

SUBSCRIPTION

Kuwait Times



THE FIRST DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 2016

JAMADA ALAWWAL 30, 1437 AH

www.kuwaittimes.net

MP Ashour files grilling motion against Subaih



Sharapova fails drug test, sponsors suspend ties



150 FILS
NO: 16808
40 PAGES

KUWAIT WILL COMMIT TO OIL FREEZE ONLY IF OTHERS DO SO

GOVT TO ISSUE INT'L, DOMESTIC BONDS TO COVER DEFICIT



Min 17°
Max 27°
High Tide 12:37
Low Tide 06:27 & 18:29

TIGER ON THE LOOSE IN DOHA TRAFFIC JAM

DOHA: A tiger was spotted wandering through a traffic jam on one of Doha's busiest roads yesterday, and government officials said they would investigate the incident after footage appeared online. Pictures and video showing the tiger roaming among cars on the Doha Expressway flooded social media in the tiny Gulf country. Footage including a 20-second video on YouTube and Twitter showed the big cat running through lanes of heavy traffic, apparently trying to find a way off the congested road. Footage also emerged showing the tiger initially falling onto the road from a moving truck.

The interior ministry took to Twitter to say it was investigating the incident. "We assure all that the concerned authorities (are) following up with what has been trending over spotting a tiger in some areas of the country," it tweeted. Twitter users said the incident happened yesterday morning, although this could not be immediately verified. Other images showed a man in a traditional white robe holding the big cat on a chain, suggesting it had been recaptured safe and sound.

Continued on Page 13

YUNUS MEETS AMIR, ADDRESSES KCCI



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets Nobel laureate and founder of Grameen Bank Prof Dr Mohammad Yunus at Bayan Palace yesterday. Yunus, who in on a visit to the country, said the meeting primarily focused on "poverty in the Muslim world and issues related to the youth". Yunus later spoke at the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI). —/ KUNA (See Page

KUWAIT: Kuwait will commit to a potential global oil production freeze if major oil producers, including Iran, also agree to join the pact, acting oil minister Anas Al-Saleh said yesterday. OPEC leader Saudi Arabia and non-OPEC producer Russia, the world's two largest oil exporters, said last month they would freeze output at January levels to prop up prices if other nations agreed to join the first global oil pact in 15 years. "If there is an agreement, Kuwait will commit to the freeze," Saleh told reporters.

Asked what would happen if not all the main producers joined in the freeze deal, he said: "I'll go full power if there's no agreement. Every barrel I produce I'll sell." Brent crude futures were trading below \$40 per barrel yesterday. The Saudi-Russian accord has so far failed to have a dramatic impact on crude prices, partly because OPEC's third-largest producer Iran plans to raise production after the lifting of international sanctions in January.

Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak said on Friday that a meeting between OPEC and other leading oil producers to discuss freezing oil output could take place between March 20 and April 1. Novak said the meeting could take place in Russia, Vienna or Doha. Saleh said Kuwait has not received a formal invitation yet but "we will attend" if the meeting of oil producers proved to be "tangible". Kuwait is currently producing 3 million barrels of oil per day, Saleh said. The state has plans to raise its oil production capacity to 4 million bpd by 2020.

Saleh also said the government plans to issue both international and domestic bonds to help cover a budget deficit caused by low oil prices. Saleh told Reuters on the sidelines of a financial conference that the issues would

Continued on Page 13

Try Our Monster Size Shrimps



KD 3.500

Fisherman Junior Combo

10 pcs Shrimps, Fries, Tartar Sauce, Bread & Cola

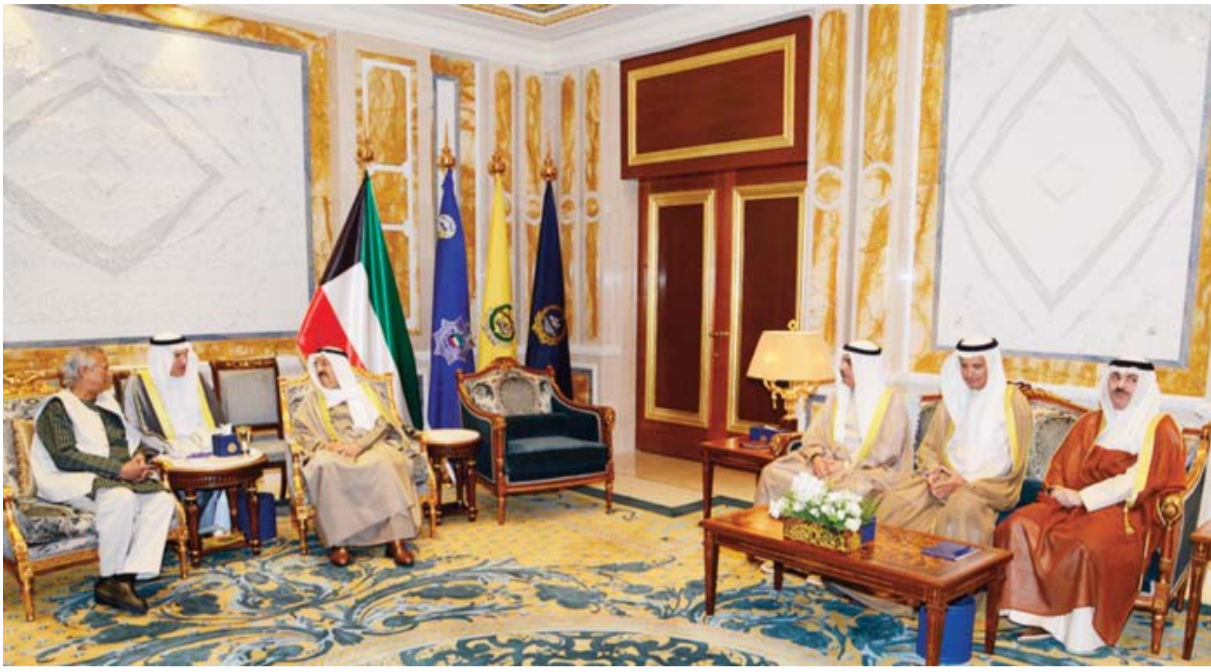


@Shrimpykw

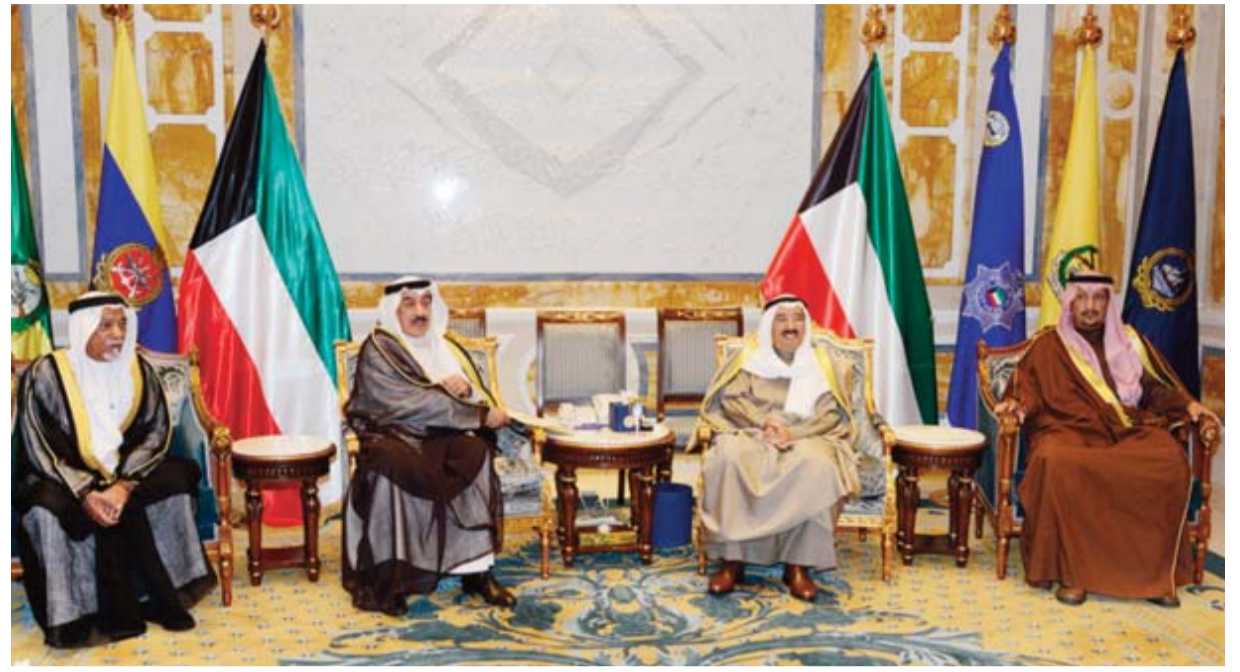
Home Delivery
1802 662

Order Online
www.shrimpy.com





KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets Nobel Laureate and founder of Grameen Bank Dr Mohammad Yunus.—Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets Al-Jahra Governor Fahad Al-Amir and a number of Al-Jahra residents.

NOBEL LAUREATE 'VERY HAPPY' TO HAVE MET AMIR

KUWAIT: Nobel Laureate and founder of Grameen Bank Dr Mohammad Yunus underscored the productiveness of his meeting yesterday with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Yunus, who is on a visit to the country, said that the meeting primarily focused on "poverty in the Muslim world and issues related to the youth."

Elaborating on his motto of 'three zeros,' Yunus said that he has always been driven by efforts to "rid the world of poverty, unemployment and carbon emission." "His Highness the Amir has informed me of numerous initiatives Kuwait has taken to eradicate unemployment and poverty," Yunus noted. "We had great discussions and I am very happy to have had the chance to meet His Highness the Amir," the Nobel Laureate said.

A social entrepreneur, banker and economist, Yunus is championed in his home country of Bangladesh for pioneering the concepts of microcredit and microfinance. His microfinance organization, Grameen Bank, makes small loans to the impoverished as means of helping them cope with the rising cost of living. In 2006, Yunus was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his finance work. In addition to meeting His Highness the Amir, Yunus also met with National Assembly Speaker Marzuq Al-Ghanem and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

Al-Jahra Governorate

In other news, His Highness the Amir received retired Lieutenant General Fahad Al-Amir, Al-Jahra Governor, and a number of Al-Jahra residents at Bayan Palace. In a speech at the reception, the Governor thanked His Highness, on behalf of the residents, for



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets Dr Mohammad Yunus.

establishing different projects in Al-Jahra Governorate including a hospital, a court house, and a hall to celebrate special occasions. He also praised the wise leadership of His Highness, adding that the governorate's officials are set to present to His Highness ideas on several development projects to be executed in the area.

After the meeting, a number of Al-Jahra residents hailed the completion of several projects in Al-Jahra, namely Sheikh Ahmad Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Hall for social occasions and soon to be over Al-Jahra Hospital. In a press statement, Al-Oyon Mayor Malouh Al-Harbi expressed great

honor to meet His Highness the Amir to thank him for the various projects that were completed in the governance.

Meanwhile, Adwan Mohammad Al-Towalrah praised His Highness the Amir's vast knowledge of problems in Al-Jahra, including the needed vital projects that were done to help the governorate, thanking as well the various ministries that took part for their efforts. Dr Mohammad Al-Busairi said meanwhile he was honored to have met His Highness the Amir and thanked him for his care and keenness to ensure projects like a hospital, a court house, and a banquet hall were seen through. The delegation later vis-



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets Municipal Council Chairman Muhalhal Al-Khalid.

Municipal Council

ited His Highness the Prime Minister as well.

Also yesterday, His Highness the Amir received Kuwait's Municipal Council Chairman Muhalhal Al-Khalid, who conveyed to His Highness a report on the achievements of the Council for the 11th convening term from 21-10-2013 to 30-4-2015. His Highness the Amir also received His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-

Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince received His Highness Sheikh Nasser, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled and Acting Chairman of the State Audit Bureau (SAB) Adel Al-Sarawi.

Graduation

Separately, His Highness the Amir is set to patronize and attend a broad graduation ceremony of Kuwait University's students for the 2014-2015 academic year, including those with higher education degree. The ceremony will be held today at the Late Sheikh Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah Theater in Shuwaikh district. — KUNA

AMIR CONDOLES WITH TUNISIA PRESIDENT OVER DEADLY ATTACKS

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences to Tunisian President Mohamed Beji Caid Essebsi yesterday after multiple attacks on Tunisian army and police targets left scores of casualties in the city of Ben Guerdane, near the borders with Libya.

His Highness the Amir voiced sincere sympathy with the President Essebsi and the government and people of sisterly Tunisia, as well as the victims and their families. He prayed to Almighty God for mercy on the souls of martyrs and quick recovery for those wounded in the attacks. He expressed Kuwait's strong

denunciation of all forms of terrorism or attacks on innocent lives, saying that such despicable acts of violence aimed to destabilize sisterly Tunisia. The State of Kuwait stands by Tunisia at these hard times and backs up the efforts of the international community to eradicate terrorism and dry up the sources of financing for terrorism, His Highness the Amir wrote. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables to President Essebsi.

Meanwhile, Chairman of the Inter-

Parliamentary Union and Speaker of (Kuwait) National Assembly Marzuq Ali Al-Ghanem has expressed strong condemnation of the armed terrorist attacks. The Parliament Speaker said in a cable to his Tunisian counterpart, Mohammad Al-Nasser, "We assure you and the brotherly Tunisian people that we stand fully on side of Tunisia, as leadership, parliament and people, in facing such criminal acts aimed at Tunisia's security and stability." He expressed heartfelt condolences to Tunisia on the deaths, inflicted as a result of these terrorist attacks, and wished the injured quick recovery. — KUNA

INFO MINISTER REITERATES KUWAIT'S REJECTION OF INSULT AGAINST SAUDI ARABIA, GCC MEMBERS

RIYADH: Kuwaiti Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah yesterday reaffirmed Kuwait's total rejection of any insult to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Speaking to reporters following participation in the 24th meeting of the GCC information ministers, the minister warned that anyone who may allow himself to insult GCC member countries would face legal action. "This matter (insult) cannot be condoned since it is pertinent to international relations in general and relations with brotherly GCC countries in particular," he said.

He quoted the Kuwaiti government, represented by First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah as having vowed to take necessary measures against those involved in insulting GCC countries.

On the meeting, which concluded in Riyadh earlier yesterday, the Kuwaiti minister said Gulf

media should play a more effective role in light of the current critical and sensitive circumstances in the Arab region. He added that the ministers had discussed the current situation in Yemen and the role of the Saudi-led operation aiming to support legitimacy and stability there.

Earlier, Sheikh Salman stressed the importance of launching a joint Gulf media network to provide services on both internal and external levels. This system will support the stability and security of "our countries due to acceleration of events and developments at the regional and international levels," Minister Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud said upon his departure to Riyadh to participate in the meeting.

He also pointed to the importance of the unity of the media discourse, saying that media message would entrench the values of citizenship and highlight the noble values of the Islamic religion, renouncing violence, extremism, terrorism and upholding love and tolerance and the values of peace. — KUNA



RIYADH: Information Minister Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah attends the 24th meeting of the GCC information ministers. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Professor Muhammad Yunus speaks during a lecture at Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

PROFESSOR MUHAMMAD YUNUS GIVES LECTURE AT CHAMBER

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: Professor Muhammad Yunus, a Bangladeshi social entrepreneur, banker, economist and civil society leader who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for founding Grameen Bank and pioneering the concepts of microcredit and microfinance, was the guest speaker at the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry yesterday. In his speech, Yunus narrated how he started lending to the poor and was able to turn the lives of many Bangladeshis for the better through his microfinance program, which started only because he wanted to make a difference to the lives of many people at a time of famine in Bangladesh.

"During the independence of Bangladesh, we had high hopes and many expectations, which unfortunately turned into a nightmare. I was teaching at a university in the US at that time, earning a very good income. I told myself this was the time to go back and help Bangladesh. I went back and saw the situation in Bangladesh was in a very sorry state," he said.

When he started work as an academic, he was happy seeing his students learning something from him, but he admitted he was not satisfied and content, seeing his country and his people in a worsening situation. "I thought that teaching economics is not helping the poor at all. I said to myself I was useless - what is the use of teaching people economics but they are all struggling on a daily basis? So for me, it was a totally pointless thing to continue. Many people were dying because of the famine, so I decided to go to the villages and learn about the life of the people," Yunus recalled.

Yunus said he was a total stranger in his own country because he grew up and taught economics in an American university for years. "So going back to my country and learning about the lives of people was really difficult, but I tried. I saw my people trying to survive, many turning to loan sharks in order to live for

the moment. I saw how the people were struggling, borrowing a little amount of money for absolutely unimaginable interest. They were struggling hard to pay it back, so they were basically stuck and couldn't move forward at all," he said.

Helping the poor

Yunus decided he would help these poor people. "Because I had some money at that time, I started lending money to the poor and I was able to help many of them. I felt satisfied and content, especially by seeing them happy, I gave them money so they could start something without too much interest. But I knew my money would eventually run out, and I would not be able to continue lending money to the poor, so I sought the help of many banks, but they laughed at me. They said how can you allow these poor people to borrow money? How can they repay, they asked. I said they need to borrow money to survive and help their families. They said they had money, but it was only available for companies and rich people, who could pay it back. I started criticizing the banks for their anti-poor policies, and made an issue out of it, so they relented and allowed the poor to borrow money but with me as their guarantor," Yunus recounted.

"If these poor people could not repay, I guaranteed to pay back from my pocket, so we signed a deal and they agreed to lend me more money. But the banks continued to deny some people and eventually suspended the program. I wanted to continue to give opportunities to the poor, so I applied for a government license for my own bank. I officially got the license in 1983, and Grameen Bank is now one of the biggest national banks in Bangladesh," he stated.

Yunus said he had a cordial meeting with HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and thanked him for hosting many Bangladeshi nationals in Kuwait.

GCC TRAFFIC WEEK AIMS AT EDUCATING DRIVERS OF SAFETY RULES' IMPORTANCE

KUWAIT: A Ministry of Interior's (Mol) senior official said Tuesday the GCC Traffic Week, due next Sunday, aimed at intensifying the education of traffic and safety rules and regulations for all drivers. Major-General Abdullah Al-Muhanna,

Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs, said the traffic week of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) would bolster coordination among the six GCC countries with the objective of improving traffic and transportation. He added in a press

statement the GCC Traffic Week, held under the motto "You Decide Your Own Fate," would contribute to safer roads and less accidents. Muhanna called on all drivers to abide by traffic safety rules for their own safety. — KUNA



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah speaks during the Kuwait Investment Forum yesterday.



Director General of KDIPA Meshaal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah speaks during the conference. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Chairman of the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Ali Al-Ghanem addresses the conference.

GOVT SUPPORTS PUBLIC, PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS: PREMIER

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah yesterday affirmed the government's support of all initiatives that will strengthen public and private sector partnerships, pointing out that the government seeks to promote partnerships between local and foreign sides through a variety of procedures and legislation.

The premier was speaking at an investment forum organized by the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) to expand investment opportunities in Kuwait and make the Kuwaiti market more attractive for foreign investments in order to revitalize the local economy and turn it into a production economy, along with creating more jobs.

Sheikh Jaber stressed that Kuwait has opened its doors to partnerships and friendships between the public and private sectors on one hand and partners in sisterly and friendly countries on the other.

Basic pillars

Director General of KDIPA Meshaal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah assured that the authority has been committed since its launch to serve the public and private sectors and attract as much investments as possible as one of the basic pillars of the development of the national economy.

He added that the Kuwaiti economy is all

about the ambition of young people in addition to the location of Kuwait as a link between the East and West. Its banking sector is also robust with a vitality that makes it able to meet all financing needs. "The Kuwait Investment Forum is a vivid domestic and international platform that will adequately shed light on these transformations. This is manifested in themes tackling economic policy priorities, improving the business environment, displaying potential investment opportunities, financing options, showing Kuwait's leading role in supporting developmental and humanitarian assistance and mapping the way forward for Kuwait to advance to an innovation-based economy underlined by sustainability, in view of its international commitments," he said.

