzie but were unable to get any closer. — AFP



**LAS VEGAS:** Sione Molia of New Zealand looks to pass the ball against Russia during the USA Sevens Rugby tournament at Sam Boyd Stadium on March 4 in Las Vegas, Nevada. — AFP

## MLS REACHES MATURITY AS 21ST SEASON KICKS OFF

**LOS ANGELES:** The 21st season of Major League Soccer kicks off across North America this weekend with officials optimistic about prospects for future growth despite emerging challenges from rival competitions across the globe.

A legacy of the 1994 World Cup, MLS has come a long way since the San Jose Clash kicked off the league with a 1-0 win over DC United in front of 31,863 fans on April 6, 1996.

While the MLS is yet to reach the same sort of prominence as American football, baseball and basketball, the beautiful game has nevertheless established a solid foothold that stretches across the nation. Since the inaugural season two decades ago, the MLS has doubled in size, increasing to 20 teams from the original 10, with four more teams scheduled by 2020 and ultimately expanding to a 28-team league. Average attendances have shown a steady increase, reaching a record of 21,619 per game during the 2015 season, up sharply from 2000, when average crowds for each match hit a record low of 13,611. Orlando City have already sold more than 43,000 tickets for their game against Real Salt Lake on Sunday, and are aiming to sell out their season-opener at the 62,500-capacity Citrus Bowl for a second straight year. The defending MLS Cup champions, the Portland Timbers, have a waiting list for season tickets at their 21,000-seat home while Pacific Northwest rivals the Seattle Sounders frequently draw crowds of 40,000 or more.

### No longer a 'foreign' sport

Mark Abbott, the deputy commissioner of MLS who was an instrumental figure in founding the league, says the increased attendance figures reflect the shifting demographics of soccer's fan base.

A generation of fans who watched the

1994 World Cup as children are in their mid-20s and 30s and have grown up with the sport. "What's happened over the last 22 years in the United States and Canada since the 1994 World Cup is that they have both become soccer nations," Abbott told AFP.

"What we're seeing now is a fan base that is being driven by young people who have grown up with soccer in a way that is different. "That's the most significant thing that has been happening. It's not some foreign, exotic sport any more—it's a sport that people know and love and love being fans of."

The international profile of the league has also been boosted through the recent arrival of several globally renowned foreign stars. Since David Beckham joined the Los Angeles Galaxy in 2007, a lengthening list of overseas players have joined the ranks of the MLS, notably Didier Drogba, Kaka, Frank Lampard, Steven Gerrard, Andrea Pirlo and David Villa. Crucially, the league has also begun to attract foreign players in their prime, such as 29-year-old Italy international Sebastian Giovinco, who joined Toronto FC from Juventus in 2015, and Mexican striker Giovanni dos Santos.

### Echoes of Premier League?

Former France, Arsenal and Juventus star Patrick Vieira, who is launching his managerial career with New York City FC, owned by the Abu Dhabi United Group which also owns Manchester City, said the steady growth of the MLS reminded him of the evolution of the English Premier League. "When you look at where the MLS was 10 years ago and where it is now, it is going up fast and in the right way," Vieira said during a conference call. "The MLS reminds me of the Premier League—when we spoke about the Premier League, it was the third or fourth league in Europe. "The MLS will go the same way." — AFP



**RIO DE JANEIRO:** The synchronized swimming team of Ukraine performs during the teams' technical routine final of the FINA Synchronized Swimming Olympic Games Qualification Tournament in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, yesterday. — AFP

## NZ OFF TO FAST START AS SAMOA SHOCKS FIJI

**LOS ANGELES:** New Zealand got off to a quick start in their bid for a third straight Rugby Sevens World Series triumph, winning both of their matches on the opening day of the Las Vegas Sevens on Friday.

New Zealand, South Africa, Australia, Kenya and Argentina all won both of their opening day matches, but reigning series champions Fiji were stunned by Samoa in their opening contest.

Savelio Ropati's late try lifted Samoa to a dramatic 28-24 victory over their Pacific rivals, who rebounded with a comfortable 42-12 victory over France.

England's day got off to a rocky start as they had to battle back from a 19-5 deficit to salvage a 19-19 draw with Japan. Two tries in the final two minutes, the second converted by Tom Mitchell, gained the draw, but in England's second match—the last of the day—Joe Nayacavou sealed a superb win for Scotland with a try on the last play of a 24-14 victory that knocked England out of the running for the Cup.

New Zealand—whose victories at Wellington and Sydney in the last two stops in the series pulled them level with Fiji and South Africa atop the standings—opened the tournament at Sam Boyd Stadium with a 42-7 victory over Portugal.

They followed up with a 38-0 win over Russia and in their final Pool A match they will take on Kenya, who also went two-for-two on Friday, as did Australia in Pool B, Argentina in Pool C and South Africa in Pool D.

Bryan Habana, South Africa's leading try-scorer in tests with 64, returned to sevens after a 12-year hiatus as South Africa notched victories over Canada and Wales.

Australia opened their campaign with a 26-0 rout of Scotland that included the sevens debut of Quade Cooper, the veteran of the 15-a-side game.

Cooper, 27, came on as a substitute in the final five minutes against Scotland and struggled at first to adjust to the rhythm of the seven-a-side format.

However, he contributed four conversions in a 35-5 victory over Japan. Hosts the United States opened with a 19-12 victory over Wales, but wasted a 12-point lead in a sloppy 26-26 draw with Canada.

The Las Vegas tournament is the fifth stop in the 10-event series, which even more in the spotlight this year with rugby making a return to the Olympics at Rio de Janeiro in August.

Friday's action drew a crowd of 18,441 — a record USA Sevens one-day attendance. Pool play continues on Saturday before the event concludes today. — AFP



**LAS VEGAS:** Joe Nayacavou (C) of Scotland is tackled by Tom Kingston (L) and Greg Jeloudev of Australia during the USA Sevens Rugby tournament at Sam Boyd Stadium in Las Vegas, Nevada. — AFP



## BANGLADESH TAKE ON INDIA IN ASIA CUP FINAL

**DHAKA:** Bangladesh are hoping to cause a major upset in the Asia Cup final in Dhaka today by spoiling favourites India's preparations for the World Twenty20, which starts next week.

Top-ranked India crushed Bangladesh by 45 runs in the opening match of the tournament, but the hosts have since executed a turnaround, winning three matches on the trot to qualify for the final.

Bangladesh's five-wicket win over Pakistan on Wednesday, watched by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina from a packed gallery, sparked jubilation in the cricket-mad nation. "Any good team, if they are the home team, they will always know the conditions very well. So to beat a home team is always difficult," Indian captain MS Dhoni told reporters.

"Also Bangladesh, over the years has developed a lot. They have improved their strength," said the skipper, predicting: "It will be a good final."

Dhoni's side, the pre-tournament favourites, defeated the UAE by nine wickets on Thursday to end the league phase with a 100 percent success rate.

India—who have won nine of their last 10 Twenty20 internationals—will start the final as favourites, but Dhoni said nothing could be taken for granted, especially in the shortest format of international cricket.

His side are five-times winners of the Asia Cup, which takes place every two years, although India's winning meets were all held in the previous 50-over one-day international format.

"In this format the difference between the two teams can often be just one knock, one individual having a very good day or one bowler having a very good day," Dhoni said. "The difference between a good team and not-so-good team can be just a performance on that particular day."

Dhoni, whose illustrious trophy case

includes one Asia Cup from 2010, would like to end the 12-day meet on a high before India hosts the World Cup T20 Championship starting on March 8.

Hosts Bangladesh have qualified for the Asia Cup final only once in 2012, when they lost to Pakistan at home by just two runs.

"For us it's obvious to be emotional because we don't always get such chances and this is happening at home," Bangladesh captain Mashrafe Mortaza said Saturday.

Clashes broke out yesterday between police and hundreds of fans queuing for tickets, local Bangladesh media reported. Police fired tear gas to disperse the fans, according to the online edition of Prothom Alo, a Bengali-language daily.

Earlier, pacesman Taskin Ahmed had appeared determined to make India's job difficult in today's match.

"India without a doubt is one of the best teams in the world," Taskin told reporters in Dhaka on Thursday. "But if we can play up to our potential, good things are possible. I would say it's a 50-50 game."

Indian team director Ravi Shastri said that a boisterous crowd would not be a problem for his side in the final.

"We're used to noise," Shastri said on Saturday. "Who cares? When you play at that level, you are immune to that."

Bangladesh: Mashrafe Mortaza (capt), Tamim Iqbal, Soumya Sarkar, Sabbir Rahman, Imrul Kayes, Shakib Al Hasan, Mahmudullah Riyad, Mohammad Mithun, Mushfiqur Rahim, Nasir Hossain, Nurul Hasan, Taskin Ahmed Abu Hider, Al-Amin Hossain, Ararat Sunny.

India: MS Dhoni (capt), Shikhar Dhawan, Rohit Sharma, Ajinkya Rahane, Virat Kohli, Suresh Raina, Yuvraj Singh, Hardik Pandya, Ravindra Jadeja, Ravichandran Ashwin, Jasprit Bumrah, Harbhajan Singh, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Pawan Negi, Ashish Nehra. — AFP



**WASHINGTON:** Alex Ovechkin #8 of the Washington Capitals jumps as a shot comes in on Antti Raanta #32 of the New York Rangers at the Verizon Center on Friday in Washington, DC. The Rangers defeated the Capitals 3-2. — AFP

## RAANTA STEPS UP FOR LUNDQVIST, HELPS RANGERS DOWN CAPITALS

**WASHINGTON:** New York's Finnish goaltender Antti Raanta made 32 saves while subbing for the injured Henrik Lundqvist and helped the Rangers win 3-2 at Washington on Friday in a clash of the top teams in the NHL's Eastern Conference. Raanta was pressed into duty after Lundqvist was ruled out because of neck spasms. He was stellar against the NHL's top team, helping the Rangers extend their streak of not losing consecutive games that dates to mid-December. Derek Stepan, Jesper Fast and Keith Yandle scored for the Rangers against Braden Holtby, who made 20 saves. Jay Beagle and T.J. Oshie had the Capitals' goals. Washington's lead over the Rangers was trimmed to 16 games.

### STARS 4, DEVILS 2

Valeri Nichushkin had a goal and an assist on his 21st birthday, and the Stars stopped a four-game slide. Vernon Fiddler, Jason Spezza and Colton Sceviour also scored for Dallas, and Kari Lehtonen made 18 saves. Fiddler's short-handed score into an empty net with 20 seconds left was his 100th career goal. With about a month left in the season, Dallas, Chicago and St. Louis are locked up in a tough race for the Central Division title. The Stars (39-20-7) and Blackhawks (40-21-5) each have 85 points, followed by the Blues (37-20-9) with 83. New Jersey has lost seven of nine. Adam Henrique and Devante Smith-Pelly scored for the Devils, and Cory Schneider had 15 saves before leaving at 2:05 of the third due to

an injury. Keith Kinkaid made six saves.

### BLUE JACKETS 6, OILERS 3

Defenseman David Savard had two goals, and the Blue Jackets scored on their first two shots. Boone Jenner and Scott Hartnell each had a goal and an assist as last-place Columbus won for the third time in four games. Cam

Atkinson and Fedor Tyutin also scored, and Joonas Korpisalo had 25 saves. Connor McDavid had a goal and an assist for Edmonton, which had won three in a row. Taylor Hall and Leon Draisaitl also scored. McDavid, the No. 1 overall pick in last year's draft, has eight goals and 14 assists in 17 games since returning from a broken left collarbone. — AP

### NHL results/standings

Dallas 4, New Jersey 2; Washington 2, NY Rangers 3; Columbus 6, Edmonton 3.

Eastern Conference						Western Conference								
Atlantic Division						Central Division								
Team	PL	W	L	OT	GF	GA	Team	PL	W	L	OT	GF	GA	
Tampa Bay	64	38	22	4	179	152	80	Chicago	66	40	21	5	187	159
Florida	64	36	20	8	176	151	80	Dallas	66	39	20	7	213	191
Boston	65	36	23	6	201	178	78	St. Louis	66	37	20	9	166	162
Detroit	64	32	21	11	163	168	75	Nashville	65	32	21	12	176	166
Ottawa	65	30	28	7	189	204	67	Minnesota	65	30	25	10	172	163
Montreal	65	30	29	6	177	181	66	Colorado	66	33	29	4	178	189
Buffalo	65	26	31	8	154	175	60	Winnipeg	63	26	32	5	164	190
Toronto	63	21	32	10	150	187	52	Pacific Division						
								Los Angeles	63	38	21	4	168	145
								Anaheim	63	36	19	8	161	147
Metropolitan Division								San Jose	63	35	22	6	191	169
Washington	64	47	13	4	210	149	98	Vancouver	63	24	27	12	152	181
NY Rangers	65	38	21	6	184	165	82	Arizona	64	27	31	6	169	203
NY Islanders	62	35	20	7	178	154	77	Edmonton	67	25	35	7	165	200
Pittsburgh	63	33	22	8	171	161	74	Calgary	64	26	34	4	173	203
Philadelphia	63	29	23	11	157	172	69							
New Jersey	66	31	28	7	147	164	69							
Carolina	65	29	26	10	158	174	68							
Columbus	65	27	30	8	173	199	62							

Note: Overtime losses (OT) worth 1 pt and not included in loss column (L).

## LATE KHALID SALEH AL-GHUNAIM BILLIARDS TOURNAMENT BEGINS

**KUWAIT:** The late Khalid Saleh Al-Ghunaim Annual Billiards Tournament will kick off tomorrow, March 7, at Hot Shot Plaza in Hawally. This tournament began in the 80s, to encourage youth to practice this "technical" game, and among the results of these participations is the formation of a group of highly experienced players who were able to win Gulf, Arab and international tournaments, while the organizing committee is trying to take it from being a Kuwaiti-Gulf tournament to become an international one. The late Khalid Saleh Al-Ghunaim is considered among the pioneers in supporting this game and this tournament is a continuation of his good efforts. The number of participants in this tournament reached 176, and this will help go international later on.

The final ceremony will be held on Saturday March 12, 2016 at 7 pm.



Khalid Saleh Al-Ghunaim

## HERSCHELLE GIBBS, IDP EDUCATION CREATE HISTORY FOR KC FINALS



Finalists with the trophy during press meet.

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Cricket (KC), the official body of governing cricket in Kuwait in association with IDP Education - official IELTS centre in Kuwait invited South African legend Herschelle Gibbs as the guest of honor in order to give yet another boost to the overall development of domestic cricket in Kuwait. As many as 7 finals took place over an action packed weekend that saw the entire Kuwait Cricket fraternity celebrate the National and Liberation day of Kuwait T20 style. KC-SDL & KC-DTDL were the on-going turf tournaments that concluded on the 25th & 26th of February respectively at TACK entertainment city cricket ground - Doha in a lively atmosphere created by DJ flames that kept the entire audience present at the ground fully entertained. KC - DTDL saw as many as 20 teams participate in the tournament.

It was undoubtedly a privilege for all the finalist teams and their respective players along with the entire Kuwait Cricket fraternity to have someone of Gibbs's stature not only to witness the finals but also give his expert opinions and pitch reports during the process.

When Johnny Rhodes retired, South Africans wondered where they would find a replacement fielder of the most predatory type; Herschelle Gibbs answered the call and was as good, if not better than the great Johnny himself. Gibbs started his international career in 1996 and played many match winning innings for his country; none better than his 175 off just 111 balls against Australia at the Wanderers in 2006.

Earlier in the weekend, a one of its kind press meet took place on Thursday the 25th at TACK-TEC in the presence of all the KC council

members including the chairman Emad Al Jassam who was ecstatic to see the preparations and build up.

Sajid Ashraf, the director of domestic cricket and marketing at Kuwait Cricket while conducting the press meet asked Gibbs about his thoughts on the development of cricket in Kuwait to which the super star enthusiastically responded "I was here for Huawei 4 nations T20 festival which was a fantastic tournament, professionally managed and organized, and therefore had every reason to come back and will keep coming back in the future as I see a lot of potential in Kuwait Cricket". Gibbs added that more needs to be done on building an international training facility giving example of the ICC academy in Dubai while praising the picturesque look of TACK entertainment city cricket ground - Doha.

The first of the seven mega finals took place on Thursday (25th Feb) evening right after the press meet and saw Bangladesh friends take on gulf cable in KC-SDL division 5 finals. Gulf cable won the match by 5 wickets and Bretnor George was announced the man of the finals for his crucial 40 runs in 47 balls.

### MAN OF THE FINALS

KC-SDL division 4 finals were played between Al Bader and Afghan tigers and Al Bader comfortably won the match by 44 runs and Yohan was declared the man of the finals. Q8 falcons won the KC-SDL division 3 finals in a nail biting finish against Royal Kings by a mere 5 runs only with the very experienced Rasheed Ismail taking away the man of the finals trophy by scoring a valuable 54 runs in 37 balls. KC-SDL division 2 finals were played

between Kuwait Hawks and Lanka Lions and Nikhil Kulkarni was declared man of the finals for his outstanding batting of 94 runs in 56 balls that sealed the deal for Kuwait hawks.

KC-SDL division 1 final was a treat to watch and the aptitude at display was appreciated by



Chairman KC Council Emad Al Jassam

the crowd and Herschelle Gibbs as the extremely talented future stars took on the star studded team of Petrofac. Future stars put on a fighting score of 172 runs batting first with Naeem Choudhry first stealing the show with a strike rate of over 200 going all guns blazing at 65 off 31 balls and was very well supported by Hisham Mirza who scored 40 off 28 balls. Skipper Ramaraju of Petrofac was the pick of the bowlers picking up 3 wickets in 4 overs and going for only 22 runs. With more than 100 runs left to be chased down, Petrofac was reeling in 72 for 8 when Mudassar Ali and the ever-green Azmatullah Mohammed were on the crease. What happened after will undoubtedly go down as one of the best chases in a final in



Gibbs addressing the press.

Kuwait's T20 domestic cricket history. Mudassar Ali scored a match winning 47 not out and was equally well supported by Azmatullah Mohammed who was at his vintage best scoring 37 not out. Mudassar Ali was declared the man of the finals for his overall match winning performance.

KC-DTDL division B finals saw the rivalry of Sky Lark CC and Kuwait Hawks come to life as the two went head to head on Friday the 26th of Feb at 4:30pm onwards. Kuwait hawks who have had a fantastic run this domestic season continued their winning streak with yet another match winning performance by the talented Nikhil Kulkarni who scored 93 runs in 47 balls and helped his side win two back to back division B finals over the weekend.

The grand finale of KC-DTDL division A was by far the most awaited game of the weekend as it had the top two teams of Kuwait, Petrofac and Aroma, in terms of wins and players take on the center stage at prime time 7:30 pm onwards in front of the entire Kuwait Cricket fraternity including the event sponsors and His Excellency the Ambassador of South Africa to Kuwait MP Bona, and His Excellency, the acting ambassador of Afghanistan to Kuwait, Sheikh. The toss was conducted by director of domestic cricket and marketing Sajid Ashraf along with Herschelle Gibbs, deputy chairman of the council Iqbal Vanoo, director technical Sudhakar Shetty, director general Asad Baig, president TACK International Mohammed Ashraf and the team of match officials headed by Imran Haji Mustafa. Ramaraju of Petrofac won the toss and elected to bat first. It was a fascinating sight to see Gibbs interview the captains of

both the sides, Amjad of Aroma and Ramaraju of Petrofac as it gave a very international feel to the buildup.

### GIBBS WAS MESMERIZED

The dashing Amir Javed (41 off 15) and Hassan Arif of Petrofac (23 off 10) were on fire as they took the score to 80 runs in as little as 5 overs before a bullet throw from Raveja saw the back of Amir Javed. Boundaries were as easily hit as taking a single and Gibbs was mesmerized to see such strong batting on display. The skipper Amjad Ashraf of Aroma got his side back in to the game by picking up three crucial wickets of Nadeem Malik, Mustansar Butt and Bilal Ali in a match winning spell of 4 - 25 - 3. However, it was out and out an evening that belonged to Mohammed Asghar who absolutely murdered the bowling attack of petrofac and scored a sizzling 65 runs off 28 balls with 7 fours and 4 humongous sixes. Usman Waheed played the anchor role and scored a composed knock of 50 runs off 37 balls with four 4's and one 6. Aroma chased down the target with two overs to spare and that saw the entire club rush to the pitch upon scoring the winning runs with Ashghar declared the man of the finals. The presentation party and the entire event was headed and conducted by Sajid Ashraf. In order to make the most of Gibbs's tour to Kuwait, KC had set up a unique coaching clinic in association with IDP and indiansinkuwait.com that saw as many as 50 registered kids between the ages of 8 - 19 learn batting, bowling, fielding and confidence building skills from the legend himself on Saturday, February 27.

# CROATIA ON BRINK OF QUARTERFINALS IN DAVIS CUP

**LIEGE:** Croatia needs only one more point to reach the Davis Cup quarterfinals after Ivan Dodig and Franko Skugor won the doubles against Belgium's Ruben Bemelmans and David Goffin yesterday.

After a tense first set, Dodig and Skugor broke their opponents four times and prevailed 7-6 (5), 6-3, 6-1 to give Croatia a 2-1 lead ahead of Sunday's reverse singles.

In the opening singles on Friday, Goffin defeated Borna Coric in five sets on the clay court of the Country Hall, and 2014 U.S. Open champion Marin Cilic eased past Kimmer Coppejans in straight sets.

The Belgian pair led 5-4 in the tiebreaker but the Croats held on serve and converted their first set point when

Bemelmans went long. Dodig and Skugor then converted the second of three set points in the second set after another unforced error from Bemelmans, and easily won the 22-minute final set.

Dodig, who won the French Open doubles title last year with Marcelo Melo, said winning the difficult first set was "one of the keys," adding that "it helped us stay in the match, then we were able to raise our game." Today, Goffin will play Cilic, and Coppejans will face Coric.

In Rome, Italy became the first team to reach this year's Davis Cup quarterfinals when Simone Bolelli and Andreas Seppi defeated Marco Chiudinelli and Henri Laaksonen 6-3, 6-1, 6-3 for a 3-0 win over Switzerland.

Italy, whose only Davis Cup title came 40 years ago, will face either Argentina or Poland for a place in the semi-finals in July.

Switzerland, the champions in 2014, were without star players Roger Federer, who is injured, and Stan Wawrinka, who opted not to play in the tie in Pesaro.

Italy survived scares in both its singles rubbers Friday to take a 2-0 lead in its Davis Cup first-round tie against a Switzerland team missing Roger Federer and Stan Wawrinka.

Paolo Lorenzi let slip a two-set lead and was forced to save three match points before beating Marco Chiudinelli and Andreas Seppi almost did the same but recovered to defeat Henri Laaksonen in four sets, winning 7-5, 7-6 (4), 3-6, 6-3.

The winner of the tie plays Poland or Argentina in the quarterfinals. Lorenzi won 7-6 (14), 6-3, 4-6, 5-7, 7-5 in a match which lasted nearly five hours and also featured the longest tiebreaker in World Group history.

The Italian clawed his way back from 5-2 down in the final set and, although he wasted two match points, sealed the win when Chiudinelli hit long. Lorenzi was ranked 92 places above Chiudinelli after a fine run of form, but the 146th-ranked Swiss had a 3-0 head-to-head record against the Italian.

Clay is also Chiudinelli's least favorite surface but he was aggressive from the start and Lorenzi had to save two break points in the sixth game. There was little to separate the pair in the tiebreaker too but Lorenzi finally took the set with an

ace - one of 17 he served up in the match. Chiudinelli rebounded to earn the first break of the match at the start of the second set but Lorenzi broke back twice in succession. He also saved two break points in the seventh game before going on to take the set with another ace.

Lorenzi saved two set points on his own serve in the third set but gifted Chiudinelli a way back into the match when he sent a forehand long. The Swiss player then claimed the fourth set as well with a superb return to level the match.

Meanwhile, China yesterday beat Pakistan in a Davis Cup tie, winning the doubles match after some good rallies on day two at the Sri Lanka Tennis Association courts.—Agencies

# LEBRON POWERS CAVALIERS TO EASY WIN OVER WIZARDS

**CLEVELAND:** LeBron James flirted with a triple-double before sitting out the fourth quarter, Kyrie Irving scored 21 points and the Cleveland Cavaliers avenged a recent ugly loss to Washington by throttling the Wizards 108-83 on Friday night. The Cavs were blown out at Washington on Sunday, when James watched from the bench and the Wizards built a 30-point lead. But with James energized after not playing since Monday, and Cleveland using a "small" lineup as forward Kevin Love got the night off, the Cavs snapped Washington's four-game winning streak. James finished with 19 points, 13 rebounds and seven assists. Timofey Mozgov scored 14 points, 12 on dunks, for Cleveland. John Wall scored 17 and Markieff Morris 13 for the Wizards.

Jersey. Karl-Anthony Towns scored 21 points for Minnesota, but only six after the first quarter.

### RAPTORS 117, TRAIL BLAZERS 115

DeMar DeRozan had 38 points, Kyle Lowry added 28 and Toronto overcame a huge game from Damian Lillard to beat Portland for its franchise-record 12th straight home win. Lillard scored 50 points, one shy of his career high set last month in a 137-105 win over Golden State. DeRozan went 24 for 25 from the free-throw line, both career highs. Jonas Valanciunas had 17 points and 10 rebounds for Toronto. Portland lost the season series to Toronto for the first time since 1996-97. C.J. McCollum added 24 for Portland, but he and Lillard were the only Blazers in double figures.

### CELTICS 105, KNICKS 104

Isaiah Thomas had 32 points and eight assists, Avery Bradley hit a go-ahead layup with 17.7 seconds left and Boston Celtics won its 13th straight at home. Evan Turner had 21 points and eight rebounds for the Celtics, and Jae Crowder finished with 20 points and eight rebounds. Boston trailed by eight points in the fourth quarter but used a series of mini-runs to eventually take the lead for good on the driving layup by Bradley. Carmelo Anthony had a chance to win the game in the closing seconds but badly missed a 3-pointer off the backboard as time expired. Anthony had 30 points and seven rebounds. Arron Afflalo added 17 points and Kristaps Porzingis finished with 15 points for the Knicks, who lost their third straight.

### HEAT 112, 76ERS 102

Hassan Whiteside had 19 points and 19 rebounds, Dwyane Wade scored 21 points and Miami won its fourth straight. Goran Dragic added 15 points and 11 assists for the Heat. Luo Deng scored 13 points and Joe Johnson, Amar'e Stoudemire and Gerald Green had 12 points each. Ish Smith had 26 points, eight rebounds and five assists and Robert Covington scored 25 points for the depleted 76ers, who were missing several key players. Philadelphia has lost 11 straight. The Heat improved to 7-2 since losing Chris Bosh to a blood clot in his calf. They are 4-0 since signing Johnson after the seven-time All-Star agreed to a buyout with Brooklyn.

### SUNS 102, MAGIC 84

Alex Len scored a career-high 31 points and grabbed 15 rebounds, and Phoenix held Orlando scoreless for a 7 1/2-minute stretch to snap a 17-game road losing streak. Devin Booker and Ronnie Price added 14 points each for the Suns, who got their first road victory since Dec. 7 at Chicago. The streak tied a franchise record. Elfrid Payton had 19 points and 11 assists for Orlando, which shot 35 percent against the NBA's bottom-ranked team in defensive field-goal percentage.

### HAWKS 106, LAKERS 77

Reserve Dennis Schroder led six players in double figures with 16 points and Atlanta completed its first season sweep of the Lakers since 1973-74. Kyle Korver made all four of his 3-pointers for 15 points and newcomer Kris Humphries added 14 points and eight rebounds off the bench. The Hawks have held four straight opponents under 40-percent shooting for the first time since Dec. 7-20, 1996. Julius Randle had 16 points and 10 rebounds for the Lakers, who have lost two in a row and 10 of 11. D'Angelo Russell's streak of four straight games with 20 or more points ended when he finished with seven points on 3-of-16 shooting. Los Angeles fans began chanting Kobe Bryant's name in the closing minutes, but he was nursing a sore right shoulder and wasn't around. — AP



**BELGRADE:** (L-R) Serbia's tennis players Nenad Zimonjic and Novak Djokovic and Kazakhstan's tennis players Aleksandr Nedovyesov and Andrey Golubev pose ahead of the tennis match during the Davis Cup World Group first round double match between Serbia and Kazakhstan at "Aleksandar Nikolic" hall in Belgrade, yesterday. — AFP

# DJOKOVIC BEATEN AS MURRAY BROTHERS DOUBLE UP FOR VICTORY

**PARIS:** Novak Djokovic suffered his first Davis Cup defeat in five years yesterday as Serbia slipped 2-1 down to Kazakhstan while Andy and Jamie Murray gave defending champions Great Britain a 2-1 lead over Japan.

World number one Djokovic and 39-year-old Nenad Zimonjic lost their doubles rubber to Kazakhstan's Andrey Golubev and Aleksandr Nedovyesov in Belgrade in the first round tie.

The 6-3, 7-6 (7/3), 7-5 scoreline gave Kazakhstan a 2-1 lead ahead of the reverse singles on Sunday where the winner will go on to face either Britain or Japan in July's quarterfinals.

Today, Djokovic will play Mikhail Kukushkin when he will try to keep the tie alive for the 2010 champions. The final singles is due to feature Viktor Troicki against Nedovyesov.

In Birmingham, the Murray brothers edged Britain closer to the quarter-finals with a 6-3, 6-2, 6-4 win over Japan's Yoshihito Nishioka and Yakutaka Uchiyama.

Just as in their title triumph over Belgium in November in what was Britain's first Davis Cup success in 79 years, the brothers played a starring role.

It was a fifth win in five Davis Cup outings for the Murrrays who didn't face a break point on Saturday.

The win gave the hosts a 2-1 lead and world number two Andy Murray can seal the tie on Sunday when he faces Japan's top player Kei

Nishikori, ranked number six, in the first reverse singles.

Dan Evans is scheduled to face Nishioka in what may be the decider.

Nishikori is the highest-ranked player Murray has ever played in Davis Cup, but he has won five of their previous six matches. "I played well against him last year. I played him a couple of times. He's ranked six in the world, so he's one of the best," said Murray.

"It's obviously going to be extremely tough, but I'm playing well and hopefully I can play a good one tomorrow and try and seal the win."

### BRYANS GIVE US EDGE

Bob and Mike Bryan gave the United States a crucial 2-1 edge with a thrilling five-set win over the Lleyton Hewitt-inspired Australians in Melbourne.

The 16-time Grand Slam and Olympics doubles champions looked to be cruising to victory, breezing through the opening two sets before Hewitt and John Peers forced a fifth set.

But the American twins proved too strong in the decider, winning 6-3, 6-3, 4-6, 4-6, 6-3 to give their team a 2-1 lead.

Jim Courier's Americans can wrap up the tie on Kooyong's grass courts with just one more victory on Sunday through their top-rated John Isner-who faces Bernard Tomic-or Jack Sock who could end up playing Hewitt.

The winner of that tie will face either 2005

champions Croatia or Belgium in the quarterfinals. Croatia went ahead 2-1 in Liege when Ivan Dodig and Franko Skugor enjoyed a 7-6 (7/5), 6-3, 6-1 win over Ruben Bemelmans and David Goffin.

Italy became the first team to reach the quarterfinals when Simone Bolelli and Andreas Seppi defeated Marco Chiudinelli and Henri Laaksonen 6-3, 6-1, 6-3 for a 3-0 win over Switzerland.

Italy, whose only Davis Cup title came 40 years ago, will face either Argentina, three-times runners-up since 2006, or Poland.

Switzerland, the champions in 2014, were without Roger Federer, who is injured, and Stan Wawrinka, who opted not to play in the tie in Pesaro.

World Group rookies Poland fought back in Gdansk by winning the doubles against Argentina after dropping both of Friday's singles.

Marcin Matkowski and Lukasz Kubot saw off Carlos Berlocq and Renzo Olivo 6-3, 6-4, 6-4.

In Hanover, Tomas Berdych claimed a 50th Davis Cup win when he and veteran Radek Stepanek claimed a 7-6 (9/7), 7-5, 6-4 win over Germany's Philipp Kohlschreiber and Philipp Petzschner.

The Czech Republic, champions in 2012 and 2013, are 2-1 in front. The winners are likely to face France, who are 2-0 up on Canada in Guadeloupe, in the quarterfinals. — AFP

## NBA results/standings

Cleveland 108, Washington 83; LA Lakers 77, Atlanta 106; Boston 105, New York 104; Toronto 117, Portland 115; Denver 120, Brooklyn 121 (OT); Memphis 94, Utah 88; Milwaukee 116, Minnesota 101; Charlotte 108, Indiana 101; Orlando 84, Phoenix 102; Philadelphia 102, Miami 112.

Eastern Conference					Western Conference				
Atlantic Division					Northwest Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB					
Toronto	41	19	0.683	—	Oklahoma City	42	20	0.677	—
Boston	38	25	0.603	4.5	Portland	33	30	0.524	9.5
New York	25	38	0.397	17.5	Utah	28	33	0.459	13.5
Brooklyn	18	44	0.290	24	Denver	24	38	0.387	18
Philadelphia	8	54	0.129	34	Minnesota	19	43	0.306	23
Central Division					Pacific Division				
Cleveland	43	17	0.717	—	Golden State	55	5	0.917	—
Indiana	32	30	0.516	12	LA Clippers	40	20	0.667	15
Detroit	31	30	0.508	12.5	Sacramento	25	35	0.417	30
Chicago	30	30	0.500	13	Phoenix	16	46	0.258	40
Milwaukee	26	36	0.419	18	LA Lakers	12	51	0.190	44.5
Southeast Division					Southwest Division				
Miami	36	26	0.581	—	San Antonio	52	9	0.852	—
Atlanta	34	28	0.548	2	Memphis	37	24	0.607	15
Charlotte	33	28	0.541	2.5	Dallas	33	29	0.532	19.5
Washington	30	31	0.492	5.5	Houston	30	31	0.492	22
Orlando	27	34	0.443	8.5	New Orleans	23	37	0.383	28.5

# INFANTINO'S FIFA REIGN STARTS WITH BUDGET FLIGHT

**CARDIFF:** New FIFA president Gianni Infantino wants to slash costs at football's world governing body so he started his reign by taking a budget flight to his first significant meeting. Infantino, 45, flew to Bristol from Geneva on the low-cost easyJet airline on Friday ahead of the weekend's International Football Association Board AGM in Cardiff.

FIFA have been criticised for their lavish expenditure in the past, but Infantino, recently elected as successor to the disgraced Sepp Blatter, said they must look after their cash because it does not belong to them. "I came with easyJet today because it was the best option to Bristol and then Cardiff. I always take the easiest and best option. I had to go to UEFA to say goodbye to the executive committee," Infantino said. "The traffic was terrible from Bristol to Cardiff which meant I was a little late. We are normal people and we have to behave like normal people. There will be occasions when I have to take a private plane, if I have no other way to go somewhere, if it's too complicated or I need to go to three countries in the same day.

"I will not now start travelling only easyJet. I will always take the best option. Everyone in FIFA should be working to optimise the costs. This was my job at UEFA when I was general secretary. I will give the philosophy from the top. One of my priorities has always been to optimise the costs because we have to be responsible what we do with the money, which is not our

money. It is football's money."