Important achievements

Chairman of the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Ali Al-Ghanem said Kuwait has a great private sector with experienced and ambitious experts. He added that the call for investment in Kuwait is based on important achievements such as a legislative environment that treats foreign investments like local investments. He added that the sharp decline in oil prices has put heavy pressure on the state's budget.

The two-day Kuwait Investment Forum is the KDIPA's first promotional event, convened against the background of several



(From left) Kuwait Petroleum Corporation's CEO Nizar Al-Adasani, Minister of Commerce and Industry Yousef Al-Ali, Minister of Social Affairs and Labor, State Minister for Planning and Development Hind Al-Subaih and MP Faisal Al-Shaya attend the conference.

positive developments witnessed in the Kuwaiti economy that have caught the attention of investors. It demonstrates the government's resolve to attract quality local and foreign investments by creating the right investment environment, simplifying procedures, enabling a favorable legislative

framework for the encouragement and protection of investment and offering a host of incentives and exemptions, including allowing for 100 percent foreign ownership.

The forum invited ministers and high-ranking government officials, as well as local, Arab and international dignitaries,

businesspersons and investors in sectors pertaining to banking, finance, investment and industry, in addition to academics and experts from renowned regional and international organizations and representatives from the local, regional and international media.



KUWAIT: Minister of Commerce and industry Yousef Al-Ali speaks at the Smart Kuwait Conference. — Photo by Joseph Shagra

KUWAIT NEEDS REALISTIC STRATEGIES BASED ON ASPIRATIONS: MINISTER

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Minister of Commerce and industry Yousef Al-Ali yesterday said events like the Smart Kuwait Conference are part of ambitious steps governments and countries take towards improving services provided for citizens, as well as one of the most important channels of socioeconomic development. He added that various definitions and expressions have been used to define smart cities, societies, governments and countries. "Hence comes our need in Kuwait to set realistic strategies based on our aspirations and our country's needs on one hand, and taking into full consideration our society's values and the potentials provided by modern technology on the other," Ali explained after the opening ceremony, which was also attended by former Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt. Ali represented His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah at the event, which was organized by the International Turnkey Systems Group (ITS), in cooperation with NoufEXPO.

Effective role

Ali stressed that the private sector has an effective role to play in socioeconomic development. "Kuwait has always led regional areas in applying technology in government work, which started back in the 1970s," he added, noting that the conference aims at catching up and resuming the building of a "smart" Kuwait. Welcoming the presence of

Reinfeldt, Ali expressed hope of benefiting from his experience in turning Stockholm into the leading European smart city.

ITS CEO Fahd Al-Rashdan said cities were major locomotives of world economies and hence comes the importance of having smart cities. "Statistics show that 50 percent of the world's population live in cities and this ratio is expected to rise to 75 percent by 2030," he pointed out, noting that this poses several challenges and problems, such as congestions and security and energy problems that will only be solvable by smart solutions.

Smart municipality

Speaking about Kuwait's 'smart municipality', Ahmed Al-Manfouhi, Director General of Kuwait Municipality stressed that the municipality was the origin of many of the Kuwaiti ministries and that thanks to cooperation with ITS, the municipality is issuing licenses online without any human input. "Legislations have always been the main obstacles against developing databases and this is why the municipality launched the 'paperless municipality' project. We hope we will have a clear vision about it within six months," he added.

Musaed Al-Assousi, Director of the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI), said that smart cities' definitions may vary, but they all have a shared aim of improving standards of living by using modern technology.

PRIME MINISTER PRAISES KFH'S PARTICIPATION IN INVESTMENT FORUM

KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah praised Kuwait Finance House's (KFH) participation in the economic events and conferences that are meant to boost the economy and contribute in achieving the comprehensive development.

His praise came during his visit to KFH booth on the sidelines of the Kuwait Investment Forum, which kicked off under a diamond sponsorship of KFH, amidst the presence of several dignitaries, government officials, leaders of private sectors, local and international high-level speakers, and media personalities.

The forum aims at enhancing efforts towards luring value-added investments, which serves in energizing the market and boosting the national economy. It also aims at discussing the new regulations and government plans in the development and investment.

Chairman of KFH, Hamad Abdulmohsen Al-Marzouq is to moderate the Financing Investment session to be held today to 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.

Meanwhile, Group Chief Strategy Officer, Eng Fahad Khaled Al-Mukhaizeem offered the Prime Minister a memorial plaque wishing him every success in the service of the country and its people.

It is noteworthy that The Kuwait Investment Forum is held under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. It is organized by Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority in collaboration with Business and Economic Group.



KUWAIT: Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem honors HH the Prime Minister.

KUWAIT REMOVES OBSTACLES FOR GULF RAILWAY PROJECT: OMAIR

DUBAI: Kuwait has cut a long way in removing obstacles on the would-be lines of the Gulf railway project, Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs Ali Al-Omar said. The project's course in Kuwait has been identified, and will go through cultivated lands whose owners will be compensated, the minister said during a reception held by the Kuwaiti Consul General in Dubai Theyab Al-Rashidi.

Al-Omar is taking part in the Middle East Rail 2016 fair which opened yesterday. Removing the obstacles was a major condition for offering the project through the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) program, which is likely to make it easy to find a Gulf investor for the project. He said that the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport will monitor the project in Kuwait. Referring to the two-day Middle East Rail 2016, Omar said it is a chance to get acquainted with latest technologies in the field. — KUNA

INFO MINISTER PATRONIZES TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

KUWAIT: The 'Kuwait Tourism and Development Conference: Facts and Future' will be held on March 29 and 30 under the auspices of Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah.

The conference will be organized by the Leaders Group Company For Consultancy and Development in collaboration with the ministry's tourism sector, the World Trade Organization (WTO), in addition to local, regional, and international partners.

Speaking on the occasion, Leaders

Group's General Manager Nabila Al-Anjeri stressed that the conference is the result of several weeks of preparation, adding that it aims at developing tourism in Kuwait to act as a main pillar in achieving development plans, reform, sustainable development, as well as turning Kuwait into a financial and economic hub.



Leaders Group's General Manager Nabila Al-Anjeri

"The fact that the conference will be patronized by the information minister reflects its importance, especially in view of the recent international changes in oil prices and the impact this factor has on national economy," she underlined.

In Brief

NEW COLD WAVE TODAY

KUWAIT: A new cold wave, which could be the last one of this winter, is forecast in Kuwait today, astronomer Adel Al-Saadoun said yesterday. Arabs in old times had called it 'Bard Al-Ajouz' (cold of the elderly) wave, extending for seven days, he said, however he explained that it would not be severely cold. — KUNA



MINISTER PRAISES KUWAITI WOMEN'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti women have taken on many high-ranking positions in the workforce, including those in politics, health, education, Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Hind Al-Subaih emphasized yesterday. The Minister made this remark after yesterday's parliament session, as the world marked the International Women's Day. Subaih wished more advancement to Kuwaiti women in all fields of life, where they prove they are fit to bear more responsibilities on their shoulders. — KUNA



KFSD HOLDS FREE FIRE SAFETY COURSE

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Fire Services Directorate (KFSD) organizes a free training course to the public on fire safety in cooperation with the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET). Registration to the course, which takes place from March 13, 2016 to March 17, 2016 at the Ibn Al-Haitham Training Center, can be made online at www.kfsd.gov.kw, Public Relations and Media Director Colonel Khalil Al-Amir said.



Photo

of the day



KUWAIT: A low-angle shot of a tree taken at a park in Kuwait City. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

FIRST GULF CONFERENCE ON ELDERLY HEALTH CARE NEXT SUNDAY IN KUWAIT

KUWAIT: The first Gulf conference on total care for the elderly, slated for March 13-15 in Kuwait, will turn the spotlight on the rights of the elderly in receiving optimum health care under all conditions, said an official yesterday.

In the main, the conference will afford its participants to exchange expertise on goading proper authorities to legislate effective laws regarding giving the elderly the correct health care they deserve, said Dr Ibtisam Al-Huwaidi, director of health services for senior citizens at the ministry of health, in statements

at a press conference held today.

Further, the conference will address the role civil society, NGOs, public and private sectors, regional and international organizations can play in laying out strategies commiserate with those of the WHO and the United Nations to ensure administering proper health care to the elderly, said Dr Huwaidi, who is one of the conference's organizers. The conference will also, through a number of scientific lectures, give an overview of the experiences of GCC countries and Arab ones in dealing with giving

competent health care to the elderly, she said.

She commended Kuwaiti ministry of health's efforts at laying out a concrete strategy for elderly health care that will initially cover the period 2016-2020 and which is in concert with similar strategies propagated by the WHO and other international health organizations. Among highlights of the ministry's strategy is expanding the number of clinics for geriatric medicine, setting up others for the care of memory loss, establishing yet other ones for helping the elderly with controlling

their mobile functions, among other things, said Dr Huwaidi.

Other considerations will be training nursing staff on proper care for the elderly and encouraging research in geriatric medicine, she said. Already the ministry has begun issuing health care cards just for senior citizens with which they can get priority health services at all government clinics and hospitals and medical centers, she said.

Speaking at the same press conference, a top GCC official, Suad Al-Enizi, revealed that

the percentage of the elderly among GCC populations hovers between 2.5 to 3. She added that GCC countries were contemplating the establishment of a multi-pronged program to address the issue of proper caring for the elderly.

Between the years 2000 to 2050, the percentage of world elderly populations is poised to be between 11 to 22 percent, giving much urgency that all countries should steer their attention more seriously to elderly care and well-being. — KUNA

OOREDOO DIAMOND SPONSOR FOR GUST CAREER FAIR

KUWAIT: Ooredoo Kuwait, a member of the international Ooredoo Group, is participating in the Gulf University of Science and Technology 17th Career Fair as platinum sponsor. The fair was inaugurated yesterday and continues to open its doors today to receive visitors.

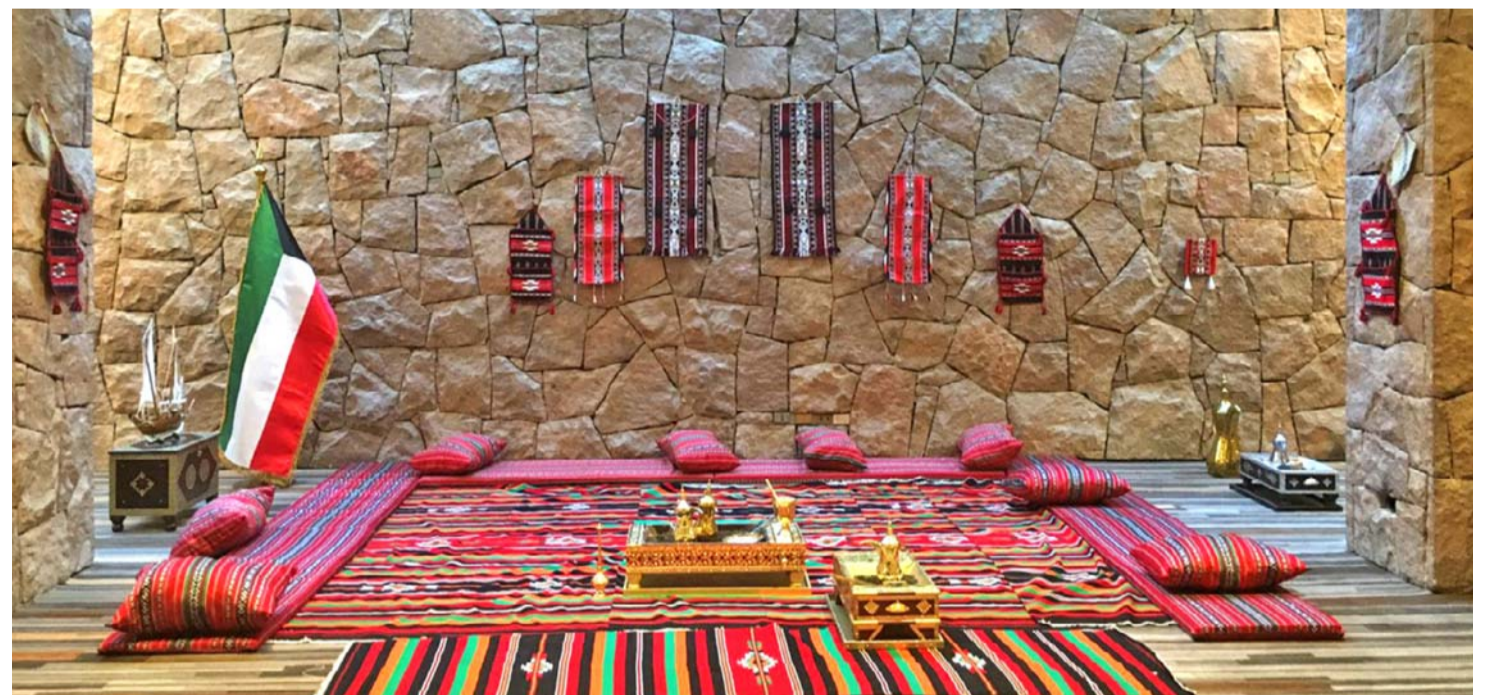
Driven by its social responsibility, Ooredoo is keen to take part in such occasions as it is always willing to support youth and help them reach their potential and shape their career paths. Ooredoo was the only telecom service provider that participated in the fair.

In a statement to the press, Ooredoo Chief of Human Resources and Administration Services said: "Youth have a major part in our corporate social responsibility program. We strongly believe in the role they play in creating a better future. We especially believe in talented Kuwaiti youth, who can be partners in our success as a telecom service provider operating in Kuwait."

Ooredoo Kuwait's Human Resources representatives will be present at the Ooredoo's booth to brief students about the benefits of working for Ooredoo and the different career growth opportunities provided by the company, as well as internship opportunities.

This is not the first time that Ooredoo has taken part in a job fair; it has successfully participated in several job fairs in the past. The company's aim is to open new horizons for the ambitious youth by giving them an opportunity to apply their educational knowledge to the professional world.

Ooredoo is known for its dynamic and fresh corporate culture where new ideas are nurtured and everyone is given a fair chance to grow and maximize their potential. Ooredoo employees are always given opportunities to develop their skills and enhance their knowledge through extensive training programs along with new challenges to develop their interests.



KUWAITI CULTURAL GALA KICKS OFF IN CHILE

SANTIAGO: A Kuwaiti cultural gala kicked off in the Chilean capital Santiago yesterday, hosted by the Kuwaiti embassy in conjunction with the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL). During the opening ceremony of the event, where a spate of international ambassadors to the South American nation were present, Kuwait's Ambassador to Chile Mohammad Al-Jdaae said that the cultural events consist of various activities aimed to display Kuwait's rich history and tradition. "Culture leaves an indelible mark on our minds and emotions, and it is truly limitless," Jdaae said.

NCCAL's Assistant Secretary General of the Culture Sector Mohammad Al-Asousi said that "the vibrant cultural festival has been organized as an attempt to enhance Kuwaiti and Chilean ties. The gala, Asousi noted, would last until March 11, and will feature a slew of activities that offer a glimpse into Kuwait's cultural lore. Moreover, a musical performance and photographic exhibitions are amongst the events planned for the gala. A historical portrait bearing Kuwait's name, drawn by famed artist Jaber Ahmad, will also be unveiled during the gala. — KUNA



KUWAITI ACTIVISTS STRESS IMPORTANCE TO INTEGRATE DISABLED

DOHA: Two Kuwaiti activists in the field of disabilities called yesterday for benefiting from successful international experiences in empowering people with disabilities to be active individuals in their societies.

They stressed on importance of overcoming difficulties and improving services provided to people with disabilities as well as including them in development projects, the activists said in statements on the sidelines of the Doha second international conference about problems of the deaf and blind (dual disability).

The deputy chairperson of Kuwait society to follow up on people with special needs, Kholud Al-Ali, said the association works to improve services provided for the handicapped, in accordance with highest levels that keep pace "with our modern era."

She stressed on importance of raising community awareness about people with disability issues and defending their cause as well as correcting misconceptions that affect their rights.

The dual disability conference comes within the Arab and Gulf efforts to integrate people with disabilities into the society in order to achieve their participation as active citizens, she said. Treasurer of the association Abeer Al-Jammaz said meanwhile that the conference will contribute to the exchange of experience with experts, academics and parents of handicapped people with disabilities on a number of emerging issues on the Arab arena and obstacles hindering their integration into the community.

The conference included a presentation about many innovative technologies to help this segment overcome communication difficulties, she said. The three-day conference that started on March 6 was organized by the Arab Union for the Blind (AUB), with participation of representatives of civil society organizations and governments in addition to a number of experts from Qatar, Arab and foreign countries and the World Federation of the Deaf and the Blind. — KUNA



A picture from the scene after the fire was put out.



Firefighters take rest after tackling the blaze.

CHILD DIES IN JAHRA HOUSE FIRE

Bay Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: A child died in a fire reported at a house in the Oyoum district of Al-Jahra yesterday. The cause of death was determined as smoke inhalation, according to initial investigations. Firemen had rushed to the scene after receiving a call about a fire that trapped 18 persons inside their home. They were able to evacuate all residents, and handed over those injured to paramedics. Some of the injured people were in a critical condition, including the child who later died. Two firemen were also injured while tackling the blaze. An investigation has been opened to determine the cause of the fire.

The Drugs Control General Department (DCGA) arrested 10 suspects, including eight Arab men, a bedoon and a citizen,

with possession of drugs. Nearly 2 kilograms of shabu (meth), one kilogram of heroin, 120 grams of hashish and 6,200 illicit tablets were confiscated. The suspects were sent to concerned authorities.

Gas leak

Police, firemen, and civil defense officers went on alert following a gas leak reported at a Fintas policlinic. The site was evacuated, and the situation was put under control. Health Ministry maintenance teams were called in to stop the leak and determine the reason behind it.

Kuwait Municipality yesterday announced destroying 1,500 kilograms of expired food seized during an unscheduled crackdown on food stores and warehouses at Industrial Shuwaikh yesterday.

MP ASHOUR LODGES GRILLING AGAINST MINISTER SUBAIH

KUWAIT: MP Salah Ashour yesterday lodged a grilling motion against Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Planning Affairs and Development Hind Al-Subaih, in line with clauses number 100 and 101 of the Kuwaiti Constitution. The grilling motion, Ashour described, consists of two items, with one dealing with alleged attempts to "privatize cooperative societies," while the other relates to "cessation of assistance to orphans."

As prescribed in clause number 100 of the Kuwaiti Constitution, "all MPs are obligated to stand before the Prime Minister and Cabinet to answer any interrogations called against them," Ashour noted. Moreover, clause number 101 states that "every minister is responsible for the works of their respective ministries, and once a minister loses Parliament's trust, a motion of distrust would be filed, which would require the minister to resign."

Parliament Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem announced that the grilling would take place in Parliament's March 15 session. In a statement to the press, Ghanem said that Subaih reserves the right to request a delay in proceedings, adding that "she also has the right to face the interrogation process during the next parliamentary session, if she so chooses."



Minister Hind Al-Subaih



MP Saleh Ashour

"If there is a request for a delay, then Parliament would vote on whether it would happen," Ghanem said. Despite a recent spike in grilling motions, Ghanem assured that "it would not interfere with Parliament's agenda, and that all pending issues would be addressed." As per clause number 135 of the National Assembly Charter, "a grilling motion

would only take place at least eight days after such motion was called."

Earlier yesterday, Subaih stressed that political probing is guaranteed by the Kuwaiti constitution, hence, it's every MP's right to practice it even if it was done against her capacity as the Minister of Social Affairs and Labor. —KUNA

MILLIONS IN ALLOWANCES PAID TO UNDESERVING PEOPLE: SUBAIH

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Planning and Development Hind Al-Subaih announced forming a special committee to investigate violations worth millions of dinars, which were detected in the social allowances sector. The violations came in the form of paying allowances to people who did not deserve them, including company owners and board members. Subaih added that the committee had detected around 650 cases earlier and it has now detected some new ones.

"Once the investigation is over,

the tally will be declared and legal measures will be taken to hold those responsible for the violations legally accountable, including ministry officials and allowance recipients," she added, explaining that 85 company owners, business associates and board members were involved in the violations, in addition to 1,127 people who had been unlawfully receiving the allowances since 2008, adding up the total sum they received to KD 2,428,142.

Subaih said that allowances were previously stopped for 1,331 people who are currently indebted by KD 1,517,692, in addition to

454 cases that had been getting allowances from both MSAL and the disabled authority.

Penalties

Municipal Council member Nayef Al-Sour strongly slammed penalties and deduction of one-third of the monthly salaries of some of its Kuwaiti employees over violations committed by a cleaning company and some expatriate employees. He also called for an immediate investigation of those who took these measures.

Social care

Ministry of Social Affairs and

Labor's (MSAL) Undersecretary Mutar Al-Mutairi said that the social care sector's efforts resulted in achieving 98 percent of its development plans for this year. Mutairi also denied evicting any of the family care tenants regardless of their age, and noted that MSAL has been always working on making them feel integrated into the society as normal citizens. Mutairi stressed that within the measures currently in progress to transfer the responsibility of kindergartens to the Ministry of Education (MoE), a joint committee had been formed that met several times pending the transfer.

13 BODIES TO GIVE REMARKS ON COMPANIES LAW CHARTER

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: A grace period that was given to 13 bodies including the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), the Investment Companies Union, the Banks Union and some auditing bodies to make their remarks on the primary draft of the commercial companies law executive charter expires by the end of this week. The authorities were told to give their remarks so that the Ministry of Commerce and Industry could review the remarks and set the final charter. The primary draft was set in accordance to changes in the Capital Market Authority and the companies law, where some articles were removed and new ones are set to be added to make it more flexible to cope with economic changes in progress since 2012.

FOUR GET DEATH FOR DRUG TRAFFICKING IN KUWAIT

KUWAIT: The Criminal Court has sentenced four people to death - three Indian men and a Sri Lankan woman - for drug trafficking. The three were caught in a case related to heroin smuggling. The court found the four, including three men from Kerala guilty of possessing and selling the narcotic in the country. A case against them was registered in April 2015 following the bust at Kuwait International Airport.

All four sentenced may appeal the verdicts within 30 days and the Appeal Court will review the sentences. Customs caught one of the smugglers at the airport bringing in the heroin. He later gave the names of the other defendants who were arrested in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh

SCHOOL SHOULD REFUND FEE INCREASES: ATHARI

KUWAIT: Ministry of Education's (MoE) Undersecretary Dr Haitham Al-Athari recently met members of the parliamentary educational affairs committee to discuss private school fees and the owners' demands to increase them, Al-Qabas reported. During the meeting, Athari stressed that the ministry has not approved any fee increases in private schools so far and that the topic was still being discussed with the committee pending a further meeting to be held next week. "The educational affairs committee will hear parents' opinions as well as that of school owners," he added, pointing out that MoE was very keen on students' best interests. He also denied approving any fee increase and that schools that have already collected higher fees would be mandated to refund them for the time being until the topic has been fully discussed with the parliamentary committee and decided upon.



In top form.

The E-Class.

Starting from **KD 17,950**

The E-Class is instantly recognisable anywhere. It looks, feels and performs like nothing else. That's the magic of the bold sedan that proudly wears the Star in the grille. True to its iconic form, every E-Class is defined as much by its sculpted physique as the visionary innovation within.

- Blind Spot Assist
- Lane Tracking Package
- Sun Protection Package
- COMAND Online (optional)
- LED Intelligent Light System
- COLLISION PREVENTION ASSIST PLUS
- Active Parking Assist with PARKTRONIC
- Dashboard in ARTICO man-made leather with topstitching

Mercedes-Benz

The best or nothing.



A. R. Albisher & Z. Alkazemi Co., Jahra Road (Highway 80), Shuwaikh Industrial Area, Tel: 2495-0000

MercedesBenzKW



GulfRun

WWW.GULFRUN.COM

CARSHOW

MARCH 10-12

MOROUJ - SAHARA



ASTON MARTIN

Lamborghini

Audi

Mercedes-Benz

Dodge

TOYOTA

ALGIDA

LEADER Station

JASHANMAL

American Tax BUREAU

HYDROTEK

MOTO CARE

baspoke

AL SABAN

SEVENFRIDAY

CREDIT ONE

@GULFRUN

Crime

Report

LARGE DRUG SMUGGLING ATTEMPT FOILED

KUWAIT: Shuwaikh customs officers foiled an attempt to smuggle four million illicit tablets to Kuwait, said security sources. Officers found the tablets hidden inside cavities in a container that arrived from an Arab country. Coordination is ongoing with the Drug Control General Department (DCGD) to arrest the suspects who tried to smuggle the drugs.

Maids burn child

A citizen accused his two domestic helpers of scalding his daughter with hot water. The man said that the two Filipina women escaped from his Adan house after committing their crime. A security source said the man told Adan area police that his two-year-old daughter sustained second degree burns, accusing the workers of pouring hot water on her. Detectives are looking for the two.

Woman beats father

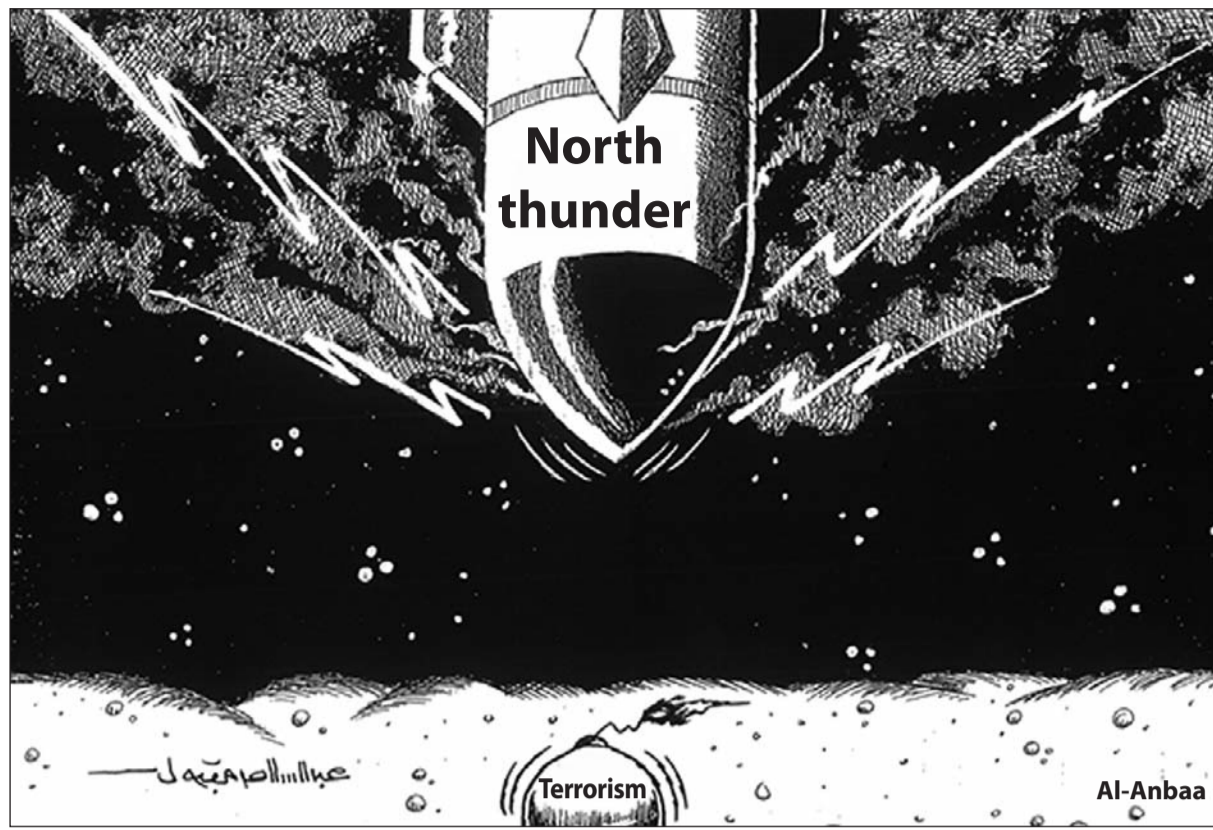
A woman beat her retired father in his Qairawan house, and was charged accordingly. The victim gave police a medical report stating that he sustained several bruises and grazes after his 27-year-old daughter beat him. Detectives were asked to arrest and bring her for further legal action.

Home robbery

A citizen reported a theft that happened at his house which is still under construction in Jaber Al-Ahmad. The thieves took the copper wires from the construction site and disappeared, he said. The citizen went to Naem police station and told them that thieves entered from the backdoor and stole the copper wires, used for electric wiring. Police are investigating. —Al-Rai

LOCAL BANKS TO FINANCE 49%, FOREIGN 51% OF CLEAN FUEL PROJECT

KUWAIT: Well-informed sources said local banks are leading a local consortium to finance the Clean Fuel Project, and will finance 49 percent of the project's budget of KD 3.4 billion, while 51 percent of the budget would be funded by a consortium of foreign banks. The sources explained that the project includes providing non-cash facilities for three phases and elaborated that the first one (Mina Abdullah refinery) would be executed by a consortium of companies at a total cost of KD 2.071 billion, the second would be executed by another consortium at a cost of KD 962 million and the third (Mina Ahmadi refinery) would be executed by a third consortium at a cost of KD 1.361 billion. —Al-Qabas



AN ABSENTMINDED NATION

Al-Anbaa

By Saleh Al-Shayeji

An Arab lives and dies dominated by a feeling of being oppressed, inferior and wronged. He has been brought up to the culture of postponed promises, postponed victories and a postponed better future. He spends his life whining and feeling sorry waiting to achieve the better future, victory, pride, prestige and status. This is how Arab generations have lived their lives through centuries and ages. Currently, as Arabs, we should not be surprised with how miserable we are, because historically, we are no exception. The situations we are experiencing nowadays are not new to Arab real life. Arabs had never been better off than today. We have always experienced division, threats, wars, evils, ignorance and bad conditions.

Do not believe stories about a bright glorious Arab past that our forefathers lived. Those are only stories invented by dreaming historians and writers who did not actually live in that perilous hard past nor experienced its atrocities. They wrote what they wrote while physically and chronically distant from those times. They wrote such stories out of misery, self-criticism and praising the past only to criticize their present and blacken it. With ideas of hope, anticipation and patience, which are known to be the key to all achieve-

ments, Arabs have always lived with an idea that victory would be achieved someday. Of all nations, they have lived their lives in search for such victory. If one asks them about the victory they are seeking, they would immediately say victory over Israel. If asked the same question before the state of Israel was established, they would say over colonization, and before that, over the Ottomans, over Abbasids before that, over Umayyads before them, over the enemies of Allah and non-believers, Christians, Jews, etc!

We are more possessed with victory than with science, work, health, construction, industry, agriculture or bringing up children preparing them for their future lives. We instead prepare them to die! Arabs do not realize that victory over misled selves and souls anticipating the achievement of promises of a better future that they expect to come out of the blue is the real true victory.

Other nations seek victory in factories, labs and fields. They have already triumphed and do not seek further triumphs in wars, battles and killings. They do not rejoice with the growing number of martyrs. Our nation will always be defeated as long as it only sees victory in blood and battlefields.

—Translated by Kuwait Times

News

in brief

Saudi Airlines suspends selling tickets to Lebanon from Kuwait

KUWAIT: Saudi Arabian Airlines asked travel agencies in Kuwait to stop issuing travel tickets to Lebanon on its fleet until further notice. The company further instructed the agencies to remove restrictions on tickets that have already been booked in order to allow passengers to ask for a refund or a reroute, Al-Qabas reported. —Al-Qabas

Cash deficit

KUWAIT: The cash deficit in the 2015/2016 budget for eleven months ending on February 29, 2016 reaches KD 5.1 billion, according to Finance Ministry statistics, which further indicate that the deficit could exceed KD 6 billion by the end of March. The statistics show that revenues between April 1, 2015 and February 29, 2016 reached KD 12.6 billion, while cash spent to state department during the same period reached KD 16.2 billion. The figures also indicate that some dues were yet to be paid, including KD 194 million to the Public Institution for Social Security and KD 140 million to the Ministry of Electricity and Water. KD 1.2 billion were put in the future generation's fund during the same period, the statistics show. —Al-Qabas

Licensed revoked

KUWAIT: The Manpower Public Authority is intensifying crackdowns against 'marginal' or illegal labor forces at fields that includes industry, agriculture and constructions. A company that is found to be in violation of the labor law will have its file closed, and all of its transactions will be suspended except for 'final termination for travel' transactions, sources said. Employers in that case would also be referred to the Ministry of Interior for investigations, and if convicted, would be banned from practicing commercial activities, forced to pay a fine for every worker he employs illegally and could also face jail time, the sources added. —Al-Anbaa

Municipal Council

KUWAIT: The parliament's public facilities committee approved a proposal to limit the number of constituencies for Municipal Council elections to 10, where two members can be elected in each constituency while elections would take place under the single-vote format. —Al-Jarida

VIVA PARTICIPATES IN GULF UNIVERSITY'S JOB FAIR

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announced its participation in Gulf University for Science and Technology's job fair from 9 to 10 March 2016.

Anas Yousef Al-Ateeqi, Chief Human Resources Officer stated: "Represented by the Human Resources Sector, VIVA's participation in this significant annual event reflects its continued commitment to support young Kuwaitis in various fields, in the frame of its CSR strategy and its human development plan. VIVA endeavors to provide young Kuwaitis with suitable job opportunities that fit their specialties while maintaining our commitment to the government's Kuwaitization as more than 67 percent of our workforce is Kuwaiti."

Ateeqi added: "VIVA pursues all social activities that help strengthen its position in the local market through supporting and training of a national workforce that represents the pillars of the nation. VIVA is also committed to invest in community initiatives that encourage young Kuwaitis to join the telecom industry and provide them with the opportunity to submit their resumes and job applications to identify talented Kuwaitis who have the potential to join VIVA's team, and learn more about the needs and requirements of the job market."

VIVA is keen to continue its ongoing socially responsible role in the community by spreading the spirit of goodness amongst Kuwaiti society. We believe at VIVA in taking a



Anas Al-Ateeqi

holistic approach to our CSR activities, one that engages our employees, and creates goodwill in our communities with a focus on helping to grow and develop the State of Kuwait.

VIVA's Corporate Social Responsibility 'CSR' activities can be reviewed on the company's website at <https://www.viva.com.kw/csr>. This offers a description of each CSR initiative that VIVA has supported, or taken on since its inception.



KUWAIT: Interior Ministry's Undersecretary Lieutenant General Suleiman Al-Fahad awarded First Lieutenant Athbi Al-Sayar and Lieutenant Hamad Al-Kheder from Salmiya Police Station for their efforts that resulted in the arrest of several lawbreakers. Assistant Undersecretary for General Security Abdulfattah Al-Ali attended the ceremony.

QUAKER
كويكر
1877

- بدون ألوان اصطناعية
- بدون إضافة غلوتومات أحادي الصوديوم
- بدون مضافات حافظة اصطناعية

IT'S HERE
The SOUP you've always wanted

شوربة الدجاج بالشعيرية مع شوفان
Chicken Noodle with oats

شوربة الدجاج مع الشوفان
Cream of Chicken with oats

شوربة الخضار بالكمون مع الشوفان
Vegetable Cumin with oats

شوربة الحنظل مع الشوفان
Creamy Mushroom with oats

Find some great valuable recipes on our social media accounts at [QUAKER_KW](#) [QUAKERARABIA](#)

Altco W.L.L
General Trading and Contracting

ص.ب. 33987 صفاة. ١٣٠ - هاتف: 22475115 - 22474994 - 22498090 فاكس: 22478118
P.O.Box: 23987 Safat: 13100 Kuwait Tel: 22475115 - 22474994 - 22498090 Fax: 22478118



Bangladesh's court upholds Islamist tycoon's sentence

AMERICAN SAYS HE WILL NEVER LEAVE DAMASCUS

IRAN CONDUCTS MISSILE TESTS DEFYING SANCTIONS

US REVIEWING INCIDENT, FORMULATING RESPONSE

TEHRAN: Iran conducted multiple ballistic missile tests yesterday in what it said was a display of "deterrent power," defying US sanctions imposed earlier this year aimed at disrupting its missile program.

State media announced that short-, medium- and long-range precision guided missiles were fired from several sites to show the country's "all-out readiness to confront threats" against its territorial integrity. Pictures of the launches were broadcast and reports said the armaments used had ranges of 300 kilometers, 500 km, 800 km and 2,000 km. The United States hit Iran with fresh sanctions on its missile program in January, 24 hours after separate sanctions related to Tehran's nuclear activities had been lifted under a landmark deal with world powers. The latest tests, during an exercise named "The Power of Velayat", a reference to the religious doctrine of the Islamic republic's leadership, were undertaken by the Revolutionary Guards and its Aerospace wing.

No impact on plans

Sepah News, the Guards' official media service, carried a statement confirming the tests, which come less than two weeks after elections in Iran delivered gains to politicians aligned with Hassan Rouhani, the country's moderate president. The Revolutionary Guards report to Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, not Rouhani, and their influence dwarfs that of the army and other armed forces.

Ballistic missile tests have been seen as a means for Iran's military to demonstrate that the nuclear deal will have no impact on its plans, which it says are for domestic defense

only. Major General Ali Jafari, the Guards' top commander, and Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh, spoke about the tests on television, with the latter downplaying the effect of US efforts to disrupt its activities.

"Our main enemies, the Americans, who mutter about plans, have activated new missile sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran and are seeking to weaken the country's missile capability," Hajizadeh said. "The Guards and other armed forces are defenders of the revolution and the country will not pay a toll to anyone... and will stand against their excessive demands." Iran's ballistic missile program has been contentious since the nuclear deal with the United States and five other powers was struck in Vienna on July 14 last year.

On October 11, Tehran conducted the first of two ballistic missile tests which angered Washington. State television weeks later aired unprecedented footage of underground missile storage bunkers. A UN panel said in December that the tests breached previous resolutions aimed at stopping Tehran from developing missiles capable of carrying a nuclear warhead.

Iran has always denied seeking an atomic weapon and argues that its missiles would never be designed to, nor ever carry, the bomb. The nuclear deal was heralded by moderates such as Rouhani, who staked his reputation on the negotiations, but hardliners in Tehran said it damaged national interests.

'Destabilizing activities'

Announcing the new missile sanctions on January 17, one day after the nuclear deal was implemented, US President Barack

Obama said "profound differences" with Tehran remained over its "destabilizing activities". Five Iranians and a network of companies based in the United Arab Emirates and China were added to an American blacklist.

The White House had first threatened to impose the measures in December but withdrew them after Rouhani hit out at both their timing and intent. Missiles were not part of the nuclear agreement. Asked before the missile sanctions were announced how Iran would react to fresh measures against it, Rouhani said: "Any action will be met by a reaction." Those measures came after four Iranian-Americans, including Washington Post reporter Jason Rezaian, left Tehran following their release in a prisoner swap with the United States. The exchange took place on the same day the nuclear deal came into force.

The United States is closely following reports that Iran has conducted ballistic missile tests and if they are confirmed will seek an "appropriate response" at the UN Security Council, a US official said yesterday. The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the reported ballistic missile tests would not be considered a violation of the international nuclear deal with Iran but there were "strong indications" the test would be inconsistent with a UN Security Council resolution.