For former UEFA secretary-general Infantino, the visit to Bristol was particularly emotional. When he was born in 1970, his life was saved by a blood transfusion when he was five days old with blood coming from Bristol and Belgrade. And the Swiss-Italian lawyer is keen to meet the person from Bristol who helped save his life all those years ago.

"It's important to me because I tried to find

out who these two people were. Unfortunately it was not possible at that time, I was told there is no archives," he said.

"It's quite a coincidence the first trip I make from Switzerland is to Bristol. Form that airport, 46 years ago almost, the blood left to save my life."

While he is in the United Kingdom, Infantino will also take in an English Premier League game when he sees Swansea play Norwich. — AFP



Gianni Infantino

## PSG KEEP POWDER DRY BEFORE CHELSEA SHOWDOWN

**PARIS:** With numerous stars rested, Paris Saint-Germain settled for an uninspiring goalless draw at home to Montpellier yesterday ahead of their crucial Champions League return clash with Chelsea.

PSG's enormous lead at the top of Ligue 1 and determination to progress in Europe meant this game was never the priority for coach Laurent Blanc, although things could have been very different had Edinson Cavani found the net rather than the bar early on.

The draw allowed the defending champions to restore their 23-point lead at the top over second-placed Monaco, who drew 2-2 at Caen on Friday, and

means they could still secure a fourth straight title when they host the principal club at the Parc des Princes on March 20.

By then they will hope to have confirmed their place in the last eight of the Champions League for the fourth year running, but all depends on the second leg of their last-16 tie with Chelsea in London on Wednesday, into which they take a 2-1 lead.

Blanc rested a host of key players to keep them fresh and Zlatan Ibrahimovic was on the bench alongside David Luiz and Thiago Motta while captain Thiago Silva was not involved at all.

While Marco Verratti and Blaise

Matuidi were not fit, there was a return for Angel Di Maria but the home starting line-up also featured 20-year-old defender Presnel Kimpembe and midfielder Christopher Nkunku, who was making his first start in Ligue 1 at the age of just 18.

Nkunku showed some nice touches in a first half that lacked intensity at a Parc des Princes once again far from full.

The hosts almost opened the scoring from one of their first attacks as a Maxwell cross was turned onto the bar by Cavani, but other than that PSG only really threatened when Di Maria turned on the style. The Argentine produced some flashes of quality and also nearly

found the net from a curling left-foot free-kick that forced Laurent Pionnier in the Montpellier goal into an excellent save high to his left.

Di Maria then sent a low ball across the face of goal but Lucas, sliding in, was unable to make contact in one of the last acts of the first half.

The state of Di Maria's fitness has been one of the biggest concerns for Blanc ahead of the game at Stamford Bridge and he was replaced after an hour to make way for Ibrahimovic.

Despite the Swede's introduction, PSG could not break down their opponents, but they will recall that a 0-0 draw at home to Lille immediately before the

first leg against Chelsea did them little harm. Montpellier, meanwhile, will be pleased as they continued their revival since the January appointment as coach of Frederic Hantz.

Monaco could only draw in Caen despite twice taking the lead, as Ivorian forward Christian Kouakou scored a minute from time to secure a point for the home side. Lyon, who ended last weekend in third spot after inflicting a first domestic defeat of the season on PSG, entertain Guingamp today.

They could be leapfrogged later on Saturday by Nice, who host bottom club Troyes, and Saint-Etienne, who visit Angers. — AFP

## STUNNING COMEBACK KEEPS WEST HAM IN EURO HUNT



**LIVERPOOL:** West Ham staged an incredible late comeback against 10-man Everton at Goodison Park yesterday to run out 3-2 winners and keep alive their Champions League hopes.

Prolific Everton forward Romelu Lukaku scored one and created another for Aaron Lennon to give the home team a 2-0 lead, the goals coming either side of a red card for their winger Kevin Mirallas.

But goals from Michail Antonio and Diafra Sakho drew the Hammers level before French midfielder Dimitri Payet completed the comeback with a last-minute winner to fire his team into fifth place in the Premier League, one point off the top four.

West Ham's defensive injury crisis handed 17-year-old Reece Oxford a start at centre back, and he was immediately put under pressure by a fast start from the home team.

Midfielder James McCarthy almost opened the scoring with a strike from the edge of the area, but Adrian in the Hammers' goal reacted smartly to tip the ball over the bar.

The pressure forced the opening goal on 13 minutes with Lukaku scoring for the

eighth straight game against West Ham.

The muscular forward shrugged off Oxford and turned smartly to plant the ball past Adrian for his 18th Premier League goal of the season.

The home team appeared to be cruising, with England midfielder Ross Barkley testing Adrian again with a dipping volley, but their task got much harder on 35 minutes.

Mirallas, already booked controversially for diving, received a second yellow card after going in late on full back Aaron Cresswell.

However, it was the home team who defied the odds to double their lead shortly before the hour mark through lively winger Lennon.

The former Spurs man combined neatly with Lukaku before finishing coolly underneath the advancing Adrian. Everton were granted a golden chance to put the game to bed when substitute Alex Song brought down half-time substitute Muhamed Besic in the box, but Adrian kept out Lukaku's weak spot kick.

The striker fluffed another superb opportunity moments later, again shooting tamely at Adrian, and he was left to rue his mistakes when the visitors struck twice in three minutes to haul themselves level.

Antonio gave the Hammers hope with a close-range header, his third goal in three games, before Senegal striker Sakho struck with a carbon-copy header from a Payet cross. With the hosts on the ropes, the Hammers searched for a winner and found it in the final minute through Payet, who nipped in to meet Sakho's backheel and guide the ball past Joel Robles. — AFP



**MADRID:** Real Madrid's Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo vies with Celta Vigo's defender Hugo Mallo during the Spanish league football match Real Madrid CF vs RC Celta de Vigo at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid yesterday. — AFP

## FOUR-GOAL RONALDO SILENCES MADRID CRITICS IN CELTA ROUT

**MADRID:** Cristiano Ronaldo silenced his critics with four goals in Real Madrid's 7-1 mauling of Celta Vigo yesterday after being jeered by certain sections of the home support. Ronaldo wheeled away in celebration with hand cupped to his ear after smashing home Madrid's second after Pepe had headed Zinedine Zidane's men in front before half-time.

The three-time World Player of the Year added three more to surpass Telmo Zarra as the second highest scorer in La Liga history with 252 goals in just 228 appearances.

And there was further good news for Real as Gareth Bale scored Madrid's seventh on his first appearance after six weeks out with a calf injury. Victory moved Real back to within nine points of leaders Barcelona, who travel to Eibar on Sunday.

"You know Cristiano, he is capable of scoring four goals and there are very few people capable of doing that. That is why he is unique," said Zidane. "It is part of football that the fans whistle now and then. They are demanding fans, but at the same time they know their players well and always want more. That is good to help

us improve and do more." There was little evidence that Ronaldo or Real were about to burst into life during a quiet first-half played out in front of a frustrated home crowd after last weekend's 1-0 defeat to Atletico in the Madrid derby. Iago Aspas had a huge chance to put Celta in front when he headed against the bar before Keylor Navas smothered his follow-up effort from point-blank range.

Ronaldo didn't make his presence felt until 20 minutes in when his fierce strike from distance was beaten to safety by Ruben Blanco. The Celta keeper also denied Isco and Casemiro, but the visitors were struggling to deal with cross balls and Pepe powered home the opener five minutes before the break from Isco's cross.

### BRILLIANT FREE-KICK

Ronaldo had controversially claimed Real would be top of the league if the rest of his teammates matched his exacting standards after the Atletico game. And the Portuguese was met with a few whistles from the crowd early in the second-half after losing possession twice in quick succession. However, he responded

instantly with a dipping strike from 25 yards that flew past Blanco. Ronaldo immediately headed towards the stand behind the goal with his hand placed over his ear as a warning shot to his critics. More was to come from Ronaldo as he then curled home a brilliant free-kick into the top corner. Ronaldo hit the bar with another free-kick before Aspas capitalised on the huge amount of space in behind the Madrid defence to pull a goal back with a neat chip over Navas.

However, Madrid duly replied with a further three goals in 13 minutes. Firstly, Ronaldo completed his 30th La Liga hat-trick with a tap in from Isco's unselfish low cross.

Bale then made his entrance with the Welsh star's return to fitness a huge boost for Zidane ahead of Madrid's Champions League last-16, second-leg clash with Roma on Tuesday.

Ronaldo headed home his fourth of the afternoon before substitute Jese Rodriguez smashed home Madrid's sixth after a fine solo run.

And Bale showed what Madrid were missing last week against Atletico when he drove at the Celta defence before firing in his 14th goal of the season off the post. — AFP

## MCCLAREN MISERY DEEPENS AS NEWCASTLE CRASH AGAIN



**NEWCASTLE:** Steve McClaren's fight to save his job suffered another major blow as crisis-torn Newcastle crashed to a dismal 3-1 home defeat against Bournemouth yesterday.

McClaren had endured a miserable week featuring reports that he had lost the backing of Newcastle's players, who were expecting the embattled former England coach to be sacked if they lost this weekend.

Angered by that story, Magpies boss McClaren showed signs of cracking under the strain of Newcastle's relegation battle when he unwisely became embroiled in a spat with a journalist during his weekly press conference.

Against that dispiriting backdrop, Newcastle desperately needed an uplifting victory against Bournemouth, but instead they capitulated once again and remain second bottom of the Premier League and one point from safety with 10 games left to save themselves.

Steven Taylor's first half own goal started the collapse and Josh King made it two before Ayoze Perez gave Newcastle hope.

That proved a false dawn as Charlie Daniels' stoppage-time strike condemned Newcastle to a third successive defeat that triggered a torrent of abuse for McClaren and his players from Newcastle's disgruntled fans.

Newcastle had early chances, with Emmanuel Riviere just failing to connect with Moussa Sissoko's early cross and skipper Jonjo Shelvey firing narrowly wide from 20 yards, but once the visitors settled, it was they who set the tempo.

Benik Afobe volleyed over after controlling Adam Smith's cross on his chest, and might have done better after Matt Ritchie's pass had sparked a lightning break.

But the deadlock was broken in the 28th minute when Max Gradel's quick footwork allowed him to feed the ball out to King and his cross was deflected past Rob Elliot by Taylor.

Taylor almost made amends for his own goal on the stroke of half-time when he surged forward and controlled Riviere's cross before his shot was blocked just wide.

Riviere was replaced by Aleksandar Mitrovic at the break, but the visitors might have increased their lead within six minutes of the restart when Elliot got down well to parry Smith's drive.

The Cherries were utterly dominant with their hosts clinging on for dear life,

although Mitrovic went close with a curling 61st-minute effort which beat keeper Artur Boruc, but also the far post.

Boruc then had to turn away Daryl Janmaat's stinging 64th-minute drive. But the game was over with 20 minutes remaining when King ran on to Ritchie's through-ball and lashed a shot past Elliot into the roof of the net.

Perez gave the home side hope when he reduced the deficit with 10 minutes remaining, but Daniels powered a shot past the helpless Elliot to leave McClaren sweating over his future. — AFP

### Live Matches on TV (Local Timings)

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE		
Crystal Palace v Liverpool	16:30	beIN SPORTS 2 HD
West Bromwich v Man United	19:00	beIN SPORTS 2 HD
SPANISH LEAGUE		
Real Betis v Granada CF	14:00	beIN SPORTS 3 HD
SD Eibar v FC Barcelona	18:00	beIN SPORTS 3 HD
Real Sociedad v Levante	20:15	beIN SPORTS
Sporting Gijon v de Bilbao	20:15	beIN SPORTS
Valencia v Atletico de Madrid	22:30	beIN SPORTS 3 HD
ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE		
Torino FC v SS Lazio	14:30	beIN SPORTS 4 HD
Atalanta v Juventus	17:00	beIN SPORTS 4 HD
Bologna FC v Carpi	17:00	beIN SPORTS
Genoa CFC v Empoli	17:00	beIN SPORTS 9 HD
Frosinone v Udinese Calcio	17:00	beIN SPORTS 8 HD
Sassuolo Calcio v AC Milan	17:00	beIN SPORTS 1 HD
Inter v Citta di Palermo	22:45	beIN SPORTS 4 HD
GERMAN BUNDESLIGA		
FSV Mainz 05 v Darmstadt	17:30	beIN SPORTS
Hamburger v Hertha Berlin	19:30	beIN SPORTS
FRENCH LEAGUE		
de Marseille v Toulouse	16:00	beIN SPORTS 6 HD
Stade Rennes v Nantes	19:00	beIN SPORTS
Lyonnais v Guingamp	23:00	beIN SPORTS

## STOKE EARN POINT IN DRAW AT CHELSEA



**LONDON:** Mame Diouf secured a late point for Stoke City at Chelsea yesterday, heading home an 85th-minute goal after goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois could only punch at Xherdan Shaqiri's dangerous cross.

The champions had gone ahead in the 39th minute through Burkino Faso striker Bertrand Traore, leading the line in place of the injured Diego Costa, who turned and sent a pinpoint shot into the corner of Jack Butland's net.

Chelsea's Brazilian duo Willian and Oscar both had good chances saved by Butland and Courtois had to dive full length to tip a Shaqiri shot round the post in the 58th minute.

The result kept Chelsea in 10th place, three points and three places behind Stoke, and maintained interim manager Guus Hiddink's unbeaten record in domestic competitions since he took over from Jose Mourinho in December. — Reuters



**LONDON:** Stoke City's English goalkeeper Jack Butland (L) makes a save from Chelsea's English midfielder Ruben Loftus-Cheek during the English Premier League football match between Chelsea and Stoke City at Stamford Bridge in London yesterday. — AFP

# Sports

Kuwait bags two gold in Amir's shooting competition

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Djokovic beaten as Murray brothers win

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GIBBS, IDP EDUCATION CREATE HISTORY FOR KC FINALS Page 17



LONDON: Watford's Nathan Ake heads the ball while Leicester's Wes Morgan, right, competes during the English Premier League soccer match between Watford and Leicester City at the Vicarage Road stadium in London, yesterday. —AP

## MAHREZ MAGIC KEEPS LEICESTER FLYING HIGH



**WATFORD:** Leicester took a five-point lead at the top of the Premier League as a wonderful strike by Riyad Mahrez sealed a 1-0 at Watford yesterday that boosted their hopes of a fairytale title triumph.

Algeria winger Mahrez blasted an unstoppable shot into the top corner in the 56th minute for his 15th goal of a brilliant season. That clinched a 17th win of the campaign for the Foxes, who took full advantage of a 2-2 draw for title rivals Tottenham

and Arsenal earlier yesterday. Victory took Claudio Ranieri's men five points clear of second placed Tottenham and eight ahead of Arsenal in third with only nine games standing between the Foxes and a truly incredible title success.

Mahrez also has 11 assists this season to go with his impressive tally of goals and his latest moment of inspiration kept Leicester firmly in pole position.

Leicester signalled their intentions early on when a direct, forward pass by Marc Albrighton sent Jamie Vardy racing through on goal and forced Watford keeper Heurelho Gomes into a vital interception.

The visitors forced a corner soon afterwards and looked dangerous when Watford failed to clear it properly. The ball fell to Christian Fuchs just outside the penalty and the defender saw his low shot beaten away by Gomes.

There was a scare for the home side,

however, when Nathan Ake rose above Wes Morgan in the 11th minute to meet a right-wing free-kick and his header skimmed the top of Kasper Schmeichel's crossbar.

Leicester were pressing relentlessly and they forced another error that led to a chance for Vardy. The England forward latched onto another ball over the top by Albrighton but fired wide of the far post from a difficult angle.

Ranieri thought his side were ahead in the 23rd minute when Vardy stole possession and fed Mahrez before bursting to the near post to meet the midfielder's cross.

But the normally lethal striker fired wastefully into the side netting when he should have broken the deadlock.

### RESHAPED

Watford should then have broken the deadlock three minutes later when Odion Ighalo's cross from the right found captain

Troy Deeney, but his shot deflected through to a grateful Schmeichel.

After a scrappy spell in the run-up to half-time, Danny Simpson swung in a cross from the Leicester right after the Foxes kept alive a poor corner but captain Wes Morgan headed straight at Gomes.

Schmeichel had to race out of the area to head away from the onrushing Deeney in the final minute of the half following an under-hit header by Morgan.

Ranieri made a double change at half-time with Jeff Schlupp and Andy King introduced in a reshaped system.

But it was the home side who threatened first when Mario Suarez found himself on the edge of the box but his shot flew straight at Gomes.

Danny Drinkwater then found the ball at his feet 20 yards from the Watford goal after a smart Leicester passing move but he fired wide.

But the deadlock was broken on 56 minutes in spectacular style. Fuchs' cross from the left was half-cleared by the head of Jose Holebas, but Mahrez picked up possession just inside the area and lashed a wonderful effort into the top corner.

Gomes then made an important save from a Robert Huth header and Ake cleared crucially from inside his own goalmouth as Leicester tried to press home their advantage. Mahrez carved out another chance for himself with some fine footwork on the edge of the box, but his curling shot went through to Gomes.

The Foxes should have been punished for some hesitant defending with 10 minutes to go when the ball bounced around their box and fell for Ighalo, but the striker headed straight at Schmeichel. And Hornets substitute Almen Abdi lashed a shot a fraction wide as Leicester became nervous. —AFP

## AGUERO DOUBLE FIRES SLICK CITY TO VICTORY



**MANCHESTER:** Sergio Aguero scored twice as Manchester City ended a run of three successive Premier League defeats with a 4-0 demolition of bottom club Aston Villa at Eastlands yesterday.

Manuel Pellegrini's side made heavy weather of the opening 45 minutes, but struck twice early in the second half to maintain their place in the top four and keep alive their slender hopes of winning the title. Yaya Toure side-footed in the opener before Aguero added a second as an attempted clearance by former City defender Micah Richards rebounded in off him.

Aguero made it three with a sublime finish, but then hit the post with a penalty after Raheem Sterling tapped in a fourth.

Villa are now nine points from safety after a fourth successive defeat and appear certain to play in

the second tier next season for the first time since 1988. Pellegrini switched from 4-2-3-1 to a 4-4-2 line-up in an attempt to put early pressure on Villa, with Wilfried Bony making his first start since Boxing Day as he joined Aguero up front.

Pellegrini's side, though, lacked urgency against visitors who defended deeply, often pulling all 11 players back into their own third of the field.

Both of City's strikers had chances in the opening quarter-of-an-hour, with Aguero showing a sublime first touch to control Ferdinand's angled chip, before cutting inside Aly Cissokho and lifting a shot goalwards from close range, with keeper Brad Guzan nudging it over the bar.

Bony had a clear opening as he raced between defenders towards Gael Clichy's low cross, but could not quite stretch enough and saw the ball skim wide off his boot. Guzan was sharp to push aside a snapshot from Aguero, who then drove across goal and wide after collecting Bony's angled return pass. Villa, though, were not without threat, and Joe Hart had to get down quickly to turn Jordan Ayew's 20-yard shot around his near post after Ciaran Clark's persistence had



MANCHESTER: Aston Villa's Scottish defender Alan Hutton (L) vies with Manchester City's English midfielder Raheem Sterling during the English Premier League football match between Manchester City and Aston Villa yesterday. — AFP

created an opening. City's frustrating first half was summed up when Bony found space to meet David Silva's corner, and planted his header around 10 yards wide.

The second half proved more satisfying for the home side, who were in front less than three minutes after the restart. Aguero darted to the byline and cut a pass back to Silva, who played the ball square for Toure to stroke it into the corner of the net.

A second goal quickly arrived, with the struggling Bony able to claim an assist. The Ivory Coast inter-

national's through pass undid Villa's defence, with Richards slicing his attempted clearance off the shins of the chasing Aguero and into the net.

If that goal had an element of fortune about it, the Argentina international followed it up with a beautifully-constructed third, chipping down Silva's chipped return pass and drilling a shot past Guzan. At that point, with the game won, Pellegrini brought off Bony and sent on Sterling, who was seeking to atone for a poor performance against his former club Liverpool on Wednesday. — AFP

## TOTTENHAM, ARSENAL SHARE THE SPOILS IN CRUNCH DERBY



**LONDON:** Alexis Sanchez earned Arsenal a point in a pulsating North London derby at White Hart Lane after Tottenham Hotspur had looked set to join Leicester City at the top of the Premier League table yesterday.

Tottenham had come from behind to turn the game on its head early in the second half and when Harry Kane's majestic strike put them ahead after 61 minutes it seemed Tottenham would top the table from Leicester City for a few hours at least.

In the end, the 2-2 draw was just about a fair result as Arsenal showed plenty of fight after playing most of the second half with 10 men after Francis Coquelin was dismissed for a second booking.

Tottenham, bidding for a first title since 1961, remained in second place on 55 points, three ahead of Arsenal. Leicester, who play later at Watford, have 57.

Arsenal, reeling after two consecutive league defeats, went in front against the run of play shortly before halftime when

Aaron Ramsey beat Hugo Lloris with a deft flick from Bellerin's ball into the area.

When Coquelin was sent off after a foul on Kane in the 55th minute, Tottenham sensed their chance and were denied an equaliser when Kane's close-range effort was kept out by David Ospina—television replays showing the ball just failed to cross the line.

The hosts did not have to wait much longer to draw level though. A corner found its way to central defender Toby Alderweireld at the far post and he lashed in from close range.

Kane then took his goal tally for the season to 20 with an effort worthy of winning any game. Picking up the ball near the corner flag he advanced towards the area before curling a sublime shot past Ospina.

Kane was inches wide with another chance as Tottenham went for a third but the hosts were stunned when Bellerin expertly picked out the otherwise anonymous Sanchez who beat Lloris with clinical precision to end a run of 11 league games without a goal.

The biggest North London derby in years could have gone either way in a nervy finale. Arsenal defender Gabriel almost sliced a cross into his own net and then in stoppage time Ramsey looked set to fire a dramatic winner before a goal-saving tackle by Kevin Wimmer. — Reuters

# Kuwait Times BUSINESS

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KFH diamond sponsor of Kuwait Investment Forum on March 8-9

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Frenzied property buying in Shanghai fuels bubble fears

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## IRAN AND TURKEY AIM TO TRIPLE TRADE TO \$30BN

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BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping is displayed on a large screen during the opening session of the annual National People's Congress in Beijing's Great Hall of the People yesterday. — AP

# CHINA CUTS 2016 GROWTH TARGET TO 7%

### LEADERSHIP SEEKS TO QUELL ANXIETY OVER SLOWING ECONOMY

BEIJING: China's leadership tried to quell anxiety about its slowing economy following financial turmoil and rising labor unrest as it cut its growth target yesterday and promised to open the oil and telecom industries to private competitors in sweeping industrial reforms. Premier Li Keqiang announced a growth target of 6.5 to 7 percent in a report to the national legislature on Beijing's plans for the year. That was down from last year's "about 7 percent" and reflects the ruling Communist Party's marathon efforts to replace a worn-out model based on trade and investment with more self-sustaining growth driven by consumer spending.

Li, the country's top economic official, warned that China faces "more and tougher problems," including weak export demand. But he expressed confidence that communist leaders can maintain stable growth. "China has laid a solid material foundation and its economy is hugely resilient," the premier said in an address to nearly 3,000 delegates to the National People's Congress, a 12-day affair that kicked off Saturday. "As long as we work together as one to surmount all difficulties, we will definitely achieve the targets for economic and social development in 2016."

In a wide-ranging speech lasting nearly two hours, Li said Beijing will "oppose separatist activities" in Taiwan, the self-ruled island China claims as part of its territory. He announced no new initiatives following the recent election of Taiwanese President Tsai Ying-wen, who takes office in May.

#### Military spending

A separate budget report released yesterday confirmed that military spending will rise 7.6 percent, which comes at a time of tensions with China's neighbors over disputed portions of the South China Sea. The military budget of 954 billion yuan (\$146.5 billion) keeps China in second place in global defense spending behind the United States.

The premier promised more measures to clean up China's badly polluted air, water and soil, and more spending on science and industrial research and development to create technology and better-paying jobs. Chinese leaders are struggling to reassure the public and global markets about their ability to steer the world's second-largest economy following a plunge in stock prices and currency turmoil. Spreading protests by laid-off workers have fueled questions about whether Beijing can manage its ambitious economic transition.

The latest growth target is the minimum Chinese leaders say is required to achieve the official goal of doubling average incomes from 2010 levels by 2020. Economists warn anything higher could set back reforms by forcing Beijing to prop up growth with more wasteful investment.

Last year's economic growth declined to a 25-year low of 6.9 percent. Private sector forecasts suggest even achieving Li's lower target will be a challenge. The International Monetary Fund expects this year's growth to drift down to 6.3 percent.

The party's reform plans require it to cut the dominance of state companies that dominate industries from banking and telecommunications to oil and steel, and give entrepreneurs a bigger role.

Li promised to open electric power, telecommunications, transportation, oil, natural gas and municipal utilities to private competition, though he failed to say whether foreign companies might be allowed in. He said private companies would receive the same treatment as state-owned enterprises in project approval, finance and tax policy.

#### Deepening reform

"We must deepen reform across the board," the premier said. He said the market "must play a decisive role." Delegates to the ceremonial legislature, which routinely endorses ruling party plans in near-unanimous votes, praised the plans.

"If the 6.5 to 7 percent growth should be solid and real, I think it's very acceptable," said Liu Gexin, a delegate from Sichuan province in the southwest. Others were more breathlessly enthusiastic. "It's an exhilarating report. It's a mobilization order," said delegate Zhu Liangyu from Beijing. "I completely agree with it." Li promised to open service and manufacturing industries wider to foreign investors, but gave no details. He promised that regulations would be made "more fair, transparent and predictable" to attract investment. Business groups have complained that Chinese regulators are hampering access to promising sectors in violation of free-trading pledges.

Much of China's slowdown has been self-imposed as regulators clamped down on a building boom and nurtured retailing, tourism and other service industries. An unexpectedly sharp downturn over the past two years has raised the risk of politically dangerous job losses and prompted Beijing to shore up growth with mini-stimulus efforts. Despite repeated official denials, widespread expectations that Beijing will weaken its yuan to boost exports that forecasters say shrank by as much as 20 percent in February has driven an outflow of capital that spiked to a record \$135 billion in December.

This past week, Moody's Investors Service cut its outlook on China's government credit rating from stable to negative, citing rising debt, capital outflows and "uncertainty about the authorities' capacity to implement reforms."

In comments Friday reported by the government's Xinhua News Agency, a Chinese deputy

finance minister retorted that Moody's was wrong and shortsighted. Communist leaders have tried to shift public attention away from the growth target. They say their priority is jobs and so long as the economy generates enough, they will accept slower growth.

The downturn and Beijing's reforms have wiped out jobs in mining, steelmaking and other industries. Retailing, e-commerce and other service industries are growing and absorbing some idled workers, but others are struggling to find work. The government says the economy created 13 million new jobs last year, but has not said how many were lost. The China Labor Bulletin, a research group in Hong Kong, reported 2,606 labor

disputes last year, nearly twice as many as 2014's 1,379.

The premier pledged to boost consumption in areas such as elder care and health services and to link traditional businesses to the Internet. China has the world's biggest population of Internet users, and investors are pouring billions of dollars into developing online and smartphone-based ventures for food delivery, movie ticketing, travel and other services.

The government hopes such services can help propel consumption that grew to 44.5 percent of the economy last year from 2014's 36.8 percent.

Li said the government hopes to generate at least 10 million new jobs this year as part of plans

to create 50 million in the five years through 2020. The premier pledged to accelerate "supply-side reform," or the painful process of shrinking bloated industries from steel to cement and aluminum. That glut has led to price-cutting wars that are driving companies into bankruptcy. Steel producers have responded by exporting their surplus, prompting complaints by China's trading partners.

Li said Beijing will promote mergers and shut down "zombie enterprises" - companies that are kept afloat by cheap loans from state banks. The premier said targets will include the coal and steel industries, for which plans already were announced in February, but didn't give details of other sectors that will be affected. — AP

## MOODY'S MAINTAINS KUWAIT'S CREDIT RATING AT AA2

KUWAIT: Moody's Investors Service has placed Kuwait's Aa2 long-term issuer rating on review for downgrade. During the review, Moody's will assess the extent of the impact of the further sharp fall in oil prices, which Moody's expects to remain low for several years, on Kuwait's economic performance and the balance sheet of its government in the coming years.

In particular, the review will allow Moody's to determine the extent to which Kuwait's economic and fiscal strength insulate it from the need to take a rating action to reflect the impact of the price shock.

Moody's expects to complete the review within two months, according to a statement released by the agency on Friday. Kuwait is highly dependent on hydrocarbons to drive economic growth and to finance government expenditure.

Oil and gas accounted for over 90 percent of total goods exports and roughly 63 percent of nominal GDP in 2014, the latest date for which full-year official statistics are available. It also provides around 77 percent of total government revenues. Between September 2014 and September 2015, the oil price roughly halved. Since then, it has fallen a further 40 percent. Moody's recently revised its oil price assumptions for Brent to \$33 per barrel in 2016 and \$38 per barrel in 2017, rising only slowly thereafter to \$48 by 2019.

The structural shock to the oil market is weakening Kuwait's government balance sheet and its economy, and therefore also its credit profile.

#### Fiscal balance

Moody's projects that between 2013 and

2015, revenue as a percentage of GDP declined by 17.5 percentage points and the fiscal balance turned into a deficit of 1.1 percent of GDP in 2015 from a surplus of almost 35 percent in 2013. Moody's estimates that, during the same period, the country's current account surplus relative to GDP fell to six percent from around 40 percent, and nominal GDP contracted by more than 30 percent. Assuming a limited policy response, the depressed oil prices for the coming years would imply a further reduction in government revenues of around 16 percent in 2016 and only a gradual recovery thereafter, with total revenues only recovering to 2009 levels in nominal terms by the end of 2019.

With average annual expenditure growth of about 4.5 percent per year between 2016 and 2019, this would result in an average fiscal deficit of around five percent of GDP for the time period.

Assuming a funding mix of 80 percent via debt issuance and 20 percent from government reserves, this would imply a rise in Kuwait's general government debt stock to around 25 percent of GDP by 2019, up from 7.6 percent in 2014. That would shift Moody's assessment of the government's fiscal strength to 'Very High' from 'Very High (+)'.  
Set against that negative impact, the government retains very significant financial buffers.

While transparency is limited, Moody's estimates that total government assets managed by Kuwait Investment Authority amounted to around \$580 billion (or roughly five times of estimated 2015 GDP).  
In addition, foreign currency reserves at the

Central Bank of Kuwait were \$25.7 billion at the end of 2015. Kuwait operates a slightly more flexible exchange rate system than its Gulf Cooperation Council peers. The Kuwaiti dinar is pegged to a basket of currencies, rather than to the US dollar. However, while no official basket composition is published, it is likely to be dominated by the US dollar. During 2015, the Kuwaiti dinar has depreciated by about 3.7 percent against the US dollar, but has gained about 1.2 percent since beginning of the year. As such, the impact from currency depreciation on the local currency value of the government's hydrocarbon revenues has been very limited.

However, foreign exchange reserves at the Central Bank of Kuwait have fallen to \$25.7 billion in December 2015, from \$29.3 billion a year earlier, thereby reducing Kuwait's external buffers against future shocks somewhat. The government has introduced a limited number of measures to mitigate the impact of low oil prices on its economy and balance sheet, such as a partial fuel subsidy reform in early 2015, and reduced allowances for government entities' travel expenses and overseas medical treatment for Kuwaiti nationals. While it has stated its intention to consider wider-reaching fiscal reforms, including further subsidy rationalization, prioritization of capital projects, and revenue-enhancing tax reforms, there is little clarity on the likely content or effectiveness of these measures.

The rating review will allow Moody's to assess the credibility and sustainability of those plans and the government's ability to mitigate the impact on its credit standing. — KUNA

# WHY YOU NEED AN ONLINE PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

**W**e all know the MENA's top employers post jobs on Bayt.com and search its industry-leading CVs database, but did you know they also check out potential candidates on the Bayt.com People platform? Creating a searchable public profile on Bayt.com is free, easy and takes only an instant if you already have a complete CV.

The career experts at Bayt.com, the Middle East's leading job site, give you 4 reasons why you should have an online public profile:

**1. It's personal**

Think of it as your online business card.

You can tailor it any way you like and it can be accessed by a treasure trove of potential contacts including future employers, clients, consultants and peers. You can also ask friends and colleagues and get referrals and recommendations to make it even snazzier. Whatever personal/professional brand you wish to convey to the outside world, Bayt.com People is your ideal platform to do so and it can be done easily and instantaneously.

**2. You stand on the shoulder of giants**

Since its inception in 2000, Bayt.com has been catering to the very specific needs of the MENA region and is favoured today by

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the region's top employers large and small. Professionals familiar with the Bayt.com brand are used to the extremely user-friendly technologies and the constant aggressive growth in the number of tools and the extent of functionality available to them. Expect Bayt.com People to further evolve continuously - and fast!

**3. Employers are looking for you today**

With more and more employers sourcing candidates and hiring online this is one pioneering professional branding opportunity

you cannot do without. Whether you are actively looking for a job or a passive candidate simply interested in hearing about lucrative opportunities there is no better way to have your eyes and ears to the market and be noticed for relevant opportunities. Today's fresh crop of HR managers are very comfortable using the internet to source screen and research potential hires and are doing so in droves, so it is crucial your personal brand is at the forefront in your choice of both positioning and platform. In fact, 61 percent of respondents who took part in the Bayt.com 'Personal Branding in the MENA' poll, September 2013, said that their companies always check the profiles of

new recruits online before hiring them.

**4. It's versatile and free**

The Bayt.com People platform is designed with usability in mind and is extremely versatile and user-friendly. You can make changes to your Bayt.com public profile as your experiences, achievements, objectives and preferences evolve anytime, online and for free. Whether you are looking for a client, an employer, a reference or a catch-up with old friends and work colleagues, the Bayt.com People platform ensures your professional profile can be easily found and is in the exact professional shape you prefer.



BEIJING: Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, center, walks past Chinese President Xi Jinping, at right, to deliver a work report for the opening session of the annual National People's Congress in Beijing's Great Hall of the People yesterday. — AP

## EU COMMISSIONER LAUDS CYPRUS' COMMITMENT TO BAILOUT REFORMS

**NICOSIA, Cyprus:** With Cyprus poised to conclude a three-year rescue program this month, a top European Commission official praised the country's commitment to pushing through key reforms and quickly turning its economy around despite dour economic projections.

EU Commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis put it down to the eurozone country's "consistent implementation of structural reforms" for getting its economy growing again after nearly going bankrupt. "I would say this is really this determined reform effort by the government," Dombrovskis said after talks with Cypriot Finance Minister Harris Georgiades.

Cyprus received a 10 billion euro lifeline in March 2013 that forced a seizure of uninsured deposits in its two largest banks and shuttered the smaller lender. The so-called haircut crushed confidence in the banking sector and forced authorities to impose capital controls that were fully lifted two years later.

Dombrovskis said the Cypriot economy is projected to grow by 1.5 percent in 2016 for the second year running and by 2 percent next year. He said thanks to Cyprus "systematically over-performing" on its fiscal targets, the country is forecast to see a modest general government surplus of 0.1 percent this year, while the public debt is expected to fall just below 100 percent of gross domestic product.

Dombrovskis said "it takes some time" to see the benefits from tough reforms, but Cyprus has joined the ranks of other countries that successfully saw through their res-

cue program like Ireland which he said now has the fastest growing economy in Europe.

The EU official urged Cypriot authorities to stay the course on reforms, despite wrapping up its rescue program. "It's not the end of the road, it's actually very important to stay on course and continue with structural reform efforts and continue with responsible fiscal policies," Dombrovskis said.

Georgiades called the end of the program "a new beginning" to further reform the Cypriot economy and stay "clear of the mistakes of the past."

Georgiades said he's confident that Cyprus' credit rating will be upgraded to investment-grade status, although he stressed that the country has already established access to markets.

Cyprus still faces major hurdles in fixing its economy. Although dropping, unemployment still hovers at around 15 percent - huge for a country that for years enjoyed near-perfect employment conditions.

Another challenge is that nearly half of all bank loans are sour, giving Cyprus world-leader status in bad loans, according to some officials. Cyprus Banks Association Director Michael Kammass said an overhaul of the banking system with new supervision and control rules, downsizing and loan restructurings, have helped to recover lost confidence.

Another factor that has substantially raised the demand for banking services is a significant increase in the number of foreign companies setting up regional headquarters in Cyprus, Kammass said. — AP

# IMF TO IDENTIFY HOLDINGS OF YUAN IN RESERVES SURVEYS

**WASHINGTON:** The International Monetary Fund said on Friday it will separately identify China's yuan currency in its official foreign exchange reserves database starting Oct. 1, a move prompted by the yuan's new status in the Fund's reserve currency basket.

The move will aid China's effort to secure a bigger role for its currency, also known as the renminbi, by revealing quarterly reserve hold-

ings of yuan among the 188 IMF member countries.

Last November, the IMF agreed to include the yuan in its Special Drawing Rights basket after determining that it is "freely usable."

Friday's move means the renminbi will join the other currencies that are separately identified in the IMF's quarterly survey of foreign exchange reserves: the US dollar, euro, yen,

pound sterling, Swiss franc, Australian dollar and Canadian dollar. All other currencies are lumped together.

"IMF member countries will be able to record as official reserves their holdings of RMB denominated external assets that are readily available for meeting balance of payments financing needs," the Fund said in a statement. The change will be effective in time for the fourth quarter survey to be published in March 2017, the IMF said.

**Overcapacity**

China will resolve overcapacity in industry, with a focus on the steel and coal sectors, and appropriately deal with "zombie" companies this year, Premier Li Keqiang said in remarks prepared for delivery at the opening of the annual meeting of parliament.

Li reiterated yesterday that the exchange rate of the yuan, also known as the renminbi, would be kept basically stable this year, while Beijing would continue to improve the exchange rate regime.

The government would strengthen macro prudential management of foreign debt and take measures to prevent regional systemic risk, Li said. On stock markets, Li said the government would launch the Shenzhen-Hong Kong stock connect scheme at "an appropriate time". — Reuters

## FACTS ABOUT CHINA'S 2016-2020 GROWTH PLAN

**BEIJING:** China yesterday published the draft of its 13th Five-Year Plan, a blueprint for economic and social development over the 2016-2020 period. Such plans are a legacy of China's command economy era but still guide policymakers, and the 148-page document is due to be approved by the ongoing National People's Congress, the country's Communist-controlled parliament.

**Here are some main targets listed in the draft plan.**

1. To grow China's economy, the world's second-largest, by an average of at least 6.5 percent a year over the period. Gross domestic product (GDP) to go from 67.7 trillion yuan (\$10.4 trillion) last year to more than 92.7 trillion yuan in 2020.

2. The service sector to account for 56 percent of GDP by 2020, up from 50.5 percent in 2015.

3. To cap total energy consumption under five billion tonnes equivalent of coal by 2020, compared with 4.3 billion tonnes equivalent of coal last year.

4. To cut energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions per unit of

GDP by 15 percent and 18 percent respectively from 2015 levels by 2020.

5. City air quality to be rated "good" or better at least 80 percent of the time by 2020, up from 76.7 percent in 2015.

6. To raise installed nuclear power capacity to 58 gigawatts by 2020, when another 30 gigawatts are scheduled to be under construction. Currently, 28.3 gigawatts are installed, with 26.7 under construction.

7. To expand the high-speed railway network to 30,000 kilometres (around 18,600 miles) by 2020, from 19,000 kilometres last year, and build at least 50 new civilian airports.

8. To boost per capita disposable income by 6.5 percent or higher every year. The figure grew by 7.4 percent in 2015.

9. To create a total of 50 million jobs in urban areas over the five years.

10. Permanent urban residents to make up 60 percent of China's total population by 2020, up from 56.1 percent last year. The proportion of people with urban "hukou", or household registration, is to reach 45 percent of the total population. — AFP

## IRAN AND TURKEY AIM TO TRIPLE TRADE TO \$30BN

**TEHRAN:** Iran and Turkey aim to triple their annual trade to \$30 billion within two years, officials said in Tehran yesterday, despite the two countries being at odds over fighting in Syria.

Following last year's nuclear deal with world powers Iran is being targeted by Europe as a new market but Turkey is also seeking to cash in after the end of most international sanctions on Iran.

Visiting the Iranian capital, Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu met Iran's first vice president Eshaq Jahangiri. "We have set a target of \$30 billion for our trade," Jahangiri said in a press briefing broadcast on state television, outlining a two year timeframe for upping the figure from its current \$10 billion.

Trade between Turkey and Iran slipped from \$15 billion to around \$10 billion in the past 12 months, with less imports reaching Tehran.

Iran sells gas to Turkey and an increase in exports is one of the topics that should be discussed during Davutoglu's trip. The trade target comes after tensions rose between Turkey and Iran over the war in Syria after Ankara shot down a Russian fighter plane last year.

Russia and Iran back Syrian President Bashar al-Assad while Turkey has sought his removal and supported rebels fighting to overthrow the Damascus regime. Jahangiri acknowledged that Iran has "differences" with Turkey on regional issues. — AFP

## EXCHANGE RATES

**AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.**

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.651
Indian Rupees	4.506
Pakistani Rupees	2.879
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.086
Nepali Rupees	2.746
Singapore Dollar	220.960
Hongkong Dollar	38.836
Bangladesh Taka	3.844
Philippine Peso	6.428
Thai Baht	8.535

GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	80.443
Qatari Riyal	82.864
Omani Riyal	783.524
Bahraini Dinar	801.120
UAE Dirham	82.130

ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	35.330
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	38.571
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.408
Tunisian Dinar	148.850
Jordanian Dinar	425.160
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	0.201
Syrian Lira	2.150
Morocco Dirham	31.082

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	301.500
Euro	334.970
Sterling Pound	432.200
Canadian dollar	228.150
Turkish lira	104.130
Swiss Franc	306.560
Australian Dollar	227.330
US Dollar Buying	300.300

GOLD	
20 Gram	249.880
10 Gram	127.860
5 Gram	64.770

**UAE EXCHANGE CENTRE WLL**

CURRENCIES	TELEX TRANSFER PER 1000
Australian Dollar	201.91
Canadian Dollar	219.82
Swiss Franc	306.95
Euro	336.85
US Dollar	299.90
Sterling Pound	431.04
Japanese Yen	2.67
Bangladesh Taka	3.817
Indian Rupee	4.375
Sri Lankan Rupee	2.083
Nepali Rupee	2.732
Pakistani Rupee	2.860
UAE Dirhams	0.08161
Bahraini Dinar	0.7970
Egyptian Pound	0.03819
Jordanian Dinar	0.4265
Omani Riyal	0.7788
Qatari Riyal	0.08269
Saudi Riyal	0.07994

**DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD**

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	301.750
Canadian Dollar	226.610
Sterling Pound	422.300
Euro	328.765
Swiss Frank	302.320
Bahrain Dinar	798.280
UAE Dirhams	82.395
Qatari Riyals	83.605

Saudi Riyals	81.145
Jordanian Dinar	425.070
Egyptian Pound	38.425
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.088
Indian Rupees	4.457
Pakistani Rupees	2.874
Bangladesh Taka	3.838
Philippines Peso	6.373
Cyprus pound	574.735
Japanese Yen	3.640
Syrian Pound	2.370
Nepalese Rupees	3.780
Malaysian Ringgit	73.300
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	46.420
Thai Bhat	9.450
Turkish Lira	102.800

**BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY**

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
<b>Europe</b>		
British Pound	0.422189	0.431189
Czech Korune	0.004289	0.016289
Danish Krone	0.040525	0.045525
Euro	0.326181	0.334181
Norwegian Krone	0.031485	0.036685
Romanian Leu	0.086486	0.086486
Slovakia	0.008965	0.018965
Swedish Krona	0.031547	0.036547
Swiss Franc	0.297685	0.307885
Turkish Lira	0.097924	0.108224
<b>Australasia</b>		
Australian Dollar	0.216246	0.227745
New Zealand Dollar	0.199597	0.209097
<b>America</b>		
Canadian Dollar	0.221250	0.229750
US Dollars	0.297400	0.301900

US Dollars Mint	0.297900	0.301900
<b>Asia</b>		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003456	0.004056
Chinese Yuan	0.044777	0.048277
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036800	0.039550
Indian Rupee	0.004197	0.004587
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002578	0.002578
Kenyan Shilling	0.003016	0.003016
Korean Won	0.000240	0.000255
Malaysian Ringgit	0.069366	0.075366
Nepalese Rupee	0.002858	0.003028
Pakistan Rupee	0.002703	0.002983
Philippine Peso	0.006335	0.006615
Sierra Leone	0.000071	0.000077
Singapore Dollar	0.216114	0.222114
South African Rand	0.013538	0.022038
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001704	0.002284
Taiwan	0.009085	0.009265
Thai Baht	0.0085704	0.0086254

<b>Arab</b>		
Bahraini Dinar	0.793061	0.801061
Egyptian Pound	0.033300	0.037636
Iranian Riyal	0.000083	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000194	0.000254
Jordanian Dinar	0.421234	0.428734
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000149	0.000249
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020519	0.044519
Nigerian Naira	0.001241	0.001876
Omani Riyal	0.776697	0.782377
Qatar Riyal	0.082103	0.083316
Saudi Riyal	0.079513	0.080463
Syrian Pound	0.001277	0.001497
Tunisian Dinar	0.144212	0.153212
Turkish Lira	0.097924	0.108224
UAE Dirhams	0.081106	0.082255
Yemeni Riyal	0.001362	0.001442

# CLINTON CALLS FOR 'CREDIBLE' ECONOMIC PLAN

**DETROIT:** Hillary Clinton said Friday the nation needs a "new bargain" for the economy and called upon all the presidential candidates to offer a "credible strategy" for raising wages as her primary race against rival Bernie Sanders shifts to a series of Rust Belt contests.

Clinton's address at Detroit Manufacturing Systems, a manufacturer of instrument panels for cars, offered her the opportunity to contrast herself with both Sanders and business mogul Donald Trump, the leading Republican candidate. "Anyone running for president owes it to you to come up with real ideas, not an ideology, not an old set of talking points but a credible strategy designed for the world we live in now," Clinton said in remarks pointed at both rivals.

Speaking Friday night at a rally in western Michigan, Sanders repeated his charge that Clinton has backed trade deals that have had "disastrous" consequences for workers. He has sought to diminish her standing by implying she waffled when she initially called the Trans Pacific Partnership trade as the "gold standard" as secretary of state but later opposed the deal.

"It's not just the loss of jobs that resulted from these trade agreements," Sanders said. "Right now in manufacturing plants in Michigan, many of the new jobs that are being created are paying substantially less than the older jobs because companies are

saying, 'If you do not accept these low wages, we are going to move to China or Mexico.'"

In her address, Clinton called for a so-called "clawback" of tax benefits for companies that ship jobs overseas, rescinding tax relief and other incentives intended to encourage domestic investment. Revenue raised by this "clawback" would then be used to support investment in the United States.

Clinton made clear to differentiate with Republicans, saying there were "so many insults" at Thursday night's Republican debate "it was hard to keep track." She said the "biggest insult of all was to the American people" and the economy was an "afterthought" during the Republican debate.

The Republican National Committee accused Clinton of promising a "trillion-dollar tax hike" and "four more years of Obamanomics." The Democrats' focus on manufacturing jobs and trade policy is forming the backdrop for Michigan's primary and contests on March 15 in Ohio, Illinois and Missouri amid global economic weakness.

President Barack Obama's decision to rescue the US automakers still reverberates through the nation's manufacturing belt, but many communities have struggled with the shift of factory jobs to Mexico and Asia. Trailing Clinton in the chase for delegates, Sanders has ratcheted up his criticism of her past support for trade deals, including the North American Free Trade Agreement and



**DETROIT:** Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton speaks to workers at the Detroit Manufacturing Systems facility in Detroit, Michigan. — AFP

normalizing trade relations with China. Both were signed by President Bill Clinton while she was first lady. Including superdelegates, Clinton now leads Sanders 1,066 to 432, according to the latest Associated Press delegate count. It takes 2,383 delegates to win.

Clinton said on trade the next president would need "judgment and experience" and she would not support any deal unless it creates good jobs, raises wages and protects the nation's security.

She also sought to undercut Sanders' cre-

ditionals on the economy, accusing the senator of failing to produce a detailed plan to promote manufacturing and pointed to his past opposition to the federal Export-Import Bank, which makes and guarantees loans to help foreign customers buy US goods. — AP



**SHANGHAI:** Home prices in Shanghai, China's biggest financial hub, climbed 3.6 percent in February from the previous month, according to a survey.

## FRENZIED PROPERTY BUYING IN SHANGHAI FUELS BUBBLE FEARS

HOMES PRICES JUMP 17.5% IN YEAR THROUGH JANUARY

**HONG KONG/SHANGHAI:** Frenzied property buying in Shanghai has set alarm bells ringing that a new bubble is forming, just months after China's frothy stock markets crashed, raising fears about a replay of the real estate bust that has hit the country's growth since 2012.

Home prices in the city, China's biggest financial hub, climbed 3.6 percent in February from the previous month, according to a survey by CRIC, extending the 17.5 percent annual gain it recorded in January, which was seven times faster than the country as a whole.

The property revival has coincided with investors' abrupt loss of faith in China's share markets, which had soared 150 percent in the year to mid-2015, only to give up fourth fifths of those gains since the summer. "The (property) market seems crazy again. I have no idea why it's crazy, but it should be the right time to buy," said Wang Zhongcai, a 50-year-old clerk, who was queuing, among many others, to register ownership of a small investment apartment he had bought.

From 2005 to 2011, property prices in China soared, buoyed by ready credit, migration into the cities, and government stimulus measures after the global financial crisis. As developers poured money into new builds and unrelated companies set up property arms, residential housing development as a share of economic output tripled in a decade, until government measures to cool the market ended the frenzy.

Chastened by the impact of that bust, which left a

huge stock of unsold apartments across China and hammered industries supplying construction materials, Beijing has for the last 18 months been trying to soften the blow, cutting interest rates, downpayment requirements and property transaction taxes.

### FIRST-TIER FIRST

The government's principal goal was not to help the bigger cities but the smaller ones where unfinished, abandoned developments remain a very visible reminder of the market failure.

But the big cities appear to be drawing the lion's share of new investment - and warnings from economists. "In first-tier (cities) the prices are certainly rising too fast. Every time when there are control policies, most resources focus on first tier," said Lan Shen, Standard Chartered's China economist in Beijing.

"Going forward the policies will be more aiming at the lower tiers; very selective measures, not broad-based to create a bigger bubble in the first tier," Lan said. But as China loosens the credit environment to support growth, which slipped to its weakest in 25 years in 2015, speculators are following the investment logic, not Beijing's goals.

"First-tier cities have a more sophisticated environment (for speculation). Investors see room for prices to rise because there's a lot of demand yet limited supply," said Clement Luk, chief executive officer for eastern China at realtor Centaline.

He added that Shenzhen, a booming major city in southwest China, was blazing the trail for Shanghai.

"People think since Shenzhen has gone up 50 to 60 percent last year while Shanghai was up only 20 percent, it should be now Shanghai's turn."

Hong Kong developer Shui On Land said last month it sold out a new residential development in north-central Shanghai on the day of launch at an average price of about \$1,140 per square foot.

The largest unit was an 1,800 sq ft apartment that fetched more than \$2.2 million, and the agent said prices would "definitely go up" when they start selling a new phase of the development in May.

Wang Wenwen at real estate agency Sinyi said sellers could see the market heating up and were now playing catch-up with each other in raising prices. An official at Shimaop Property, which last October launched a project in a less central part of Shanghai averaging 41,000 yuan per metre, said the company was planning to raise prices for its new launches this month and next.

Shanghai is already trying to alleviate the pressure, issuing new rules last month to increase the supply of small and medium-sized apartments. But the history of China's booms and busts and Beijing's efforts to cap the highs and cushion the lows has made some investors wary that what goes up too fast comes down as speedily. "This rally is too crazy," said a property agent who gave his last name as Xu. "I own three units in Shanghai and I'm planning to sell them. I think a chill wind is blowing to the first-tier city, and I worry that the government will implement cooling measure soon." — Reuters

## TOKYO INVESTORS EYE REVISED JAPAN GDP DATA NEXT WEEK

**TOKYO:** Japan's revised fourth-quarter GDP figures will be a key trading cue for Tokyo investors next week, following a much anticipated US jobs report later Friday.

The world's number three economy contracted in the October-December quarter, preliminary figures showed, and investors are keen to see if those weak numbers hold. The initial reading-Japan's second quarterly contraction in 2015 — fanned talk of fresh Bank of Japan stimulus measures to kickstart the economy, as policymakers struggle to put the country on a path to solid growth.

But analysts widely expect a slight downward revision on Tuesday. "The most closely-watched release of the coming week will be the second estimate of (fourth-quarter) GDP," research house Capital Economics wrote in a commentary. "The second estimate usually adds little accuracy to the first." Investors are also keenly awaiting a European Central Bank (ECB) meeting next week, while Friday's US jobs report is expected to show the world's top economy added 190,000 jobs in February and the unemployment rate held steady at 4.9 percent. The ECB's first major central bank to meet this month, ahead of gatherings by the US Federal Reserve and the Bank of Japan-is set to kick off its meeting amid speculation policymakers will unveil new measures to spur inflation in the struggling eurozone.

Markets are also keeping watch on events in Beijing where the government on Saturday heads into the National People's Congress, at which delegates will sign off on a new five-

year economic plan.

On Friday, Tokyo's benchmark Nikkei 225 index rose 0.32 percent, or 54.62 points, to close at 17,014.78. The blue-chip index gained 5.10 percent over the week. The broader Topix index of all first-section shares finished up 0.46 percent, or 6.30 points, at 1,375.35. On the week, the index added 4.89 percent.

"US data continues to shine, oil continues to firm and risk appetite is coming back into all aspects of the markets," Angus Nicholson, market analyst at IG in Melbourne, wrote in an email to clients.

Also on Friday, Tokyo nominated 70-year-old economist Makoto Sakurai to the Bank of Japan's board to replace one of two policymakers whose term is set to expire. Among them is outgoing member Sayuri Shirai, who in January opposed the bank's move to adopt a below-zero interest rate policy, a move widely panned as desperate after earlier easing measures failed to generate strong growth. In Tokyo, petroleum-linked stocks were boosted as oil prices held recent gains. Energy explorer Inpex surged 6.83 percent to 971.3 yen and JX Holdings rose 1.87 percent to 479.3 yen.

Toyota ticked up 0.83 percent to 6,229 yen, Sony climbed 2.87 percent to 2,592.5 yen, and Nintendo was up 0.39 percent to 16,665 yen. Uniqlo operator Fast Retailing, a market heavyweight, fell 0.34 percent to 34,410 yen. On forex markets, the dollar edged up to 113.86 yen from 113.69 yen in New York late Thursday. — AFP



**TOKYO:** A man walks by an electronic stock board of a securities firm in Tokyo on Friday. Asian shares were mixed in cautious trading on Friday as investors awaited the release of US non-farm payroll data and developments from China's National Congress. — AP

## ARGENTINA MAY RETURN TO MARKET WITH \$11.68 BILLION DEBT SALE

**BUENOS AIRES:** Argentina plans to return to international credit markets in April with three bonds sales totaling \$11.68 billion under US law if Congress swiftly approves a debt deal for holdout creditors, top finance ministry officials told Congress on Friday.

Finance Minister Alfonso Prat-Gay said the bonds, which will be used to finance the payouts to investors holding unpaid debt stemming from the country's 2002 default, would carry maturities of five, ten and thirty years. Prat-Gay and his deputy, Luis Caputo, on Friday presented a package of debt agreements brokered with creditors, including a \$4.65 billion cash payout to the main holdouts suing in a Manhattan court led by billionaire Paul Singer.

Argentina has now reached provisional settlements with about 85 percent of bondholders and says negotiations continue with the rest. "If the deal extends to all holdout investors, the bond issue will be for \$11.684 billion. That's what we need to close this chapter definitively," Prat-Gay said.

The debate in Congress is the first major political test of President Mauricio Macri's ability to garner cross-party support for his economic reform package, the success of which hinges on ending the festering 14-year debt battle.

Legislators will also be asked to repeal two laws blocking settlement of the debt case. Macri's government is confident it can corral the votes needed to win approval even though the opposition holds a majority in the Senate and Macri holds only the largest minority in the lower chamber.

Caputo told legislators the bonds would carry an interest rate of about 7.5 percent. While debt brokers see healthy appetite for Argentine debt after its prolonged absence from global debt markets, the gloomy global context may weigh. Argentina has been a financial markets pariah since its record default on \$100 billion in 2002 but progress is being made, according to court-appointed mediator Daniel Pollack.

He said on Friday that agreements in principle had been struck with 10 additional bondholders involving settlements totaling \$6.7 million. The deals are subject to Congress lifting the two laws and that the court lift injunctions on bond payments that have been in place for the last several years.

"The court has done so, conditionally, but a few parties have appealed that order," Pollack said in a statement. "It is the hope of all concerned that the appeals will be expedited so that there can be clarity as to the finality of the order." — Reuters

## MARKAZ: MENA MARKETS TURN POSITIVE IN FEBRUARY

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" recently released its monthly market research report. In this report, Markaz examines and analyzes the performance of equity markets in the MENA region as well as the global equity markets for the month of February.

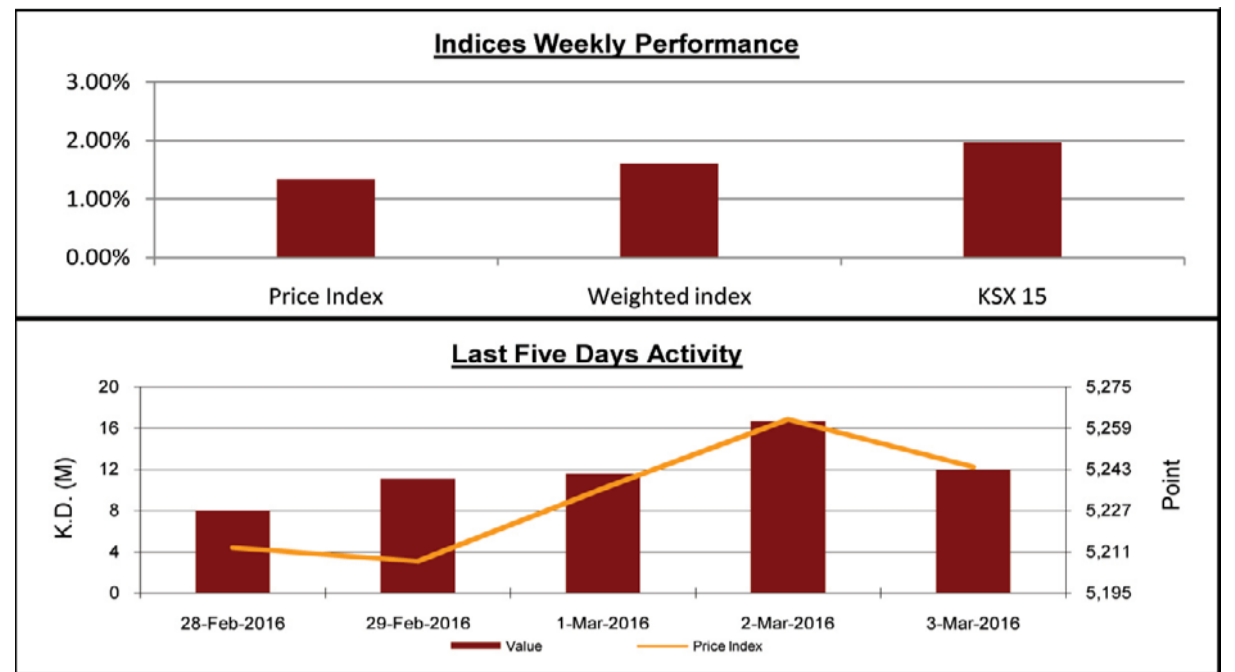
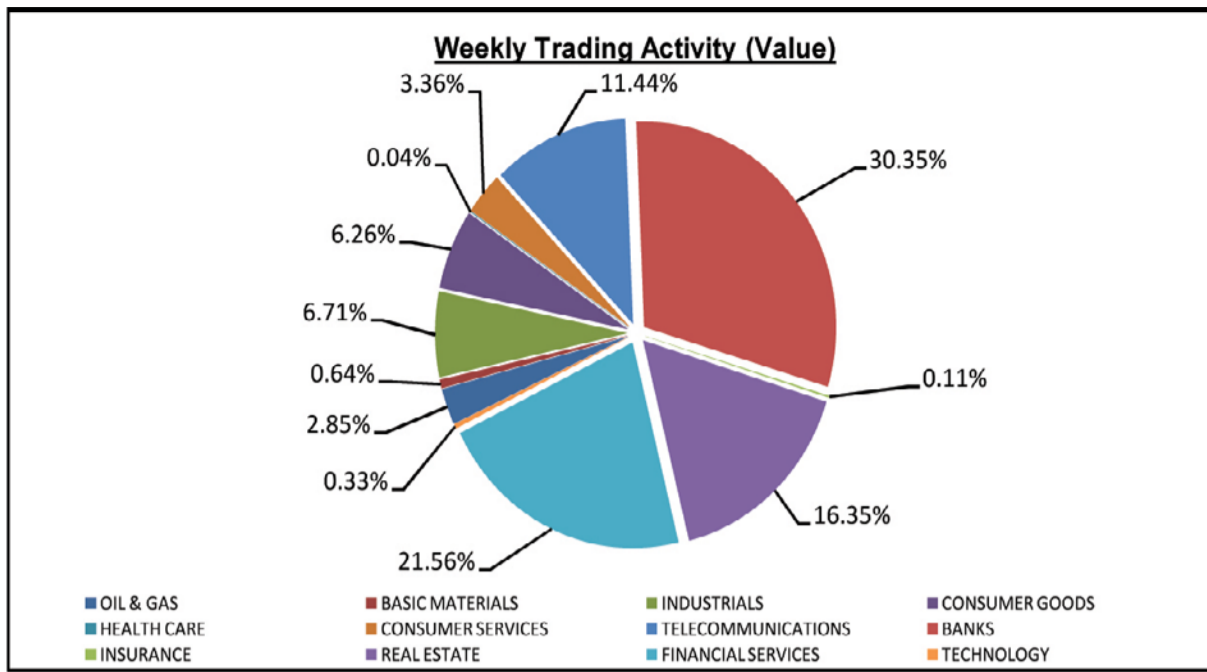
February was a good month for MENA markets, as nearly all indices ended the month in green. Dubai (8.1 percent) and Abu Dhabi (7.3 percent) indices lead the charge, while Bahrain (-0.7 percent) and Jordan (-1.5 percent) lagged behind. Kuwait price (1.8 percent) and weighted (1.4 percent) indices fared well, after facing one of the worst starts to a year since 2009. Brent crude price improved marginally to close the month at \$35.97 per barrel, up 3.5 percent from previous month's close. Reflecting the change in fortunes, S&P GCC also improved by 3.7 percent in February, to close at 88 points.

MENA Market Trends - February 2016										
Index	M. Cap (USD Bn)	Last close	2015 %	Feb-16 %	YTD %	S&P correlation**	ADVT* (USD mn)	P/E	P/B	Div. Yield
S&P Pan Arab										
LargeMid Cap Index	102.3	126	-17.0	3.2	-6.9	0.160	N.A	9.55	1.13	5.92
Saudi Arabia	372.0	6,093	-17.1	1.6	-11.9	0.177	1542.25	11.19	1.43	4.91
Qatar	121.4	9,892	-15.1	4.3	-5.1	0.102	90.21	11.85	1.45	4.28
Abu Dhabi	113.7	4,351	-4.9	7.3	1.0	0.118	68.18	10.65	1.39	5.02
Kuwait Price	83.0	5,207	-14.1	1.8	-7.3	0.086	33.29	13.22	1.07	4.65
Kuwait Wt.ed	83.0	358	-13.0	1.4	-6.1	0.045	33.29	13.22	1.07	4.65
Dubai	76.3	3,240	-16.5	8.1	2.8	0.120	152.40	8.14	1.10	4.77
Egypt	49.6	560	-24.4	2.5	-11.1	0.069	46.64	9.68	1.25	2.96
Morocco	45.6	8,908	-7.2	0.1	-0.2	-0.029	7.69	15.91	2.15	4.58
Jordan	22.1	4,069	-0.2	-1.5	-3.8	0.019	11.54	14.24	1.28	4.74
Bahrain	18.0	1,178	-14.8	-0.7	-3.1	0.030	0.89	9.29	0.82	4.46
Oman	15.7	5,395	-14.8	4.2	-0.2	0.106	11.33	9.15	1.07	5.44

Source: Reuters, Zawya, \* - Average Daily Value Traded for the month, \*\* - 3-year daily return correlation

MENA markets liquidity had a positive month, with volumes increasing by 17 percent and value traded rising by 10 percent. Abu Dhabi, Morocco and Bahrain witnessed increases in both volume and value traded, while Egypt, Kuwait and Jordan were the only markets to record declines in both. Volume and value traded in Abu Dhabi increased by 172 percent and 59 percent, respectively, while the Kuwait bourse witnessed a 16 percent volume and 30 percent value drop.

Most Blue Chips ended the month of January in green, with Americana (Kuwait) topping the charts at 29.5 percent, as speculation peaked about the selling of the controlling stake to an investment firm. It was followed by Emaar Properties (UAE, 14.5 percent) and First Gulf Bank (UAE, 12.3 percent). While Emaar Properties announced a healthy 11 percent increase in earnings for 2015, despite a write down in the last quarter due to a fire in one of its properties, the latter announced an 11 percent increase in Q4 profit; one of the few bright spots, in what has been a disappointing earnings season for Abu Dhabi banks. Emirates NBD (UAE, -5.7 percent) and NCB (Saudi, -5.7 percent) lagged behind the rest of the blue chips in the region. In February, shareholders of Emirates NBD have approved the bank's proposal to raise its euro medium-term note program to \$12.5bn, from the previous \$7.5bn, and also to establish any similar debt program, in the future. Saudi's NCB announced that it will be closing two branches in Beirut, Lebanon due to their low financial returns.



# KSE EDGES HIGHER ON RENEWED CONFIDENCE

## BAYAN WEEKLY MARKET REPORT

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE) ended last week in the green zone. The Price Index closed at 5,244.00 points, up by 1.34 percent from the week before closing, the Weighted Index increased by 1.61 percent after closing at 362.10 points, whereas the KSX-15 Index closed at 854.63 points up by 1.96 percent. Furthermore, last week's average daily turnover increased by 5.95 percent, compared to the preceding week, reaching KD 11.85 million, whereas trading volume average was 155.62 million shares, recording an increase of 15.37 percent.

As per the KSE's performance last week, the market indicators continued its upward direction during the first session of the week supported by the active trading that concentrated on the small-cap and low-priced stocks, accompanied with selling pressures that included a number of the leading stocks, in light of a general performance characterized by shrinking cash liquidity and by 37.09 percent.

On the second session of the last week, the market witnessed mixed closings to the three indices, whereas the Price Index declined affected by the selling for profit operations which were executed on the stocks that realized big gains in the previous session, whilst the Weighted and KSX-15 indices were able to increase by the end of the session supported by the random purchasing operations witnessed by some leading stocks, which pushed the cash liquidity up to compensate its first session's losses, in light of a relatively quiet performance in terms of volume and number of deals.

The Price Index was able to increase once again in the mid-week session, benefiting from the active speculative operations that included some small-cap stocks after its prices reached low levels, while the Weighted and KSX-15 indices decreased in the same session due to the selling pressures and the profit collection operations executed on the large-cap stocks, ignoring by this the positive monthly closings of the market indicators. On Wednesday's session, the three market indicators closed in the green zone, supported by the active trading activity on some leading stocks, in addition to the positive speculative operations that included some small-cap stocks, among a general state of optimism especially after the positive financial results for 2015 and the cash dividends distributions disclosed by most of the listed companies, which pushed the cash liquidity to increase by 44.08 percent to reach KD 16.65 million.

On the last session of the week, the market witnessed mixed closings to the three indices, whereas the selling for profit opera-

MARKET ACTIVITY			
	Last Week	Previous Week	Ch. %
Volume	778,107,339	539,573,096	44.21%
Value (K.D)	59,270,196	44,754,933	32.43%
Deals	18,616	11,719	58.85%

MARKET CAPITALISATION (K.D.)			
	Last Week	Previous Week	Weekly Ch. %
	23,978,954,855	23,619,948,724	1.52%
			-5.09%

TOP GAINERS OF THE WEEK				
Company	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Ch. (fils)	Ch. %
GIH	24.50	21.00	3.5	16.67%
RKWC	110.00	95.00	15.0	15.79%
SECH	41.50	36.00	5.5	15.28%
TAHSSILAT	54.00	47.00	7.0	14.89%
HAYATCOMM	53.00	46.50	6.5	13.98%

TOP LOSERS OF THE WEEK				
Company	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Ch. (fils)	Ch. %
YIACO	178.00	228.00	-50.0	-21.93%
SANAM	35.00	42.00	-7.0	-16.67%
MASSALEH	52.00	59.00	-7.0	-11.86%
KCIN	1,000.00	1,120.00	-120.0	-10.71%
ALNAWADI	76.00	84.00	-8.0	-9.52%

tions executed on some small and mid-cap stocks pushed the Price and Weighted indices to end the session with losses, while the KSX-15 Index recorded limited gains by

the end of the session as a result to the purchasing operations witnessed by the operational and leading stocks, among a noticeable decrease in the trading activity com-

KSE INDICES				
		Price Index	Weighted index	KSX 15
Weekly	Last week	5,244.00	362.10	854.63
	Previous week	5,174.69	356.37	838.19
	Change (Point)	69.31	5.73	16.44
	Change (%)	1.34%	1.61%	1.96%
Annual	Last year	5,615.12	381.70	900.43
	Change (Point)	-371.12	-19.60	-45.80
	Change (%)	-6.61%	-5.13%	-5.09%

pared to the previous session. By the end of last week, the market capitalization for the listed companies in KSE reached KD 23.98 billion, increasing by around KD359 million or 1.52 percent from its value in a week earlier, where it was KD 23.62 billion. On an annual level, the market cap for Kuwait Stock Exchange recorded 5.09 percent loss from its value at end of 2015, where it reached then KD25.27 billion.