"If confirmed, we intend to raise the matter in the UN Security Council," the official said. "We will also encourage a serious review of the incident and press for an appropriate response." "This development underscores why we continue to work closely with partners around the world to slow and degrade Iran's missile program," the official said. — Agencies



IRAN, ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF

VIENNA: Iran's Ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA, Reza Najafi waits for the start of the IAEA board of governors meeting at the International Center. — AP

ALWAYS A BETTER WAY

TOYOTA

THE NEW AVANZA A SHOWCASE OF YOUR SUCCESS

Check out the new 2016 Avanza. An all new exterior that is stylish and trendy, it's also got a bigger interior, making it even more comfortable and practical. What's better still is the fact that it's as reliable and economical as ever. It's the perfect family vehicle to showcase your progression in life

- Dual VVT-i 1.5L engine – 4 cylinders – 103 hp
- Adjustable Electronic Power Steering With Audio Control Switch
- Sound System with CD player + AUX + USB + 6 Speakers
- Comfortable up to 7 passengers with foldable seats
- Multiple storage areas

LIVE EVERY MILE

- 5 Years Warranty Unlimited Mileage
- 3rd Party Insurance
- 2 Years Service / 30,000km*
- Car Registration

* Service up to 30,000 KM is performed based on manufacturer's recommendation.

Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer & Sons Est. Co. W.L.L.
ONE OF THE AL-SAYER GROUP HOLDING COMPANIES.

5 YEARS
MUSAADA
Kawala Assurance

2016

Tel: 1803803
toyota.com.kw
toyotakw

AL-RAI: 4th Ring Road - AL AHMADI: Eastern Ahmadi - AL JAHRA: Industrial Area - SHUWAIKH: Al Tilal Showroom FLEET SALES - AL-RAI: Ext. 2102/3/4/6/9

EU AND TURKEY LEADERS SEEKING 'GAME-CHANGING' MIGRANT PLAN

ISTANBUL: EU and Turkish leaders yesterday sought to turn into a lasting accord a plan on easing Europe's migrant crisis hailed as a game-changer by Ankara and Brussels but swiftly criticized by the UN's refugee chief.

The day after agreeing the tentative plan following late night talks in Brussels, Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu was to discuss how it could work in a crucial meeting with his Greek counterpart Alexis Tsipras. The EU is wooing Turkey used by over one million migrants in the last year as a springboard for reaching the bloc as the key player in helping ease Europe's worst migrant crisis since World War II. The talks in Brussels were expected to be tough but Davutoglu upped the ante by bringing additional Turkish demands to the table—such as accelerated visa liberalization—as well as offering more than EU diplomats expected. But after hours of talks, EU president Donald Tusk described the outcome as a "breakthrough" and said he would now work on the legal details to reach a final deal at a European summit in Brussels on March 17-18.

A key pillar of the mooted deal was the unexpected offer by Ankara to take back every irregular migrant that crosses from Turkey to the islands of EU member

Greece. In return, the EU would then resettle one Syrian living in Turkey on its territory for every Syrian migrant it takes back from Greece.

The hope is that the plan will eliminate incentives for migrants to come to Greece by boat, but it ran into swift opposition from the head of the UN refugee agency Filippo Grandi. "I'm deeply concerned about any arrangement that would involve the blanket return of anyone from one country to another without spelling out the refugee protection safeguards under international law," he told the European Parliament. Rights group Amnesty International said EU and Turkish leaders had "sunk to a new low" and ridiculed the notion that Turkey was a "safe country" to which migrants could return. Iverna McGowan, the head of Amnesty's European Institutions Office, said "the idea of bartering refugees" was "dangerously dehumanizing."

'Historic meeting'

Davutoglu was due to meet Tsipras in the Aegean port city of Izmir, with discussions expected to focus on Turkey taking back migrants who crossed from its shores to Greece. "We will have a historic meeting where we will have a decision to update

our readmission agreement so Turkey can take in all migrants who do not have a right to international protection," Tsipras said. Turkey and Greece signed a protocol over the readmission of migrants in 2002 but it has rarely been activated and its use could transform the refugee crisis. Tsipras said that Turkey had come to the table at the summit with "tempting proposals that surprised many people."

German Chancellor Angela Merkel—who has been the strongest proponent of a deal with Turkey—gave cautious support. "It is a breakthrough if it becomes reality," she told reporters. Davutoglu said the one-for-one Syrian refugee swap deal was "game-changing" and denied that Turkey was "demanding" money. As well as that offer, Davutoglu surprised his counterparts by asking for an extra three billion euros (\$3.3 billion) in aid and visa-free travel for Turks to the bloc by June. European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker also called the plan a "real game changer," insisting that it was "legally feasible."

'EU split'

Turkey is the main launching point migrants making the dangerous crossing over the Aegean Sea to the Greek islands. It hosts 2.7 million refugees from the five-



KUCUKKUYU: Women and children sit on a Turkish Coast guard boat near the village of Kucukkuyu, in western Turkey yesterday after Turkish Coast guard arrested a group of migrants and refugees as they tried to reach the Greek island of Lesbos. — AFP

year civil war in neighboring Syria, more than any other country.

For Turkey, perhaps the biggest gain was the EU's agreement to bring forward to June visa-free travel to the EU's Schengen passport-free area for Turkey's

75 million people, provided that Ankara honors its promises. Davutoglu further pushed for the opening of five more "chapters" in Turkey's long-drawn out EU accession process—so far it has only completed one out of more than 30. — AFP



DAMASCUS: In this picture taken Thursday, Feb 25, 2016, Thomas Webber gives an English lesson to students at the Lycée Français Charles de Gaulle school. — AP

AFTER DECADES LIVING IN DAMASCUS, AMERICAN SAYS HE WILL NEVER LEAVE

'THEY'RE GOING TO HAVE TO CARRY ME OUT'

DAMASCUS: Thomas Webber stoops to check his car for bombs every morning before heading out, but the 71-year-old American has no plans to leave Damascus, a city he has called home for more than four decades. He is perhaps the last American not of Syrian origin living in the capital, after the United States closed its embassy and urged citizens to leave the country in 2012. The Czech Embassy, which has handled US interests since then, told him to be careful.

"Foreigners were being kidnapped at the time," Webber says of the chaotic period four years ago. "I guess I don't look like a Syrian. I'm a little bit taller than most." At 6 feet 4 inches, he is a lot taller than most, and his silver hair and bespoke suits—complete with pocket squares—also make him stand out. But the policemen at nearby checkpoints wave him on with a smile, and he stands by his decision to stay.

"The Syrian people are just the most beautiful people in the world," he says. "There's no way I'm going to leave this country. They're going to have to

carry me out." He said that when the Czech Embassy contacted him, urging him to leave, it told him he was the last American not of Syrian origin still living in Damascus. An official at the Czech embassy in Damascus contacted by The Associated Press said he could not confirm whether that was the case.

Chaotic early months

Webber was born and raised in Orchard Park, New York, a suburb of Buffalo. His father was a German railway master and his mother was a Polish nurse. He flunked out of dental school, skipped the Vietnam draft due to a technical error, and was living in California when he was offered a job teaching science at Damascus Community School, a private American academy. "I said OK, and then headed to the public library and got out an atlas," he recalls.

He arrived in Damascus in 1975, and went on to convert to Islam and marry a Syrian woman. Except for a brief stint teaching in Iran, he has lived in Syria ever since. Today he has three grown children, 11

grandchildren and a great grandchild living in various countries. He visits them often, but always comes home to Damascus.

Syria has been hostile to Israel and to US policies in the region for as long as Webber has been there, but thousands of Americans and other Westerners, including diplomats, teachers, businesspeople and clergy members, called it home. And the country was a relatively safe destination for American tourists, students and other visitors. That began to change in 2011, after Syrians rose up with mostly peaceful protests demanding political change. President Bashar Assad responded with a brutal crackdown, an insurgency erupted, and soon the country was in the grip of a full-blown civil war that has now killed more than 250,000 people.

In the chaotic early months of the conflict foreigners fled, fearing kidnappings and bombings. The government has maintained a tight grip on the capital, with security checkpoints at almost every intersection, but insurgents have lobbed mortar rounds into the city center from suburbs under their control. "One hit about 3 meters in front of our door," Webber said calmly. "Wiped out seven cars."

He and his wife began taking "strong precautionary measures," he said. "When I went out by myself I told her where I was going, and same with her. When I'm driving, I am very observant of cars around me. We started doing a lot more things together, which is good for our relationship," he added cheerfully.

'It's part of my heart'

The security situation in the capital has improved since then, and over the past week a US and Russian-brokered cease-fire has brought about the first major lull in the fighting. On a recent day, Webber walked up the stone steps of the botanical garden café in the Old City, greeted the waiter and took a table on the rooftop, which offers a panoramic view of the old city. Nestled between the Barada River and the entrance to the famed Umayyad Mosque, the garden offers birdsong and quiet tranquility in the heart of a busy city, and seems a world apart from the war.

Webber recently wrote about it on TripAdvisor, where he is a level 6 contributor. He has written more than 300 reviews on the site, trumpeting Syria's famed restaurants and attractions. "I have the choice of any country, including America, and I choose to stay here," he says. "It's part of my heart now."

Many of his friends have left, and a landscaping business he founded is suffering. But the exodus of qualified teachers made it easy to get a part-time job in the English department of a local high school. Several times a week, Webber shares his love of Charles Dickens with teenagers from the French-speaking Lycée Charles de Gaulle. "I feel 45 years old again after a good day of teaching," he said.

Most Damascenes place little stock in the cease-fire, and fear the shelling may soon resume. But Webber—ever the optimist—thinks the peace will hold, and after spending four decades immersed in Arab culture, he has taken on its belief in divine providence. "My wife agrees with me on this—when it's your time, it's your time. I could leave school and slip on a banana peel and die," he said, folding his arms. "It's God's will." — AP

BAHRAIN SHIITE CLERICS DEMAND EQUAL RIGHTS

DUBAI: Dozens of Shiite clerics called yesterday for equality in Sunni-ruled Bahrain, also insisting that there had never been a call for sectarianism by their majority community in the Gulf kingdom. A month-long Shiite-led uprising rocked the small state in February 2011, taking its cue from Arab Spring protests and calling for political reforms.

But authorities quelled the protests, backed by Saudi-led troops from Gulf countries that accuse Shiite-dominated Iran of meddling in Bahraini affairs. "There was never, and there is not today, a demand by the people or the ulama (clerics) for a sectarian state... let alone a one-sect state," the 39 Shiite clerics said in a statement.

"The people have always called for citizenship equality... without any discrimination based on ethnicity, color, religion or sect," they said. The statement said the people have the right to demand a ruling system "based on a constitution that

does not sideline the will of the people". It also called for the right to have "free elections" in which voters would elect a "parliament with full powers, not controlled by other authorities, and have a say in choosing the government".

Led by Sheikh Isa Qassim, the spiritual leader of the main opposition Al-Wafaq movement, the clerics also urged protection for the freedom to practice religious rites. "This is a right no believers of any faith can abandon," they said. Sheikh Ali Salman, the Al-Wafaq secretary general, was given a four-year jail sentence last June for inciting disobedience.

Tiny but strategic Bahrain, which connected to regional Sunni powerhouse Saudi Arabia by a causeway, lies across the Gulf from Shiite Iran and is home to the US Fifth Fleet. Despite the crackdown on the 2011 uprising, protesters continue to clash frequently with police in Shiite villages outside the capital Manama. — AFP

US STRIKE KILLS AT LEAST 150 SHEBAB FIGHTERS IN SOMALIA

WASHINGTON: An American air strike on a Shebab training camp in Somalia killed more than 150 fighters planning an imminent attack on forces from the United States and its regional allies, the Pentagon said Monday. While the US military regularly conducts operations targeting the Al-Qaeda-linked fighters in Somalia, Saturday's raid had a greater toll than all previous such US strikes combined.

The raids, which began in 2003, had killed between 113 and 136 militants prior to the latest operation, according to the New America foundation. Captain Jeff Davis, a Pentagon spokesman, said the strike on Camp Raso killed fighters as they were completing "training for a large-scale attack." Warplanes and unmanned drones were used in the strike, about 120 miles north of Mogadishu. "We know they were going to be departing the camp and they posed an imminent threat to US and (African Union) forces," Davis said, noting that as many as 200 fighters had been using the camp. The US military has a small and secretive presence in Somalia, with a defense official estimating the current number of American troops in the country on an advise-and-assist mission at 150.

After a relative calm in the Somali capital, the Shebab have ramped up attacks in recent months, taking advantage of the apathy of the African Union's AMISOM mission and the weakness of Somalia's central government. Davis said the group had neared the completion of specialist training to conduct "offensive operations," declining to provide further details on the assault the fighters were allegedly planning.

"Their removal will degrade al-Shebab's ability to meet the group's objectives in Somalia, which includes recruiting new members, establishing bases and planning attacks on US and AMISOM forces there," he said. The training camp had been under surveillance for some time ahead of the strike. "There was a sense that the operational phase was about to happen," Davis said. Pentagon press secretary Peter Cook said the strike was carried out in "self defense,"

but he did not provide any detail on the threat the fighters may have posed.

Attacks on the rise

Shebab fighters have claimed responsibility for a string of recent attacks, including a twin bombing at a busy restaurant in the Somali city of Baidoa last month. Also Monday, six people were wounded when a laptop bomb exploded at an airport in Somalia, police said, the second such attack in recent weeks targeting passenger aircraft.

The bomb exploded at a checkpoint in the small central town of Beledweyne, some 200 miles (325 kilometers) north of the capital Mogadishu, where last month Shebab insurgents claimed responsibility for a bomb attack which ripped a hole in a passenger plane shortly after takeoff. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the latest blast, which took place at a checking area where security screening is carried out before cargo and bags are loaded onto planes.

On January 15, Shebab fighters overran a military outpost in El-Adde, southern Somalia, manned by up to 200 Kenyan soldiers deployed as part of the African Union peace-enforcement mission, AMISOM. Kenya has refused to say how many of its soldiers were killed in the attack. Shebab fighters are targeting AMISOM because in the absence of a functioning national army. The 22,000-strong force is the only protector of the internationally backed government the jihadists are committed to overthrowing.

President Barack Obama's administration promised to publish in the coming weeks a casualty count from the air raids it has conducted since he took office in 2009. The toll is due to list both combatants and civilians the US believes were killed. Critics have condemned the lack of transparency on these raids, often taking place in unstable countries inhospitable to US forces like Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen, where the United States is not officially at war. — AFP



MOGADISHU: In this Thursday, Feb 17, 2011 file photo, Al-Shebab fighters march with their weapons during military exercises. — AP

FRANCE STILL STRUGGLES WITH VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

PARIS: A radio campaign detailing harrowing experiences and a call from President Francois Hollande to "face up to harassment" show that France still has much to do to tackle the widespread denial of violence against women. In one of the radio spots that began airing at the weekend, a woman identified as Anna describes how her husband Louis came into the bathroom as she was preparing to go to bed.

"He forced himself on me, he raped me. It was the start of a nightmare for me. I was too afraid to divorce, so I said nothing. But keeping silent for 30 years—no-one should have to go through that." The radio campaign has been organized by the Feminist Collective Against Rape, who are hoping victims who feel ashamed—or somehow to blame for their own abuse—can be encouraged to speak out.

The group believes that in France more than 86,000 women a year are victims of rape or attempted rape, but only 13 percent complain to police and just one percent of those complaints leads to a conviction. "Making people feel at ease with expressing themselves is the first step," said Marie-France Casalis, one of the Collective's leaders. But due to the disparity between the number of suspected offences and the number that go punished, the group is calling for each complaint to be systematically investigated.

It also wants sex attacks to be classed as a crime and not merely an offence, which under French law carries lighter penalties. In France, a rape—defined as "any act of sexual penetration, regardless of its nature" that is committed "by violence, constraint, threat or surprise"—is a crime punishable by up to 15 years in prison. That can rise to 20 years if there are aggravating circumstances, such as rape by a partner, or the rape of a victim who is pregnant or suffering from an illness.

A study on the perception of rape in France, published last week by "Memoire traumatique et victimologie," a group that researches the psychological effects of violence, showed that worrying stereotypes persist. For example, 24 percent of French people believe a forced act of oral sex is a sexual assault and not rape. Two out of five people believe the responsibility of the rapist is lessened if the victim is "seductive." Another finding that provoked particular concern was that a third of people aged 18 to 24 believe that "women can get pleasure from being forced during sexual intercourse."

'Sexist myth'

"The rule of silence, impunity and an absence of recognition, as well as the abandoning of victims of sexual violence, still dominate," said Muriel Salmons, the head of the group that carried out the research. To mark International Women's Day yesterday, President Hollande has taken to the pages of a women's magazine for the first time in his four years in power to admit that harassment of women is "scandalously trivialized" by French society. He told Elle that verbal or physical harassment of women was a "mass phenomenon which must be faced up to because it attacks the very principles of living with others." But in France really a country where "the sexist myth of a naturally violent sexual masculinity" persists, as the study on the perception of rape darkly concluded?

Francois de Singly, a sociologist, said: "Society puts on a pedestal the notion of virility, which contains a logic of the sort of violence you find in war, in competition and in sexuality. And no-one dares say that this virility should be condemned." He wants a rethink in the way boys are educated in France because he believes that historically they have been brought up to believe that "force is legitimate". — AFP

CANADA PM POISED FOR FIRST OFFICIAL US VISIT

OTTAWA: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will bring panache and progressivism on his first official visit to Washington, where he and his wife will be guests of honor at a White House state dinner tomorrow.

"There's a buzz in Washington," said Matt Browne, a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress think tank in the US capital. "People are really very excited to be around him, speaking with him and learning more about his vision." Trudeau will be the first Canadian leader to be feted in Washington in almost two decades.

Over the coming days there will be cocktail parties, toasts with champagne, music and celebrities, a wreath-laying at Arlington Cemetery, a Q&A with students, speeches, and more. As well, the trip presents an opportunity to reset the Canada-US relationship strained under previous administrations.

"It will be refreshing to have some inspirational and issues-based politics rather than bickering," said Browne, contrasting Trudeau's push for diversity, inclusiveness and a progressive economic agenda with recent US presidential debates in which Donald Trump refuted disparaging accusations about his "small hands" and genitals.

"(Railing) against intolerance and politics of fear and division and ideas such as the need for the state to invest in infrastructure and job creation, it's all part of a new progressive agenda that Trudeau is leading, and there's a lot of interest in his vision," said Browne. But don't expect the Canadian prime minister to hog the spotlight. "There's a keen interest in Sophie too," he observed, referring to Trudeau's wife, the television host Sophie Gregoire.

Trudeau, 44, and Gregoire, 40, were featured on the cover of Vogue magazine's December issue, while The New York Times and The Washington Post recently published flattering

portraits of the prime minister. "Clearly the Trudeaus are a glamour couple, perhaps like the Kennedys, and that adds to the mystique and the buzz around town," Browne said.

'Pay attention'

The Trudeaus will be officially welcomed by US President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle at a ceremony on the White House South Lawn tomorrow morning, followed by a luncheon hosted by Secretary of State John Kerry and finally the big event—a state dinner that evening (followed by an after party at a swank hotel).

Between courses, Trudeau and Obama are expected to firm up new bilateral agreements on trade and the environment, which are to be announced during the visit. Ahead of the trip, Canadian public safety and environment ministers have been talking up proposals for tighter fuel emissions standards, promoting greater use of electric cars, regulating upstream oil and gas emissions, sharing border exit and entry records, and expanding US customs preclearance at more Canadian airports.

Following the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States, travel across the world's longest border has been bogged down by security measures. According to government figures, the number of cars and truck crossings plunged from 97 million in 2000 to 65 million in 2014. But far more than that, the 120-seat state dinner is a chance to schmooze with shakers and movers.