As far as KSE annual performance, the price index ended last week recording 6.61 percent annual loss compared to its closing in 2015, while the weighted index decreased by 5.13 percent, and the KSX-15 recorded 5.09 percent loss.

### Sectors' Indices

Nine of KSE's sectors ended last week in the green zone, while the other three recorded declines. Last week's highest gainer was the Technology sector, achieving 6.76 percent growth rate as its index closed at 915.87 points. Whereas, in the second place, the Basic Materials sector's index closed at 929.45 points or 4.29 percent increase. The Telecommunications sector came in third as its index achieved 3.37 percent growth, ending the week at 612.92 points.

On the other hand, the Healthcare sector

headed the losers list as its index declined by 4.36 percent to end the week's activity at 972.22 points. The Consumer Services sector was second on the losers' list, which index declined by 2.08 percent, closing at 939.17 points, the least declining sector was the Insurance sector, as its index closed at 1,051.08 points at a loss of 0.01 percent.

### Sectors' Activity

The Financial Services sector dominated a total trade volume of around 293.97 million shares changing hands during last week, representing 37.78 percent of the total market trading volume. The Real Estate sector was second in terms of trading volume as the sector's traded shares were 27.31 percent of last week's total trading volume, with a total of around 212.49 million shares.

On the other hand, the Banks sector's stocks were the highest traded in terms of value; with a turnover of around KD 17.99 million or 30.35 percent of last week's total market trading value. The Financial Services sector took the second place as the sector's last week turnover was approx. KD 12.78 million representing 21.56 percent of the total market trading value.-Prepared by the Studies & Research Department — Bayan Investment Co.

SECTORS' WEEKLY TRADING ACTIVITY				
Sector	Volume	To Market %	Value	To Market %
OIL & GAS	54,406,223	6.99%	1,691,315	2.85%
BASIC MATERIALS	1,605,846	0.21%	380,603	0.64%
INDUSTRIALS	47,324,941	6.08%	3,977,633	6.71%
CONSUMER GOODS	6,750,780	0.87%	3,711,656	6.26%
HEALTH CARE	87,562	0.01%	21,409	0.04%
CONSUMER SERVICES	13,043,856	1.68%	1,990,835	3.36%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	28,771,931	3.70%	6,778,515	11.44%
BANKS	116,209,291	14.93%	17,988,001	30.35%
INSURANCE	398,586	0.05%	63,430	0.11%
REAL ESTATE	212,490,997	27.31%	9,691,002	16.35%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	293,965,800	37.78%	12,779,165	21.56%
TECHNOLOGY	3,051,526	0.39%	196,631	0.33%

SECTORS INDICES PERFORMANCE				
Sector	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Weekly Ch. %	Annual Ch. %
OIL & GAS	756.32	753.29	0.40%	-7.62%
BASIC MATERIALS	929.45	891.25	4.29%	-5.77%
INDUSTRIALS	979.21	962.92	1.69%	-6.12%
CONSUMER GOODS	1,069.39	1,058.45	1.03%	-2.33%
HEALTH CARE	972.22	1,016.55	-4.36%	5.07%
CONSUMER SERVICES	939.17	959.10	-2.08%	-6.89%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	612.92	592.94	3.37%	2.39%
BANKS	825.08	813.22	1.46%	-9.04%
INSURANCE	1,051.08	1,051.21	-0.01%	-6.74%
REAL ESTATE	835.74	824.17	1.40%	-11.16%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	560.73	544.62	2.96%	-5.82%
TECHNOLOGY	915.87	857.91	6.76%	11.67%

# A MODEST MARKET GAIN KEEPS 4-DAY WINNING STREAK ALIVE

## WALL STREET WEEKLY OUTLOOK

**NEW YORK:** US stocks wobbled to the finish Friday but salvaged a four-day winning streak after the US government said employers added more jobs than expected in February. That was another vote of confidence in the economy. Mining companies made the biggest gains as metals prices climbed.

The jobs report showed that construction, retail and health care companies are still hiring more workers. Energy companies also rose with the recovering price of oil. Stocks fell back from an afternoon peak as investors sold telecommunications companies, which have been the best-performing sector of the market this year.

The Dow Jones industrial average rose 62.87 points, or 0.4 percent, to 17,006.77. The Standard & Poor's 500 index gained 6.59 points, or 0.3 percent, to 1,999.99. The Nasdaq composite index edged up 9.60 points, or 0.2 percent, to 4,717.02.

The Labor Department said employers added 242,000 jobs last month. Consumer demand was solid, and the government also said employers hired more people in December and January than it had previously estimated. More people also looked for work. This week stocks rose after reports on hiring, construction spending and manufacturing suggested that the US economy is doing fairly well. Kate Warne, investment strategist for Edward Jones, said she expects continued job and economic growth for the US.

"The worries that we've been hearing recently about the economy sliding into recession aren't warranted," she said. Combined with low inflation rates, she said that's good news for investors.

Metals and energy prices kept climbing on the continued signs of life for the economy. Gold, which is trading at its highest price in a year, rose \$12.50, or 1 percent, to \$1,270.70 an ounce. Silver jumped 55 cents, or 3.6 percent, to \$15.69 an ounce and copper rose 7 cents, or 3 percent, to \$2.27 a pound.

The price of US oil jumped \$1.35, or 3.9 percent, to \$35.92 a barrel. Brent crude, the benchmark for international oils, rose \$1.65, or 4.5 percent, to \$38.72 a barrel in London.

Oil prices climbed about 10 percent this week and have risen for three weeks in a row, which hadn't happened since May. Brent crude is now higher than it was at the beginning of the year, although US crude is still lower. Those gains helped copper mining company Freeport-McMoRan gained 63 cents, or 6.9 percent, to \$9.74. Aluminum producer Alcoa edged up 10 cents to \$9.57.

Energy stocks also kept rising. Drilling rig operators did the best as investors were pleased they keep closing rigs to cut costs. Transocean climbed \$1.88, or 17.4 percent, to \$12.71. Enco rose \$1.43, or 13.1 percent, to \$12.36. The market has now erased most of its losses after a painful start to the year. But there are signs investors are still worried:

investors keep buying utility and telecom stocks, which are considered safe bets when the market is troubled, and the price of gold has surged to its highest levels in more than a year. And while stocks have risen the last three days, the gains were small and came in choppy trading.

Warne said investors still feel uneasy about problems ranging from shaky economies outside the US, low oil prices, and uncertainty over when the Federal Reserve will raise interest rates and what effect that will have on the economy.

"I think we're going to continue to see a lot of market volatility," she said. AMC Theaters, owned by Wanda Group of China, is buying Carmike Cinemas for \$1.1 billion.

The deal will create the biggest movie theater chain in the world. Earlier this year, Wanda said it would buy Legendary Entertainment, a studio that co-financed movies including "Jurassic World" and "The Dark Knight." Carmike climbed \$4.14, or 16.4 percent, to \$29.25. Bond prices fell. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note rose to 1.87 percent from 1.84 percent late Thursday.

Michael Fredericks, portfolio manager for BlackRock Multi-Asset Income Fund, noted that bond yields have recovered along with stocks over the last few weeks. "There was just a huge amount of pessimism" about economic growth, he said. He added that bond yields had fallen because investors were worried about the health of Europe's banks and



**NEW YORK:** A Wall Street sign in front of the flag-draped facade of the New York Stock Exchange. — AP

the possibility the Fed would experiment with negative interest rates in the US.

A handful of companies rose and fell as quarterly earnings kept trickling out. Hewlett Packard Enterprise, an information technology products and service company, reported better-than-expected results from its first quarter as a publicly-traded company. Its stock surged \$1.84, or 13.5 percent, to \$15.44. Handgun maker Smith & Wesson rose \$1.65, or 6.5 percent, to \$27.05 after its profit and sales surpassed Wall Street estimates. Smith & Wesson also raised its profit and sales projections for its current fiscal year.

Tax preparer H&R Block tumbled after its quarterly profit and revenue disappointed investors. The company said people are filing

their taxes later and refunds are taking longer to process as efforts to fight tax fraud increase. The stock dropped \$5.14, or 15.6 percent, to \$27.76.

Britain's FTSE 100 gained 1.1 percent and France's CAC 40 rose 0.9 percent. Germany's DAX was up 0.7 percent. Japan's Nikkei 225 index closed 0.3 percent higher and Hong Kong's Hang Seng added 1.2 percent. South Korea's Kospi edged 0.1 percent lower.

In other energy trading, wholesale gasoline rose 3 cents to \$1.33 a gallon. Heating oil climbed 4 cents to \$1.16 a gallon. Natural gas picked up 3 cents to \$1.67 per 1,000 cubic feet. The euro rose to \$1.0996 from \$1.0959 the day before while the dollar rose to 114.21 yen from 113.57 yen. — AP



## OOREDOO OFFERS EXCEPTIONAL BENEFITS WITH SHAMEL

**KUWAIT:** Ooredoo Kuwait, a member of the international Ooredoo Group, re-launched its postpaid plans ShameL with brand new benefits that include freezing subscription of up to 3 months, adding a new device in addition to preexisting contracts, and unlimited calls on Ooredoo network to all subscribers.

Commenting on the relaunch, Mijbil Alayoub, Director of Corporate

Communications at Ooredoo Kuwait said: "We're always challenging ourselves to come up with products that truly complement the lives of our customers. The new benefits of ShameL are a result of extensive research and focus group discussions, and we are proud to be truly pioneers in introducing the latest products in the market. We are certain that the features will appeal to our customers."

For the first time in Kuwait, Ooredoo subscribers can now enjoy the privilege of freezing their contract for up to 3 months a year when they travel, without worrying about paying bills for months that they don't use. Additionally, Ooredoo now allows customers to transfer contracts to other customers even during the contract period, with no penalties or extra fees. Keeping up with the lifestyle of its cus-

tomers, Ooredoo also allows customers to get an additional device on top of their current plan, in installments, without paying extra fees. Additionally, all ShameL subscribers can enjoy unlimited calls on the Ooredoo network, in addition to other perks such as minute and data rollover, to ensure that they are making full use of their package. Ooredoo's operations in Kuwait date

back to December 1999 when it launched wireless services as the second operator. The company today provides mobile, broadband internet and corporate managed services tailored to the needs of customers and businesses. Ooredoo is guided by its vision of enriching people's lives and its belief that it can stimulate human growth by leveraging communications to help people achieve their full potential.



**WASHINGTON:** President Barack Obama meets with members of his economic team in the Roosevelt Room of the White House on Friday. —AP

## STRONG US JOB GROWTH HELPS DISPEL FRESH RECESSION FEARS

**WASHINGTON:** A robust February jobs report showcased a resilient US economy just as fears of a new recession had begun to surface. Economic reports in recent weeks had fueled anxieties about a looming downturn: Manufacturers were slumping. Stocks had plummeted. China was slowing sharply along with other emerging markets. The rising dollar had crushed exports.

But last month, US employers sent a clear message of confidence. They added a healthy 242,000 jobs, while the unemployment rate held at a low 4.9 percent, the government said Friday. The gains showed that the economy is surmounting its challenges without suffering much damage.

"Neither global headwinds, financial turbulence nor political uncertainty has dimmed American business' enthusiasm for hiring," said Sal Guatieri, an economist at BMO Capital Markets. "The solid jobs report should allay recession fears."

Retailers, restaurants, construction firms and health care providers - the core of consumer demand and vital fuel for economic growth - drove much of the hiring.

Worker pay did slip last month after having picked up in January. But more Americans began searching for jobs and found them. That lifted the job market's participation rate - the proportion of adults either working or looking for work - to a 13-month high of 62.9 percent.

Friday's jobs report will factor into an increasingly tense presidential race. Hillary Clinton, the Democratic front-runner, has cast herself as the logical successor to President Barack Obama and his stewardship of the economy. The Republican hopefuls have spotlighted what they call the economy's failures, blaming tax rates and Obama's signature health care program for stagnant incomes and the loss of blue-collar jobs.

February's job growth could also give the Federal Reserve a path to raise interest rates again as early as June, according to many economists. Prior solid job growth had led the Fed to raise rates from record lows in December before it paused at its January meeting in the face of global pressures, falling oil prices and subpar inflation.

"It's probably a better than a 50 percent proposition that they will raise the rates in June," said Kevin Logan, chief US economist at the bank HSBC.

Stock investors appeared to cheer last month's job growth. The Standard & Poor's 500 index climbed 1 percent in late afternoon trading.

Retailers added 54,900 jobs last month. Restaurants and bars added 40,200, the health care sector 38,100 and construction companies 19,000.

Hiring by employers that are directly linked to consumers has more than offset layoffs at manufacturers and fossil fuel companies - two sectors squeezed by the pressures of uncertainty in China, sluggishness in Europe, declining oil prices and a

stronger dollar.

Job losses in mining - which includes the battered energy industry - have totaled 140,400 in the past 12 months. And manufacturing has added just 12,000 jobs over that time.

Consumers have provided the foundation for much of the job market's improvement in what's become something of a self-sustaining cycle. The nearly 2.7 million workers who have been added over the past 12 months have bolstered spending on autos, housing and meals out.

That spending has sustained US economic growth, even as other indicators have signaled a possible drop-off. China, the world's second-largest economy, is struggling with high corporate debts and slower growth. Oil prices have tumbled amid relatively low demand. The strong dollar has eaten away at exports.

With unemployment remaining low, economists say more companies should begin to raise pay to attract workers, thereby fueling more hiring and increasing people's ability to spend, invest and save.

For years, tepid pay growth was one of the key weaknesses of the economic recovery. Many of the jobs created in the wake of the Great Recession were in lower-paid occupations - from cashiers, waiters and store clerks to home health aides and temporary workers.

But in recent months, wage gains started to tick up. The increases bolstered hopes that a lower unemployment rate had prompted companies to raise pay. Yet between January and February, earnings fell slightly in a clear setback.

Economists were searching for explanations for the sudden reversal given the otherwise strong jobs report. Ian Shepherdson, chief economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics, noted that wages might have slipped last month because of the timing of the survey for the jobs report. It occurred before Feb. 15, possibly missing a payday for workers who are paid semi-monthly.

Wage growth is often weak when the jobs report survey week doesn't include the 15th of the month, Shepherdson noted.

The government on Friday also revised up its estimates of job growth in December and January by a combined 30,000. Over the past three months, employers have added a strong 228,000 jobs.

Some businesses intend to ramp up hiring further. The Michigan-based moving company Two Men and a Truck says it plans to add 1,000 workers or more starting this month. Demand for movers has picked up as more people are settling into apartments and newly purchased housing.

"Really, the only thing that holds us back from growth is not having enough employees," said Sara Bennett, the company's human resources director. —AP

## NAPCO TO SPONSOR OMAN'S TOP RUNNER SAMI AL-SAIDI

**KUWAIT:** In line with its corporate social responsibility (CSR), National Aluminium Products Company SAOG (NAPCO), one of the leading extruders of aluminium profiles in the GCC, has announced its sponsorship for Sami

accommodation, food and running kit. The sponsorship agreement is until December 2016. Sami Al-Saidi is Oman's prominent runner who has finished many notable races in the last few years. Recently, he was declared the overall winner and the winner of the men's event at the Muscat Marathon, where he finished the full marathon in 2 hours, 50 minutes, and 20 seconds.

"NAPCO has decided to sponsor Sami Al Saidi for the year 2016 and cover all financial expenses related to his participation in marathons. He is an incredible sportsman with tremendous strength, stamina and will power - all of which reflect our company's own brand value. Our sponsorship reinforces our commitment to motivate and nurture local talents to showcase their skills and capabilities in sporting events. It is a matter of great pride for NAPCO and we wish Sami continued success," concluded Robert Holtkamp, CEO, NAPCO.



Al-Saidi, a top Omani runner and the winner of the fifth edition of the Muscat Marathon. The company will extend financial support to Al-Saidi which includes entry fees to events,

## ONEM, ONE OF THE SPONSORS OF GSMA MOBILE WORLD CONGRESS 2016

Mobile World Congress 2016 was a great annual event from ONEM who was one of the sponsors of the GSMA. ONEM shared key note announcements on the podium with partner Mobile Operators and Content Providers.

The American Innovation and Serial Entrepreneur Jay Samit who's best seller 'Disrupt You', gave a key note speech regarding disruptive technologies and their impact on Mobile Operators. He mentioned how ONEM was one such company that had caught his attention due to the considerable market size of the 3 billion un-connected (internet) to whom ONEM's technology was able to deliver a wide range of services and content.

Jay Samit's final quote was that "...if you can find a good solution for 10 people you've got 10 dollars and if you solve it for a billion, then you're a billionaire".

MTN Nigeria provided two very enlightening presentations that included the purpose and reasoning behind their adoption of ONEM's DEETS services. The presenter called on other Mobile Operator's to embrace ONEM as a logical solution to provide new revenue generating services as well as tackling the OTT problem.

In particular MTN gave concrete examples of how ONEM would be attractive to 80% of their subscriber base who aren't data enabled. The examples covered particular market opportunities of farmers and logistic companies who could benefit from having access to social farming information. The presenter mentioned how a farmer can check on crop prices and set up buy and sell options using ONEM's simple group based sharing tools. Farmers can have their own ecosystem that will cover a wide range of related issues such as weather, pesticides, crop harvest, to market conditions which are all crowd sourced information available over the ONEM platform.

In another example he mentioned how a goods transporter could find cargo for return trips by posting or querying a crowd based transportation and cargo service. Because ONEM works with a subscriber's MSISDN the accuracy and ownership of information is very reliable making crowd sourced information and services more dependable and accurate.

The CEO of Aislecom Dave George gave a presentation 'Small Island, Big Network', that covered



the importance of ONEM as a provider of services related to Tourism, Education and Business. Dave saw ONEM as a way to leverage a new kind of business for his network where data alone was unable to provide them a means to contribute new services and content in a meaningful way. His example covered the Medical School, the emergency services MADMAN? and he had ideas on how ONEM could give them an edge over internet based services due to the reliability

and reach even during times of natural disasters.

Partner Mobile Announcements for TOT Thailand, Smart Burundi, Uganda and Tanzania and China Mobile were among the other highlights.

Content providers Lexifone, gave a keynote presentation on how ONEM's and Lexifone's, 'On The Fly Language Translation' will provide great services for millions of people in all economic sectors.

Crowd Mobile the owner of the

famous 'Bongo' service where human responders answer any question given to them also gave a key note on how ONEM will provide them with reach and facility to access many markets under one umbrella.

Other announcements centered around the Arabic content provider Beeel which will be able to reach many non-Arabic speaking markets where diaspora populations of Arabic speaking people have emigrated to.

## NOT-SO-LATEST STYLES ARE SOUGHT AFTER IN CASH-STRAPPED GAZA

**GAZA CITY:** Standing by skips full of clothes, vendors call out to bargain hunters scrambling for the not-so-latest styles in the Gaza Strip. In the Palestinian enclave plagued by poverty and sky-high unemployment-and hit by a nearly decade-long Israeli blockade-the second-hand clothes market is booming. Adidas jackets and Tommy Hilfinger shirts are among the brands being hawked in the narrow streets of the Fray flea market or at the open-air Yarmuk market. There are some improbable

look and mothers who have come to dress their children or find a jacket for their office-worker husbands. Before Israel imposed a blockade of the coastal Palestinian territory in 2006 "people would not have dared say they bought second-hand," he said. "Things have changed with the economic situation." His stock comes from Israel and Europe. Several times each month, his suppliers and those of his colleagues holding the rare crossing permits issued by Israel pass through the heavily-fortified

cardigan to go with his grey pullover and sunglasses with black frames.

### Hottest European labels

Hamza says he buys almost solely second-hand. "That goes for all my friends, boys and girls," he said in Rajab's shop. "We all come here because you can get the hottest European labels, which are impossible to find new in Gaza." Prices are around 10 shekels for a shirt, 30 for a jacket and 40-50 shekels for designer jeans. That is still too much for some. The average monthly salary for Gazans in work is just \$174, but nearly half are unemployed.

Nearly 40 percent of the 1.8 million Palestinians crowded into the narrow strip on the shores of the Mediterranean live below the poverty line.

Before the blockade, tens of thousands of Gazan families lived off the incomes of relatives working in Israel but then draconian restrictions were imposed in 2006 after Hamas captured an Israeli soldier. Israel further tightened controls a year later when Islamist movement Hamas consolidated its rule over Gaza. Vicious fighting between Hamas and secular rival Fatah in 2007 and three wars with Israel since 2008 deepened the strip's troubles.

### 'Real quality' from Israel

For those on a threadbare budget, there are the street vendors of Fray or Yarmuk markets in Gaza City, where t-shirts and children's clothes change hands for as little as a shekel or two and other items are not much pricier. "Two pairs of trousers for 15 shekels," a trader shouts. "Seven shekels a shirt." Rami Jendiya comes to Yarmuk every weekend to outfit her family. "In the stores you have jackets for 50 or 60 shekels," she says. "Here I can buy four for the same amount."

Salah Al-Qerem, 53, used to work in Israel. When Israel revoked work permits for Gazans in 2006 he gave up his cabinet-making craft to take over his father's used clothing stall in Fray market. Now he sells Israeli castoffs "of really good quality," he says. —AFP



**GAZA CITY:** A Palestinian farmer uses a donkey to plough his field along the border fence with Israel on the eastern outskirts of Gaza City on Friday. —AFP

items among the piles, including what appear to be used Israeli military uniforms, reflecting the entanglement of the two neighbouring peoples' lives despite the conflict. Second-hand clothes even thrive in the shopping streets of the most affluent neighbourhoods, says Ahmed Rajab, who runs a shop selling used brand-name garments. "I see a parade of people from all social classes," he says, helping youngsters looking for a hipster or casual

border into the Jewish state. There they buy used clothes by weight at 5,000 shekels (\$1,250, 1,200 euros) a tonne, says Abu Alaa, a regular at Gaza City's Fray market.

Then the merchandise is trucked in bulk into Hamas-run Gaza, where it is sorted, washed and ironed. "People no longer ask where it came from but how much it costs," says Hamza, 23, who has come to Ahmed Rajab to buy a grey and black

# KFH DIAMOND SPONSOR OF KUWAIT INVESTMENT FORUM ON MARCH 8-9

HAMAD AL-MARZOUQ MODERATOR OF FINANCING INVESTMENT SESSION

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced its participation in the Kuwait Investment Forum slated for March 8-9 as a diamond sponsor emanating from its endeavors to be present at important economic forums and conferences to utilize its vast experience in demonstrating investment opportunities while discussing means of improving the economy and enhancing the investment climate in Kuwait.

Chairman-KFH, Hamad Abdulmohsen Al-Marzouq is to moderate the Financing Investment session to be held second day of the forum at 13:00, Courtyard Marriott. This session will tackle the role of capital markets in enhancing a competitive environment, the role of financial solvency as a major support for investment, and the strength of banking sector and its impact on economic performance, in addition to its role in financing investment.

The forum hosts dignitaries from public

and private sectors, local and international high-level speakers, and media personalities. It highlights strategy and objectives of economic development, investing in development projects towards streamlining a favorable business environment while discussing the prospects of oil industry and economic development. Moreover, the forum will represent a platform to shed light on SMEs as varied opportunities and integrating schemes, investment opportunities in infrastructure projects and the lucrative investment opportunities in the cultural and tourism sectors. It will also showcase Kuwait's pioneering role in humanitarian and development arena.

The Kuwait Investment Forum organized by Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority in collaboration with Business and Economic Group is to kick off under the patronage of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. The forum comes against



Hamad Al-Marzouq

the backdrop of the positive development in the Kuwait economy which has become of great interest to local and international investors. Kuwait endeavors to attract value-added investments while providing the suitable environment and issuing motivating regulations in efforts to serve in energizing the market and boosting the national economy.

KFH was established in Kuwait in 1977 and is enlisted in the Kuwait Stock Exchange. KFH Group is a global pioneer in the field of Islamic banking services, where it offers a wide array of Islamic products and services, not to mention a high standard of innovation and client service.

KFH manages its operations in the GCC, Asia, and Europe through over 446 branches, including KFH-Turkey, in order to offer services for the bank's clients in Turkey, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Germany, Jordan, and Dubai.

KFH's mission is to achieve highest levels of excellence and innovation in the field of client service, while developing common interest for all those concerned with the financial institution. KFH's vision is to spearhead the global development in Islamic financial services, and to upgrade the bank into the level of becoming the most sustainable profitable Islamic bank in the world.

Enjoy **iPhone 6s** starting at **KD 21** monthly

Available at **ZAIN ONLINE STORE**

Subscribe now and enjoy these benefits:

- 500 local minutes
- 50 GB LTE-A Internet
- Unlimited SMS

A Wonderful World

## GULF BANK ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF AL-DANAH DAILY DRAWS

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Bank held its Al-Danah daily draws on 28 February 2016 announcing the names of its winners for the week of 21 February - 24 February 2016. The Al-Danah daily draws include draws each and every working day for two prizes of KD1,000 per winner.

**The winners are:**

- (Sunday 21/2): Nayef Ahmad Abdulla Al-Sabah, Deyaa Ibrahim Abdulaziz Al-Fares
  - (Monday 22/2): Khalid Mohammad Al-Hussain, Maher Saleh Abdullah Al-Amer
  - (Tuesday 23/2): Abdulla Jassem Mohammed Al-Hamar, Noor Mohammad Awath Al-Khalagy
  - (Wednesday 24/2): Jamal Mehye Eldin Shaaban, Iqbal Abdullah Sulaiman Jabr
- Gulf Bank's Al-Danah 2016 draw lineup includes daily draws (2 winners per working day each receive

KD1000). Al-Danah's 1st Quarterly draw for the prize of KD200,000 will be held on 31 March, the 2nd Quarterly draw for the prize of KD250,000 will be held on the 30th of June and the 3rd Quarterly Draw for the prize of KD500,000 will be held on September 29th. The final Al-Danah draw for KD1 million will be held on 5 January, 2017 whereby the Al-Danah millionaire will be announced.

- Five reasons why the Al-Danah account is the best:
- 1) Kuwait's single biggest yearly cash prize of KD 1 million
  - 2) Kuwait's biggest quarterly cash prizes, up to KD500,000
  - 3) Two winners of KD1,000 every working day
  - 4) The most opportunities to win
  - 5) Only Bank that transfers your chances to win from year to year
- Win big, live big, with Al-Danah 2016.

Al-Danah also offers a number of unique services including: the Al-Danah Deposit Only ATM card which helps account holders deposit their money at their convenience; as well as the Al-Danah calculator to help customers calculate their chances of becoming an Al-Danah winner.

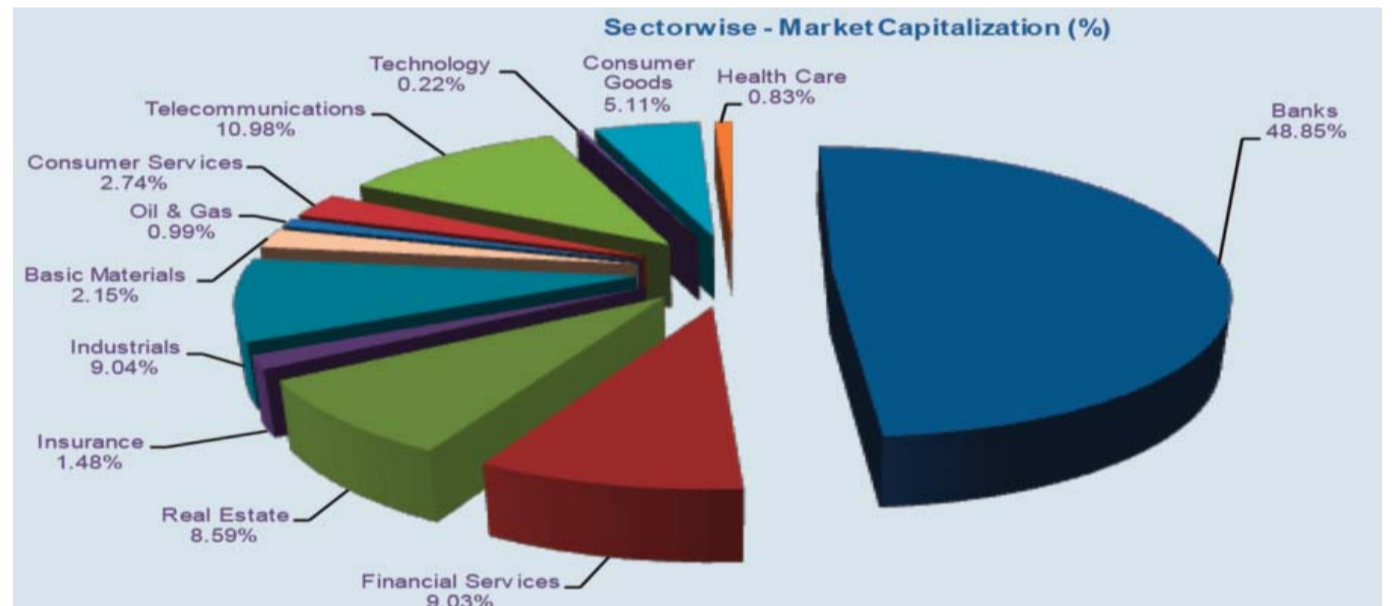
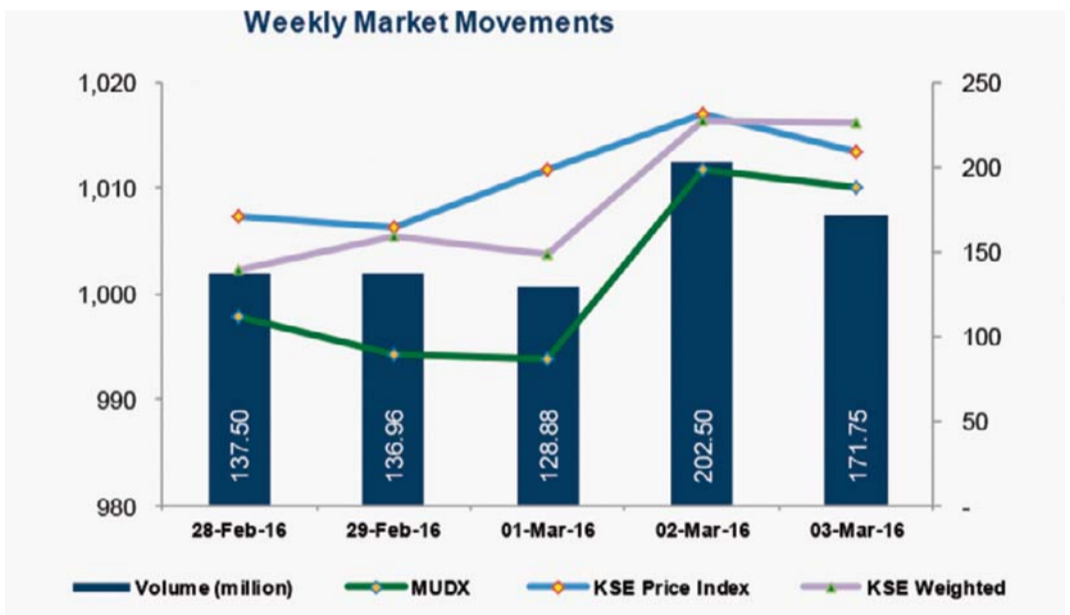
Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account is open to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents of Kuwait. Customers who open an account and/ or deposit more will enter the draw within two days. To take part in the Al-Danah 2016 upcoming quarterly and yearly draws, customers must have an Al-Danah account containing at least KD 200; customers can visit one of Gulf Bank's 56 branches, transfer on line, or call the Customer Contact Center on 1805805 for assistance and guidance. Customers can also log on to [www.e-gulfbank.com/aldanahwinners](http://www.e-gulfbank.com/aldanahwinners), to find out more about Al-Danah and its winners.

## ZAIN OFFERS NEW IPHONE 6S PLAN

**KUWAIT:** Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, launched its latest iPhone 6s plan for postpaid customers with more talk time and more data for KD 21 only.

The new smartphone plan offers entitled postpaid customers to exciting features, including 50 GBs of monthly data, 500 local minutes, unlimited SMS messages, as well as free Zain Wi-Fi at the Avenues and Souq Sharq. This offering comes in line with Zain's aim to provide its customers with a superior telecommunications experience. Zain is committed to bringing its customers the latest and most advanced products in the telecommunications world, as it strives to enrich their lives with technology's most advanced solutions. A great number of Zain customers are devoted iPhone users who are keen to enjoy the latest technology has to offer.

Zain's enhancement of the iPhone 6s smartphone plan sprung from its core understanding of postpaid customers' needs. The offer aims at providing customers with a superior content consumption experience with Zain's nationwide LTE-A Internet. Zain emphasized its commitment to the needs of the largest customer base in Kuwait, and will continuously look into expanding its horizons to keep customers conveniently connected, to download content and stay in touch with their loved ones throughout the day.



# BUOYANT OIL LIFTS KUWAIT STOCK MARKET

### KFH Capital Market Report

**KUWAIT:** The KSE indices all witnessed a positive week, as oil prices surge, the market closed at 5,244.00 up by a 1.34 percent. The MUDX Islamic Index was also up by 1.01 percent to close at 512.82 points. While the KSX15 which comprises of the market blue chips closed at 854.63 up 16.44 points.

Equities across the Middle East reacted edged up as fear over global economy ease; further, the Brent crude surged 12.5 percent compared to last week, currently trading at USD 36.71 per barrel.

The Weekly volumes reported 777.58 million shares compared to 539.53 million shares in previous week. Among the major contributors the Financial Services Sector (contributing 37.74 percent) witnessed 293.43 million shares of trading compared to 229.69 million shares in the previous week, while Real Estate Sector (contributing 27.33 percent) witnessed 212.49 million shares of trading compared to 133.20 million shares in the previous week.

Sectors with notable volumes included the Industrials sector, witnessed 47.32 million traded shares with an increase of 187.37 percent in volumes during the week. Counters like National Ranges Co. (Mcap - KD 5.18 million) witnessed 15.31 million shares in trading compared with 3.64 million shares the previous week, after postponing the date of the lawsuit hearing filed from against them.

The overall Market Cap was up by a 1.6 percent as it stood at KWD 24.92 billion, the market saw a positive trend in the blue chips during the week. National Bank of Kuwait - NBK (Mcap - KD 3.72 billion) saw its market cap increase by 1.39 percent. While Mobile Telecommunication Co - Zain (Mcap - KD 1.61 billion) saw its market cap go surge 5.63 percent, and Borgan Bank (Mcap - KD 717.27 million) saw an increase of 4.48 percent in its market cap, we believe in anticipation of earning results for FY 15.

On the total market breadth, Of the 56 Islamic Companies, 34 advanced while 9 declined during the week.