"It's not just fun," Canadian Senator Art Eggleton, who attended a 1997 state dinner at the White House as trade minister with then prime minister Jean Chretien said. "It's an opportunity to get to know each other and build relationships," he said. "The United States is our closest ally and neighbor and by far our biggest trading partner so building relationships is very important." — AFP



CONCORD: Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump encourages supporters to pledge their votes at a campaign rally. — AFP

MICHIGAN PRIMARY WILL TEST TRUMP'S SUPPORT WITH WHITE, WORKING CLASS

TRUMP DEFENDS NAZI-LIKE SALUTE AT RALLY

LANSING: Front-runner Donald Trump's staying power with white, working-class voters is tested in Michigan, the first industrial state primary in the four-man race for the Republican nominating contest. The brash New York billionaire has appealed to those voters by opposing international trade deals and supporting a wall along the US-Mexico border to keep out immigrants who are seen as competitors for jobs in the industrial economy.

With an eye on the November general election, Trump contends he can put Midwestern, Democratic-leaning industrial states such as Michigan and Wisconsin in play for Republicans. The Republican party is in near-civil war after Trump came from nowhere last summer but now holds first place over ultra-conservative Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, one-time tea-party favorite and Florida Sen Marco Rubio and the more moderate Ohio Gov John Kasich.

Trump leads with 384 delegates, followed by Cruz with 300, Rubio with 151 and Kasich with 37. Winning the Republican nomination requires 1,237 delegates. Trump yesterday defended a gesture he makes at his rallies in which he raises his right hand in a salute that has been compared by some to the Nazi salute.

Speaking to NBC, Trump called the accusations "ridiculous" and said his supporters call on him to

make a gesture as if he's swearing in for the presidency. "I didn't know it was a problem," Trump said. "Sometimes we'll do it for fun." Mississippi, Idaho and Hawaii are also holding Republican contests. Democrats Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders face off in Michigan and Mississippi.

High-stakes primaries

Slotted between last week's high-profile Super Tuesday contests and high-stakes primaries next week in Florida and Ohio, the votes are unlikely to dramatically reshape either party's primaries. But 150 Republican and 179 Democratic delegates to the parties' national nominating conventions are still at stake.

Unless Kasich and Rubio can win in their home states next week, the Republican primary campaign likely becomes a two-person race between Trump and Cruz, who has publicly criticized party leaders. After winning six states, Cruz is arguing he's the only candidate standing between Trump and the Republican nomination.

Cruz on Monday said the current vacancy on the Supreme Court means Republicans can't take a chance on Trump, who is frequently labeled as a closet liberal. "He's been supporting left-wing politicians for 40 years," Cruz said. More mainstream Republicans have cast both Trump and Cruz

as unelectable in a November contest. But they're quickly running out of options to stop their momentum and are increasingly considering long-shot ideas such as a contested convention or a yet-to-be-determined third-party candidate.

Clinton, meanwhile, appears to be on a steady path to the Democratic nomination. The former secretary of state and first lady has steadily grown her lead over Sanders, who has struggled to broaden his appeal beyond a loyal following of younger voters and liberals. Clinton's surge led former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg to announce Monday that he will not run for president as an independent candidate, which would have shaken this year's already extraordinarily unpredictable presidential campaign.

Michigan's results will offer clues about whether Sanders is making any progress in the overwhelming support that Clinton has enjoyed from black voters. Trying to make a stand in Michigan, Sanders has accused Clinton of being disingenuous when she said he opposed the auto bailout that rescued carmakers General Motors and Chrysler during the Great Recession. The 2008-2009 bailout by presidents George W Bush and Barack Obama remains popular in Michigan, the home of the US auto industry, and has been credited with preserving the Midwest's manufacturing base. — AP



TORONTO: Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (left) answers questions from The Huffington Post's global editorial during a global town hall hosted by The Huffington Post Canada. — AP



RENAULT
Passion for life

New Renault DUSTER 2016

Rediscover the joy of driving



- 16" Alloy Wheels
- Daytime Running Lights
- Cruise Control and Speed Limiter
- New Front Chromed Grille And Headlamps

The joy of driving Starts From

3,800

KD **Get 200KD** GIFT VOUCHER

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR QUOTATION, VISIT OUR RENAULT STORE AT AL-RAI OR WWW.RENAULT-ME.COM

* Terms and conditions apply.




1 804 888
Customer Care Center

شركة عبد المحسن عبد العزيز البابتين

Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Co. W.L.L.



FIVE YEARS ON, JAPAN TSUNAMI SCARS STILL A GAPING WOUND

TOMIOKA: The eye in the sky tells the story: satellite imagery from Japan's tsunami-ravaged Pacific coast shows the catastrophic aftermath of vibrant communities destroyed five years ago and their struggle to recover even now.

Walls of sea water inundated a wide swath of the country's northeast on March 11, 2011 after a magnitude 9.0 earthquake upended the ocean floor. They also triggered reactor meltdowns at the Fukushima Daiichi power plant, in the worst nuclear disaster since Chernobyl in 1986, spreading radioactive contamination over a wide area. While cities and towns farther north escaped the worst of the nuclear fallout, their landscapes were among the most devastated, and, as Japan readies to mark the fifth anniversary of the disaster on Friday, many are still barely recovering. The tsunami destroyed buildings, swept entire homes out to sea and hurled seagoing vessels of iron and steel onto land as if they were toys thrown about by children.

About 16,000 people are known to have died and some 2,600 people are missing, presumed dead. Satellite pictures of the city of Miyako taken on March 13, 2011 and released by Google as part of a digital archive, reveal wide tracts of land covered in brown muck. Another taken late last month shows the landscape still stained by the same color, but other areas where efforts to rebuild

have borne fruit.

Two days after the tsunami the Hachiman River flowed through Minamisoma, a city smothered in a mess of mossy green and chalky white-colors dumped when the ocean rolled ashore. An image taken in November last year reveals a cityscape mostly cleared, though still dusty brown and awaiting redevelopment. In Kesenuuma, the huge red-hulled ship that the ocean dumped ashore and which for many became a symbol of the power of the tsunami has gone, revealing again the green hills of the town.

'Lost hope'

But the visible remnants of the disaster tell only part of the story of misery wrought by nature's fury. In the seaside hamlet of Tomioka, six kilometers from the shuttered nuclear plant at Fukushima, unseeable-through-measurable-radiation haunts the land. Tomioka is still dotted with the carcasses of destroyed homes and wrecked vehicles, the clean-up slowed by the tiny, but dangerous atomic particles that infest the earth. "Many from my town have lost hope of returning," said Yuji Takahashi, 72, who used to live in the community where citizens gathered under cherry blossoms in spring and held a fire festival in summer to pray for a good harvest.

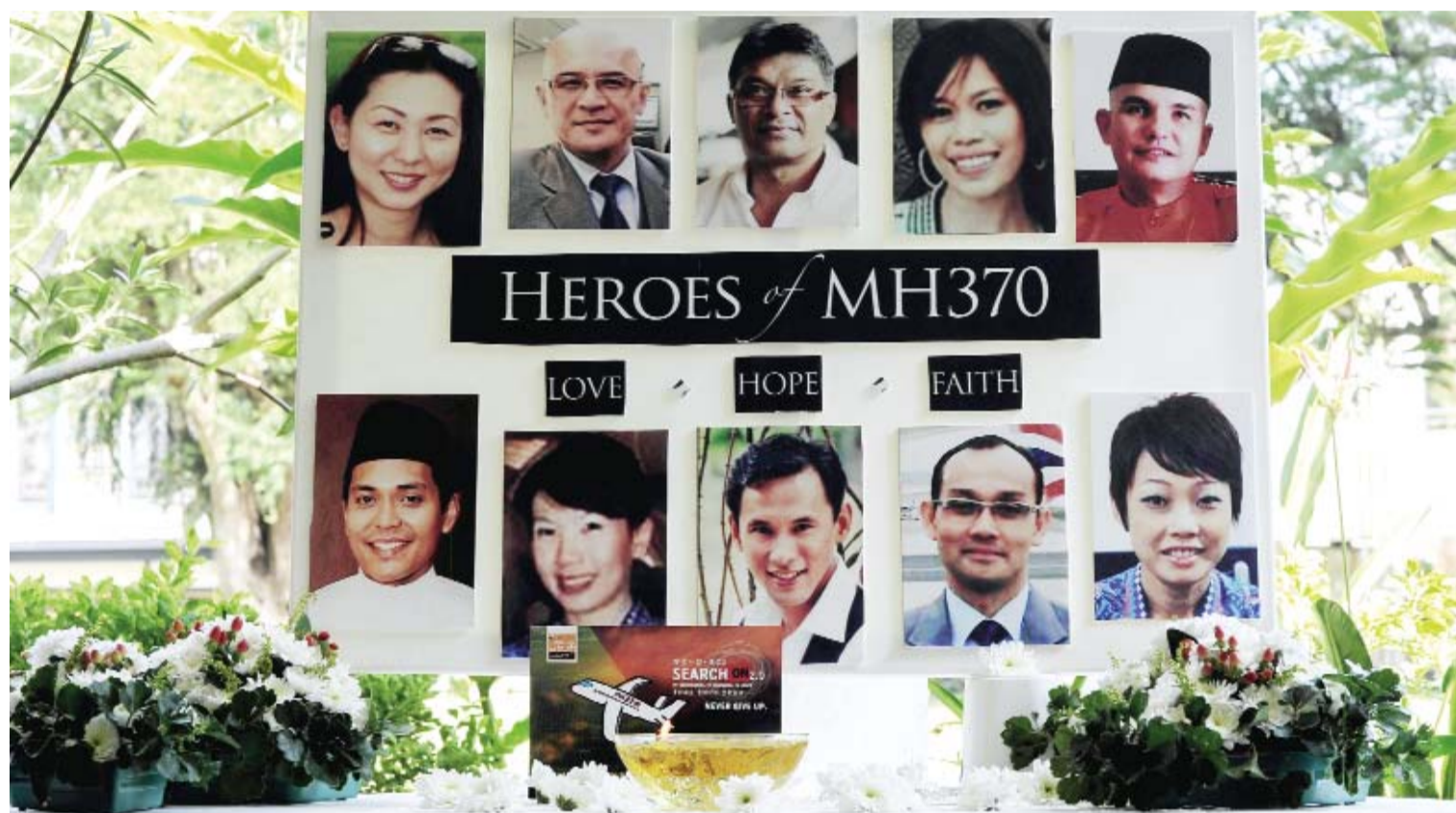
Trucks and construction vehicles roar along a road



FUKUSHIMA: This photo taken on March 12, 2011 shows people looking at the damaged village after being hit by a tsunami in Minamisoma. — AFP

where a digital panel shows radiation readings, while cranes haul big black plastic bags full of contaminated waste. The situation is better in Minamisoma, where lower radiation levels have allowed evacuated residents to

return. Five years ago the powerful waves of the tsunami ripped off roofs and tore homes from their foundations, leaving a landscape reminiscent of Japan's bombed out ruins at the end of World War II. — AFP



PETALING JAYA: A poster showing cabin crew from missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 is displayed during a prayer at a school. — AFP

MH370 FAMILIES' PAINFUL CHOICE: DEMAND ANSWERS OR MOVE ON?

DISAPPEARANCE REMAINS A MYSTERY TWO YEARS ON

BEIJING: Nearly every day, the retired factory worker goes to the airline office, riding a series of buses across Beijing to hand-deliver a letter. And nearly every day, the letter says the same thing: "Tell us the truth, and get our loved ones back to us."

Once she hands over the letter, Dai Shuqin gets back on the bus and goes home, back to a small apartment where boxes hold copies of hundreds of letters she has delivered over the past two years, all begging for news on her sister and four other relatives who vanished when Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 disappeared on March 8, 2014. There were 239 people on board. Most of the passengers on the plane, which was en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing, were Chinese. So across China, dozens of families are still wrestling with how - or if - to accept that their relatives are dead. Investigators believe the Boeing 777 crashed in a remote stretch of the southern Indian Ocean, killing everyone on board after flying far off course and running out of fuel. But they have only theories to explain exactly what happened, or why. Only one confirmed piece of plane wreckage has been found, a battered, rowboat-sized wing part that washed up on an Indian Ocean island about eight months ago. What can you do when you don't know what happened to people you loved?

'People say we are nuts'

Some of the grieving families have filed lawsuits,

including 12 families who did so Monday. Some have accepted cash settlements with Malaysia Airlines in exchange for agreeing not to file suit. Many are still debating what to do. And some, like Dai, find their only solace comes in believing that their relatives are still alive. Somewhere. Somehow. As a result, their lives are now consumed by demanding answers from an airline that has few answers at all.

"People say we are nuts," said Dai, a 62-year-old woman whose younger sister was on the flight, along with her sister's husband, son, daughter-in-law and grandson. "But for us, we have the feeling that our loved ones are still alive." Officials "just tell us all the passengers are dead. We don't accept that. If they tell us the truth, or give us a convincing explanation, then we'll stop coming here every day." She does not care if her quest looks impossible.

"I can't sleep and I can't get over this," Dai said. Her apartment has few decorations beyond a large world map stuck to one wall. A folding metal table is covered with copies of letters sent to the airline. "I have no other ways to handle this. ... Going to Malaysia Airlines every day gives me a bit of relief, and I feel I am doing something for my sister."

Real story hidden?

Many relatives believe the real story of MH370 has been hidden from them. They disagree on what may have happened, debating theories and trading facts

and rumors. But few believe they know the entire truth. That suspicion is heightened in China, where widespread censorship and the official control of access to information has led to a general sense among Chinese that what they see in the media, or hear from the government, is not to be trusted. This widespread cynicism fomented a quiet if deep-seated anger, and a willingness to accept conspiracy theories.

Kelly Wen, who runs a furniture store, is desperate to move on, to find a way to start her life again after her husband disappeared with the plane. But she remains overwhelmed by the loss. "My family is still in the shadow of the MH370 accident," said Wen, a 31-year-old Beijing resident with a 5-year-old son now left without a father. "I can't work like I did before because there are too many issues I need to handle in my family. But I do hope I can gradually walk out of the accident and go back to work."

With the second anniversary approaching, Wen increasingly believes she needs to make up her mind about what to do. "I need to decide whether to accept compensation and reach agreement with Malaysian Airlines or file suit in court," she said. She and some 80 other relatives of MH370 passengers went together to meet Malaysia Airlines staff in late February to get updates on the situation. From the start, it did not go well. Outside the airline office were nearly two dozen policemen in case there was trouble. — AP

PHILIPPINE SENATOR POE CAN RUN FOR PRESIDENT

MANILA: The Philippine Supreme Court ruled yesterday that Sen Grace Poe is eligible to run for president in May 9 elections, overturning an elections commission decision to disqualify her and removing a long-hanging legal question over a tightly fought race to lead the Southeast Asian nation.

The justices voted 9-6 to favor Poe's petitions against the Commission on Elections decision last December to disqualify her on the grounds that she was not a natural-born citizen and did not have the required 10-year Philippine residency required of presidential candidates, Supreme Court spokesman Theodore Te said at a news conference, adding that the ruling can be appealed.

"This victory isn't only mine," a triumphant Poe told hundreds of people who joined an International Women's Day rally by a left-wing group in a downtown Manila square. "This is a victory for all of us." The decision will provide a major boost to the campaign of Poe, who has already been leading in popularity polls, and removes a cloud of uncertainty over what has been shaping as a closely contested four-way race to succeed President Benigno Aquino III, whose six-year term ends June 30.

"She will now be the candidate to beat," political analyst Ramon Casiple said, adding that fence sitters and supporters who were concerned that Poe may be taken out of the race because of her legal troubles would now have a clear choice. "She can now run away from the pack," Casiple said.

Pulse Asia, an independent polling body, placed Poe in the lead with 26 percent in a survey conducted last month of 1,800 respondents nationwide, followed by Vice President Jejomar Binay, who got 25 percent. Former Interior Secretary Mar Roxas, whose candidacy has been endorsed by Aquino, and tough-talking Mayor

Rodrigo Duterte of southern Davao city each got 21 percent. The survey had a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percent. Poe had a wider lead in a Pulse Asia poll in January.

Political neophyte

Although a political neophyte, the 47-year-old Poe carries a popular family name and has a heart-rending life story in a country where many are swayed more by personalities than policy positions. The US-educated Poe is the adopted daughter of one of the Philippines' most famous movie couples. Her late father, Fernando Poe Jr., was a movie action star who mostly played roles as a defender of the poor and downtrodden in a country still plagued by widespread poverty and corruption.

But the Commission on Elections ruled in December that Poe was not a natural-born Filipino as required by the constitution because she was abandoned as a baby by her unknown parents at a Roman Catholic church. Poe, who renounced her Philippine citizenship for about five years to live with her own family in America, also lacked the required 10-year Philippine residency ahead of the May 9 vote, the commission said. That prompted Poe to bring her case to the Supreme Court, which she asked to trash her disqualification.

Appearing often in campaign sorties in a white shirt and blue denim pants that many Filipinos identify with her father, Poe has run on the same pro-poor platform that her father carried, pledging that under her presidency, "nobody will be left behind." Aquino's successor will need to grapple with poverty, corruption and Marxist and Muslim insurgencies in the south - persistent problems facing a country that three decades ago toppled the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos through a "people power" movement. — AP



MANILA: Philippine presidential candidate Sen Grace Poe addresses hundreds of supporters during a rally to mark International Women's Day. — AP

CHINA SAYS IT WON'T BUDGE ON SOUTH SEA SOVEREIGNTY

BEIJING: China's foreign minister took a hard line yesterday on the country's claims to virtually all the South China Sea, saying it won't permit other nations to infringe on what it considers its sovereign rights in the strategically vital area.

Wang Yi, speaking to reporters at an annual news conference in Beijing, said another nation's claim to freedom of navigation in the region doesn't give it the right to do whatever it wants - an apparent reference to the US, which has sent naval ships past reefs where China has engaged in island-building.

Wang sought to deflect allegations China is militarizing the region by building military facilities on the artificial islands. He said China's development there was defensive and that other nations were being militaristic - not China. "China cannot be labeled as the most militaristic. This label is more suited to other countries," Wang said.

In addition to reaffirming that South China Sea islands are an "integral" part of China's territory that "every Chinese is obligated to defend," he reiterated Beijing's refusal to cooperate with an International Court of Arbitration case brought by the Philippines over disputed claims in the area. China says it is not bound by the arbitration because it filed a statement in 2006 that it would not accept "compulsory procedures entailing binding decisions" in regard to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Tensions have risen in recent months over China's ongoing project of building islands in the disputed Spratly archipelago by piling sand atop reefs and

then adding airstrips, ports, radar stations and other military infrastructure. China has also deployed surface-to-air missiles on at least one of its holdings in another island group to the west and is expected to station warplanes on its new islands in the Spratlys, at least on a temporary basis.

Raised tensions

Neighbors have complained that the work has raised tensions by changing the status quo in the area, where six Asian governments have overlapping claims and which include some of the world's busiest sea lanes. Asked whether China would allow foreign journalists to visit those islands, Wang stressed that they also were intended for civilian uses and that once they are completed, foreign journalists would be invited. China regards the US and its allies as unwanted interlopers in the South China Sea and regards all actions by the US Navy in the area as provocative, despite the force's presence in the region dating to well before the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949.

The South China Sea includes sea lanes through which more than \$5 trillion in global trade passes each year, along with rich fishing grounds and potential oil and gas deposits. Wang's tone changed considerably when questioned on the South China Sea by a reporter from Cambodia, China's strongest ally within the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which also includes disputants Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and the Philippines. — AP

SOUTH TO IMPOSE UNILATERAL SANCTIONS ON NORTH KOREA

SEOUL: South Korea said yesterday it is imposing unilateral sanctions on North Korea over its recent nuclear test and rocket launch, including a ban on financial dealings with 40 individuals and 30 entities. The announcement came a day after North Korea warned of pre-emptive nuclear strikes in response to the start of US-South Korean military drills it views as a rehearsal for invasion. This year's annual drills, set to run until late April, are the largest ever.