The Islamic universe market cap witnessed a positive week to close at KD 6.26 billion an increase of 1.19 percent. The universe heavyweights like Kuwait Finance House - KFH (Mcap - KD 2.43 billion) remained unchanged during the week. While Boubyan Bank (Mcap - KD 825.30 million) saw an increase of 2.56 percent in its market cap.

Weekly Indices Performance & their Volatility					Week: 28-Feb-16 to 03-Mar-16		
Indices	Week-end Stats			Chg (%)	Volatility		
	Current	Previous	Change		Current	Previous	
KSE Price Index	5,244.00	5,174.69	69.31	1.34%	7.37%	4.02%	
MUDX	512.82	507.70	5.11	1.01%	14.18%	9.94%	
KSE Weighted	362.10	356.37	5.73	1.61%	8.89%	6.31%	
KSX15	854.63	838.19	16.44	1.96%	11.77%	10.71%	

Top KSE Islamic Stocks in terms of Market Capitalization (MC)						
Stocks	Current Week	Previous Week	Chg.	% of MUDX	Weekly Volume	YTD-Gain
Kuwait Finance House	2,430.17	2,430.17	0.0%	38.8%	12,593,655	-5.6%
Boubyan Bank	825.30	804.67	2.6%	13.2%	1,938,149	-9.1%
Ahli United Bank	692.95	700.82	-1.1%	11.1%	158,554	-17.0%
Kuwait Telecommunications Co.	489.41	474.43	3.2%	7.8%	907,264	-1.0%
Kuwait International Bank	201.24	199.17	1.0%	3.2%	1,867,289	-14.2%

Top 3 Gainers	C. Mkt Cap	Pr. Mkt Cap	Change %	% Total Mkt	Price Stats- Weekly	
					Current	Previous
Gulf Investment House	4.02	3.45	16.67%	0.016%	0.025	0.021
Ras AL Khaimah Co. for White Cement	55.02	47.51	15.79%	0.221%	0.110	0.095
Credit Rating & Collection	8.91	7.76	14.89%	0.036%	0.054	0.047

Top 3 Losers	C. Mkt Cap	Pr. Mkt Cap	Change %	% Total Mkt	Price Stats- Weekly	
					Current	Previous
Strategia Investment Co.	-	10.20	-100.00%	0.000%	-	0.034
Yiaco Medical Co.	32.38	41.48	-21.93%	0.130%	0.178	0.228
Sanam Real Estate Co.	4.28	5.13	-16.67%	0.017%	0.035	0.042

## PROSECUTOR: IPHONE MAY ID SAN BERNARDINO ATTACKER

**LOS ANGELES:** Information contained in an encrypted iPhone could help finally answer whether there was a third assailant in the San Bernardino terror attack that killed 14 people, according to court papers filed by the county's district attorney. San Bernardino Police Chief Jarrod Burguan said Friday that the question of a third attacker has nagged investigators despite no supporting evidence.

"We've never been able to completely eliminate it," he said. "We know we have some witnesses that said they thought they saw three ... some saw two, some saw one. The majority said two, and the evidence we have up to this point only supports two." Still, he said investigators would like to definitively answer the question, and unlocking the phone could help do that.

Syed Rizwan Farook and his wife, Tashfeen Malik, opened fire Dec. 2 at an annual training of his San Bernardino County co-workers. They died hours later in a shootout with police. The 14 people killed marked the deadliest terror attack on US soil since Sept 11, 2001. In a brief filed in federal court Thursday, San Bernardino County District Attorney Michael Ramos cited two 911 calls reporting three perpetrators during the attack.

"The information contained solely on the seized iPhone could provide evidence to identify as of yet unknown co-conspirators ..." according to Ramos' brief. The brief also suggested that the county-owned iPhone used by Farook may have introduced a "lying-dormant cyber pathogen" endangering the county's computer network. Burguan said he's never heard that theory and knew of no problems.

### Possible but unlikely

Such a breach is technically possible but unlikely, said David Meltzer, a computer security expert and chief research officer at TripWire, a commercial IT security firm. If an employee wanted to introduce malicious software into the county's network, Meltzer said they would be more likely to use a desktop or laptop PC because it's easier to download and manipulate malicious code on a PC's operating system.

The district attorney is among many weighing in on the fight between Apple and the government ahead of a March 22 hearing in which Apple is asking a judge to reverse an order requiring the company to create a software program that overrides

iPhone security features. Apple says unlocking Farook's phone would make all other iPhones more vulnerable to future attacks. In a letter to Apple CEO Tim Cook cited in another court brief, Mark Sandefur - the father of one of the men killed in the terror attack - also cited reports of three attackers, saying the phone must be unlocked.

"Several of the survivors tell me bone-chilling stories of where they were, and what they saw," Sandefur wrote. "Some of them describe in precise detail, laying on the floor, hiding under furniture and the bodies of their co-workers, that they saw three assailants, not two, walking around in heavy boots as they carried out their murders. 'What if there is evidence pointing to a third shooter?' Sandefur wrote. 'What if it leads to an unknown terrorist cell? What if others are attacked, and you and I did nothing to prevent it?'"

Among those backing Apple are civil liberties advocates and some of the company's biggest competitors, including Google, Microsoft and Facebook. The last of the 22 surviving victims of the attack was released from the hospital Thursday, the Press Enterprise reported. — AP



**CHICAGO:** This July 27, 2014, file photo provided by US Customs and Border Protection shows Tashfeen Malik (left) and Syed Farook, as they passed through O'Hare International Airport. — AP



**BEIJING:** Delegates read the work report delivered by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang during the opening session of the annual National People's Congress at the Great Hall of the People. — AP

## CHINA TO RAMP UP INTERNET GROWTH, AND ITS CONTROLS

### ENCRYPTION TECHNOLOGY, BIG DATA THE KEY ELEMENTS

**BEIJING:** China's government has highlighted big data, encryption technology and "core technologies" such as semiconductors as the key elements of its push to grow into a tech powerhouse, according to a new five-year plan released yesterday that envisages the Internet as a major source of growth as well as a potential risk.

Even as it highlighted the need to improve Internet infrastructure to rural areas and unlock the digital economy's potential, Chinese economic planners called for a more secure and better managed Web, with enhanced Internet control systems, Internet security laws and real-name registration policies.

Chinese officials including Internet czar Lu Wei have played down concerns over what critics have described as China's expanding Web censorship, saying that it is the Chinese government's sovereign prerogative and a necessary measure to maintain domestic order. China's development plan calls for a better cybersecurity approval system and more "precise" Web management to "clean up illegal and bad informa-

tion." The plan also calls for a multilateral, democratic, transparent and international governance system and active participation in international Internet governance efforts.

### Promise of the internet

Premier Li Keqiang highlighted the promise of the Internet, saying yesterday that various traditional sectors, ranging from manufacturing to government to health care, need to connect to the Web and raise their efficiency as part of an overarching national strategy called "Internet Plus." He vowed to raise research and technology spending to account for 2.5 percent of gross domestic product in the five years through 2020, which he said would mark a "remarkable achievement."

The five-year plan calls for all families in large cities to have access to 100 megabyte-per-second Internet service and broadband coverage reaching 98 percent of the population in incorporated villages. At the same time, Chinese leaders, wary of over-relying on foreign technology, will seek to boost China's homegrown industry

and cut down on imports - a strategy that has drawn complaints from trade partners like the United States.

Similar to previous years, when Chinese leaders highlighted industries such as e-commerce as a growth focus, the new draft of China's development plan specifically elevated big data and cloud computing, relatively new and promising fields that Chinese industry experts view as not yet cornered by U.S. companies that dominate other parts of the technology market. The plan also calls for China to catch up on "core" technologies such as semiconductors and basic computer parts and software, as well as encryption technology.

China's campaign to beef up its chip technology has encountered political resistance from the United States. China's national chip champion, Tsinghua Unigroup, said last month that it would abandon its attempt to acquire a stake in California data storage firm Western Digital, the second deal it has scrapped because of opposition from US regulators who do not want sensitive technology to fall into Chinese hands. — AP

## US HI-TECH ENERGY AGENCY AIMS TO OUTPERFORM TESLA

**WASHINGTON:** A wing of the US Department of Energy focused on breakthrough technologies may soon give billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk's most recent foray into energy storage a run for its money, the unit's director said.

Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy, or ARPA-E, which funds projects meant to transform energy markets, has made huge strides over the last few years on next-generation batteries that could make electric cars and renewable energy cheaper and more accessible, Ellen Williams said in an interview this week.

The battery division of Musk's Tesla Motors turned a profit in the fourth quarter, after the first shipments of its rechargeable products helped to reduce losses from the company's auto business. Its Powerwall batteries store energy that homes and small businesses generate with solar panels. The Powerpack model is designed for large commercial facilities.

### Risky projects

Williams said her agency has helped kickstart a dozen high-risk projects based on newer technologies that could soon outperform Tesla batteries. "What Musk has done that is creative and important is drive the learning curve. He's decided to take an existing, pretty powerful battery technology and start producing it on a very large scale," she said.

"But it's not technology innovation in the sense of creating new ways of doing it. We are pretty well convinced that some of our technologies have the potential to be significantly better," Williams said. Batteries are in a "Wild West" phase, said Colin Wessells, chief executive of Alveo Energy, a San Francisco area startup developing a high power, long lifecycle battery technology for renewable energy and microgrids, or localized groupings of energy providers.

Only five energy grid storage batteries have been commercialized as researchers and budding entrepreneurs race to bring new technologies to market, he noted. Wessells, whose company has ARPA-E support, said huge manufacturing advances will speed up the commercialization of battery products.

"We are in a burst of innovation right now," he said at his exhibition stand at the ARPA-E conference outside of Washington this week. "Five years from now there will be a few technologies

out there that nobody saw coming."

ARPA-E is set to get a huge boost after the United States and 19 other countries launched Mission Innovation at the United Nations climate summit in Paris late last year. The governments pledged to double spending on clean energy research and development over the next five years. The United States will boost its overall energy research and development budget to \$12.8 billion by 2021.

ARPA-E was launched in 2009 with a budget of \$400 million and a mandate to fund the most cutting edge technologies. President Barack Obama's budget request for 2017 would increase its allocation to \$1 billion in five years. "With that increased budget we can definitely make a difference," said Williams.

### Staying focused

ARPA-E funds projects for three years at a time, focusing on commercializing new and exciting ideas and training researchers to pitch them in ways investors can understand. This differs from traditional academic research, which tends to take too long, Williams said, noting that scientists "always focus on the next problem."

"What we do that is very different is we really set a target to get something specific done in a specific period of time," she said. Williams said ARPA-E aims to steer projects away from what Microsoft Corp founder Bill Gates called a "valley of death" of failures between the early promise of a new energy concept and commercializing it into a viable technology that exists in the clean energy sector.

Gates, who launched a multibillion-dollar clean energy research initiative alongside Mission Innovation in Paris, said last week the money that he and other entrepreneurs will invest in clean energy R&D will "complement government research" to deliver "energy miracles." Some of these miracles may come out of ARPA-E supported labs and workshops, Williams said.

Besides energy storage, ARPA-E's research projects include using robots and drones to help develop more sustainable sorghum-based biofuels, and using sensors to make heating and air conditioning systems more energy efficient. The agency has funded projects in all 50 states. "These concepts are way out-there now, but in a few years from now they may be the way things work," she said. — Reuters

## GERMAN WATCHDOG PROBES FACEBOOK ON PRIVACY RULES

**BERLIN:** Facebook may be abusing its dominant market position and violating data protection rules, Germany's competition watchdog said Wednesday, announcing it had opened a probe into the social network.

Just days after Facebook's founder and chief Mark Zuckerberg made a highly-publicized visit to Berlin, the Federal Cartel Office said it had "initiated a proceeding against Facebook Inc., USA, the Irish subsidiary of the company and Facebook Germany GmbH."

"The authority is investigating suspicions that with its specific terms of service on the use of user data, Facebook has abused its possibly dominant position in the market for social networks," said the office, the Bundeskartellamt, in a statement. Facebook has come under fire from privacy advocates who claim the social network collects too much data and is not transparent enough in how it uses the information.

The German cartel watchdog said there was "an initial suspicion" that Facebook's conditions of use were in violation of data protection provisions. This "could represent an abusive imposition of unfair conditions on users," it explained. The Bundeskartellamt will examine, "among other issues, to what extent a connection exists between the possibly dominant position of the company and the use of such clauses," it said.

### 'We abide by the law'

Cartel office chief Andreas Mundt said that for advertising-financed Internet services such as Facebook, user data were "hugely important." "For this reason it is essential to also examine under the aspect of abuse of market power whether the consumers are sufficiently informed about the type and extent of data collected," Mundt said.

The office said that Facebook collected a large amount of personal user data from various sources. By creating user profiles the company enabled its advertising customers to better target their activities. In order to access the social network, users must first agree to Facebook's collection and use of their data by accepting the terms of service, the office said.

It was difficult for users to understand and assess the scope of the agreement accepted by them, it argued. "There is considerable doubt as to the admissibility of this procedure, in particular under applicable national data protection law," the cartel office said. "If there is a connection between such an infringement and market dominance, this could also constitute an abusive practice under competition law." In a short emailed response, Facebook said it was "convinced that we abide by the law." And the group said it would "cooperate actively with the cartel office to respond to its questions." — AFP

## DOES AN EXTREMIST'S IPHONE CONTAIN A 'CYBER PATHOGEN'?

**SAN FRANCISCO:** A local prosecutor has offered an unusual justification for forcing Apple to help hack an iPhone used by a San Bernardino mass killer: The phone might have been "used as a weapon" to introduce malicious software to county computer systems.

San Bernardino County District Attorney Michael Ramos acknowledged to The Associated Press that there's no evidence of malicious software in the county's computer network. But he added, "I wouldn't call it a total hypothetical."

Computer security experts say the prospect is unlikely. By late Friday, the prosecutor's claim had sparked a wave of social media postings, many of which mocked the DA's use of the non-technical term "cyber pathogen" to describe the supposed malware. Apple has resisted calls to help unlock the phone, arguing that building a software tool to override the phone's security features would render other iPhones vulnerable to criminals and government authorities around the world. Investigators, meanwhile, are eager to see if the phone used by shooter Syed Farook - one issued by Farook's employer, the county health department - contains any useful information about other suspects.

But the idea that Farook might have used the phone to transmit a "lying-dormant cyber pathogen" into county data systems is a new one. Ramos' office, however, cited it in a court filing

Thursday among several other reasons to support the government's position.

"This was a county employee that murdered 14 people and injured 22," Ramos said. "Did he use the county's infrastructure? Did he hack into that infrastructure? I don't know. In order for me to really put that issue to rest, there is one piece of evidence that would absolutely let us know that, and that would be the iPhone." The argument drew condemnation from one software expert who has signed a brief in support of Apple's position.

"Ramos's statements are not only misleading to the court, but amount to blatant fear mongering," independent software researcher Jonathan Zdziarski wrote in a post on his personal blog.

Other security experts who haven't taken sides also discounted the scenario. "It's definitely possible, technically, but it doesn't seem to me at first glance to be likely," said David Meltzer, a computer security expert and chief research officer at TripWire, a commercial IT security firm. He said Apple's iPhone operating system is a relatively closed environment that's designed so users can't easily introduce their own programs.

Ramos, meanwhile, said he'd heard about social media posts that mocked the term "cyber pathogen," which is not generally used by tech experts. "When they do that," he said, "they're mocking the victims of this crime, of this horrible terrorist attack." — AP



**NEW YORK:** This Feb 23, 2016, file photo shows a New York police officer stands outside the Apple Store on Fifth Avenue while monitoring a demonstration. — AP

## POLLUTION REGULATOR FOR SMOGGY SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SACKED

**LOS ANGELES:** The longtime leader of the agency that regulates air pollution for much of smoggy Southern California was fired in a closed-door vote criticized by environmental groups. The South Coast Air Quality Management District's governing board made no statement about what led it to terminate Barry Wallerstein on Friday in a 7-6 vote after he had served nearly two decades at the helm of the agency. Republicans gained a majority on the regional board recently and supporters of Wallerstein suggested he was being fired so the agency could favor big polluters and roll back regulations that have helped clean up the notoriously bad air that remains the smoggiest in the nation.

"The big concern is they're kicking him out to replace him with someone who's industry friendly and less committed to environmental regulations," said Morgan Wynn, an attorney with the Natural

Resources Defense Council. "We can only theorize or make educated guesses because the board has been very silent in explaining what they're doing." There was a noted shift in direction on the board when it voted in December to adopt less stringent regulations for emissions of nitrogen oxides, a key component of smog, Wynn said. Wallerstein and his staff pushed for stricter regulations, but the board adopted weaker rules supported by the Western States Petroleum Association.

Some observers noted a parallel with last month's decision by another powerful public agency to get rid of its leader. The decision to dismiss the California Coastal Commission's executive brought criticisms that the powerful coastal agency frequently wedged between property rights and environmental concerns had tilted in favor of developers. Dozens of

members of the public spoke Friday in favor of Wallerstein before the vote at the agency's Diamond Bar headquarters, including several people who live near refineries, oil wells, farmland and other sources of pollution. Many spoke of family and friends who struggle to breathe because of asthma and other respiratory ailments.

The agency monitors air pollution throughout the region and is responsible for passing regulations to meet clean air standards in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties. It has a broad reach and recently ordered that Southern California Gas Co. cap its leaking well near the San Fernando Valley. It also worked with the company that produces the popular Sriracha hot sauce after neighbors complained that the hot peppers were burning their eyes and making them cough.

While the agency is seen as being on the cutting edge of setting stiff pollution controls, the region still fails to meet federal air quality standards because of persistent smog and soot. Evan Gillespie of the Sierra Club said it was vital to keep Wallerstein in his role as the agency prepares to develop a broader plan for air cleanup that will have an impact on a generation. "We've watched over time as this board has watered down life-saving regulation after life-saving regulation," Gillespie said. "It throws the whole organization into turmoil at this critical moment."

Wallerstein spoke briefly before the vote, saying he hadn't asked anyone to speak on his behalf and had even encouraged some people not to speak. "From the bottom of my heart, thank you for coming out today," he said. Wallerstein had worked at the agency since 1984 and had been

executive officer since 1997. The board voted unanimously to appoint Michael O'Kelly, deputy executive and chief financial officer, as interim executive.

Board member Joe Lyou, who voted against firing Wallerstein, said he couldn't reveal what happened in the closed session. He said he was surprised when the item was added to the agenda earlier in the week, but said the timing wasn't coincidental. He said it was too simplistic to say it was a matter of business and environmental issues clashing. Lyou, who is also president and chief executive of the Coalition for Clean Air, said he and Wallerstein didn't always agree, but he praised his work, expertise and ability to work with people from different viewpoints. "I am certainly disappointed," Lyou said. "This is an unfortunate way for him to leave an agency that he dedicated so much of his life to." — AP



## GOOGLE TWEAKS 'RIGHT TO BE FORGOTTEN' IN EU SEARCHES

### CHANGES WOULD CLOSE LOOPHOLE

**WASHINGTON:** Google said it would implement changes in how it applies the so-called right to be forgotten for online searches made in Europe. The changes, to be implemented next week, would close a loophole that allowed Europeans to find deleted entries by using Google.com instead of the search page for their local country. "Starting next week, in addition to our existing practice, we will also use geolocation signals (like IP addresses) to restrict access to the delisted URL on all Google Search domains, including google.com, when accessed from the country of the person requesting the removal," said a blog post from Google's global privacy counsel Peter Fleischer.

"We'll apply the change retrospectively, to all delistings that we have already done under the European Court ruling." A European Court of Justice ruling in May 2014 recognizing the "right to be forgotten" opened the door for Google users to ask the search engine to remove results about them

that are inaccurate or no longer relevant. Google set up an online form that people in Europe can fill out to ask for information to be excluded from search results. Now a part of the holding company Alphabet under a reorganization, Google's moves failed to satisfy some regulators, notably in France, because the users could get around the restriction. Google has not changed search results in other areas such as the United States. Up to now, Google had been deleting certain results from searches made on google.de, google.fr, google.co.uk and other domains within Europe. "We're changing our approach as a result of specific discussions that we've had with EU data protection regulators in recent months," Fleischer said.

"We believe that this additional layer of delisting enables us to provide the enhanced protections that European regulators ask us for, while also upholding the rights of people in other countries to access lawfully published information." Danny

Sullivan, editor of the Search Engine Land blog, said the new practice is more complex but still could have loopholes. "It's worldwide censorship for those within the country where the request was granted, in the sense that no matter what edition of Google they use, the removed listings will not show for the terms involved," Sullivan said in a blog post. "Outside the EU, none of the censorship will be in place—so it's not worldwide when considered that way. This will also be the case for anyone within the EU who manages to disguise their location, such as someone using a VPN." In its most recent update last November, Google said it had complied with less than half of the 348,000 request to remove content in Europe. The largest number of requests came from France, with more than 73,000, followed by Germany with some 60,000. Similar processes have been put in place by Microsoft's Bing search engine that also powers queries at Yahoo. — AFP

## LAOS REPORTS LOCAL ZIKA TRANSMISSION

**BANGKOK:** Laos is the latest country to report a local transmission of Zika virus, according to the World Health Organization, as fears mount over the mosquito-borne illness that has been linked to birth defects. Asia has seen only a sprinkling of cases of the virus, but a surge in Latin America this year has pushed the UN health agency to declare Zika a global health emergency. Laos joined a total of 41 countries that have reported local transmissions of the virus since the beginning of the year, a WHO report said. Health authorities in Laos, a rural Communist country with minimal infrastructure, were not available to comment.

Neighboring Thailand reported one case last month of a 22-year-old who contracted the illness domestically and has since recovered. Thailand's health ministry urged the public not to panic, saying there have been an average of five cases per year since 2012 with no outbreaks. The sickness is carried by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, which also

spreads dengue fever. It breeds in tropical areas, including Southeast Asia, which has seen a spike in cases of dengue in recent months and most often causes mild, flu-like symptoms.

A growing body of evidence suggests Zika can also trigger microcephaly, a severe deformation of the brain among newborns, in babies born to mothers infected while pregnant. Brazil was first to sound the alarm on the apparent link with birth defects. It has since become the hardest hit country, with an estimated 1.5 million cases of active Zika transmission and 641 confirmed cases of microcephaly. On Friday scientists in the United States said they found the first concrete evidence of a link between the virus and the birth defect, which has so far been circumstantial. The findings may help to identify drugs to prevent or cure the Zika virus, which currently lacks a vaccine or specific treatment. — AFP

## CRUZ SELLS YOGA MATS AFTER ADMONISHING TRUMP TO 'BREATHE'

**WASHINGTON:** US Republican presidential candidates have found a rare moment of levity in yoga, but don't expect to see them practicing their stretches together anytime soon. Voters can, however, buy a yoga mat from Ted Cruz. Cruz tweeted Friday that his campaign website was selling the mats, following a Thursday debate between the four remaining Republican candidates, in which yoga took center stage. During the forum, Cruz tore into rival Donald Trump admonishing him to calm down and "breathe, breathe, breathe." "I am Ted," Trump shot back, as Cruz taunted him again: "You can do it. You can breathe. I know it's hard." The opportunity was apparently too much to resist for Florida Senator Marco Rubio.

"When they're done with the yoga, can I answer a question?" he interjected.

Rubio then said of Trump: "He's very flexible, so you never know!" Trump, who a few minutes prior was chastised for changing position on major policy issues, had said: "You have to be flexible because you learn you have to show a degree of flexibility." The "Cruz 2016 'Breathe' yoga mat," as the item is called online, is available for \$35 alongside caps, coffee mugs and baby clothes for sale on the Texas senator's campaign website. It is emblazoned with the words "Cruz" and "2016." Rubio as well solicited \$10 donations, pretending on his campaign website to hawk fictitious yoga pants that read "Dump Trump." — AFP



**NEW YORK:** Photo shows an arrangement of peanuts in New York. — AP

## PEANUTS FOR BABIES? - NEW STUDIES BACK ALLERGY-PREVENTING STRATEGY

**CHICAGO:** Two new studies bolster evidence that feeding babies peanuts or other allergy-inducing foods is more likely to protect them than to cause problems. One study, a follow-up to landmark research published last year, suggests that the early prevention strategy leads to persistent, long-lasting results in children at risk for food allergies. It found that allergy protection lasted at least through age 5 and didn't wane even when kids stopped eating peanut-containing foods for a year. That means at-risk kids who don't want to eat peanut butter on a weekly basis can safely take a break, at least for a year.

The second new study suggests that the early strategy could also work with eggs, another food that can cause allergies in young children. It found that allergies to peanuts and eggs were less common in young children who started eating those foods at 3 months of age than in kids who as infants received only breast milk. The New England Journal of Medicine published both new studies online Friday, coinciding with their presentation at a medical meeting in Los Angeles. Food allergies are common, potentially serious and sometimes deadly.

They're becoming more prevalent in children in many countries, affecting up to 8 percent of kids under age 3. About 2 percent of US kids have peanut allergies. The results from last year's study prompted a sea change in experts' approach to preventing these allergies. It was the first "to show that early introduction of peanut can prevent the development of allergy

to it," Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said in a statement.

It also led to new draft guidance issued Friday by a panel convened by Fauci's agency. The recommendations include giving at-risk kids peanut-containing food as early as 4- to 6-months of age. Infants at risk are those with severe skin rashes or egg allergies; allergy tests are recommended beforehand. The agency paid for last year's study and follow-up, and will issue final guidelines after a 45 day comment period. The draft guidance echoes advice issued last year by the American Academy of Pediatrics and other medical groups in response to the ground-breaking study. That study involved more than 600 at-risk British infants.

By age 5, peanut allergies were much less common in children who had started eating peanut-based foods before age 1, usually peanut butter or a peanut-based snack, than among children who'd been told to abstain. The follow-up involved most of those children. After a year off, an additional three kids in both groups tested positive for peanut allergies. The allergies remained much less common in the early peanut eaters - affecting just under 5 percent of those kids versus almost 19 percent of the others. The new results suggest that early introduction of allergy-inducing foods results in "true tolerance" in at-risk kids, said Dr. Stacy Dorris, an allergist at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. She was not involved in the research. — AP

## DOES TRUMP HAVE A HEALTH CARE PLAN? DOES IT MATTER?

**WASHINGTON:** Donald Trump's evolving ideas on health care do not amount to a full plan, and some proposals could mean new political and policy dilemmas for the Republican presidential front-runner and his party. One Trump idea - allowing Medicare to negotiate prescription drug prices - puts him at odds with Republican congressional leaders who favor the current system of private benefit managers bargaining with drugmakers. It aligns Trump with Democrat Hillary Clinton, who also favors direct negotiation by Medicare.

The Trump campaign late Wednesday released a seven-point outline for replacing President Barack Obama's health care law and said it was based on "free-market principles." It included standard GOP ideas such as health savings accounts and no health insurance mandates, along with a proposal not usually floated by Republicans - permitting the importation of lower-cost prescription drugs from abroad. Trump's positions are "based on attitudes and aspirations, not plans," said former Health and Human Services Secretary Michael Leavitt, who served under Republican President George W. Bush.

### Trump's plan

"It is clear he underestimates the complexity and has not contemplated many of the dilemmas he would face," added Leavitt, now heading a health care consulting firm. Trump's plan "is not strictly a replacement for Obamacare," said Larry Levitt of the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation. "There's no question Trump's plan would cost less than Obamacare, but it would also cover fewer people." "It is still something of a mystery," said economist Joe Antos of the business-oriented American Enterprise Institute.

The Trump campaign says its candidate is only getting started and more is coming. "Frankly, right now nobody has a comprehensive plan," Sam Clovis, the campaign's national co-chairman, said in an interview with The Associated Press. "Nobody has a bill that they put together, and it serves no useful purpose to do that," Clovis added. It would only allow critics to "nitpick you to death." Trump has claimed that his plan for Medicare to negotiate prescription prices would save \$300 billion, which is about what the whole country spends on such medications in a year. That "feels like he is just winging it and making it up," said Douglas Holtz-Eakin, a former Congressional Budget Office director and now president of the American Action

Forum, a center-right think tank.

Clovis clarified that the \$300 billion figure would include savings from other actions, such as cracking down on waste, fraud and abuse. But after reading the latest proposals from Trump, Holtz-Eakin said, "It looks to me like this is the staff putting the genie back in the bottle." If Trump's plan is a work in progress, his own statements provide a rough guide to his views. Trump's bottom line seems to be that people need access to health care. A standard refrain is that as president he will not have people "dying in the street" just because they are unable to afford treatment. He has said he would do a deal with hospitals, but it's not clear how the hospitals would be paid.

### System like Canada's

In the past, Trump indicated that he was open to looking at a government-run health care system like Canada's - what Vermont Sen Bernie Sanders is proposing in the Democratic presidential primary. That's "not at all" the case anymore, said campaign official Clovis. Unlike many Republicans, Trump says he adamantly opposes cuts to social programs for the elderly, the disabled and the poor. "Every Republican wants to do a big number on Social Security, they want to do it on Medicare, and they want to do it on Medicaid. And we can't do that," Trump said last year at a Republican forum in New Hampshire. That would

not be fair to people who have paid in for years.

Trump's stance on Medicare and Medicaid seems to put him in conflict with House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis. Ryan has advocated overhauling both programs, channeling future retirees into a privatized Medicare and limiting federal costs for Medicaid. If Trump wins the nomination, "we are going to be in a position where our nominee would not agree with the Republican House and Senate caucuses," said GOP pollster Bill McInturff, who follows health care closely. Clovis said Trump believes the economy comes first. "It's not the right thing to be talking about how to fix our entitlement programs until we have an economy that is fixed," he explained.

But the consensus among experts is that overextended benefit programs could eventually damage the economy, and it's less painful to address problems now than in a full-blown crisis. On the health law - a molehill compared with Medicare and Medicaid - there's no apparent difference between Trump and other Republicans. Calling the program a disaster, Trump has embraced the GOP's "repeal and replace" mantra. But he doesn't favor going back to the days when insurers could turn down people with medical conditions. That raises another potential problem: If Trump has no requirement for healthy people to get coverage, and those in poor health can still get a policy, premiums would shoot up. — AP



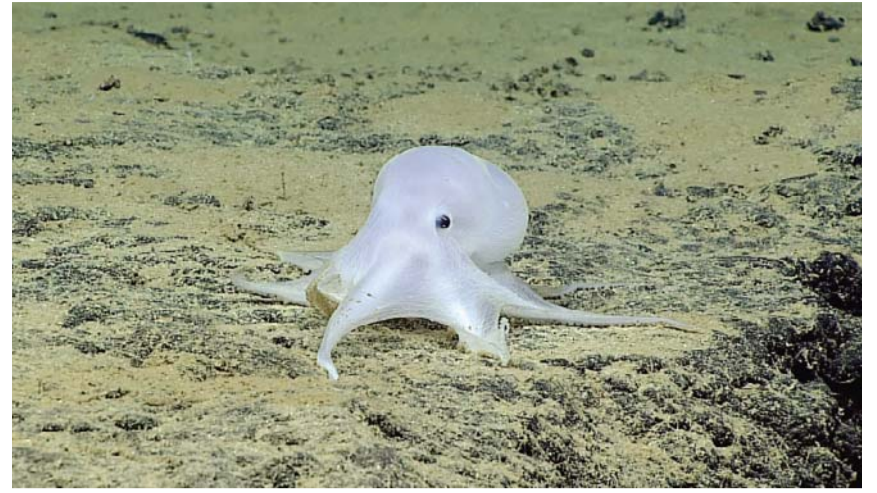
**NEW ORLEANS:** A supporter of Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump holds up a sign as he speaks at a campaign rally in New Orleans. — AP

# POSSIBLE NEW OCTOPUS SPECIES FOUND NEAR HAWAII

**HONOLULU:** Scientists say they have discovered what might be a new species of octopus while searching the Pacific Ocean floor near the Hawaiian Islands. On Feb 27, a team found a small light-colored octopus at a depth of about 2.5 miles in the ocean near Necker Island, said Michael Vecchione of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The octopus did not have fins and all of its suckers were in one row on each arm,

Vecchione said. The octopus "did not seem very muscular" and was light colored, he said. "This resulted in a ghostlike appearance, leading to a comment on social media that it should be called Casper, like the friendly cartoon ghost. It is almost certainly an undescribed species ...," he said in the statement posted on Wednesday on the NOAA website (<http://1.usa.gov/1oXarVu>). It's unusual to find an octopus with-

out fins so deep in the ocean, said Vecchione, who noted that the previous depths at which an octopus without fins was found were all less than 4,000 meters, or 2.5 miles. Two scientists he has consulted "agreed that this is something unusual and is a depth record ...," said Vecchione, who is with NOAA's National Systematics Laboratory. The octopus was discovered during a search of the ocean floor by NOAA's Okeanos Explorer, he said. — AP



This image shows a possible new species of octopus. — AP

# SORE, BUT NO TALLER, AMERICAN ASTRONAUT ADJUSTS TO EARTH

KELLY BATTLING FATIGUE AND SUPER-SENSITIVE SKIN

**MIAMI:** US astronaut Scott Kelly said Friday he is battling fatigue and super-sensitive skin, but is back to his normal height after nearly a year in space. Kelly's 340-day mission spent testing the effects of long-term spaceflight ahead of a future mission to Mars, along with Russian cosmonaut Mikhail Kornienko-wrapped up early Wednesday when they landed in frigid Kazakhstan aboard a Soyuz spacecraft.

One of the effects of spending such a long time in the absence of gravity was that Kelly's spine expanded temporarily, making him grow 1.5 inches (3.8 centimeters), only to shrink as he returned to Earth. His twin brother, Mark Kelly, said they were the same height again by the time they hugged in Houston early Thursday. According to John Charles, human research program associate manager for international science at NASA, any height gain "probably went away very quickly because it is a function of fluid accumulation in the discs between the bones in the spinal column."

Kelly also said reports he had grown a full two inches (5.1 centimeters) were exaggerated. "I don't know where that came from. I did measure myself and it was an inch and a half, so maybe somebody just decided to just round up and write it as a fact," he told reporters in his first extended media appearance since his return. The specifics are important because a team of doctors is carefully researching the genetic, physical and psychological differences between Kelly and his twin, who is also an astronaut but who stayed on Earth to take part in the study.

**'Better tan'**

The details of those ongoing studies are secret for now, as scientists will do further analysis and submit their findings for peer-review before publication. The idea is to learn more about the harmful effects of spaceflight before NASA greenlights any deep space mission to an asteroid or Mars, journeys that would last a year or more. The study includes frequent MRIs of the twins' organs and major vessels, genetic analysis and a close examination of the effects of radiation, which in high enough doses can lead to cancer.

Asked if the brothers noticed anything else different about each other upon being reunited, Scott answered: "He's got a better tan." A veteran of four space missions, 52-year-old Kelly returned to Earth with the record for the longest amount of time spent in space by an American — 520 days. A Russian cosmonaut holds the all-time record. "It seemed like I'd lived there forever. It was longer than I thought it would be. But having flown before, I did pace myself appropriately," he told reporters.

**Burning soreness**

Kelly had previously spent six months at the orbiting research lab, and was somewhat prepared for the effects of returning from microgravity. "Initially this time, coming out of the capsule, I felt better than I did last time," when his mission lasted 159 days, he said. But that soon changed. "My level of muscle soreness and fatigue is a lot higher than it was last time. Maybe there is a lin-



**HOUSTON:** NASA astronaut Scott Kelly speaks during a press conference in Houston. Kelly set a US record with his 340-day mission to the International Space Station. — AP

ear function to it," he said. "I also have an issue with my skin, that because it hadn't touched anything for so long-like any significant contact-it is very, very sensitive. It is almost like a burning feeling wherever I sit or lie or walk." Kelly added that he was wearing dress shoes only because of his televised appearance, and that a more comfortable pair was waiting nearby. Other changes he

noticed were in his fine motor skills. He said he tried to shoot some hoops but missed the basket each time. Kelly, who recently wore a gorilla suit in space to chase a fellow astronaut as a joke, also poked fun at himself for his first choice of food upon returning to Earth—a banana. "It looked so good," he said. "As soon as I ate half of it, I recognized the irony." — AFP

# SUPERBUGS CAUSE 'ONE IN SEVEN' INFECTIONS CAUGHT IN HOSPITALS

**NEW YORK:** Supergerms cause 1 out of 7 infections in hospitals, health officials said. The bugs include the staph infection MRSA (MUR'-suh) and five other bacteria resistant to many kinds of antibiotics, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported. That leaves hospitals with few - if any - medicines to fight dangerous infections in already-sick patients. "That's the scary thing," said Tim Landers, an Ohio State University expert on antibiotic-resistant infections.

Hospital-spread infections have long been a problem. The CDC estimates that on any given day, 1 in 25 patients have an infection that they picked up in the hospital. Officials have been pushing hospitals to do a better job keeping infections in check, with the government's Medicare program cutting payments to the worst hospitals. The CDC looked at data from thousands of US hospitals from 2008 through 2014, focusing on infections tied to certain surgical procedures and use of catheters. It found superbugs caused 1 in 7

of the infections caught in general hospitals but 1 in 4 in specialized long-term hospitals. The agency's director, Dr Tom Frieden, called the long-term statistic especially "chilling." Those patients often have been under medical treatment for longer periods and have had more opportunity to be exposed to superbug infections, officials said.

Antibiotics became widely available in the 1940s, and today are used to kill or suppress the bacteria behind everything from strep throat to the plague. But as decades passed, some antibiotics stopped working. Experts say their overuse and misuse have helped make them less effective. Health officials have been raising alarms about it for years. Fighting the problem requires more careful and judicious use of antibiotics, Frieden said. "Doctors are the key to stamping out superbugs," Frieden said. The report offered some good news: The rate of overall infection did continue to fall for certain surgical sites and catheters. — AP

# SPACEX LAUNCHES COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITE BUT BOTCHES SEA LANDING

**CAPE CANAVERAL:** A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket blasted off from Florida and thrust a communications satellite into orbit on Friday, but the launch vehicle's reusable main-stage booster was destroyed when it failed to land itself on an ocean platform, the company said. It marked the fourth botched at-sea return landing attempt for Elon Musk's privately owned Space Exploration Technologies, though a Falcon main-stage rocket did achieve a successful ground-based touchdown after soaring back to Earth from a less demanding launch in December.

The latest try occurred after four SpaceX launch delays stretching back to Feb 24. On Friday, the 23-story-tall Falcon 9 bolted off its seaside launch pad at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station as scheduled at 6:35 p.m. EST/2335 GMT. A half-hour later it completed the chief goal of its mission, putting the Boeing-built satellite, owned by Luxembourg-based SES SA, into orbit more than 25,000 miles (40,600 km) above Earth. On its way up, the rocket's first-stage booster separated as planned, turned around and headed toward a platform floating about 400 miles (645 km) off Florida's east coast. The rocket found its target, but its velocity proved too great to allow for a safe landing on the drone barge.

"Rocket landed hard," Musk, the founder and chief executive officer of SpaceX, said in a Twitter message more than an hour after blastoff. "Didn't expect this one to work ... but next flight has a good chance." The ability to safely and reliably return the rocket's main stage to a landing pad at sea has been a key hurdle in Musk's quest to develop a relatively cheap, reusable launch vehicle. The rocket flying on Friday faced a particularly challenging mission to deliver the 12,613-pound (5,721 kg) satellite into an orbit more than 100 times higher than where the International Space Station flies.

The speed required to achieve that feat meant the rocket was going too fast to even attempt a ground landing. SpaceX came close to nailing an ocean touchdown in January after blasting off from California to deliver a climate-monitoring satellite into orbit. The returning main-stage rocket settled itself on a platform in the Pacific Ocean, but a stabilizing landing leg failed to latch, causing the booster to keel over and explode. SpaceX's next mission, a cargo-delivery run to the space station for NASA, is targeted for launch in late March or early April. The launch firm has contracts worth more than \$10 billion from commercial companies, NASA and other agencies. — Reuters



A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket lifts off from Cape Canaveral Air Force station on Friday, March 3, 2016. The rocket is carrying the SES-9 communications satellite. — AP

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## GUST ORGANIZES FESTIVAL FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

By Faten Omar

Gulf University for Science and Technology's (GUST) Mass Communications Department organized a festival for people with disabilities yesterday at the Kuwait Scientific Center. "Cause" is a social responsibility project that is part of a student-faculty collaboration series, which each year organizes a major conference," said Antonia Jolic, an instructor at the Mass Communications Department.

She told Kuwait Times that this event will raise money for a good cause for people with disabilities. "Fifty students are participating in this event in cooperation with three children's charities paired with three leading agencies - Kuwait Association for Learning Differences (KALD) and Senyar Marketing and Branding; Kuwait Child's Rights Society (KCRS) and Blu Lowe Marketing and Advertising; and Abeer2 Voluntary Group for the Mentally Disabled and Horizon FCB; along with other private and government organizations. This year the theme is public relations with an emphasis on social responsibility. The effort is specifically aligned with Goal 4.5 of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals 2017, of which Kuwait is a signatory," Jolic said.



Antonia Jolic, instructor at GUST's Mass communications Department speaks during the event. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

involves three phases - the launch event at the Scientific Center with activities throughout the afternoon such as storytelling, stage shows and arts and crafts, followed by fundraising campaigns. The launch event

kicks off the three fundraising campaigns running throughout March. Selected charities along with their PR/advertising agencies will use creativity and a pre-set budget to raise money for their organization through "crowd



funding" on [www.jaribha.com](http://www.jaribha.com), and the last phase is a conference highlighting key causes. Socially responsible community leaders will speak during the conference from April 10-14, 2016 on the GUST campus with the participation of Spread the Passion, UNDP and Jarbha.

An award ceremony will recognize efforts and present the Al-Shakoor lifetime achievement award for CSR.

### Three phases

Dalal Al-Enzi, a GUST student, said 'Cause'



## TEF ACHIEVED ISO 9001 - 2008 CERTIFICATION

Tamilnadu Engineers Forum (TEF) in Kuwait is an association formed from the alumni of various engineering colleges in the State of Tamilnadu, India. The forum has memberships of about 600 Engineers from various disciplines and industries spread around Kuwait.

TEF General Secretary Dr Shan Senthil proudly announced its achievement of ISO Certification amidst the outburst of applause during the 16th inaugural function held on 27th Feb at AIS Hawally.

Together with this added feather on TEF's crown, it grabs the place of first Non Profitable, Voluntary services association in the Region to obtain ISO Certification.

President Jayakumar elaborated the vision of TEF as but not limited to be the best engineering association in Asia, establishing continual improvement, transparency and apply standard operating culture. TEF's ISO 9001-2008 accreditation shall support it in demonstrating the highest levels of performance and stakeholder satisfaction.



President Jayakumar



TEF General Secretary Dr Shan Senthil

# AL-SAYER GROUP INVITES ENTRIES FOR 10TH TOYOTA DREAM CAR ART CONTEST

ONE OF THE LARGEST GLOBAL ART CONTESTS FOR CHILDREN

**A**l-Sayer Group has announced the launch of the 10th Toyota Dream Car Art Contest, one of the largest global art contests for children. Since 2004, the Toyota Dream Car Art Contest has been conducted as part of Toyota's social contribution initiatives. In 2015 alone, there were 875,000 entries from approximately 81 countries and regions around the globe.

"Toyota Dream Car Art Contest," invites children from all corners of the globe to share ideas about the future of mobility by drawing their dream cars. Every great idea was born in the glimmer of a dream, and we at Toyota hope that this activity will help nurture the creativity of the next generation of great inventors, thinkers and dreamers.

According to Mohammad Naser Al-Sayer, Managing Director and Chairman Al-Sayer Group CSR Committee "Toyota encourages children to share ideas about the future of transport and a society that lives in harmony with the environment, by drawing their dream cars of the future. We believe in our children's dreams and in the importance of moving forward towards achieving them."

The contest is comprised of the Local Contest and the World Contest. The "Local Contest in Kuwait" managed by Al-Sayer Group Holding will come to an end on 9th March 2016. Winners of this contest will be representing Kuwait entering into the "World Contest," to be held in Japan during May 2016.

Nehad Al-Haj Ali, Manager Al-Sayer Group Corporate Excellence said "The response from Kuwait educational institutes so far has been overwhelming, so we have decided to extend the final artwork submission date to 9th March, 2016. We encourage young creative minds to take advantage of this excellent opportunity by participating to 'Draw your Dream Car - Express Your Creativity', to become the potential winner at national and global level."



Zahed Sultan interviews attendees during Red Bull Music Academy Workshop last year.



Tres interacts with attendees in Red Bull Music Academy Workshop last year.

## RED BULL MUSIC ACADEMY: LET'S TALK ABOUT MUSIC ON MARCH 11-12

**T**he Red Bull Music Academy is a world-traveling series of music workshops and festivals: a platform for those who make a difference in today's musical landscape. For those who have been waiting for the event to happen again in Kuwait, the wait is finally over - Red Bull Music Academy is happening this month.

Red Bull Music Academy Session Kuwait is committed to fostering creativity in music and is intend-

ed for anyone with a love for music whether a producer, vocalist, instrumentalist, beat-maker, engineer, songwriter or DJ. Any artist under these categories and over the age of 18 is eligible to apply. Over the course of a weekend (March 11 - 12), by day, the Red Bull Music Academy will be hosting a series of talks, workshops and collaborations for the music community in Kuwait.



Attendees play music during Red Bull Music Academy last year.



## AOU ORGANIZES LECTURE ON 'ACCOUNTING TERMS AND CONCEPTS FOR NON-ACCOUNTANTS'

**T**he Arab Open University (AOU) organized a public lecture, entitled "Accounting Terms and Concepts for Non-accountants" in presence of AOU Vice Presidents, Deans and AOU staff and students at the AOU Kuwait Branch campus.

The lecture was conducted by Dr Mohamed Ali Mirghani, Vice President for Administrative and Financial Affairs. Mirghani said this lecture aimed to focus on accounting as a language of business, adding that accounting includes general terms and concepts that have to be understood by non-accountants who deal with accounting reports in their jobs or in life in general. The lecture is intended to provide that general exposure so that accounting reports could be appreciated by their readers because they have the necessary knowledge for that, pointed out Mirghani.

Mirghani concluded that the lecture is one of a series of training programs that AOU adopts in accordance with its strategic plan to increase competencies of all AOU staff in different working sectors. This reflects AOU upper management's belief in necessity of continuing upgrade of job competency that the University makes sure in all training programs to keep pace with all new administrative changes and developments in accounting.





00:40 The Blair Witch Project
02:00 A Dangerous Woman
03:45 Foxes
05:30 Big Screen
05:45 Futureworld
07:30 Charge Of The Light Brigade
09:35 One More Time
11:10 Everybody's Fine
12:50 George Washington
14:20 Lords Of Dogtown
16:00 Natural Causes
17:30 Puckoon
18:55 The Magnificent Seven
21:00 Annie Hall
22:35 The Birdcage



00:50 Gator Boys
01:45 Gator Boys
02:40 Crocodile Feeding Frenzy
03:35 Charles & Jessica: A Chimp Tale
04:25 Animal Cops South Africa
05:15 Echo And The Elephants Of Amboseli
05:39 Echo And The Elephants Of Amboseli
06:02 Wildest Islands
06:49 Wildest Africa
07:36 Swamp Brothers
08:00 Monkey Life
08:25 Treetop Cat Rescue
08:50 Treetop Cat Rescue
09:15 Wild Capture School
09:45 Wild Capture School
11:05 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
12:00 Big Fish Man
12:55 Austin Stevens: Snakemaster
13:50 Wild Capture School
14:20 Wild Capture School
14:45 Wildest Latin America
15:40 Bahama Blue
16:35 Wildest Middle East
17:30 Wildest Islands
18:25 Biggest And Baddest
19:20 Wild Capture School
19:50 Wild Capture School
20:15 Rugged Justice
21:10 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
22:05 Treetop Cat Rescue



00:00 Eastenders
00:30 Father Brown
01:20 Dickensian
02:10 Dickensian
03:00 Unforgotten
03:45 Doctors
04:15 Doctors
04:45 Eastenders
05:15 Father Brown
06:05 The Cafe
06:25 Doctors
07:00 Eastenders
07:30 Dickensian
08:20 Dickensian
09:10 Doctor Who
10:00 Doctors
10:30 Eastenders
11:00 Death In Paradise
11:55 Dickensian
12:45 Dickensian
13:35 Doctor Who
14:25 Doctors
14:55 Eastenders
15:25 Starlings
16:15 Call The Midwife
17:10 Doctor Who
18:00 Doctors
18:30 Eastenders
19:00 Death In Paradise
20:00 Silent Witness
21:00 Silent Witness
22:00 Luther
22:55 Death In Paradise



00:00 Brilliant Ideas
00:30 Charlie Rose
01:30 Bloomberg Businessweek
02:00 Iraqi Kurdistan's Cash Crisis
02:30 Leaders With Lacqua

01:15 China 24
02:00 Full Frame
03:00 News Update
03:30 New Money
04:00 News Update
04:30 Closer To China With Robert Jones
05:00 News Update
05:30 My China
06:00 News Update
06:30 Dialogue
07:00 News Hour
08:00 Full Frame
09:00 News Update
09:30 Talk Africa
10:00 News Update
10:30 Sports Scene
11:00 News Update
11:30 Travelogue
12:00 News Update
12:30 Faces Of Africa
13:00 Africa Live
14:00 News Update



00:00 Managing Asia
00:30 The Edge
01:00 Inside China
01:30 Tech Transformers: Kevin Spacey
02:00 Inside China
02:30 Tech Transformers: Kevin Spacey
03:00 Managing Asia
03:30 The Edge
04:00 Inside China
04:30 Tech Transformers: Kevin Spacey
05:00 Managing Asia
05:30 The Edge
06:00 Inside China
06:30 Tech Transformers: Kevin Spacey
07:00 Managing Asia



00:00 The Haunting Of...
01:00 The Ghost Inside My Child
02:00 My Haunted House
03:00 Diabolical Women
04:00 The First 48
05:00 The Ghost Inside My Child
06:00 The Haunting Of...
07:00 The FBI Files
08:00 The FBI Files
09:00 Homicide Hunter
10:00 Beyond Scared Straight
11:00 Martina Cole's Lady Killers
12:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
13:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
14:00 The First 48
15:00 Homicide Hunter
16:00 I Killed My BFF
17:00 The FBI Files
18:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
19:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
20:00 The First 48
21:00 Homicide Hunter
22:00 Martina Cole's Lady Killers
23:00 50 Ways To Kill Your Lover



00:20 Fast N' Loud
01:10 Mythbusters
02:00 The Weapon Hunter
02:50 Big Giant Swords
03:40 Storage Hunters
04:05 The Liquidator
04:30 Auction Hunters: Pawn Shop Edition
05:00 How It's Made: Dream Cars
05:30 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Flying Wild Alaska
06:50 Philly Throttle
07:40 Fast N' Loud
08:30 Storage Hunters
08:55 The Liquidator
09:20 Auction Hunters: Pawn Shop Edition
09:45 How It's Made: Dream Cars
10:10 How Do They Do It?
10:35 Mythbusters
11:25 The Weapon Hunter
12:15 Big Giant Swords

Zahn
09:40 Fatal Encounters
10:30 Murder Shift
11:20 Deadly Affairs
12:10 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
13:00 The Will
13:50 I Almost Got Away With It
14:40 California Investigator
15:05 Dr G: Medical Examiner
15:55 Fatal Encounters
16:45 On The Case With Paula Zahn
17:35 Murder Shift
18:25 I Almost Got Away With It
19:15 The Will
20:05 Deadly Affairs
20:55 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
21:45 California Investigator
22:10 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
22:35 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
23:00 Deadly Affairs
23:50 True CSI



00:35 Weird Or What?
01:20 How It's Made
01:44 How It's Made
02:08 Invent It Rich
02:55 How The Universe Works
03:42 Sci-Fi Saved My Life
04:29 Weird Or What?
05:16 Invent It Rich
06:03 How The Universe Works
06:50 Mighty Ships
07:37 How Do They Do It?
08:00 How Do They Do It?
08:23 Weird Or What?
09:08 Sci-Fi Saved My Life
09:53 Mighty Ships
10:38 How It's Made
11:00 How It's Made
11:23 Food Factory
11:45 Food Factory
12:08 How The Universe Works
12:53 Mighty Ships
13:38 Weird Or What?
14:23 How It's Made
14:46 How It's Made
15:10 Sci-Fi Saved My Life
15:57 Food Factory
16:20 Food Factory
16:44 How The Universe Works
17:31 Mighty Ships
18:18 Sci-Fi Saved My Life
19:05 Weird Or What?
19:50 Mega Builders
20:40 How The Universe Works
21:25 How It's Made
21:50 How It's Made
22:15 Sci-Fi Saved My Life
23:00 Mega Builders
23:45 How The Universe Works

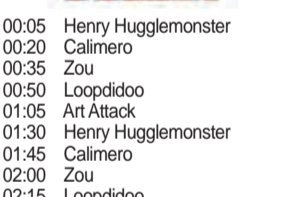


00:40 Mao's Cold War
01:30 Zero Hour
02:20 Origins
02:40 Chasing Classic Cars
03:05 Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations
03:50 100 Miles From Nowhere
04:35 Secrets Of The Arsenal
05:20 Extreme Engineering
06:05 Codes And Conspiracies
06:50 Mao's Cold War
07:35 Origins
08:00 Bizarre Foods
08:50 Tattoo Hunter
09:40 Extreme Engineering
09:55 Gunslingers
11:20 Origins
11:45 Chasing Classic Cars
12:10 Bizarre Foods
13:00 Tattoo Hunter
13:50 Extreme Engineering
14:40 Gunslingers
15:30 Origins
15:55 Chasing Classic Cars
16:20 Bizarre Foods
17:10 Tattoo Hunter
18:00 Extreme Engineering
18:40 Gunslingers
19:40 Origins
20:05 Chasing Classic Cars
20:30 American Guns
21:20 Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations
22:10 Extreme Engineering



PLANET 51 ON OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

11:50 Jessie
12:15 Cars Toons
12:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
12:45 Fish Hooks
13:00 Austin & Ally
13:10 Austin & Ally
13:35 Austin & Ally
14:00 Liv And Maddie
14:25 Descendants Wicked World
14:30 Liv And Maddie
14:55 Dog With A Blog
15:20 Dog With A Blog
15:45 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
16:10 Violetta
17:00 The Next Step
17:25 Alex And Co
17:47 Descendants Wicked World
17:50 Dog With A Blog
18:15 Mako Mermaids
18:40 Gravity Falls
19:05 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
19:30 Violetta
20:20 The Next Step
20:45 Good Luck Charlie
21:10 Good Luck Charlie
21:35 H2O
22:00 Binnie And The Ghost
22:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
22:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:10 Hank Zipzer



00:05 Henry Hugglemonster
00:20 Calmero
00:30 Zou
00:50 Loopdidoo
01:05 Art Attack
01:30 Henry Hugglemonster
01:45 Calmero
02:00 Zou
02:15 Loopdidoo
02:30 Art Attack
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster
03:05 Calmero
03:20 Zou
03:30 Loopdidoo
03:45 Art Attack
04:10 Henry Hugglemonster
04:20 Calmero
04:35 Zou
04:45 Loopdidoo
05:00 Art Attack
05:25 Henry Hugglemonster
05:35 Calmero
05:50 Zou
06:00 Loopdidoo
06:15 Art Attack
06:35 Henry Hugglemonster
06:50 Calmero
07:00 Zou
07:20 Loopdidoo
07:35 Art Attack
08:00 Calmero
08:10 Zou
08:25 Loopdidoo
08:40 Miles From Tomorrow
09:05 Sofia The First
09:30 Goldie & Bear
09:45 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
10:10 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
10:35 Doc McStuffins
11:00 Sofia The First
11:30 Goldie & Bear
12:00 Miles From Tomorrow
12:25 Special Agent Oso
12:40 The Hive
12:50 Handy Manny
13:15 Jungle Junction
13:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
14:00 Sofia The First
14:25 Goldie & Bear
14:50 Doc McStuffins
15:15 Zou
15:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
15:55 Loopdidoo
16:10 Miles From Tomorrow
16:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
17:00 Sofia The First
17:25 Jungle Cubs
17:50 Aladdin
18:15 Gummi Bears
18:40 Goldie & Bear
19:05 Miles From Tomorrow
19:30 Sofia The First
19:55 Doc McStuffins
20:10 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
20:35 Miles From Tomorrow
21:00 Goldie & Bear
21:30 Sofia The First
22:00 Jungle Cubs
22:25 Aladdin
22:50 Gummi Bears
23:20 Lilo And Stitch



00:00 Programmes Start At 7:00am
07:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
07:25 K. C. Undercover
07:50 Supa Strikas
08:15 Annedroids
08:40 Lab Rats
09:10 Kirby Buckets
09:35 Wander Over Yonder
10:00 Rocket Monkeys
10:25 Ultimate Spider-Man
10:50 Boyster
11:20 The Next Step
11:45 Pair Of Kings
12:10 Pair Of Kings
12:35 Lab Rats
13:00 Lab Rats
13:30 Pineas And Fern
13:55 Pineas And Fern
14:20 Kickin' It
14:45 Kickin' It
15:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
15:15 Rocket Monkeys
15:40 Wander Over Yonder
16:05 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
16:30 Kirby Buckets
16:55 Gamers Guide To Pretty Much Everything
17:25 K. C. Undercover
17:50 Supa Strikas
18:15 Lab Rats
18:40 Mighty Med
19:10 Annedroids
19:35 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
20:00 Kirby Buckets
20:25 Gamers Guide To Pretty Much Everything
20:55 K. C. Undercover
21:20 Pickle And Peanut
21:45 Lab Rats
22:10 Mighty Med
22:40 Super Matrak
23:05 Super Matrak
23:30 Boyster



00:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
00:55 The Grace Helbig Show
01:25 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
02:20 E! News
03:15 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
04:10 The E! True Hollywood Story
05:05 The E! True Hollywood Story
06:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
06:55 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
07:50 Style Star
08:20 E! News
09:15 Giuliana & Bill
10:15 Giuliana & Bill
11:10 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
11:35 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
12:05 E! News
13:05 WAGs
14:05 Botched
15:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
16:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
17:00 Fashion Police
18:00 E! News
19:00 House Of DVF
20:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
21:00 Dash Dolls
22:00 E! News
23:00 WAGs



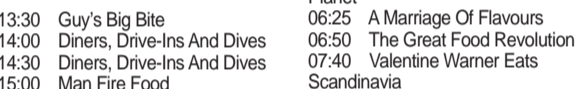
00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
01:00 Chopped
02:00 All Star Academy
03:00 Man Fire Food
03:30 Man Fire Food
04:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
04:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
05:00 Iron Chef America
06:00 Chopped
07:00 Man Fire Food
07:30 Man Fire Food
08:00 Chopped
09:00 Barefoot Contessa
09:30 Barefoot Contessa
10:00 The Kitchen
11:00 The Pioneer Woman
11:30 The Pioneer Woman
12:00 Chopped
13:00 Guy's Big Bite



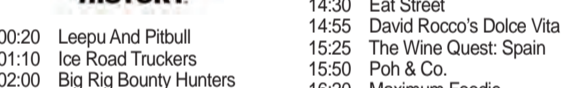
00:10 The Chase
01:05 Emmerdale
01:30 More Tales From Northumberland...
02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 Murdoch Mysteries
03:25 Murdoch Mysteries
04:20 Murdoch Mysteries
05:15 Come Dine With Me Couples
06:10 Who's Doing The Dishes?
07:05 More Tales From Northumberland...
07:30 Murdoch Mysteries
08:25 Murdoch Mysteries
10:15 The Chase
11:10 More Tales From Northumberland...
11:35 Come Dine With Me Couples
12:30 Who's Doing The Dishes?
13:25 Emmerdale
13:50 More Tales From Northumberland...
14:20 Coronation Street
14:45 Big Star's Little Star
15:35 Come Dine With Me Couples
16:30 Grantchester
17:25 Seven Days With A Friend
18:20 Emmerdale
18:45 More Tales From Northumberland...
19:10 Coronation Street
19:35 Come Dine With Me Couples
20:30 Grantchester
21:25 Seven Days With A Friend
22:20 Coronation Street



00:10 Eat Street
00:35 Eat Street
01:00 The Great Food Revolution
01:50 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
02:15 Eat Street
02:40 Eat Street
03:05 Cesar Millan: Viva Las Vegas!
03:55 Poh & Co.
04:20 Maximum Foodie
04:45 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
05:10 Street Food Around The World
05:35 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
06:00 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
06:25 A Marriage Of Flavours
06:50 The Great Food Revolution
07:40 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
08:05 Eat Street
08:30 Eat Street
08:55 Cesar Millan: Viva Las Vegas!
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14:30 Eat Street
14:55 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
15:25 The Wine Quest: Spain
15:50 Poh & Co.
16:20 Maximum Foodie
16:45 Eat Street
17:15 Eat Street
17:40 Eat Street
18:10 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
18:35 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
19:05 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
19:30 The Wine Quest: Spain
20:00 Poh & Co.
20:25 Maximum Foodie
20:50 Maximum Foodie
21:15 Eat Street
21:40 Eat Street
22:05 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet



00:00 Emergo
01:45 Automata
04:00 Wrath
06:00 Guardians Of The Galaxy
08:15 Justice League: Throne Of Atlantis
12:00 The Assault
13:45 Guardians Of The Galaxy
16:00 The Marine 4: The Moving Target
18:00 Last Passenger



00:00 The Starving Games
02:00 22 Jump Street
04:00 Encino Man
06:00 The Bounty Hunter
08:00 Encino Man
10:00 Encino Man
12:00 Space Dogs
14:00 Planet 51
16:00 Orange County
18:00 The Love Punch
20:00 Life Of Crime
22:00 This Is 40



00:30 Suburgatory
01:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore
01:30 Saturday Night Live
02:30 It's Always Sunny In Philadelphia
03:00 The Muppets
03:30 Dr. Ken
04:00 Weird Loners
04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
05:30 Modern Family
06:00 Mad Love
06:30 Community
07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:00 Weird Loners
08:30 Breaking In
09:00 The Muppets
09:30 Last Man Standing
10:00 Life In Pieces



02:00 European Tour Weekly
02:30 Gillette World Sport
03:00 Live NHL
03:00 Golfing World
07:00 Trans World Sport
07:55 Live NRL Premiership
09:55 World Rugby
10:25 Live NRL Premiership
12:30 World Rugby
13:00 HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series
16:00 Super Rugby
18:00 Super Rugby
20:00 Live World Golf Championships



02:05 Trans World Sport
02:55 Live HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series
06:05 Inside The PGA Tour
06:30 Live PGA Tour
18:30 V8 Supercar Series
21:00 The World Sailing Show
21:30 World Rugby
22:00 Live Darts UK Open



02:00 Super Rugby
04:00 Super Rugby
06:00 Live AFL NAB Challenge
08:30 Live AFL NAB Challenge
11:00 Inside The PGA Tour
11:30 World Golf Championships
18:00 Gillette World Sport
18:30 V8 Supercar Series
21:00 The World Sailing Show
21:30 World Rugby
22:00 Live Darts UK Open



01:00 Formula-E Championship
01:30 Sound Of The Future
02:00 Bellator MMA 151 - Caldwell v Warren
04:00 V8 Supercar Series
05:15 V8 Supercar Series
06:30 FIH Hockey World
07:00 Formula-E Championship
07:00 Sound Of The Future
07:30 Live V8 Supercar Series
10:00 NHL
12:00 Formula-E Championship
12:00 Sound Of The Future
13:00 FIH Hockey World
13:30 V8 Supercar Series
16:30 WWE NXT
18:30 WWE Smackdown
18:30 Formula-E Championship
18:30 Sound Of The Future
19:00 NHL
21:00 Bellator MMA 151 - Caldwell v Warren



THE ASSAULT ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

03:00 Charlie Rose
04:00 Charlie Rose
05:00 Studio 1.0
05:30 Studio 1.0
06:00 Inside: Paypal
06:30 Inside: Chevron
07:00 The Great Disrupters
08:00 Good Fortunes
08:30 Changing Climate, Changing Business
09:00 Studio 1.0
09:30 Encore
10:00 Worldwide Business With Kathy Ireland
10:30 Worldwide Business With Kathy Ireland
11:00 High Flyers
11:30 High Flyers
12:00 Charlie Rose
13:00 Bloomberg Best
14:00 Mobil 1: The Grid
14:30 The Race Of Their Lives
15:30 The Voxwomen Cycling Show
16:00 Gillette World Sport
16:30 Changing Climate, Changing Business
17:00 Studio 1.0
17:30 Encore
18:00 Inside: Fendi
18:30 High Flyers
19:00 Studio 1.0
19:30 Checking In: Singapore Airlines

13:05 Storage Hunters
13:30 The Liquidator
13:55 Auction Hunters: Pawn Shop Edition
14:20 Flying Wild Alaska
15:10 Philly Throttle
16:00 Fast N' Loud
16:50 How It's Made: Dream Cars
17:15 How Do They Do It?
17:40 Salvage Hunters
18:30 Redwood Kings
19:20 Close-Up Kings
20:10 The Liquidator
20:35 Auction Hunters: Pawn Shop Edition
21:00 Salvage Hunters
21:50 Redwood Kings
22:40 Kings Of The Wild
23:30 Philly Throttle



00:40 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
01:05 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
01:30 The Haunted
02:20 Ghost Lab
03:10 Scorned: Crimes Of Passion
04:00 Deadline: Crime With Tarron Hall
04:45 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
05:10 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
05:30 The Haunted
06:20 Fatal Encounters
07:10 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
08:00 Dr G: Medical Examiner
08:50 On The Case With Paula Zahn



00:00 Violetta
00:45 The Hive
00:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:40 Hank Zipzer
04:35 Binnie And The Ghost
05:00 Violetta
05:45 The Hive
05:50 Mouk
06:00 Lolirock
06:25 Sofia The First
06:50 Gravity Falls
09:05 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
09:10 Jessie
08:05 Shake It Up
08:30 Shake It Up
08:55 That's So Raven
09:45 Austin & Ally
10:10 Austin & Ally
10:35 A.N.T. Farm
11:00 A.N.T. Farm
11:25 Jessie



00:00 News Update
00:30 Dialogue
01:00 News Update



# CLASSIFIEDS



## KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (03/03/2016 TO 09/03/2016)

Time	Programme	Time	Programme	Time	Programme
12:45 PM	SHARQIA-1 ZOOTOPIA	2:15 PM	CONTAINMENT	1:15 AM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
3:00 PM	HELP I SHRUNK MY TEACHER	4:15 PM	HELP I SHRUNK MY TEACHER	1:30 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
5:15 PM	HELP I SHRUNK MY TEACHER	6:15 PM	BACKTRACK	1:45 PM	AL-KOUT.2 ZOOTOPIA
7:15 PM	ZOOTOPIA	8:15 PM	THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	3:45 PM	BACKTRACK
9:30 PM	RACE	10:15 PM	HELP I SHRUNK MY TEACHER	5:45 PM	ZOOTOPIA
12:15 AM	RACE	12:15 AM	HELP I SHRUNK MY TEACHER	7:45 PM	ZOOTOPIA
			THE HOUSE ON PINE STREET	9:45 PM	ZOOTOPIA
			NO THU+FR	12:15 AM	BACKTRACK
					BACKTRACK
12:00 PM	SHARQIA-2 LONDON HAS FALLEN	12:30 PM	AVENUES-3 ZOOTOPIA -3D	11:45 AM	AL-KOUT.3 RACE
2:00 PM	ZOOTOPIA	1:30 PM	ZOOTOPIA	2:00 PM	EL AMERICANO:THE MOVIE
4:15 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN	3:30 PM	ZOOTOPIA -3D	4:15 PM	EL AMERICANO:THE MOVIE
6:30 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN	9:30 PM	ZOOTOPIA	6:45 PM	RACE
8:30 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN	11:30 PM	ZOOTOPIA	9:15 PM	RACE
10:30 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN			11:45 PM	RACE
12:30 AM	LONDON HAS FALLEN				
11:30 AM	SHARQIA-3 RACE	12:45 PM	AVENUES-4 LONDON HAS FALLEN	11:30 AM	AL-KOUT.4 HELP I SHRUNK MY TEACHER
2:15 PM	RACE	2:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN	1:30 PM	HELP I SHRUNK MY TEACHER
5:00 PM	JAI GANGAAJAL - Hindi	4:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN	3:45 PM	HELP I SHRUNK MY TEACHER
8:00 PM	KHALTET OMRY	6:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN	6:00 PM	HELP I SHRUNK MY TEACHER
10:00 PM	KHALTET OMRY	8:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN	6:00 PM	KHALTET OMRY
12:05 AM	KHALTET OMRY	10:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN	8:15 PM	KHALTET OMRY
		12:45 AM	LONDON HAS FALLEN	11:15 PM	KHALTET OMRY
				1:15 AM	BAIRAQ-1 ZOOTOPIA -3D
11:30 AM	MUHALAB-1 RACE	1:00 PM	AVENUES-5 EL AMERICANO:THE MOVIE	1:30 PM	ZOOTOPIA -3D
2:15 PM	ZOOTOPIA	3:00 PM	EL AMERICANO:THE MOVIE	3:45 PM	ZOOTOPIA
4:30 PM	ZOOTOPIA	5:00 PM	EL AMERICANO:THE MOVIE	6:00 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
6:45 PM	ZOOTOPIA	7:00 PM	RACE	5:00 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
9:00 PM	RACE	9:45 PM	RACE	7:30 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
11:45 PM	RACE	12:30 AM	RACE	10:00 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
				12:30 AM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
12:45 PM	MUHALAB-2 JAI GANGAAJAL - Hindi	12:15 PM	MARINA-1 HELP I SHRUNK MY TEACHER	12:30 PM	BAIRAQ-2 JAI GANGAAJAL - Hindi
1:30 PM	CONTAINMENT	2:30 PM	HELP I SHRUNK MY TEACHER	1:30 PM	HELP I SHRUNK MY TEACHER
3:45 PM	CONTAINMENT	4:45 PM	HELP I SHRUNK MY TEACHER	3:30 PM	HELP I SHRUNK MY TEACHER
5:45 PM	JAI GANGAAJAL - Hindi	7:00 PM	HELP I SHRUNK MY TEACHER	5:30 PM	ZOOTOPIA
	NO FRI	9:15 PM	RACE	7:45 PM	HELP I SHRUNK MY TEACHER
5:45 PM	KALYANA VAIBHOGAME-Telugu	12:05 AM	RACE	9:45 PM	CONTAINMENT
	FRI			11:45 PM	CONTAINMENT
8:45 PM	CONTAINMENT	11:30 AM	MARINA-2 LONDON HAS FALLEN	12:30 PM	BAIRAQ-3 RACE
10:30 PM	BACKTRACK	1:30 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN	3:15 PM	JAI GANGAAJAL - Hindi
12:30 AM	BACKTRACK	3:30 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN	6:15 PM	JAI GANGAAJAL - Hindi
		5:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN	9:15 PM	RACE
12:00 PM	MUHALAB-3 LONDON HAS FALLEN	7:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN	12:05 AM	RACE
2:00 PM	HELP I SHRUNK MY TEACHER	9:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN		
4:00 PM	HELP I SHRUNK MY TEACHER	11:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN		
6:00 PM	HELP I SHRUNK MY TEACHER				
8:00 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN	11:30 AM	MARINA-3 BACKTRACK	3:45 PM	PLAZA ZOOTOPIA
10:00 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN	1:30 PM	ZOOTOPIA -3D	6:00 PM	ACTION HERO BIJU- Malayalam
12:05 AM	LONDON HAS FALLEN	3:45 PM	ZOOTOPIA -3D		
		6:00 PM	ZOOTOPIA		
12:15 PM	FANAR-1 ZOOTOPIA	8:15 PM	JAI GANGAAJAL - Hindi	12:45 PM	THU+FR+SAT
2:30 PM	ZOOTOPIA	10:15 PM	JAI GANGAAJAL - Hindi	2:45 PM	ZOOTOPIA
4:45 PM	ZOOTOPIA	12:15 AM	JAI GANGAAJAL - Hindi	4:45 PM	NO THU+FR+SAT
7:00 PM	ZOOTOPIA			6:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
9:15 PM	CONTAINMENT	1:00 PM	AL-KOUT.1 LONDON HAS FALLEN	8:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
11:00 PM	CONTAINMENT	3:15 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN		
12:45 AM	CONTAINMENT	5:15 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN		
		7:15 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN		
		9:15 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN		
		11:15 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN		

### NOTICE

February 22, 2016

Mr. Surendra Pothula son of Mr. Pothula Ramachandra Rao, resident of 6-406, Second Street, Mallayyapeta Rajahmundry, East Godavari, Andhra Pradesh and Miss Lakshmi Koppiseti daughter of Mr. Peddiraju Koppiseti, resident of 4-22, Chintapallivari St., Rayakunduru Veeravaram, West Godavari, Andhra Pradesh, both Indian nationals presently residing in Kuwait, have given notice of intended marriage between them under the Foreign Marriage Act, 1969. If anyone has any objection to the proposed marriage, he/she may file the same with the undersigned according to the procedure laid down under the Act/Rule within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice.