Also yesterday, Seoul's spy agency accused North Korea of having hacked into the smartphones of dozens of key South Korean officials, stealing text and voice messages and their phone call logs. The National Intelligence Service said the cyberattacks occurred between late February and early March. It didn't say which officials' phones were hacked or whether the stolen messages contained any sensitive information.

The new South Korean sanctions target 38 individuals and 24 organizations in North Korea who Seoul says are responsible for the North's development of weapons of mass destruction. A Singaporean, a Taiwanese and six entities in Myanmar, Thailand, Taiwan and other countries will also be sanctioned for indirectly assisting North Korea, the South Korean government said in a statement. It said South Koreans will be barred from engaging in financial and foreign exchange dealings with the blacklisted people and organizations, whose asserts in South Korea

will be frozen. South Korea also said it will ban the entrance of any ship that has stopped at a North Korean port in the previous 180 days. Currently only North Korean ships are banned.

It said it will continue to advise South Korean citizens not to eat at North Korea-run restaurants around the world. North Korea operates about 130 restaurants in China and other countries. Senior South Korean official Lee Sukjoon told reporters that the restaurants are a source of foreign currency that is suspected of being linked to the North's development of weapons of mass destruction. He did not elaborate.

It's unclear how much the new South Korean steps will sting North Korea, which has already been slapped with international sanctions over its nuclear and missile programs. The UN Security Council last week adopted its toughest sanctions against North Korea in two decades. North Korea described them as "nothing new" but warned it would take unspecified "merciless" steps in response.

Hard-line policy

South Korea's announcement underscores its pursuit of a hard-line policy toward the North. South Korea earlier halted operations at a jointly run factory park in North Korea, the last major cooperation project between the rivals.

The North Korean entities targeted by the new sanctions include banks, trading and ship-

ping companies, and an atomic research center. The individuals include Kim Yong Chul, a former head of North Korea's intelligence agency who was believed to be behind two attacks blamed on North Korea that killed 50 South Koreans in 2010. Many of the North Korean individuals and entities are already under US, Japanese, UN or other international sanctions.

There was no immediate reaction from North Korea to the South Korean allegations of cell-phone hacking. South Korea's spy agency said North Korea also tried unsuccessfully to hack into the email accounts of South Korean railway officials earlier this year in preparation for a cyber attack on the country's railway control system.

Seoul has accused Pyongyang of launching a slew of cyber attacks in recent years, but Pyongyang has denied the allegations. Many of the alleged cyber attacks failed to infiltrate targeted computer systems of businesses and government agencies. But in several cases, hackers destroyed hard drive disks, paralyzed banking systems or disrupted access to websites. One attack was so crippling that a South Korean bank was unable to resume online banking services for more than two weeks. Last year, South Korea said North Korea has a 6,000-member cyber army dedicated to disrupting the South's military and government. The figure was a sharp increase from a 2013 South Korean estimate of 3,000 such specialists. — AP

NOD TO INDIA'S FEMALE LAWMAKERS HIGHLIGHTS HOW FEW THERE ARE

NEW DELHI: What was meant as a gesture of respect toward women ended up reminding India that it needed to improve female representation in politics. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for only female lawmakers to address the Indian parliament on International Women's Day included silence - because there weren't enough women to speak.

Of 543 elected members in the lower house, only 62 are women - or just 12 percent. The global average is 22 percent for

women in Parliament, according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The women who spoke in the assembly yesterday raised issues including allowing women's entry into Hindu temples and better education for girls. They also demanded renewed effort in passing long-stalled legislation to require that 33 percent of lawmakers be women. "Surely, maximum governance also means giving us women our legitimate due, namely the much-awaited Women's Reservation Bill," opposi-

tion Congress party leader Sonia Gandhi said, chided her colleagues for failing to push it through since it was first floated in Parliament at least two decades ago.

The legislation aims to correct some of the social imbalance between genders, but has been blocked by powerful socialist groups and political leaders worried that a female quota system would cost their male-dominated parties seats. Communist lawmaker K Sreemathi Teacher sought to shame her male col-

leagues by noting that Afghanistan's parliament is 28 percent female, even with the Taliban presenting a constant threat to women.

Her colleague from West Bengal state's Trinamool Congress party agreed. "We don't want a separate seat in the bus. We want to drive that bus. We don't want separate queues. I want to earn money and pay my taxes," said Shatabdi Roy. Meanwhile, Bhavna Gawali from the Hindu nationalist group Shiv Sena party

said male priests were being ridiculous in holding to the ancient, sexist practice of barring women from the inner sanctum of the Shani temple in the western state of Maharashtra. "While we talk of equality, we can't go to temples," she said.

Not all of the women in the assembly were prepared to speak, but after all those who wanted to speak had taken their turns, there was enough time left for the Speaker to ask the men in the house for input on the day's agenda. — AP

15-YEAR-OLD RAPED, SET ON FIRE OUTSIDE NEW DELHI

NEW DELHI: A 15-year-old girl was fighting for her life in a New Delhi hospital yesterday after being raped and set on fire on the rooftop terrace of her family's home in a village outside the city, police said. The attack is just one of several recently reported cases of rapes of women or children in India - underlining the persistence of such violence despite a public outcry three years ago that led to stronger laws against sexual assault.

In the latest case, police have arrested a 20-year-old man suspected of raping and attempting to burn the girl to death Monday in Tigri village, near the New Delhi suburb of Noida in the state of Uttar Pradesh, according to Constable Yadram Singh of the Bisrakh police station. Singh said the man "had burns on his hands" and was charged with several offenses, including rape, attempted murder, assault of a minor and causing grievous injury.

The girl was in critical condition with severe burns over most of her body, Singh said. Indian newspapers said she had burns on 95 percent of her body. Singh's police report on the case describes how the girl's parents found her after hearing her screaming from the rooftop terrace a few hours before dawn Monday.

The girl later told police that she was raped, beaten and then set on fire by a man who she said had been stalking her for months, Singh said. India's women and children are considered particularly vulnerable to sexual violence and harassment because of widespread social taboos against speaking about sexual assault. The stigma is enough to keep many from even reporting

crimes, while many others face police resistance in filing complaints.

Experts say that has started to change since the fatal gang rape of a 23-year-old woman on a New Delhi bus in 2012 triggered national anger and demands that more be done for women's safety. The government rushed through legislation to double prison terms for rape, and to criminalize voyeurism, stalking and the trafficking of women. But activists say more action is needed, including better educating youths and adding basic safety infrastructure such as street lights and public bathrooms. The public debate has also increased Indian newspaper reports of rape and assault, including several in just the last few days.

On Monday, police in the financial capital of Mumbai said they were investigating whether a 4-year-old girl whose body was dumped in the bushes on the city's outskirts had been raped before being killed, according to the Press Trust of India news agency. The girl reportedly went missing after being separated from her mother at a railway station Sunday night.

In other cases in Uttar Pradesh, police arrested a 20-year-old man suspected of raping a 6-year-old Sunday night, and were separately investigating nine people for allegedly gang raping a woman when she went into the fields to go to the bathroom last month, PTI reported. And last week, three boys reportedly kidnapped a teenage girl from her home and raped her repeatedly in a field in the northern state of Haryana and later in New Delhi before she escaped, the news agency cited police as saying. — AP



DHAKA: This file photo taken on November 2, 2014 shows Bangladeshi Jamaat-e-Islami party leader, Mir Quasem Ali waving his hand as he enters a van at the International Crimes Tribunal court. — AFP

BANGLADESH'S TOP COURT UPHOLDS ISLAMIST TYCOON'S DEATH SENTENCE

'HE WAS THE MAIN FINANCIER OF THE PARTY'

DHAKA: Bangladesh's Supreme Court yesterday upheld the death sentence of Jamaat-e-Islami's chief financier, imposed for war crimes, in a major blow to the country's biggest Islamist party. Mir Quasem Ali, a shipping and real estate tycoon, was convicted in 2014 of abducting and murdering a young fighter during Bangladesh's 1971 war of independence against Pakistan.

Three senior Jamaat officials and a leader of the main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) have been executed since December 2013 for war crimes, despite global criticism of their trials by a controversial tribunal. The trials have divided the country and sparked deadly protests, with supporters of Jamaat and the BNP branding them a sham aimed at eliminating their leaders.

"The court upheld his death sentence for the abduction and murder of a young freedom fighter whose body was dumped in a river," Attorney General Mahbubey Alam said. The 63-year-old senior party leader faces the gallows within months unless his case is reviewed by the same court or he is granted clemency by the Bangladeshi president.

Abdur Rob, professor of political science at the North South University in Dhaka, said the ruling was a big setback for Jamaat. "He was the main financier of the party," he said. "He also ran Jamaat's social and business enterprises and had very good connections across the world, especially in the

Middle East." The executions and convictions of Jamaat officials plunged the country into one of its worst crises in 2013 when tens of thousands of Islamist activists clashed with police in nationwide protests that left some 500 people dead. In the same year it launched a nationwide crackdown of Jamaat activists in which tens of thousands of Islamists were either detained or sued over the protests.

The latest verdict is expected to widen the divide between secular groups and Islamic hardliners in the Muslim-majority nation, which has seen recent killings of secular bloggers, religious minorities and foreigners. Opposition parties say the trials are politically motivated, aimed at weakening rivals to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's secular government. The trials come as the government has also been accused of a recent crackdown on dissent, including in independent media. Since it was set up by the government in 2010, the tribunal has sentenced more than a dozen opposition leaders for their roles in the war. The government maintains the trials are needed to heal the wounds of the conflict, which it says left three million people dead.

Nationwide strike

Jamaat called for a nationwide strike on Wednesday to protest against the verdict. The party has in recent months eschewed violent protests

in reaction to war crimes verdicts. "The government conspired and planned to kill one after another of Jamaat's leaders. Mir Quasem Ali is a victim of a government conspiracy," Jamaat said in a statement.

Ali had helped revive the party by setting up charities, businesses and trusts linked to it after it was allowed to operate in the late 1970s. Jamaat was banned after its leaders became key organizers of the notorious pro-Pakistani militia Al-Badr during the nine-month war of independence.

Before he was arrested in 2012 on 14 war crimes charges, Ali headed the Diganta Media Corporation, which owns a pro-Jamaat daily and a television station that was shut down in 2013 for inflaming religious tensions. Slam, the attorney general, said the tycoon had paid \$25 million to a US lobbying firm to try to put a stop to the war crime trials of Jamaat leaders.

Defence lawyers have said the charges against him were "baseless and false" and that he was not at the crime scenes during the war. Ali's wife called the court's decision "a travesty of justice". Rights groups have also criticized the trials, saying they fall short of international standards and lack any foreign oversight. Jamaat opposed the wartime struggle for independence, and sided with the military regime in Islamabad. Independent researchers estimate that between 300,000 and 500,000 people died in the 1971 conflict. — AFP



NOIDA: Policemen are deployed near a house where a 15-year-old girl was set on fire after being raped at Tigri village. — AFP

PAKISTAN 'BREACHING OBLIGATIONS' ON NUCLEAR ARMS, UN COURT TOLD

THE HAGUE: Pakistan is violating its "obligations" to the international community by failing to reduce its nuclear arsenal, the Marshall Islands told the UN's highest court yesterday. The small Pacific Island nation is this week launching three unusual cases against India, Pakistan and Britain before the International Court of Justice.

Majuro wants to put a new spotlight on the global nuclear threat, its lawyers said on Monday, by using its own experience with massive US-led nuclear tests in the 1940s and 1950s. "Pakistan is in breach of its obligations owed to the international community as a whole," when it comes to reducing its nuclear stockpile, said Nicholas Grief, one of the island nation's lawyers.

Islamabad and its nuclear-armed neighbor India "continue to engage in a quantitative build-up and a qualitative improvement" of their atomic stockpiles, added Tony deBrum, a Marshallese government minister. DeBrum warned that even a "limited nuclear war" involving the two countries would "threaten the existence" of his island nation people.

Pakistan and India have fought three wars since independence from Britain in 1947, two of them over the disputed Himalayan territory of Kashmir. In 1998, the rival neighbors both demonstrated nuclear weapons capability. The ICJ's judges are holding hearings for the next week and a half to decide whether it is competent to hear the lawsuits brought against India and Pakistan - neither of which have signed the 1968 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

A third hearing against Britain - which has signed the NPT - scheduled to start on Wednesday will be devoted to "preliminary objections" raised by London. The Marshalls initially sought to bring a case against nine countries it said possessed nuclear arms: Britain, China, France, India, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia and the United States.

Israel has never admitted to having nuclear weapons. But the Hague-based ICJ, set up in 1945 to rule in disputes between states, has only admitted three cases against Britain, India and Pakistan, because they have accepted the ICJ's compulsory jurisdiction. Pakistan's lawyers did not attend yesterday's hearings. It did however file a counter-claim against Majuro's allegations saying "the court has no jurisdiction to deal with the application" and insisting that the case is "not admissible", said ICJ President Ronny Abraham. — AFP

Prepaid

Can't ask for more with

VIVA

XTREME

The new VIVA Xtreme package:

- Unlimited Internet
- Unlimited Calls

In addition to your credit

For more information, please visit our website at viva.com.kw or call our contact center at 102. Terms and conditions apply.

KD 3
7 Days

KD 5
14 Days

KD 10
30 Days

KD 20
60 Days

Sales Account Manager
 Fasa Husain Al-Yousifi & Sons
 Co. - Kuwait

You will be responsible for overall end-to-end sales processes of major electronics retailers from the initial contact and understanding of the client's needs to the closure on the product/service delivery, driving customer's satisfaction and growing sales into existing accounts, as well as, developing business in new accounts & markets.

Apply Now [JB3459149](#)

Construction Director
 Tecside Group
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for representing Petrofac on site and liaising with client, subcontractors and local government officials, executing the project in line with the delivery schedule, contract specifications and conditions, as well as, developing project organization chart and mobilization schedule based on standard models, using standard job descriptions and titles.

Apply Now [JB3459101](#)

Pharmacists - Boots
 M.H. Alshaya Co
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for providing all customers with a safe, legal and effective pharmaceutical service, as well as, understanding the local practices and customer expectations in the operating market, and you will adhere to all operational and legal standards whilst providing expert customer care.

Apply Now [JB3458765](#)

Housing Specialist (OCN)
 Vectrus
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for assignment, termination of residents, and controlling of billing; facilities, exhibiting superior workmanship and focusing upon a quality end product, following Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Performance Work Statement (PWS) to ensure all tasks are accomplished safely.

Apply Now [JB50107756](#)

Sr. Field Engineer I - AFT2FTS
 Raytheon
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for supporting the Automatic TOW2 Test Set (AT2FTS) program in Kuwait, conducting technical analysis of the TOW2 Systems and using the Automated TOW2 Field Test Set (AFT2FTS) Device System to identify and isolate system issues, as well as, determining technical solutions in accordance with product and customer specifications.

Apply Now [JB3457801](#)

Secretary
 MTC Multi-pack
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for scheduling and attending meetings, creating agendas and taking minutes - shorthand may be required, keeping diaries and arranging appointments, using a variety of software packages, such as Microsoft Word, Outlook, Powerpoint, Excel, Access, etc., to produce correspondence and documents and to maintain presentations, records, etc.

Apply Now [JB3458126](#)

Financial Analyst - Wealth Mgmt - Arab Investment Company - Kuwait

You will be responsible for monitoring investment portfolios, preparing daily performance reports, monitoring risk criteria's related to portfolios, constructing asset allocation, currency allocation and geographical allocation charts for portfolios, as well as, benchmarking comparisons and performance appraisals.

Apply Now [JB3224046](#)

Ambassador of the Arabian Gulf Leadership
 Aiesec in Kuwait - Kuwait

You will be responsible for leading a team of international interns as a representative of the Arabian Gulf, teaching them about the culture and heritage of Kuwait/The Arabian Gulf, participating in cultural workshops and excursion with the team, as well as, working with other team leaders to plan the weekly tasks and challenges for your teams.

Apply Now [JB50107390](#)

Area Manager - Food Retail
 Focus Management
 International - KSA

You will be responsible for full leadership of those around you with particular focus on operational improvements, recruitment, training, and succession planning, as well as, responsible for P&L and new store locations openings and marketing.

Apply Now [JB3458951](#)

Sales Manager
 Sofitel
 KSA

You will be responsible for establishing regular sales/services contacts, by telephone, correspondence, personal visits or in hotel service (entertainment) with assigned accounts as necessary to achieved planned goal, as well as, soliciting calls on behalf of the Hotel Sales & Marketing Division, Regional Sales offices or its other hotels.

Apply Now [JB50107708](#)

Field Compliance Coordinator
 Saudi Aramco - KSA

You will be responsible for providing full safety support to designated operational areas through implementation of D&WO SMS, Aramco standards, policies, and procedures, participating in risk assessment/analysis, incident investigation, and root cause analysis performing various HSE duties.

Apply Now [JB50107702](#)

Marketing Manager
 Sofitel
 KSA

You will responsible for developing and delivering marketing and PR strategy for the property and any other venue/outlet managed by the hotel, plan and manage its implementation, liaising closely with key stakeholder, as well as, overseeing incoming inquiries direct/indirect and ensuring each one is handled in proper and efficient manner.

Apply Now [JB50107734](#)

Sales and Marketing Manager - Events
 EOS Recruitment - UAE

You will be responsible for managing a sales team of up to 201 people, developing short and long term sales plans, strategy and business plan, evaluating and selecting the best market channels for the markets i.e. agents and distributors, price management, preparing sales forecasting plan and budget and elaborating budgets and controlling the sales expenses

Apply Now [JB3458628](#)

Female Sales Executive
 Kira Floorings
 UAE

You will be responsible for maintaining and developing relationships with existing customers, responding to incoming email and phone enquiries, acting as a contact between a company and its existing and potential markets, negotiating the terms of an agreement and closing sale, as well as, gathering market and customer information.

Apply Now [JB3458928](#)

Purchase Executive
 Velocity Industries LLC
 UAE

You will be responsible for documenting online forms for cost effective and lawful implementation of export and import, planning and executing export/import strategy complying with organizational aims and needs, as well as, managing financial and currency processes as per policy and law and optimize cost effectiveness

Apply Now [JB3458928](#)

Digital Marketing Manager
 I-Fxpatriate
 UAE

You will be responsible for planning and executing all web, SEO/ SEM/ PPC, marketing database, email, social media and display advertising campaigns, building and maintaining our social media presence, utilizing our marketing automation software (Pardot), as well as, measuring and reporting performance of all digital marketing campaigns

Apply Now [JB3458705](#)

Events Manager
 Elan Qatar
 Qatar

You will be responsible for assisting Events Director in implementation of Events business plan, pertaining to event management and execution, providing recommendations/initiate new events fully led and managed by Events, as well as, building and maintaining partnership with key organizations and individuals involved in the event management industry as required for delivering successful events.

Apply Now [JB3458717](#)

Legal Director
 Elan Qatar
 Qatar

You will be responsible for developing and overseeing implementation of guidelines and standard processes for the purchasing and legal activities within the organization, evaluating corporate compliance with relevant legislative and governmental requirements, as well as, providing recommendations to address these in order to protect the Organization's interests.

Apply Now [JB3458729](#)

General Manager - Food & Beverages (GM F&B) - Michael Page Intl. Ltd. - Qatar

You will be responsible for developing a strategic plan for each Franchise brand for advancing the Franchise's mission and objectives and to promote revenue, profitability, and growth, overseeing each Franchise operations to ensure production efficiency, quality, service, and cost-effective management of resources, as well as, setting and achieving key performance targets.

Apply Now [JB3458642](#)

Brand Manager - Luxury Perfumes & Cosmetics
 LH Middle East - Qatar

You will responsible for achieving sales target for assigned brands set by the management, providing management and suppliers with in-depth & accurate reports regarding Sales/ Marketing and Activities/ Expenses/ Purchases, defining, ordering, budgets and places, as well as, purchasing orders with suppliers according to required market demand while maintaining healthy stocks levels.

Apply Now [JB3458590](#)



A woman gestures toward a friend as they walk with a dog in the surf at Ocean Beach in San Francisco on Monday. — AP

HOUTHIS, SAUDIS IN TALKS

CAIRO/DUBAI: Iran-allied Houthis and their Saudi foes have begun talks to try to end Yemen's war, two officials said, in what appears their most serious bid to close a theatre of Saudi-Iranian rivalry deepening political tumult across the Middle East. A delegation from Yemen's Houthi movement is in neighboring Saudi Arabia, they said, in the first visit of its kind since the war began last year between Houthi forces and an Arab military coalition led by Saudi Arabia, a foe of Tehran.

The reported talks coincide with an apparent lull in fighting on the Saudi-Yemen border and in Saudi-led Arab coalition air strikes on the Houthi-held Yemeni capital Sanaa. Underlining the regional rifts, a senior Iranian military official meanwhile signalled that Iran could yet send military advisers to Yemen to help the Houthis. Brigadier General Masoud Jazayeri, deputy chief of staff of the armed forces, suggested Iran could support the Houthis in a similar way it has backed President Bashar Al-Assad's forces in Syria, in an interview with the Tasnim news agency.

Asked if Iran would send military advisers to Yemen, as it had in Syria, Jazayeri said: "The Islamic Republic... feels its duty to help the people of Yemen in any way it can, and to any level necessary." Saudi Arabia has

accused Iran of backing Yemen's armed Houthi movement, which drove the internationally-recognised government into exile, triggering a Gulf intervention in March.

Six Thousand Killed

The United Nations says nearly 6,000 people have been killed in Yemen's fighting. Hundreds of thousands have been displaced. The two senior officials from the administrative body that runs parts of Yemen controlled by the Houthis said the Houthi visit to Saudi Arabia began on Monday at the invitation of Saudi authorities, following a week of secret preparatory talks.

The Houthi delegation in Saudi Arabia is headed by Mohammed Abdel-Salam, the Houthis' main spokesman and a senior adviser to Houthi leader Abdel-Malek Al-Houthi, the officials said. Abdel-Salam previously led Houthi delegates in talks in Oman that paved the way for UN-sponsored talks in Switzerland last year. A spokesman for the Saudi-led Arab coalition fighting to restore President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi to power could not immediately be reached for comment. A Saudi foreign ministry spokesman could also not be reached. — Reuters

KIDNAPPED SON OF SLAIN PAK GOV FOUND AFTER FIVE YEARS

ISLAMABAD: The kidnapped son of a liberal Pakistani governor assassinated by his body-guard has been found, senior officials said yesterday, just over a week after his father's killer was hanged. Shahbaz Taseer is in "feeble" health, said Aitzaz Goraya, head of the Counter-Terrorism Department of southwestern Balochistan province, where officials said he was found after a police raid. Taseer had been abducted by Islamist gunmen from the city of Lahore in Aug 2011, months after his father Salman was killed for opposing the country's controversial blasphemy laws.

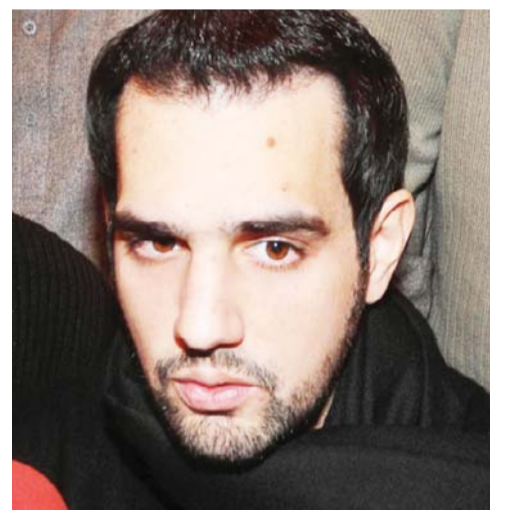
The governor's assassin, Mumtaz Qadri, was hanged on Feb 29. The Pakistani Taliban have never officially confirmed their involvement in the kidnapping, but a militant source told AFP yesterday that an army operation in the tribal areas had made it "difficult" for the group to keep him. "That's why they preferred to set him free," the source said. Militant commanders have privately told AFP in the past Taseer was being kept somewhere in the tribal areas of North and South Waziristan.

Pakistan began its operation to clear Taliban and Al-Qaeda strongholds in North

Waziristan in 2014. The source yesterday said Taseer was moved after Operation Zarb-e-Azb was launched. "Acting on a tip off, intelligence forces and police went to a compound in the Kuchlak district some 25 kilometres north of Quetta" in the southwestern province of Balochistan, Goraya said. "We surrounded the compound and we raided it. We didn't find anyone. A single person was there and he told us my name is Shahbaz and my father's name is Salman Taseer."

But the owner of a roadside restaurant in Kuchlak told reporters that Taseer was recovered after he came to his restaurant on foot yesterday evening, made a phone call and then personnel from paramilitary the Frontier Corps came and picked him up. "He had grown long hair with a scruffy beard and was frantically asking for a telephone or mobile phone" the owner of Al-Saleem hotel told reporters in Kuchlak. "He ate food here, paid a bill of 350 rupees and then called someone from a waiter's mobile," the owner said, adding that minutes later FC personnel arrived.

A second militant source said the Taliban



Shahbaz Taseer

had been demanding up to two billion rupees (\$20 million) for Taseer's release. Security analyst Imtiaz Gul said it was possible a ransom had been paid and that Taseer had been abandoned by his abductors once they received the money. — AFP

KUWAIT WILL COMMIT TO OIL FREEZE ONLY...

Continued from Page 1

be conducted once government committees had agreed on a plan. He did not give further details. Previously, Saleh had suggested Kuwait might issue bonds in US dollars or in Kuwaiti dinars. It originally aimed to make its first issue by the end of last year, but officials have not yet come up with a final plan. The ministry projected in January that the government

would run a deficit of KD 12.2 billion (\$40.7 billion) in the next fiscal year starting on April 1, nearly 50 percent higher than the deficit estimated for the current year, after contributions by the government to the sovereign wealth fund. The government has begun drawing down its huge financial reserves to cover part of the deficit, but it wants to issue debt to limit the speed of the drawdown and also develop Kuwait's financial markets. — Agencies

TIGER ON THE LOOSE IN DOHA TRAFFIC JAM

Continued from Page 1

It was not clear who owns the tiger, but keeping wild animals, including tigers, as pets is not uncommon in wealthy Gulf countries. Last year, the government had to make an appeal for the owners of an escaped cheetah cub to come forward after it was found north of Doha. After one sighting of a tiger several years ago, a spoof

Doha Tiger Twitter site was created. A lion escaped its Dubai owner's home in January and was captured wandering a residential neighborhood. In Kuwait, a man was sued in 2014 after his pet lion escaped and attacked a Filipina maid. One social media user, Sultan Al-Qassemi, complained on Twitter after seeing the footage that: "This obsession of keeping wild animals by rich kids in the Gulf has gone too far." — Agencies

Kuwait Times

Premier Brands

To see your ad here, call:
+965 248 35 616 / 617
 E MAIL :info@kuwaittimes.net
 ads@kuwaittimes.net
 Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

best offers

Skyworth™ My Wonderful Life LED-32E3000	Skyworth™ My Wonderful Life LED-40E3000	Skyworth™ My Wonderful Life LED-43E3000
<p style="font-size: 2em; color: yellow; font-weight: bold;">32"</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; color: yellow; font-weight: bold;">40"</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; color: yellow; font-weight: bold;">43"</p>
<p style="font-size: 3em; color: red; font-weight: bold;">44</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">السعر Price ك.د. KD .900</p>	<p style="font-size: 3em; color: red; font-weight: bold;">69</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">السعر Price ك.د. KD .900</p>	<p style="font-size: 3em; color: red; font-weight: bold;">79</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">السعر Price ك.د. KD .900</p>

بست
AL-YOUSIFI

Credit: Start from 5KD • Up to 48 month • Instant approval

Shop Online www.best.com.kw Free Delivery

1809 809

• Kuwait 1 (the New str.) • Kuwait 2 (Panasonic Tower) • Hawalli 1 (Tunis str.) • Hawalli 2 (Bin Khaldon str.) • Shuwaikh (4th Ring road) • Al-Rai (4th Ring road) • Salmiya (Salem Al-Mubarak str.) • Farwaniya (Behind police Station) • Fahaheel (Opp. General Parking) • Jahra (Opp. Main Co-op.) • Airport (Departure Hall)

Kuwait Times
THE LEADING INDEPENDENT
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF
ESTABLISHED 1961

Founder and Publisher
YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN

Editor-in-Chief
ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-ALYAN

EDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432
ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
FAX : 24835620/1
CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163
ACCOUNTS : 24835619
COMMERCIAL : 24835618

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

Issues

'GAME CHANGER': HOW EU MAY SHUT DOOR ON MIGRANTS

By Alastair Macdonald

A European Union draft deal with Turkey to stop migrants reaching Greece introduces a harder edge of coercion to what critics have derided as a hitherto feeble EU response to a crisis tearing it apart. Just last week, some saw European Council President Donald Tusk running short on ideas when he urged would-be migrants: "Do not come to Europe." UKIP, a party campaigning to take Britain out of the EU at a June referendum, said his "weak plea" was "too little too late to stop the vast migrant flow into Europe".

Yet what Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu called a "game-changing" plan for Turkey to forcibly take back not only economic migrants who make it to Greek islands off its coast but even refugees from Syria, who will then suffer disadvantages, is the strongest move yet to change the calculus of migration.

If the plan is agreed, and if it works, taking to a boat from a Turkish beach at the cost of life savings to a smuggler - and possibly of life itself - would no longer be a ticket to a better life in Germany but a rapid round trip to Turkey. There, those returned would be, in the words of EU officials, "at the back of the line" for legal asylum and resettlement in Europe.

The United Nations refugee agency warned that Europe must not close its door to those in need, as civil war in Syria has left millions homeless and afraid. Human rights groups have been scathing about a Europe preaching democracy but cutting a deal with a Turkish government accused of persecuting opponents. Many are concerned about a quickfire process of deporting everyone back to Turkey with little regard for individuals.

But 1.2 million people reached the EU last year to claim asylum amid chaotic scenes on beaches and on the long trek north from Greece through the Balkans. It has set EU states at odds, shut long-uncontrolled borders and fuelled nationalist sentiment among voters across the bloc. Leaders' patience is thin. "We need to break the link between getting in a boat and getting settlement in Europe," they said after Monday's summit.

Deterrence

An earlier EU plan foresaw deportation back to Turkey reserved for those, such as Pakistanis or North Africans, with little likelihood of winning refugee status in the EU - though in practice making such distinctions has proven problematic. The new plan would see even Syrians and others with stronger asylum claims being shipped with little ceremony back across straits, now being demonstratively patrolled by NATO warships.

To force back crowds that last year numbered up to 20,000 a day seems impracticable. But EU officials said the key was to dissuade people from travelling in the first place. For every Syrian sent back from a Greek island in future, another Syrian would be entitled to a legal, safe trip to Europe. That could be a rather small number if deterrence works, so EU leaders agreed to consider also resettling larger numbers.

For Europeans, the deal could help end a crisis that has jeopardized their cherished Schengen passport-free zone. There are clear gains for Greece, where Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras has warned of becoming a "warehouse of souls" as more than 30,000 migrants have become stranded there since its northern neighbors began closing their borders. The downside could be ugly scenes on the islands off Turkey. For German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who worked closely on the deal with Davutoglu before the summit, a dramatic sign of an imminent end to the crisis could be a boost in regional elections on Sunday that will, in part, pass judgment on her decision last summer to open Germany's doors to Syrians.

'Dirty Deal'

Turkey is seeking in return some \$6 billion (\$6.6 billion) to help improve the lives of refugees over the next three years - twice as much as a two-year deal with the EU struck in November, as well as the opening of new "chapters" in its long-stalled negotiation to join the European Union. Also important for Turkish public opinion is a request to bring forward by four months to June a plan to make it easier for Turks to travel without visas to Europe's Schengen zone.

Several European governments have strong reservations about the Turkish proposals. Cyprus is wary about lifting its veto on parts of the accession process as long as Ankara does not end a refusal to recognize or trade with Cyprus, diplomats said. It is also concerned not to disrupt talks that have brought the prospect of ending the four-decade division of the island. —Reuters

All articles appearing on these pages are the personal opinion of the writers. Kuwait Times takes no responsibility for views expressed therein. Kuwait Times invites readers to voice their opinions. Please send submissions via email to: opinion@kuwaittimes.net or via snail mail to PO Box 1301 Safat, Kuwait. The editor reserves the right to edit any submission as necessary.



ABORTION CAN MEAN LIES, JAIL OR WORSE

By Sabreen Taha

"Fatma", a mother of twins with a demanding workload, was distraught to discover she was pregnant again. Her doctor agreed to perform an abortion, she says, only after she promised to pretend the procedure had been a medical emergency. "He felt sorry for me and told me, 'If someone asks you how you ended up having an abortion, I will be in trouble and will lose my job, so say you were hemorrhaging at the time,'" said Fatma, who lives in the West Bank. "He did the abortion for me - the first time, the second time and third time," she told Reuters, speaking on condition her real name not be used as she had never told her husband.

For women seeking abortions in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, where Palestinian law strictly limits the procedure, the choice is stark: have the baby or terminate the pregnancy by using ruses, risky back-alley methods or even turning to neighboring Israel, where the laws are far more permissive. Women's rights campaigners rue the ban but decriminalization looks unlikely. Conservative customs guide much of Palestinian society and parliament has effectively been suspended since 2007 because of factional disputes, making it impossible to amend or pass new laws.

According to the Palestinian Health Ministry, doctors are permitted to perform abortions only when pregnancy endangers the mother's life, but not if it is a peril to her mental health. When fetal impairment is detected, an abortion can be performed if both parents consent, but terminating a pregnancy that resulted from rape or incest is banned, the ministry said. Palestinian authorities declined to give figures for how many abortions had been approved or how many people had been prosecuted for violating the law.

Anecdotal accounts suggest such sanctions are rare, but the fear of repercussion and violating taboos keep many abortions covert.

According to Wafa Muammar, head of the Palestinian police family protection unit, a woman who has an illegal abortion could face 1 to 3 years' imprisonment. That may be reduced to 6 to 12 months in cases of "shame-preventing" termination of pregnancies that resulted from incest or rape, Muammar said. The same reduction applies if a woman is threatened with a so-called "honor killing" for getting pregnant outside marriage.

Unlicensed or back-alley abortionists can also get 1 to 3 year prison terms, or 5 to 15 years if the woman dies from the procedure, Muammar said, adding that if the practitioner is a doctor, he or she could be jailed for an additional 3 years. "If the woman herself does the abortion, she will suffer a penalty, as will anyone who helps her," Muammar said. Even opting for emergency contraception such as "morning-after" pills is taboo. Some pharmacists have been known to dispense the pills with no questions asked.

Costly Risks

"Samira," another Palestinian woman who spoke to Reuters on condition of anonymity, said she found a sympathetic pharmacist away from her home town to help a friend prevent a pregnancy. "I told him about the woman, that she has 10 kids and is not feeling well," Samira said. "I told him, 'You are safe, I'm not even from this area and your name will never be mentioned.' He said, 'Okay, I trust you, here you go, here's the medicine.'"

Amina Awadat, director of the non-profit Palestinian Family Planning and Protection Association (PFPPA), said that while she respects Palestinian law, she wanted to see "safe services" become readily avail-

able for women who want abortions. "Ultimately, unsafe abortions prove costly because when women start hemorrhaging and have to go to hospital, the cost of getting the abortion and recovering from unsafe abortions is higher," Awadat said.

For some women, the motive for an abortion is fear of paying the ultimate cost - being killed by a male relative to preserve the family's "honor". For now, some Palestinian women are turning to Israel, where abortion is available once approved by a medical committee. Palestinians living in East Jerusalem, which Israel counts as part of its jurisdiction, have free access to Israeli hospitals. Israeli government data on abortion recipients do not distinguish between East Jerusalem Palestinians and Arab citizens, who make up 20 percent of Israel's population.

The most recent Central Bureau of Statistics data, from 2012 and 2013, found that around 85 percent of recipients were from the Jewish majority, and 15 percent - 2,600 to 2,800 cases annually - either Israeli Arabs or East Jerusalem Palestinians. A CBS official, citing anecdotal information relayed by hospital registrars, said 9 Palestinian women from the West Bank or Gaza had abortions in Israel in 2012, and another 6 in 2013.

Even that small number appears to have trailed off recently. Dalia Basa, an Israeli government official in charge of arranging entry of Palestinians for medical treatment, said she was now aware of around one abortion case a year. "Usually these women turn to Israel because of 'family honor' sensitivities which require discretion," Basa told Reuters, meaning pregnancies that resulted from illicit unions. She said that in such cases the recipient's application to have the abortion in Israel is generally handled by human rights groups or relatives in East Jerusalem or Israel's Arab sector. —Reuters

IN GAZA ZOO, EMPTY CAGES, LONELY ANIMALS

By Sarah Benhaida

In the Gaza Strip, where residents face a daily struggle to survive, animals at the Khan Yunis zoo are dying every week and the tiger hasn't eaten for days. Of hundreds of animals bought for the zoo's 2007 opening, the only survivors are the last deer of its herd, a pelican, an ostrich, two porcupines and the tiger - hungry yet still majestic. All the other cages are empty and overgrown, while a thick stench lingers in the air. Dusty cats weave in and out of the chipped, green bars of the cages as a puppy howls in its pen.

Now, after years of effort, zoo owner Mohammed Aweda is admitting defeat. He plans to sell the tiger and the rest of the animals and close the zoo after seeing his dreams fail. The tiger "has not eaten meat for four days," Aweda tells AFP during a visit to the deserted zoo. "The food costs 250 Israeli shekels (\$63/58 euros) per day," Aweda says. "I have not managed to earn that amount from zoo visits in one year." When it first opened, families thronged to the 2,000-sq-m Khan Yunis zoo in the south of the Palestinian enclave to see eagles, lions, the tiger, deer, pelicans and even crocodiles for just three shekels.

An Open-Air Cemetery

But between 2008 and 2014, the Gaza Strip, ruled by the Palestinian Islamist movement Hamas, has experienced three wars with Israel. The last conflict, in the summer of 2014, killed 2,251 Gazans, the majority of them civilians, and 73 Israelis, including 67 soldiers, according to the United Nations. The animals, too, were caught up in Israeli bombing, with 80 killed according to Aweda. After the conflict "I waited for days before entering and the smell of death was strong. I found carcasses everywhere."