(Krishan Kumar Pahal)  
 First Secretary (Consular)  
 and Marriage Officer

Embassy of India, Kuwait.  
 Ph.00965-22533315

**Required**  
**For a Superb Laundry**

**Laundry manager,**  
 Philippines nationality a condition.  
 ladies preferable.  
 Accommodation available.

**Tel.: 50288330**

**FOR SALE**

Mercedes Benz E-350, model 2010, single owner, no accident, well maintained by agency, km 180,000. Mob: 5576200. (C 5141) 3-3-2016

**EIG**  
 (Eminent Investment Group)

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We Are Providing  
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 Decumment Clearing.

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 Email: Info@Eigllcoman.Com

## Flight Schedule

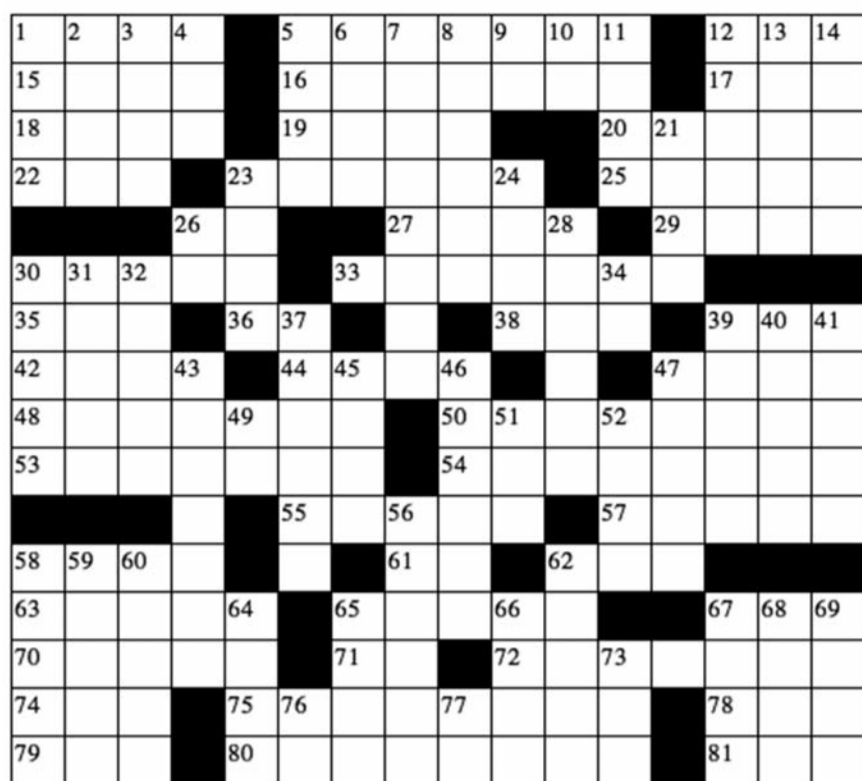
Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page ([www.kuwait-airport.com.kw](http://www.kuwait-airport.com.kw))

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

Arrival Flights on Sunday 6/3/2016				Departure Flights on Sunday 6/3/2016			
Airlines	Fit	Route	Time	Airlines	Fit	Route	Time
MSC	415	Sohag	00:05	AIC	988	Hyderabad/Chennai	00:05
JZR	239	Amman	00:25	FDB	072	Dubai	00:40
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	MSC	404	Asyut	00:55
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:55
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55	MSC	416	Sohag	01:00
RJA	642	Amman	01:05	THY	773	Istanbul	02:30
THY	772	Istanbul	01:05	DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:35
ETH	3402	Addis Ababa/Riyadh	01:30	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	02:45
DLH	635	Doha	01:35	ETH	3403	Addis Ababa	03:05
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45	UAE	854	Dubai	03:45
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00	PGT	859	Istanbul	03:55
JZR	555	Alexandria	02:25	OMA	644	Muscat	03:55
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30	FDB	068	Dubai	04:00
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:15
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	KKK	6508	Istanbul	04:20
FDB	067	Dubai	03:05	PGT	861	Istanbul	04:55
CEB	7694	Manila	03:15	QTR	1077	Doha	05:00
QTR	1076	Doha	03:15	LMU	511	Cairo	05:05
KKK	6507	Istanbul	03:20	THY	765	Istanbul	05:15
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:25	CEB	7695	Manila	05:20
KAC	544	Cairo	03:35	JZR	560	Sohag	06:10
LMU	510	Cairo	04:05	FDB	070	Dubai	06:30
PGT	860	Istanbul	04:15	JZR	164	Dubai	06:55
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:40	RJA	643	Amman	07:05
THY	770	Istanbul	05:55	THY	771	Istanbul	07:05
QTR	8511	Doha	06:10	FDB	5062	Dubai	07:10
FDB	5061	Dubai	06:30	GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15
BAW	157	London	06:40	QTR	8512	Doha	07:40
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	07:20	FDB	054	Dubai	08:30
QTR	1086	Doha	07:40	QTR	1087	Doha	08:40
FDB	053	Dubai	07:45	BAW	156	London	08:45
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50	SVA	513	Riyadh	08:50
SVA	512	Riyadh	07:50	OMA	642	Muscat	08:55
KAC	382	Delhi	08:00	KAC	171	Frankfurt	09:05
OMA	641	Muscat	08:00	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:25
KAC	354	BLR	08:15	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40
KAC	206	Islamabad	08:25	UAE	856	Dubai	09:55
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	08:30	KAC	541	Cairo	09:55
KAC	352	Kochi	08:30	KAC	117	New York	09:55
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40	KAC	561	Amman	10:00
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:50	KAC	671	Dubai	10:05
KAC	362	Colombo	08:50	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:25
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	KAC	501	Beirut	10:30
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:10	FDB	056	Dubai	10:35
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:20	JZR	482	Istanbul	10:35
QTR	1070	Doha	09:25	IRA	664	Shiraz	10:40
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	677	Abu Dhabi/Muscat	10:50
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:40	QTR	1071	Doha	11:00
IRC	528	Ahwaz	10:00	IRC	529	Ahwaz	11:00
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:25
UAE	873	Dubai	11:05	JZR	776	Jeddah	12:20
SYR	341	Damascus	11:25	SYR	342	Damascus	12:25
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	KAC	103	London	12:25
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	UAE	874	Dubai	12:30
SAW	701	Damascus	12:20	MEA	405	Beirut	12:55
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25	KAC	785	Jeddah	13:00
JZR	561	Sohag	12:45	FDB	076	Dubai	13:10
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	JZR	786	Riyadh	13:10
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	KAC	791	Madinah	13:25
QTR	1078	Doha	14:10				
FDB	057	Dubai	14:10				

**DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION**

CROSSWORD 1187



ACROSS

- 1. A French abbot.
5. Large genus of evergreen lianas of tropical America.
12. A digital display that uses liquid crystal cells that change reflectivity in an applied electric field.
15. Precipitation of ice pellets when there are strong rising air currents.
16. Of or relating to the ancient Aramaic languages.
17. The sense organ for hearing and equilibrium.
18. In bed.
19. A science (or group of related sciences) dealing with the logic of quantity and shape and arrangement.
20. Tropical American tree grown in southern United States having a whitish pink-tinged fruit.
22. A room or establishment where alcoholic drinks are served over a counter.
25. A unit of elastance equal to the reciprocal of a farad.
27. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
29. In or of the present month.
30. Inability to coordinate voluntary muscle movements.
33. Used of old persons or old trees.
35. A logarithmic unit of sound intensity equal to 10 decibels.
36. A state in northwestern North America.
38. A metric unit of volume or capacity equal to 10 liters.
42. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
44. A white crystalline double sulfate of aluminum.
48. Repeat an earlier theme of a musical composition.
50. Temporary cessation or suspension.
53. The capital and largest city of Iran.
54. Having low density.
55. A family of Sino-Tibetan languages spoken in southeastern Asia.
57. An energetic American dance that was popular in the 1930s (probably named for the aviator Charles Lindbergh).
58. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
61. An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.
63. A Russian prison camp for political prisoners.
70. A promontory in northern Morocco opposite the Rock of Gibraltar.
71. (Greek mythology) A maiden seduced by Zeus.
72. The tenth month of the Moslem calendar.
74. A periodic paperback publication.
75. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
78. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
79. Belonging to or on behalf of a specified person (especially yourself).
80. A river in northeastern Brazil that flows generally northward to the Atlantic Ocean.
81. Edible tuber of any of several yams.

DOWN

- 1. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
2. A small cake leavened with yeast.
3. A coffin along with its stand.
4. Late time of life.
5. Black honeycreepers with yellow feathers around the tail.
6. A republic in the Middle East in western Asia.
7. The capital and largest city of Nepal.
8. A member of the Semitic speaking people of northern Ethiopia.
9. A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.
10. Being one more than one.
11. Harsh or corrosive in tone.
12. Acquire or gain knowledge or skills.
13. Any of several plants of the genus Camassia.
14. A document ordering the payment of money.
21. Set down according to a plan.
23. Common Indian weaverbird.
24. Soft white semisolid fat obtained by rendering the fatty tissue of the hog v.1.
26. Being ten more than one hundred.
28. Lightweight single-breasted jacket.
31. A native American tent.
32. The 1st letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
34. Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).
37. A member of a Muslim Turkic people of western Asia (especially in Kazakhstan).
39. Of or relating to or characteristic of Benin or its people.
40. (architecture) Forming or resembling an arch.
41. Poor enough to need help from others.
43. Of or relating to a creed.
45. A Russian river.
46. A percussion instrument consisting of a pair of hollow pieces of wood or bone (usually held between the thumb and fingers) that are made to click together (as by Spanish dancers) in rhythm with the dance.
47. A crime syndicate in the United States.
49. A heavy brittle metallic element of the platinum group.
51. The Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the Dali region of Yunnan.
52. A sharp high-pitched cry (especially by a dog).
56. Prevent the growth of horns.
59. Port city in the United Arab Emirates on the Persian Gulf.
60. Place in a line or arrange so as to be parallel.
62. Formerly a term of respect for important white Europeans in colonial India.
64. A short labored intake of breath with the mouth open.
65. A person who has lied or who lies repeatedly.
66. An antidepressant drug that acts by blocking the reuptake of serotonin so that more serotonin is available to act on receptors in the brain.
67. Distant in either space or time.
68. Type genus of the Ranidae.
69. Burrowing marine mollusk living on sand or mud.
73. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
76. An informal term for a father.
77. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Have you been neglecting your friends lately you might contact one or two of your friends and plan to have lunch together soon. Abstract and spiritual ideas and the ability to present or communicate these to others are present in your life. Pay attention to your expectations of others and think about reasonable standards, especially with young people. Ask each family member three things they would like to do before summer begins and express your own wishes. A plan to camp out under the stars is beginning to take shape. Perhaps there is a special exhibit or the timing is right for an alignment of stars to be viewed. Everyone seems to have an idea of what to bring, when to leave, who is driving, etc. Everyone agrees to leave the phone at home.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

A relationship has you on a high today. So much of you is reflected back to others. This is one of those beautiful days that keep reminding you of how wonderful life can be-whether it is pretty outside or not. An elderly person may have your attention for a little while today. You need to be prepared with ways in which to keep this person busy. A busy person is usually a happy person, so if he or she is not able to get out, bring something that can be enjoyed. If it is a family member, you might really like to know about how his or her life was when he or she was young. Perhaps he or she could talk into a tape recorder and you could keep a journal with it for the grandchildren to enjoy. This actually may create opportunities for some fun conversations.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Some sort of action is required now to finish those chores that have been accumulating. You work quickly so that the afternoon can be your own. You may enjoy being with a group of friends or family for some sort of sports or to visit a tourist attraction. Some out-of-the-ordinary event can be loads of fun! Your emotions are steady and nurturing and others enjoy opening up their thoughts for you to hear. You may talk about common goals and hobbies. Your intuition is sharp and may lead to new insights. You are good at avoiding the delusion of others. This evening you may find yourself discarding the clutter and encouraging others to do the same. Create a bag for a charity group; you could come across quite a bit of clothing and books.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Be wise in the balance of your time. There is a strong wish to make your surroundings as pleasant as possible-but you can't do it all in one day! You could keep notes on some changes you would like to make and progress toward your goal a little each weekend. Your enthusiasm is high and you are ready to tend to your projects. Your best effort will gain you considerable success. Your desire for self-expression and originality is accentuated. Take plenty of breaks as your high energy can work against you, causing minor difficulties. You have a good mental outlook and can find creative ways to express your feelings so as to maintain a calm presence throughout the day. Fun conversations with your loved ones are possible this evening.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

A little run or walk with a friend or family member early this morning, will help you ease any disturbing thoughts. Avoid taking alcohol or drugs today-you will want to stay alert and aware of all the wonderful things around you now. You have a lot of ideas that will benefit some sort of volunteer group you contribute to now. Pass these ideas on to others so that the positive changes can occur in an expeditious manner. Get some help if help is needed. Create a craft or art workshop or room that is set aside just for creative endeavors. This is where you will do your best thinking and the time alone will enable you to gain a focus in other parts of your life. This room can be shared with another-have a plan, or schedule.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You are extremely sensitive today and this is a good thing because it is easier for you to detect the change in a friend or family member and you will be helpful. A positive outcome is pending and the person you help is fortunate to have you as a friend or family member. Some sort of social involvement is in the works, especially with neighbors and perhaps whatever family members live near you. Your attitude is so positive that when you suggest a get-together with people, the line forms and people want to be near your energy. Learning and teaching seem to satisfy an important need for you and you should know that the joy and positive thinking that you display are contagious and helpful in encouraging others to feel a sense of belonging.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Status and security goals need rethinking in order to take advantage of changing circumstances. Your career is a focus for this, but your home and family situation are also involved. Big ideas and grand visions play a leading role in your life. Mysterious or mystical information fires your imagination, and there is a good chance that there is more heat than light. Keep an open mind and learn all you can-do not take gossip as gospel. Psychological values and material possessions become very important for you and they are in a state of change: what is old and familiar is left behind or changed so thoroughly as to be unrecognizable. This can be a very productive time in your life... Could even be a midas-touch kind of experience.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You may have to shoo the friends away this morning, especially if you want any privacy. A volunteer service will keep you busy much of this afternoon. You learn a lot from your experiences in a volunteer service but most of all you are helpful to the people you serve. Simplicity is the answer in whatever you do at this time. There is an opening in your day for visiting or seeing a movie or attending a group event. This evening a phone call or two and a little experimenting in the kitchen is an enjoyable treat. You may have fun serving the results of your cooking experiments to a beloved. You also are excited about a few new plans that are forming in the back of your head tonight. Music is a relaxing ending to your busy day.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

The feelings of this day can be best summed up by knowing that if you do not stop to look around a little, life can be fleetingly fast. Embrace the day means just that... Embrace the day. Don't feel guilty about taking some time out of your busy day to have lunch and a walk around the block or area where you live. Purchasing household goods may be a large part of this afternoon. You could be a bit impulsive, so think through your choices very carefully. Make a conscious effort to balance your activities each day. Note on dieting: for your wellbeing, temperament and health, you actually need a diet that is varied. Weighing and limiting your meals can be very frustrating for you. Try more meals, more protein, less starches.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You savor the day and the opportunity to get off onto the side road, so to speak. Lovely books and gifts from the past holidays are finally within your reach to enjoy. This could mean a day to put a puzzle together, learn how to make candles, write letters, make phone calls, take time to learn a meditation, finish the taxes, etc. You might even think about writing a poem. You will also find communication with friends can be enjoyable. You may shop for food and supplies today, especially when you think about a surprise dinner for a loved one. This evening is marked by increased romantic aspirations and daydreaming. Your ability to understand your loved ones' thoughts and feelings may bring you unexpected rewards.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You are extremely hard working and ambitious on the home front. After the chores are completed, you may really make a push for more fun and some sort of fun exercise routine. Young people will probably be most helpful in both of those areas. You may decide to hang out with the young people and just observe. New trends and new pastime activities that young people enjoy help you be alerted to things that need to be changed or taught. You keep alert and up-to-date with all the new styles and trends and you are usually a very smart dresser. Watch your budget just now, however, and shop in less exclusive stores. Teach thriftiness. You are working on creating a balance in your life and can enjoy some wonderful rewards.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Self-awareness can be a very positive attribute. By keeping your eye on the goal and not necessarily on how you get there, you will steer clear of becoming lost. This afternoon you may be encouraged to step away from your own group of friends. Not to worry... You will be back together very soon-they may be planning something very special for you today. There are a few opportunities to reminisce about old times and talk about new goals; today will be fun. Picture taking moments are available all day long. You will find a great deal of pleasant moments adding up to a really great evening. Music, dancing, food and pretty lights fill your senses. This is the perfect time to be grateful for the people that are in your life now.

WORD SEARCH

Capital Cities of Europe

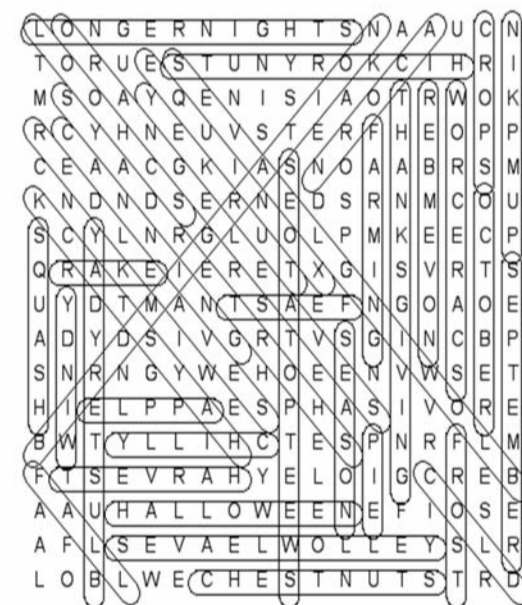
Find and circle all of the European capital cities that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message.



- AMSTERDAM (Netherlands)
ANDORRA LA VELLA (Andorra)
ANKARA (Turkey)
ATHENS (Greece)
BAKU (Azerbaijan)
BELFAST (Northern Ireland)
BELGRADE (Serbia/Montenegro)
BERLIN (Germany)
BERN (Switzerland)
BRATISLAVA (Slovakia)
BRUSSELS (Belgium)
BUCHAREST (Romania)
BUDAPEST (Hungary)
CARDIFF (Wales)
CHISINAU (Moldova)
COPENHAGEN (Denmark)
DUBLIN (Ireland)
EDINBURGH (Scotland)
HELSINKI (Finland)
KIEV (Ukraine)
LISBON (Portugal)
LJUBLJANA (Slovenia)
LONDON (England)
LUXEMBOURG (Luxembourg)
MADRID (Spain)
MINSK (Belarus)
MONACO (Monaco)
MOSCOW (Russian Federation)
NICOSIA (Cyprus)
OSLO (Norway)
PARIS (France)
PRAGUE (Czech Republic)
REYKJAVIK (Iceland)
RIGA (Latvia)
ROME (Italy)
SAN MARINO (San Marino)
SARAJEVO (Bosnia-Herzegovina)
SKOPJE (Macedonia)
SOFIA (Bulgaria)
STOCKHOLM (Sweden)
TALLINN (Estonia)
TBILISI (Georgia)
TIRANE (Albania)
VADUZ (Liechtenstein)
VALLETTA (Malta)
VATICAN CITY (Vatican City)
VIENNA (Austria)
VILNIUS (Lithuania)
WARSAW (Poland)
YEREVAN (Armenia)
ZAGREB (Croatia)

Yesterday Solution

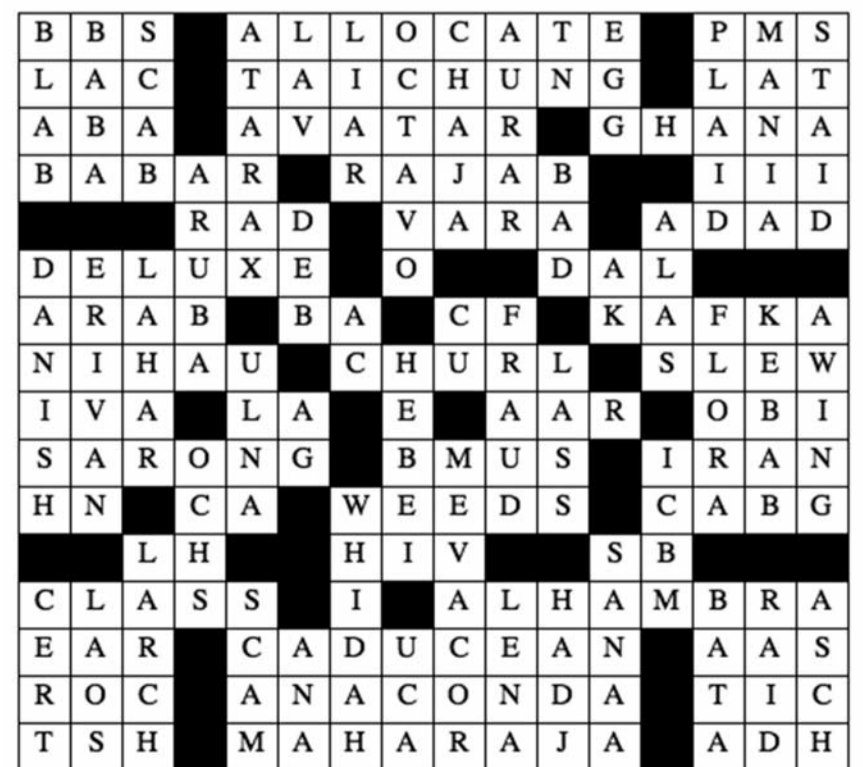
Autumn



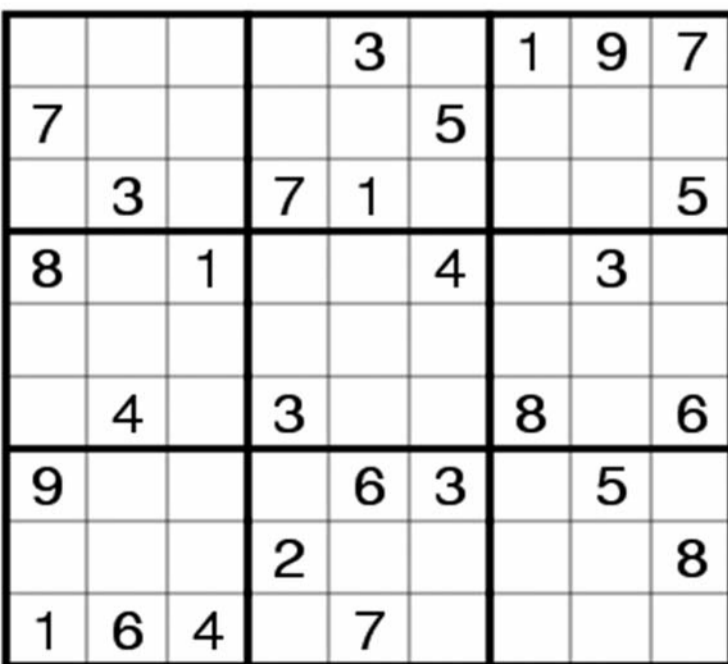
- ACORN
APPLE
BIRD MIGRATION
BLOWING LEAVES
BLUSTERY DAY
CANNING
CHESTNUTS
CHILLY
COLD
CROPS
EQUINOX
FALL
FARMING
FEAST
FROST
HALLOWEEN
HARVEST
HAYSTACK
HICKORY NUTS
LONGER NIGHTS
NOVEMBER
OCTOBER
ORANGE LEAVES
PIE
PUMPKIN
RAKE
RED LEAVES
SCARECROW
SCHOOL
SEASON
SEPTEMBER
SHORTER DAYS
SQUASH
SWEET POTATOES
THANKSGIVING
TURKEY
WINDY
YELLOW LEAVES

The hidden sentence is: AUTUMN IS A SECOND SPRING WHEN EVERY LEAF IS A FLOWER

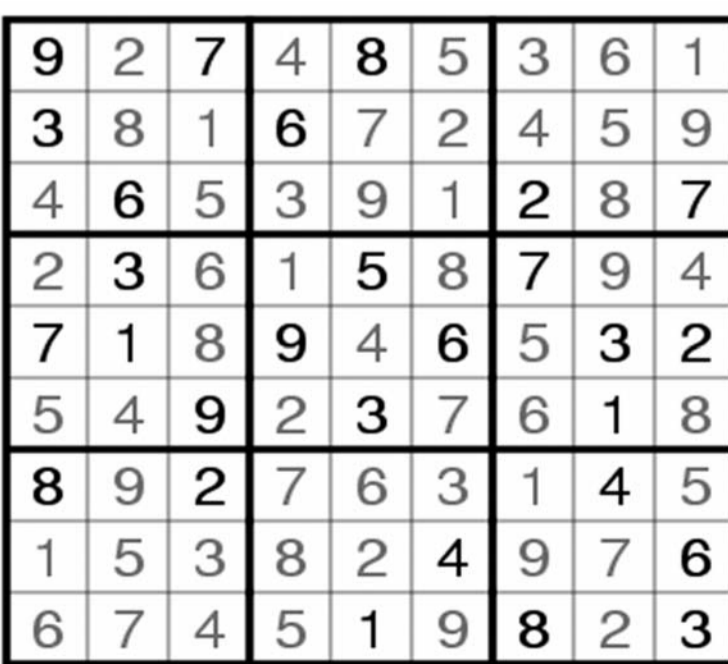
Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



For labor-related inquiries and complaints:  
Call MSAL hotline 128

### Hospitals

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

### Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322



### PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

### INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	Luxembourg	00352
Albania	00355	Macau	00853
Algeria	00213	Macedonia	00389
Andorra	00376	Madagascar	00261
Angola	00244	Majorca	0034
Anguilla	001264	Malawi	00265
Antigua	001268	Malaysia	0060
Argentina	0054	Maldives	00960
Armenia	00374	Mali	00223
Australia	0061	Malta	00356
Austria	0043	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Nigar	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Toga	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lithuania	00370		

### STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630  
Fax: (+965) 24348714  
www.met.gov.kw

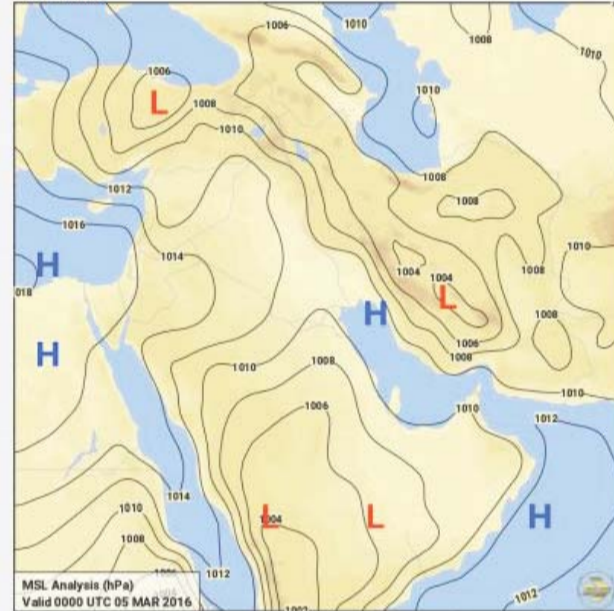
### Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 05/03/2016-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 28 °C

**By Day :** Partly cloudy with light to moderate south easterly to light variable wind, with speed of 08 - 32 km/h with a chance for scattered rain  
**By Night :** Partly cloudy with light variable wind changing to light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h with a chance for scattered rain

SFC. CHART



Four-Day Forecast

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Expected Weather	partly cloudy + scattered rain	M.Sunny	clouds to increase + scattered rain by night	clouds to decrease + scattered rain
Min Temp °C	18	16	15	17
Max Temp °C	29	26	27	27
Wind Direction	northerly to north westerly	north westerly	north westerly to light variable	variable wind changing to south easterly
Wind Speed km/h	08 - 32	15 - 40	08 - 30	06 - 28

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

### Warnings & Weather Watches

no warnings or weather watches

### Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C	REC	Max °C	EXP
KUWAIT CITY	20		25	
KUWAIT AIRPORT	19		28	
ABDALY	18		28	
BUBYAN	20		22	
JAHRA	19		30	
FAILAKA ISLAND	19		24	
SALMIYAH	19		21	
AHMADI	20		21	
JAL ALIYAH	18		28	
QAROH ISLAND	20		21	
UMM AL-MARADEM	20		21	
NUWAISIB	20		28	
WAFRA	19		30	
MANAGISH	19		29	
SALMY	18		29	
MUTRIBA	17		29	

### Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	27
Min Temp (°C)	18
Max Rel Hum (%)	99
Min Rel Hum (%)	41
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	68 SE
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	.64 mm

Sunrise	06:09
Sunset	17:50

### Prayer Times

Fajr	04:50
Sunrise	06:09
Zuhr	12:00
Asr	15:20
Sunset	17:50
Isha	19:06



### PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists	Plastic Surgeons
Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabeea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223
<b>Ear, Nose &amp; Throat (ENT)</b>	
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammed Al-Daary	25731988
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426
<b>General Practitioners</b>	
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaizeem	22636920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abdallah Al-Rafea	25333501
<b>Urologists</b>	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abdallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

Paediatricians	Endocrinologist
Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maarroof	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gujare	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282
<b>Dermatology</b>	
Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University	23845955
<b>Dentists</b>	
Dr. Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abdallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abdallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111
<b>Neurologists</b>	
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875
<b>Gastrologists</b>	
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abdallah Al-Ali	22633135

Family Doctor	Psychiatrists	Gynaecologists & Obstetricians
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581	
<b>Psychiatrists</b>		
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047	
Dr. Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0	
<b>Gynaecologists &amp; Obstetricians</b>		
Dr. Adrian arbe	23729596/23729581	
Dr. Verginia s. Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321	
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539	
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliyami	25343406	
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272	
Dr. Salem soso	22618787	
<b>General Surgeons</b>		
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044	
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148	
<b>Internists, Chest &amp; Heart</b>		
Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939	
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300	
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004	
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515	
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446	
Dr. Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3	

Physiotherapists & VD	Rheumatologists:
Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees	22666288
<b>Rheumatologists:</b>	
Dr. Adel Al-Awadi	25330060
Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290
<b>Internist, Chest &amp; Heart</b>	
DR. Mohammed Akkad	24555050 Ext 210
<b>Consultant Cardiologist</b>	
Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC	
Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	25339667
<b>Consultant Cardiologist</b>	
Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC	2611555-2622555
Inaya German Medical Center	
Te: 2575077	
Fax: 25723123	

Psychologists /Psychotherapists	Soor Center Tel: 2290-1677 Fax: 2290 1688	info@soorcenter.com www.soorcenter.com	Kaizen center 25716707	Noor Clinic 23845955
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# THE CLOONEYS

## beef up security after death threats

The couple have reportedly taken drastic measures to protect their 10.7m mansion in Berkshire, South England. They have been advised not to travel without bodyguards and even have to be chauffeured to local restaurants just 300 yards away, following troubling messages the 38-year-old beauty has received. Those messages are supposedly in relation to her current case, where she represents jailed former president of the Maldives, Mohamed Nasheed. South Oxfordshire district councillor Paul Harrison, who has been involved in negotiations to beef up surveillance at the Clooneys' home, said: "Security isn't so much for him but for her. "From George's point of view, the high-level legal work she does and the death threats she gets, it's quite serious." The 'Hail, Caesar!' actor and his wife initially applied for planning permission to erect up to eight cameras on 6m poles in the

grounds, plus another 10 fixed to the ground, but the plans were denied as the cameras would represent a "potential infringement of the privacy of neighboring properties - though a compromise has now been reached. Mr. Harrison explained: "[The poles] have now been reduced from six to three meters, so we're happy with that." The 54-year-old star is said to have masterminded all the security changes. A source told Britain's Grazia magazine: "George is understandably concerned that there are people seeking to harm Amal or at least intimidate her. "She is a formidable woman with a wealth of experience handling contentious cases, but threats must be taken seriously. "George's biggest fear is anything happening to Amal. Neither of them wants to take any chances."

## Amy Adams got wasted while attempting a Las Vegas wedding

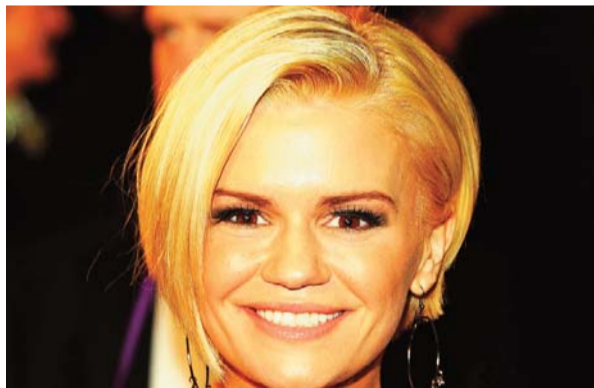
The 41-year-old actress and artist Darren Le Gallo finally tied the knot last May after a seven-year engagement, but she admits they initially intended to get hitched several months before after visiting the gambling capital to see Justin Timberlake perform. She said: "We wanted to find a chaplain, go to the desert and get married at sunset. But to be honest, we got too drunk. Then it was just not going to happen." The couple - who have five-year-old daughter Aviana together - eventually wed in a private Los Angeles ceremony but location didn't matter to the 'Batman V Superman: Dawn of Justice' star, so long as they could wed under a tree, just like in one of her favorite movies, 'Forrest Gump'. She said: "The idea came from Jenny and Forrest. That was just always my thing." Amy admits she and

Darren bicker regularly and though marriage is "hard", she is willing to work at it and no longer makes "empty threats" when they argue. She told Britain's Marie Claire magazine: "I definitely feel like I can't make empty threats. Before, I could be like, 'I'm just going to go down and get a hotel room and I'm going to think this through. I'm making myself sound horrible to this poor, awesome guy. Relationships are hard. I think what I learned is, you just have to make a choice. Marriage is a choice." The 'Enchanted' actress admits it is unlikely she'll have any more children. She said: "I think I'm good right now. I'm 'of an age', as they say. "I just feel like I need to decide, you know what I mean?"



## Khloe Kardashian continues to defend Kanye West

In the past few weeks Kanye has claimed he has debts of \$53 million, said he made Taylor Swift famous and hit out at music producer Bob Ezrin, Wiz Khalifa and Deadmau5 but Khloe has praised her brother-in-law for "owning who he is". She told NYLON magazine: "Is he like wild and out there? Yeah, but I respect him for that. I like anybody who owns who they are. And, just like no qualms about it. That's what I love." However, Khloe hinted that her mother Kris Jenner doesn't feel the same way, explaining: "I'm sure she's probably like 'Ugh, what the f\*\*k going on?' I'm sure she'd say the same thing about all of us like, 'Shut the f\*\*k up.'" Meanwhile, Khloe praised her sisters, Kim Kardashian West, Kourtney Kardashian and Kendall and Kylie Jenner, with keeping her grounded. She said: "If one of us is maybe too full of ourselves that day, that's what your family's for, to bring you back down and to burst that bubble for you." And Khloe believes it is their close bonds which have kept the siblings from going off the rails like other celebrities such as Amanda Bynes. She said: "Oh god, I don't know how we would do it without our family. I see there's a lot of celebrities and, you know, people say they're having a breakdown and this or that... Like the Britney Spears' of the world who that's - well she had a sister but - like Amanda Bynes, who was one person, like that's really hard, that amount of pressure and just scrutiny on one person where no one else really understands their journey."



## Kerry Katona thought her marriage to Brian McFadden would last for 'forever'

The Atomic Kitten singer - who has daughters Molly, 14, and Lilly-Sue, 13, with the Westlife singer, Heidi, nine, and Max, seven, with second husband Mark Croft and daughter Dylan-Jorge, 23 months, with estranged third spouse George Kay - admits her life hasn't turned out the way she planned and even though her kids have three different baby daddies, she doesn't regret it as she has her "amazing" kids. She said: "This isn't how I expected my life to turn out. I thought I'd be with my first husband forever, but I wouldn't have it any other way because I have five amazing kids." The 35-year-old singer admits criticism of her turbulent personal life has been upsetting, but she knows she is a good mother regardless of the upheaval. She told Closer magazine: "I've been slagged off so much for being a bad mum, which has been awful, so I always feel guilty. I know I'm doing a good job bringing up my children, so when people say, 'Those poor kids, all the different dads, all the different marriages', it's the most heartbreaking thing. I can't say I regret any of my marriages because they gave me my beautiful children." And Kerry's children are incredibly "proud" of her. Lilly-Sue said: "A lot of people will criticize her for everything that has happened in the past - but I'm proud of my mum for turning her life around." How many people can say they changed their life and made such a good person of themselves?"

## Pharrell Williams labels Blake Shelton and Gwen Stefani's romance is 'a miracle'

The 'Happy' singer is thrilled that his fellow 'Voice' mentors have found love with each other after both getting divorced last year. Speaking on the 'Today' show, he said: "It's poppin' off! It's so beautiful, because being there, I watched both of them go through a lot, you know. You hate to see your friends go through something so heavy, and it's kind of like a miracle, man - just watching that." However, Pharrell was initially unaware that the duo had started a relationship. He said: "I had no idea. And then Blake sends me a text message, and I'm like, 'Whoa!'" A source stated

the following about Gwen: "She was heartbroken for her children that the marriage wasn't going to work. She tried so hard for the kids to keep the marriage together. Then here came this ray of sunshine who did make her smile, and now he's one of the most positive people in her life. They have turned lemons into lemonade and have turned a bad situation for both of them into something great. They're both much happier."



## Years & Years band member Olly Alexander wants to encourage people to be open about their sexuality



The video for the band's latest song 'Desire' celebrates sex in the LGBT community and Olly revealed the concept of the video came from their wish to highlight "other sexualities and identities that are well deserving of some shiny pop video love". He explained in an open letter on Facebook: "Most of the pop videos I've seen that have any male and female interaction are usually centered around a romance, and that's great, I am all for romance, but let's face it there are a lot of other sexualities and identities that are well deserving of some shiny pop video love. I've been wanting to make a video with some of my queer family for a long time and 'Desire' felt like the right time to do it. Every Y&Y video has some similar elements that run through it: magical worlds, symbolism, pretty lights and this time I wanted sex added into that mixture. I wanted the video to feel sexy. Everyone has a different definition of what they find sexy, so why do we so often get given one version of what sexy is time and time again? Is there a rulebook for men and women on how to feel sexy or what sexy is? For me, whoever it is, two women, two men, a group of gender-queer people, it's all cute. It can all be a positive and a joyful expression of sexiness and sexuality, you

don't have to be a specific gender to enjoy it. So yeah, gay people have sex, and it's not just gay people, it's all kinds of people! All these non-straight people, they're out there, having sex! Sex, between two consenting adults, can be a healthy, positive, safe and enjoyable thing (sic)." Olly also cited his teenage influences as women including Madonna, Destiny's Child, Alanis Morissette, Britney Spears and Whitney Houston who "asserted and acknowledged their sexuality in varying and different ways and to me they were ways that felt powerful". He explained: "They were singing about men and I wanted to sing about men. They were seductive and sensual in their videos - I wanted to be seductive and sensual in my videos (and believe me I made a lot of these kind of home videos). They were so much more interesting to me than the majority of male musicians whose Type A macho masculinity felt completely unrelatable."



## Paltrow says she, ex-husband Chris Martin and their children are a 'true family'

Chris and Gwyneth split in 2014 after almost 10 years of marriage but have remained so close for the sake of their kids, Apple, 11 and nine-year-old Moses, that the 43-year-old actress says they are now more like siblings. Speaking about Chris, 39, she said: "He's like my brother. I'm really close to him. We're a family. Even though we're not in a romantic relationship, we're a true family and we like to do things to reinforce that we're a family for the children [and] for each other. [The split] was a very intense time for our family. Emotions were very high and deep and all over the place. I just try to keep to myself as

much as possible." Meanwhile, the entire family cheered Chris on when he performed with Coldplay during the half-time show at Super Bowl 50 last month but Gwyneth admitted she worries about keeping the kids grounded when they have such incredible experiences. She told the 'Today' show: "They were thrilled. They were very proud. It's pretty incredible. It's also a little weird that your first football game is that, so how do you also counteract that and instill that life is not that all the time?"



## Kate Hudson wants to send her son Bingham to an English school

The 'Kung Fu Panda 3' star raises her four-year-old child with her former fiance Matt Bellamy and when he's older she'd like him to get his education in the same country his Muse rocker dad is from. Kate loves the fact her son's dual American/British citizenship allows her to come over to the UK more and she would live in London for large parts of the year if she didn't need to be in the US with her older boy Ryder - her 12-year-old son with her ex-husband Chris Robinson. In an interview with The Independent newspaper, she said: "We'll spend anywhere from four to six months in the UK depending on the year. I've always loved London and I'm so happy there. I feel at home there so it's nice now to have a son who's half US citizen, half British! I'm a fan of Notting Hill and I love central London, especially Marylebone. I'd live there a little bit more but Ryder is in school in LA. When Bing is older, I'd love to have him in an English school, so we'll see." Kate had a fantastic childhood with her mother Goldie Hawn, stepfather Kurt Russell, brother Oliver Hudson, half-brother Wyatt Russell and stepbrother Boston. And she admits her own parents have had a big influence on how she brings up Ryder and Bingham and Kate hasn't ruled out adding to her brood in the future. The 36-year-old actress who was accused of rocking the cradle recently due to her alleged recent relationship with Nick Jonas said: "I think my parenting style is pretty similar to my own parents. We had a beautiful childhood. It's not that it didn't come with family stuff like a lot of families have, but we were lucky and were so close and remain close which today I think is very rare... We had a traditional upbringing, progressive, but very family-value-oriented, but there were also extraordinary things that we didn't realize were extraordinary until growing up... I do my best. I think I'm an easy-going mom but I'm pretty strict too when it comes to manners and things like that. I love being a mom. I'll have more children, yeah. Second round."

## Reese Witherspoon being sued over a logo

The 'Legally Blonde' actress is the subject of a lawsuit from Jordann Weingartner, who claims the magnolia design used for the 39-year-old star's Draper James clothing and jewelry line, which launched in 2015, is a rip-off of her own "distinctive six-pointed floral design" piece of jewelry. Jordann launched the accessory, and got a copyright for the design, in 2008 and her lawsuit states the piece, called Magnolia, is a big seller online and in stores across multiple states including Florida, New York, Texas and California. The designer claims Reese's logo - a magnolia flower on a disc, with initials in the centre - confuses the market place and is suing to get a cut of the actress' profits, and to get her Draper James Magnolia removed from stores, TMZ reports. Reese previously revealed she was inspired to launch her clothing range after being approached to front campaigns for other brands but couldn't relate to their reference points. She has said: "I was being approached by a few East Coast brands to represent them. I have been to the Hamptons only once. I haven't travelled in the North East. 'What I know is Charleston and North Carolina and the beaches of Georgia. Tailgating. Sipping tea on the porch. Sunday dinners. Dressing for church. Those are the touchstones in my life. Those are the stories I wanted to tell."



## Bobbi Kristina Brown died from a combination of drug intoxication and drowning

The forensic investigation into the 22-year-old beauty's death last July - almost six months after she was found unresponsive in a bath - had initially been kept secret because of possible foul play and an ongoing criminal investigation. But now the cause of death can be revealed after Fulton County Superior Court Judge Henry Newkirk in Atlanta, Georgia, ordered the documents be unsealed. The judge granted a motion filed by media organizations, who had argued the order to seal the results violated the state and federal constitutions and court rules because there was no public notification or opportunity for a hearing. Following the ruling, an initial statement was released by the Fulton County Medical Examiner's office on Friday - on what would have been Bobbi's 23rd birthday - and reveals what condition her body was in when she was found unconscious in the tub on January 21, 2015. The Medical Examiner's Office in Atlanta reviewed medical records, investigative files and other documents to determine how Bobbi - the daughter of deceased music icon Whitney Houston and Bobby Brown - died. The report concluded cannabis, alcohol, sedatives and anxiety medications contributed to her passing but the "underlying cause" of death was "immersion associated with drug intoxication". The statement read: "Death was clearly not due to natural causes, but the medical examiner has not been able to determine whether death was due to intentional or accidental causes, and has therefore classified the manner of death as undetermined."



## Madonna will have free Down Under concert after 23 years of absence

The 57-year-old pop megastar is putting on an exclusive, one-night-only club show, named 'Madonna: Tears of a Clown', at The Forum Theatre in Melbourne next Thursday. The venue holds only 1,500 people and every ticket for the evening of "art, comedy, storytelling and music" is going to be given away for nothing to her loyal supporters. In a statement, Madonna said: "I wanted to do something special for Australia because you have been so patient and waited so long. The 'Tears of a Clown' show will make its debut on March 10. Performance art, comedy, storytelling and music of course! Especially for my 'Rebel Heart' fans down under!" Only lucky fans who signed up to Madonna's fan club before March 1 will be eligible to win tickets and also they must be over 18 and must upload

photos of themselves excited about Madonna's return to Australia. Details can be found on Madonna.com. The eLiving for Lovei singer first hinted at performing a music and comedy mash-up called 'Tears of a Clown' while on stage in Macau in February. This weekend Madonna will play her first ever shows in New Zealand when she brings her 'Rebel Heart World Tour' to the Vector Arena in Auckland. She then will play concerts at a string of arenas in Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney. Madonna last performed in Australia in 1993 on her 'Girlicious Show World Tour' in support of her fifth album 'Erotica'.



## Pamela Anderson has not made a decision about making an appearance on 'Baywatch' film

The 48-year-old actress starred in the original TV series as blonde bombshell lifeguard CJ Parker and her character is being portrayed by Kelly Rohrbach in the big screen remake. Pamela has been offered a role in the movie. But on the 'Wendy Williams Show' this past Wednesday, the original playboy girl said that she was upset with the compensation package presented to her by the movie executives. She feels she should have been offered 'way more' than what they had intended to pay. Also she has stated that she is nervous about appearing for nostalgia value, even though original Mitch Buchannon, David Hasselhoff, is going to appear alongside his replacement Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson. Speaking to 'Harper's Bazaar' magazine, she said: "Well, they called me and asked me to be in it, but I haven't decided yet. I don't know. I don't like remakes of TV shows and I kind of want to leave it as is and be remembered for that. I don't know if I want to go on 'Baywatch' and be, like, the old lady working at a counter somewhere." Pamela starred on the TV series - which became a worldwide phenomenon - for five seasons between 1992 and 1997. The Playboy cover star has surprisingly revealed she never wore sunscreen when shooting on location on the

beach in Santa Monica, California because she didn't want the chemicals from the UV protective lotion going into the sea. She said: "I never wore sun block, I didn't really believe in it. I always felt that it was chemicals going into your skin and particles that go into the ocean. People always tell me, 'You have to wear sun block all over your face', so I have a natural sun block that I use sometimes, but I'm just gonna go with it and see what age does to me because I need to be in the sun. The first season, they didn't want me to wear makeup, they wanted me to be very natural. I said OK, but then I would go to Lexi's [makeup artist Alexis Vogel] at three in the morning and she would put eyelashes and liner on me and we just created that look, then I would show up, and they'd go, 'You're already wearing makeup!' And I'd say, 'No I'm not!' But then I'd get hit by a wave and my eyelashes would fall off and my makeup artist there would come up and go, 'This is all that's left of Pamela, I hope you're happy - two little soaking wet eyelashes.' But most of the time it would stay on."



OJ Simpson's former estate and pool are shown from the backyard, Tuesday, Nov 4, 1997 in the Brentwood section of Los Angeles. — AP photos



The body of Nicole Brown Simpson is seen where she was found on the bloodstained walkway of her Bundy Drive condominium as seen in this LAPD evidence photo, introduced and accepted as evidence and released for publication, in the OJ Simpson wrongful-death civil trial.

## Latest twist in OJ Simpson case: Discovery of knife

It was yet another twist in the case that even two decades later remains at the center of American attention. Warning that the story behind it could well amount to nothing, police nevertheless said they are examining a knife that was reportedly found at the home where OJ Simpson was living in 1994 when his ex-wife and her friend were stabbed to death.

The knife was believed to have been recovered by a construction worker tearing down the house. The worker then gave it to an off-duty police officer who was working as a security guard at a filming location, police said.

It was unclear when the knife was found and how long it was held by the officer, who is now retired. The knife was being analyzed by a Los Angeles Police Department crime lab for DNA or other material that could possibly link it to the killings.

Capt Andy Neiman stressed Friday that the authenticity of the story was not confirmed and that investigators were looking into whether "this whole story is possibly bogus from the get-go." "It's unusual how this all of a sudden becomes a huge story during this time," Neiman added, referring to the popular "People v. OJ Simpson: American Crime Story" anthology that is airing on the FX television channel.

Simpson was charged and acquitted in the slayings. Even if the knife is linked to him, legal experts say he could not be criminally charged again because of pro-

tections against double jeopardy. "If they were going to find this knife and make it useful in the murder trial, they should have found it 20 years ago, and they didn't," said Loyola Law School professor Laurie Levenson, a former federal prosecutor and longtime observer of the Simpson case. "It will just raise more questions about the incompetence of the investigation and probably lead to more books and more movies."

### Decade long mystery

The weapon used in the killings has been a mystery for decades. Other knives have surfaced during the case, but they were not linked to the crimes. In 1994, a salesman testified at a preliminary hearing that he sold Simpson a knife before the killings. That same month a woman turned in a red-stained kitchen knife she said she found near Simpson's home, and a handle and a piece of blade of a knife were found in a tank that collects waste from airplanes at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago, where Simpson flew the night of the killings.

In 1998, a residential construction crew found a folding-blade knife in Simpson's former neighborhood, but police said there was no evidence to show it was related to any crime. The bodies of Nicole Brown Simpson and friend Ronald Goldman were found stabbed multiple times outside her home on June 12, 1994.

The discovery led to the so-called "Trial of the

Century" in which Simpson was represented by a team of high-profile attorneys led by the flamboyant Johnnie Cochran. A jury acquitted Simpson in 1995 after deliberating only four hours. In 1997, a civil court jury found him liable for the slayings and awarded \$33.5 million in damages to the victims' families.

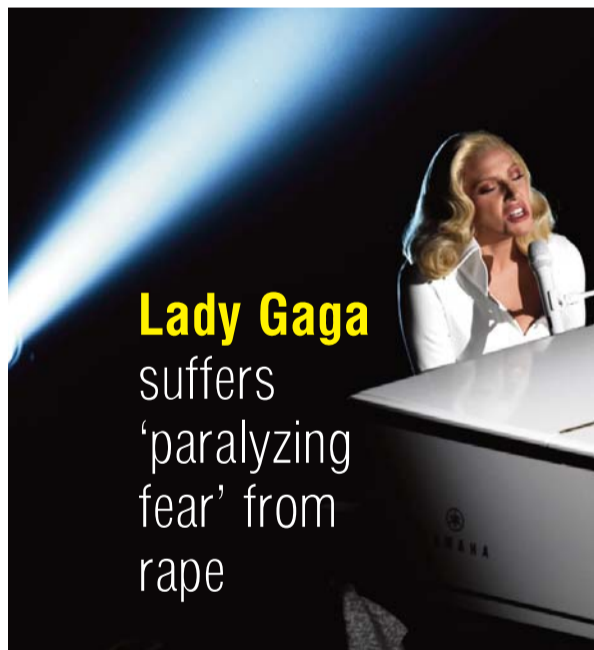
Simpson's Brentwood mansion was torn down after he moved to Florida following his acquittal. Simpson, who has always maintained his innocence in the killings, is now serving a sentence of nine to 33 years in a Nevada prison for a 2007 armed robbery and kidnapping conviction in which he tried to retrieve football memorabilia. He is eligible for parole next year.

His Las Vegas lawyer said he had not talked to Simpson about the knife but questioned who was in possession of it over the years. "The only thing I've heard is that some cop claims some other guy claims he found a knife on some property," attorney Malcolm LaVergne said. "From what I can see, there's no chain of custody."

If the knife turns out to be linked to Simpson, that fact could be raised at his parole hearing. "The Nevada Parole Board may consider and give relevant weight to any evidence that bears on whether the release of the petitioning inmate could constitute a danger to the public," the state attorney general's office said in a statement. — AP



In this Oct. 3, 1995 file photo, OJ Simpson, center, reacts as he is found not guilty of murdering his ex-wife Nicole Brown and her friend Ron Goldman, as members of his defense team, F Lee Bailey, left, and Johnnie Cochran Jr, right, look on, in court.



Lady Gaga suffers 'paralyzing fear' from rape

Lady Gaga on Friday described her Oscar performance with rape survivors as the most difficult of her life, saying that she remains in chronic pain from a decade-old assault. The pop star on Sunday offered an emotional performance of her song "Till It Happens To You" at the film industry's gala awards, with university students who have experienced rape joining her on stage with arms joined in solidarity. "I was never such a wreck as I was the week before this performance," Gaga told New York radio station Z100. Speaking of her rape, she said: "It's the thing that I am the most ashamed of in my life and I have always felt that it was my fault until this week." Gaga, who turns 30 this month, has previously revealed that she was raped by an older man when she was 19.

But she said that the Academy Awards performance marked a coming out of sorts, as previously the issue was "swept under" with people quickly moving on to other topics. "People don't know this about me because I don't share it, and I know they see me as this kind of celebrity that has success and money and the world watching and that I must have no problems. But I actually suffer from chronic pain all the time and it's from this paralyzing fear that I've experienced for almost 10 years," she said.

Gaga, whose real name is Stefani Germanotta, said that she had compartmentalized the experience in the back of her mind but that it "stays in your body, in your tissues." "So I feel physical pain, and there are a lot of people who suffer from chronic pain who have been through a traumatic experience," she said. Gaga said that she later got matching tattoos with some of the young people at the performance, who had come on stage with slogans written on their arms such as "Not At All Your Fault" and "Unbreakable." Gaga was nominated for an Oscar for the song which appears in "The Hunting Ground," a documentary about rape on university campuses.

She was introduced by Vice President Joe Biden who encouraged viewers to sign a pledge on the site itonus.org. The pledge, which has seen a surge of interest since the Oscars, commits the signatory to intervene in situations when a person has not or cannot consent to sex. — AFP

## 'Zootopia' running wild for \$67m opening

Disney's "Zootopia" is showing plenty of bounce at the US box office with a dominating \$67 million weekend at 3,827 sites, according to early projections Friday. The animated comedy leads all weekend moviegoing with Gramercy's action sequel "London Has Fallen" taking a solid \$23 million while Paramount's Tina Fey comedy "Whiskey Tango Foxtrot" fades quickly with less than \$8 million.

Fox's fourth weekend of surprise hit "Deadpool" remains a player with about \$16 million—which will lift it past the \$300 million mark. "Zootopia" showed clearly that it was drawing from outside its core audience of children with \$1.7 million in Thursday night previews, making it Disney's top non-summer preview gross for an animated movie. The film centers on a rabbit (voiced by Ginnifer Goodwin) trying to establish herself as a cop in a city filled with anthropomorphic animals.

With a plus \$65 million opening, "Zootopia" will replace 2014's "Big Hero 6" as the top launch weekend for a non-Pixar Disney title. It has a chance at becoming the 12th animated movie to open at more than \$70 million, a list led by the 2007 launch of "Shrek the Third" at \$121 million. Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst with comScore, credited Disney with adept handling.

"Zootopia" is off to a rollicking start and with great reviews, a terrific marketing campaign and a family film marketplace that has seen a mere trickle of product over the past few months, the marketplace is primed and ready to make this one of the most successful Walt Disney Animation Studios titles ever and in the process kicks off a box office month of March that will clearly start on a high note," he said.

Dergarabedian also pointed out that moviegoers are beginning to take note of the March 25 debut of "Batman v



This image released by Disney shows Chief Bogo, voiced by Idris Elba, a scene from the animated film, "Zootopia." — AP

Superman: Dawn of Justice." "London Has Fallen" and "Whiskey Tango Foxtrot" will have more modest debuts, but will nonetheless enhance and overall weekend that along with the ubiquitous "Deadpool" that will generate strong overall returns over this early March frame," he added.

"Zootopia" was projected with \$18 million on Friday compared with \$8 million for "London Has Fallen" at 3,490 locations. "Zootopia" reviews have been stellar with a Rotten Tomatoes score at 99%. The international total is \$98 million after three weekends with openings in China, Germany and Russia this weekend.

The performance of "London Has Fallen" is a quick redemption for star Gerard Butler a week after his "Gods of Egypt" under-performed in its opening with just \$14 million—problematic given the \$140 million price tag for "Egypt," more than dou-

ble the \$60 million budget for "London." Butler returns as a Secret Service agent three years after "Olympus Has Fallen" along with Aaron Eckhart and Morgan Freeman returning as the president and vice president. "Olympus" opened to \$30 million in 2013 on its way to a \$99 million domestic total.

"Whiskey Tango Foxtrot," a comedy that finds Fey's character reporting from the Afghanistan a war zone, appears to be underperforming recent estimates of \$10 million to \$12 million, 2,374 sites. "Whiskey" has a \$35 million production price tag and a respectable 61% "fresh" rating on Rotten Tomatoes so it may be helped by word of mouth in coming weeks. — Reuters

## Leslie Jones reacts to criticism of 'Ghostbusters' character

Leslie Jones ain't afraid of no ghost - or playing a transit worker. The co-star of the upcoming all-female version of "Ghostbusters" took to Twitter to defend her role as a member of the paranormal-fighting group who appears in footage released Thursday to be an employee of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

The portrayal of the team's only non-white member as a subway worker in filmmaker Paul Feig's new "Ghostbusters" came under fire on social media after the trailer debuted online. "Why can't a regular person be a Ghostbuster?" the African-American actress-comedienne posted on Twitter. "I'm confused. And why can't I be the one who plays them? I am a performer. Just go see the movie!"

Jones' character Patty teams up to fight ghosts and other apparitions in the film with Kristen Wiig's particle physicist Erin, Melissa McCarthy's paranormal researcher Abby and Kate McKinnon's nuclear engineer Jillian. In one scene, Jones' character tells them, "You guys are really smart about this science stuff, but I know New York - and I can borrow a car from my uncle."

A poster for the character released earlier this year referred to Patty as a "ghost tracker, municipal historian, metaphysical commando." "I understand this is a reboot of 'Ghostbusters' from 1984 and the new characters mirror their male counterparts," wrote Donna Dickens on the pop culture site HitFix.com on Friday. "But it's been over 30 years and the dynamic of three white scientists and 'street-wise' minority is dated."

Jones, who serves as a "Saturday Night Live" cast member and appeared in the film "Top Five," made it clear she was not personally offended by the part, adding on Twitter: "IT'S NOT A MAN, WOMAN, RACE, CLASS THANG!! IT'S A GHOSTBUSTER THANG!!" A spokeswoman for "Ghostbusters" writer-director Feig did not immediately return messages seeking comment.

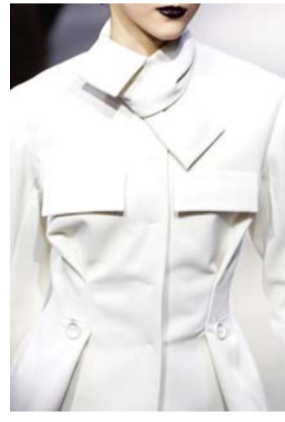
In the original "Ghostbusters" films, Ernie Hudson portrayed the team's only non-white member, Winston. He joined the group by responding to a help wanted ad and did not have any prior experience with paranormal activity. The new "Ghostbusters" installment is scheduled for release July 15. — AP



Actress Leslie Jones poses at the "Top Five" premiere at the Princess of Wales Theatre during the Toronto International Film Festival in Toronto. — AFP



Dior



Dior's studio team puts on the Fall/Winter ready to wear show after the exit of Raf Simons from the legendary Fashion House. — AFP photos



Emanuel Ungaro

Fausto Puglisi's chosen collection for Emanuel Ungaro being modeled on Friday in Paris.

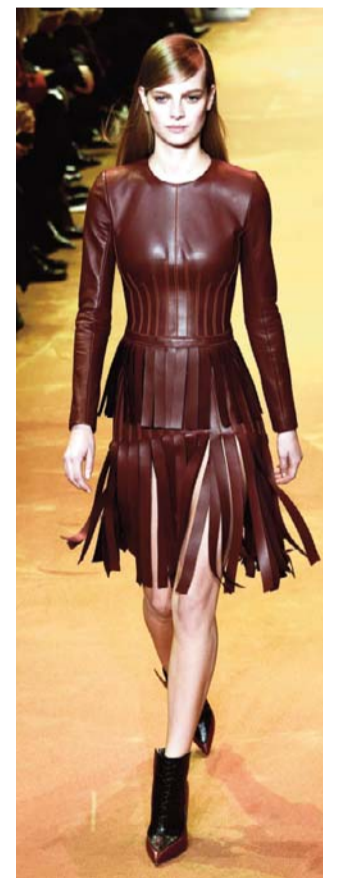
# PARIS FASHION WEEK

Isabel Marant



The French designer presented her latest Fashion Collection on Friday.

Mugler



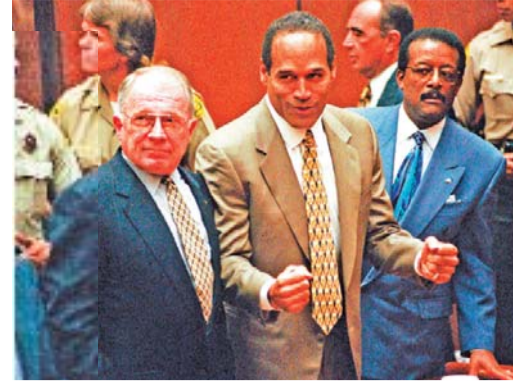
Thierry Mugler's fall/winter ready to wear show which was presented yesterday in Paris has become the most talked about show this fashion season.

# Lifestyle

SUNDAY, MARCH 6, 2016

Latest twist in OJ Simpson case

# 38



A woman views art at the Artsy & Douglas Coupland booth during the VIP opening of The Armory Show 2016 in New York. — AFP

## Moldovan rappers chime with protests

Mani is a TV producer by day, but in his "second life" the business management graduate dresses up as a mobster to rap about corruption among Moldova's ruling elite. Ex-Soviet state Moldova is Europe's poorest nation and has been hit by a string of political crises, with protesters taking to the streets to demand an end to rampant graft among those running the country.

While most of the demonstrators have pitched tents and picketed parliament, Mani and other discontented youths have turned to the medium they know best to express their anger-rap music. "I would prefer not to do so many songs about social issues but I think an artist has to react in the face of what is happening in his country," 27-year-old Mani told AFP.

He has been active in the Moldovan rap scene for a decade, trying through his music to highlight the rotten core in his homeland that was startlingly revealed last year in a scandal over \$1 billion—some 15 percent of Moldova's GDP—which vanished from the banking system. That scandal was the last straw for many Moldovans, convincing them that they had to take to the streets to battle a ruling class that had lost itself in corruption. Over the past year the country has seen three different governments but the protests rumble on, demanding new elections to wipe the slate clean.

### 'I got a billion'

For Mani, whose real name is Marian Lupu, the story of the missing billion dollars has proved a rich source for material. "My buddies were involved with me, they listened to me, they helped me," raps Mani.

"It's not easy to steal a billion...no, but it's thrillin'" he sings in one of his latest songs, "I got a billion."

Wedged between Ukraine and Romania, Moldova is often seen in terms of a tug-of-war between Moscow and the West, especially after it inked an historic EU association agreement in 2014 despite bitter opposition from former master Russia. But

the current protests have seen both nominally pro-Western and pro-Russian forces from the right and left temporarily put aside their differences to challenge a ruling elite they accuse of using pro-European rhetoric to cover up widespread graft.

"I don't think this was the first billion to be stolen. It just really hit home this time," says fellow rapper Kapushon, an IT gradu-

ate, his hat tilted in the hip hop style. "But they have always stolen. Do we know how many billions have been stolen since 1991? We deplore this latest case. That's if it is still the latest and there are no new ones already."

### 'Rock Moldova'

While the rappers take aim at the corruption and political scandals, other social problems are also in their sights. Mired in poverty, some 600,000 of Moldova's 3.5 million inhabitants have moved abroad in search of work and this has also struck a chord with the musicians.

"My father left twelve years ago, my mother nine years back. They were teachers and my father was a headmaster," Mani said. "It's the tragedy of our family and that of our country." In 2012, the musician Guz had a popular hit with his song "I rock Moldova" in which he encouraged people to try to change the society. "Politics doesn't mean nothing without the people," Guz said.

"The important thing is to be true to your principles and to stay proud." The protest movement has been dragging on for around a year in the country, and the rappers' main message chimes with the demonstrators—to sweep the system clean and start afresh. "They help young people to see and understand what is happening in the country," said Victoria Morozinschi, an economics student in Moldova's capital Chisinau. "They are very brave." — AFP

In 2012, the musician Guz had a popular hit with his song "I rock Moldova" in which he encouraged people to try to change society.



While most of the demonstrators have pitched tents and picketed parliament, Mani, pictured, and other discontented youths have turned to the medium they know best to express their anger — rap music. — AFP photos



Mani has been active in the Moldovan rap scene for a decade, trying through his music to highlight the rotten core in his homeland.

## 'Prince of Tides' author Pat Conroy dead at 70



Pat Conroy, a US novelist whose books included "Prince of Tides" and "The Great Santini," died at the age of 70, his hometown newspaper reported late Friday. Conroy, who was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer just four weeks ago, died Friday surrounded by family at his home in Beaufort in the state of South Carolina, the Beaufort Gazette reported.

Conroy's bruising childhood in the southern United States served as material for his novels. His 1976 book, "The Great Santini," was inspired by his own family and his overbearing father, an abusive and ultra-macho Marine fighter pilot. The book was turned into a 1979 movie starring Robert Duvall.

Conroy later wrote about a reconciliation of sorts with his aging father in the 2013 memoir titled "The Death of Santini." His 1986 novel "The Prince of Tides," about a troubled man who falls in love with his suicidal sister's psychiatrist, was turned into a 1991 Hollywood movie starring Nick Nolte and Barbra Streisand. The movie received seven Oscar nominations, including for Best Picture and one for Conroy as the screenplay co-author.

Conroy used his time at The Citadel military college and the school's problems with racial integration as inspiration for his 1980 novel "Lords of Discipline." That book resulted in Conroy being banned from campus, and triggered a war of words with the school that went on for years. Further irritating the school, in the 1990s Conroy pushed for female integration at the all-male bastion, the Charleston Post and Courier said.

Because of what they saw as a negative portrayal The Citadel refused to let cameras film a movie version of the book at the site. "Lords of Discipline" nevertheless became a 1983 movie starring David Keith. Conroy later wrote a 2002 memoir about his time at the military academy, titled "My Losing Season."

"I celebrated my 70th birthday in October and realized that I've spent my whole writing life trying to find out who I am and I don't believe I've even come close," Conroy wrote on Facebook on February 15, when he announced his pancreatic cancer diagnosis. With the help from doctors at the hospital "I intend to fight it hard," he wrote. Conroy's books, even a cookbook that he authored, were regulars on The New York Times best-seller list. The late author, who had been living in Beaufort since 1993 and was currently writing another novel, is survived by his wife, novelist Cassandra King, the Beaufort Gazette reported. — AFP