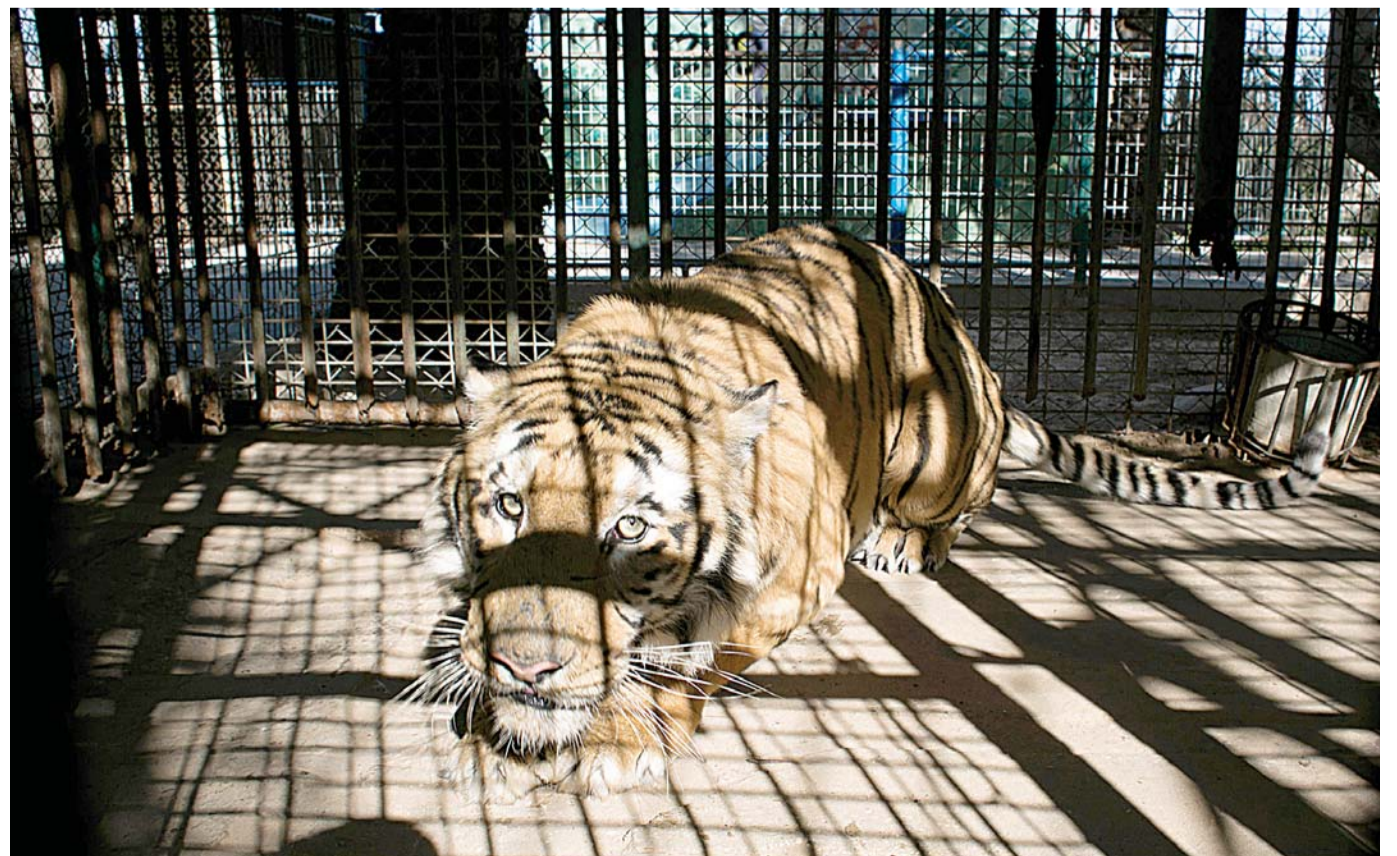
Israel maintains a crippling blockade of the Palestinian enclave and with little in the way of a local economy Gaza's residents simply don't have any money left to spend on going to the zoo. Inside, a stench emerges from a cage where a barely legible sign tells visitors to respect the cleanliness of the premises. Desiccated bodies of crocodiles and a lion lie in the sun, surrounded by the bones of other animals. The weather is fine, but the zoo seems more like an open-air cemetery than a

place for joy. Two other zoos in Gaza are in similar states.

School bus driver Tamer Al-Nirab says dozens of children used to visit the zoo every day but now "nobody can afford it". Eighty percent of Gaza's population are reliant on international aid, according to the UN. At its peak, the zoo had 60 stocked cages, with Aweda and his 13 family members living off the profits. But now they have taken up other jobs just to try to obtain enough food for the animals.

"Some of my brothers became drivers, others have found employment in small businesses," says Aweda, standing in front of the cage where the 180-kg, eight-year-old tiger paces.

To obtain the tiger was a mammoth effort, he says, explaining that it was transported "from Senegal to Egypt, then from Sinai to Gaza through a tunnel". He is now hoping to sell the beast for \$30,000. After that, Aweda says, he will sell the land, and the small zoo of Khan Yunis will be no more. —AFP



A tiger looks on from inside its cage at a zoo in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip on March 5, 2016. —AFP

PORSCHE SUSPENDS TIES WITH SHARAPOVA

BERLIN: German luxury car manufacturers Porsche yesterday became the third big-name sponsor to distance themselves from Maria Sharapova after the tennis star admitted failing a drug test at the Australian Open. "We regret the news about Maria Sharapova. Until more details are known and we can analyse the situation, we have decided to suspend planned activities (with her)," said Porsche in a statement. The 28-year-old Sharapova, who has won five Grand Slam titles in her career, signed a three-year deal to be brand ambassador for Porsche in April 2013. The Russian also won the WTA indoor tournament in Stuttgart, which is sponsored by the car manufacturers, in 2012, 2013 and 2014, with the champion driving off in a brand-new sports car. Porsche joins Swiss watchmaker TAG Heuer and US sportswear giant Nike, who said they were halting their relationship with Sharapova. Sharapova announced Monday that she had tested positive for Meldonium, a drug she said she had been taking since 2006 but was only added to the banned list this year. — AFP

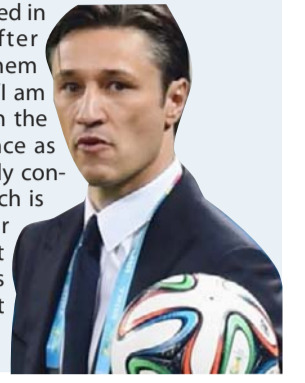


TERRY MISSES TRAINING AHEAD OF PSG CLASH

LONDON: Chelsea captain John Terry remains doubtful for today's Champions League clash with Paris Saint-Germain after missing yesterday's final pre-match training session. Terry, 35, sustained a hamstring injury during his side's 5-1 Premier League win over Newcastle United on February 13 and has not featured since. He did not take part in yesterday's group training session at Chelsea's Cobham training base and was reported to be working alone in a bid to prove his fitness. With Kurt Zouma sidelined by a serious knee injury, Chelsea have lined up with Branislav Ivanovic and Gary Cahill at centre-back in recent matches. Striker Diego Costa did take part in training, having missed Saturday's 1-1 draw at home to Stoke City as a precaution due to a minor tendon problem. Kenedy and Pedro Rodriguez, who have been troubled by groin and hamstring problems respectively, were also present. PSG lead 2-1 ahead of the second leg of the last 16 tie, which represents the third season in succession that the teams have met in the Champions League knockout phase. — AFP

FRANKFURT TURN TO KOVAC IN RELEGATION BATTLE

BERLIN: Bundesliga strugglers Eintracht Frankfurt yesterday appointed Niko Kovac as head coach in their battle to stay up after predecessor Armin Veh was sacked with the club in the bottom three. The 44-year-old former Bayern Munich midfielder coached Croatia at the 2014 World Cup, but was released after two years in charge last September because his team failed to qualify for this summer's European championships in France. This will be the first time Kovac has coached in Germany's top flight. Veh was sacked on Sunday after Frankfurt's draw with Ingolstadt the previous day saw them drop into the bottom three with nine league games left. "I am pleased to have been given this opportunity, even though the situation isn't easy," said Kovac in his first press conference as Frankfurt boss. "I am here to keep us up. And I'm absolutely convinced I'll do it. Kovac has signed a two-year contract, which is only valid for the Bundesliga, and with younger brother Robert, 41, as his assistant, his job is to keep Frankfurt up. "It must be the goal of Niko Kovac to mobilise the team's strength to stay up," said Frankfurt's chairman Heribert Bruchhagen. — AFP



SHOOTING FEDERATION PRAISES AMIR'S SUPPORT FOR THE SPORT OF SHOOTING

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Secretary General of Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations thanked HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for his patronage of HH the Amir 5th



Sheikh Ali Al-Khalifa

International Shooting Grand Prix that concluded on Monday at Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex.

Al-Osaimi said HH the Amir's continued support for the sport of shooting in the tournament competition year after year as well as the tournaments hosted by Kuwait, shows HH the Amir's interest in the game which gives added responsibility to Kuwaiti shooters to continue their achievements, and work on always being better. This was evident by having Kuwait on top of the list of winning countries during the tournament which coincided



Duajj Al-Otaibi with Sheikh Ali Al-Khalifa

with Kuwait's celebrations of the national days and HH the Amir's ascension to power.

He said the tournament continued to attract notable shooters in the world be it from Europe, Australia, Africa besides the Arab countries, and this made competition tougher and more difficult to win medals.

Osaimi thanked those who contributed to with members of the board of directors in

addition to various government bodies.

The Grand Prix concluded with highly successful technical performance as all participants have testified.

Meanwhile, President of the Asian Shooting Confederation (AFC) Sheikh Ali Bin Abdallah Al Khalifa said the wide ranging participation by world shooters confirms the importance of this prestigious tournament that all of them



Obaid Al-Osaimi, Munther Al-Khateeb and Rajeh Al-Tul

compete to win. He said the Grand Prix saw high levels and had shooters show their best skills, and congratulated Kuwait shooters for their "sweeping" medals.

Sheikh Ali thanked HH the Amir for his generous patronage of the tournament and his continued support of the same at various levels be it in the Gulf, Asia or international.

He lauded the role of Information Minister,

State Minister for Youth Affairs for his tremendous efforts in developing the sport of shooting in the Arab and Asian levels.

He also appreciated the role of President of Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations Eng Duajj Al-Otaibi and the rest of the board of directors in organizing the Grand Prix, which was highly successful.

PEYTON MANNING JOKES, CHOKES UP DURING RETIREMENT REMARKS

ENGLEWOOD: His voice cracking with emotion, Peyton Manning said good bye to the game he loved at a news conference packed with friends, family and laughter.

He threw in some Scripture, some fond memories and even a dig at Super Bowl 50 MVP Von Miller, whom he thanked for taking a break "from your celebrity tour to be here today." He ended it with his signature "Omaha!" and then posed for pictures with more than a dozen

of his former teammates with the Indianapolis Colts and Denver Broncos, each of whom he helped win a Super Bowl. Manning, who turns 40 this month, said the timing was simply right to call an end to his 18-year NFL career.

"I thought about it a lot, prayed about it a lot ... it was just the right time," Manning said. "I don't throw as good as I used to, don't run as good as I used to, but I have always had good timing." He came to Denver on March 20, 2012, for the chance to win another title in the twilight of his career and GM John Elway had the blueprints.

Four years later, he hobbles away a champion just like his boss did 17 years ago.

Elway thanked Manning for coming to Colorado for the second chapter of his brilliant career, saying he made his own job easier, noting that with Manning living here, free agents were basically asking Elway "where do I sign?"

EMOTIONAL

Manning went 50-15 in Denver, leading the Broncos to four AFC West titles, two Super Bowl trips, one championship and in 2013 guided the highest-scoring offense in league history - all after retraining himself to throw after a series of neck fusion surgeries forced

him to miss all of the 2011 season and led the Colts to cut him. Team president Joe Ellis told Manning, "If there is a list of achievements needed to attain greatness you've checked every box. ... We will miss watching you play quarterback. You have been a joy."

Elway was equally emotional when he walked away from the game after winning his second championship in 1999, and on Monday he said, "Having been through it, I know it's a hard day for him."

Indeed, Manning choked up several times, especially when he listed all the things he'd miss about football, the flights home after a big win, his teammates.

Coach Gary Kubiak talked about how Manning missed six weeks with a foot injury and how he worked his way back to regain his starting job in time to lead Denver on its historic playoff run.

Manning said if there's one thing he learned in his most trying season was how to be a good teammate in trying times. He said it's easy to be a good teammate when you're the starter and things are going well, but when you're trying to regain your health and your starting job it's tougher.

Manning declined to address in detail a recent rehabbing of a sexual harassment claim from his days at Tennessee.

"This is a joyous day and nothing could overtake this day. I think it is sad that some people don't understand the truth and the facts. I did not do what has been alleged. And I am not interested in relitigating something that happened when I was 19 years old. Kind of like my dad used to say when I was in trouble, 'I can't say it any plainer than that.' So, this is a joyous day. It's a special day. And like Forrest Gump said, 'That is all I have to say about that.' — AFP



KHALID SALEH AL-GHUNAIM 9 BALL TOURNAMENT KICKS OFF

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Annual Khalid Saleh Al-Ghunaim 9 ball open tournament kicked off at Hot Shot Plazio with more than 160 players participating.

Fahad Khalid Saleh Al-Ghunaim said the new addition to the tournament is the participation of professional headed by world champions American Shane Van Boening and Germany's Raslo Suki in addition to champions from the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Qatar.

He expected to see tough competition during the tournament which encourages the youth to practice this game, and transform it to becoming international.

He said the current tournament will witness women players for the first time, also to encour-



age them to play this game and form a women's national team to represent Kuwait abroad.

Al-Ghunaim said Kuwait has competent players who succeeded in winning more than 154 medals and cups in various tournaments in Gulf, Arab and international tournaments they participated in.

When asked about the lack of a federation for the game despite its popularity in Kuwait he said we met Information Minister, State Minister for Youth Affairs Salman Al-Sabah and he promised to deal with the issue.

Al-Ghanim congratulated HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber on the occasion of National Days, and 10 years on HH the Amir assumption of power.



COLORADO: Denver Broncos quarterback Peyton Manning speaks during his retirement announcement at team headquarters Monday, in Englewood, Colo. Manning, who has been in the NFL for the past 18 years, is retiring after winning five MVP trophies and two Super Bowl championships, the most recent last month against the Carolina Panthers. — AP

GULFRUN CAR SHOW AT MUROUJ THIS WEEKEND

KUWAIT: GulfRun - powered by Zain - is holding its 9th annual car show from March 10 to 12 at the Murouj Complex - Sahara Resort. The car show is an annual exhibition showcasing the sports cars participating in the highly anticipated 11th GulfRun race that is scheduled to take place on March 17 and 18 at the Bahrain International Circuit.

This year's car show will have more than 40 sport cars participating in the race on display; and from car dealerships participating showcasing their latest models: Audi, Aston Martin, Dodge, Lamborghini, Mercedes, and Toyota.

GulfRun is an annual car race that is managed and organized by a group of Kuwaiti car enthusiasts who want to provide a venue for amateur drivers

and to raise awareness on safe driving. Over 50 participants are classified into different categories according to their vehicles capabilities and power. At the racetrack, they are trained and compete in various motorsports venues at the track. Drivers can compete against their peers in a safe and secure environment; whilst learning valuable driving skills.

"For the past decade, we have been providing car enthusiasts with a venue to race in with the assistance of professional and qualified instructors. Many of the racers have been returning since our first year and have evolved into some of Kuwait's best drivers." Said Ahmad Al-Mudhaf, GulfRun CEO adding that, "GulfRun's aim has always been to endorse a responsible and pro-

fessional approach to Automobile Racing."

VENUE FOR AMATEUR DRIVERS

The GulfRun's management team extend their gratitude to the continuous support by Kuwait's private sector, which acknowledges the important role sport plays amongst Kuwait's youth. The 9th GulfRun Car Show and GulfRun XI is supported by a wide range of sponsors: Title sponsorship by Zain Telecom; Platinum Sponsors: Hydrotek, Algida, Jashanmal, Slider Station, American Tax Bureau; Gold sponsorship by Bespoke Automotive, Al-Sawan Co., MotoCare, Credit One, and Seven Friday; Payment Partner: Tap.

START OF POWERBOAT RUN 2016 RESCHEDULED FOR SATURDAY

KUWAIT: Yousef Al-Rubayan, head of the technical committee of Powerboat Run 2016, said that the event has been shifted to Saturday, March 12 from Friday, March 11. The change is only in the date - all other activities remain unchanged. Asked about the reason for the delay, he said that the latest weather forecasts were carefully reviewed by the technical committee, that proposed delaying the event for a day. However, the workshops will last for three days.

Rubayan said that the safety of participants is their top priority, as it's always recommended by the president of the higher organizing committee Dr Tarek Al-Kazemi. "We are monitoring the little details. The event is just like a marine show for 50 miles with 20 participants in different boat sizes. Moreover, we are keen on applying safety procedures. Weather conditions are very important factors we should take into consideration," he said. Rubayan stated that all participants are well-acquainted with safety rules, and realized the importance of the delay, along with various



Yousef Al-Rubayan

agencies in the state. "We are very proud of them all, especially the Kuwaiti youth who are doing their best to have a successful event," he said.

TROUT HOMERS AND STEALS, BUT WHITE SOX BEAT ANGELS 9-4

TEMPE: Mike Trout had his first homer and first stolen base of the spring in the Chicago White Sox's 9-4 victory over a Los Angeles Angels split squad on Monday.

Jose Abreu had three hits for the White Sox. Dioner Navarro had two hits and two RBIs, and Steve Lombardozzi hit a two-run homer in the seventh. Trout connected in the third inning against Chicago starter Erik Johnson, turning the first pitch into a line drive over the center field wall. Trout swung at the lowest percentage of first pitches in the AL last year, but is planning to add aggression to his formidable talents.

"Mike is going to be aggressive when it's there," Angels manager Mike Scioscia said. "He's developing a nice feel, and if it happens to be on a first pitch, so be it."

Trout also walked twice in three plate appearances, improving his on-base percentage to .636 in the spring. "He's in the zone," Angels starter Hector Santiago said. "He's seeing the ball well. That ball got out, and he

knew it the second it hit the bat."

STARTING TIME

White Sox: Johnson gave up four runs on three hits in three innings. His line was spoiled some when left fielder Jerry Sands misplayed a two-run double by Kole Calhoun, but otherwise looked sharp in his competition to earn the fifth spot in the White Sox rotation. "I felt great," Johnson said. "The ball is definitely exploding out of my hand. You could tell just by all the terrible contact, a lot of weak foul balls. For me, the two balls they hit really hard were just fastballs up over the plate. I'm still getting synced up, still really dialing in and I knew today I wanted to throw a lot of fastballs and that's exactly what I did."

Angels: Santiago struck out five and yielded four hits in three solid innings for the Angels. The former White Sox hurler even threw his screwball, which he used sparingly during his 2015 All-Star season. "It's there," Santiago said of the screwball. "I threw seven or eight in the

bullpen warming up. It's definitely an effective pitch. It has different depth, a different perspective to it. It's top to bottom, running away from a righty or down and in to a lefty. It's a pitch, no doubt about it. It's a matter of how aggressive our catchers want to be calling it."

TRAINER'S ROOM

White Sox: 1B Adam LaRoche is close to returning from back spasms.

Angels: C Taylor Ward, Los Angeles' top prospect, was reassigned to minor league camp along with four other players.

UP NEXT

White Sox: John Danks is expected to start when Chicago hosts the Milwaukee Brewers at Camelback Ranch. Angels: Ace Garrett Richards makes his second start of the spring when they visit the Diamondbacks. Los Angeles' probable opening day starter gave up two runs in his spring debut. — AP



PHILADELPHIA: Pierre-Edouard Bellemare #78 of the Philadelphia Flyers gets off a shot as he is checked by Matt Carle #25 of the Tampa Bay Lightning during the second period at the Wells Fargo Center on Monday in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. — AFP

CAPS END DUCKS' 11-GAME WIN STREAK WITH 2-1 WIN

ANAHEIM: T.J. Oshie and Nicklas Backstrom scored in the shootout as the Washington Capitals stopped the Anaheim Ducks' franchise-best winning streak at 11 games with 2-1 victory Monday night in a meeting of regular-season heavyweights. Andre Burakovsky scored the tying goal early in the third period for the NHL-leading Capitals, who also ended Anaheim's eight-game home winning streak with their sixth consecutive victory over the Ducks. Braden Holtby made 27 saves and stopped two more shots in the shootout. Oshie atoned for an overtime penalty with the US Olympic shootout star's fourth goal in five shootout attempts this season, but after Corey Perry scored to keep the Ducks alive, Backstrom ended it. Ryan Getzlaf scored on Anaheim's first shot, and John Gibson stopped 30 shots.

FLYERS 4, LIGHTNING 2

Shayne Gostisbehere scored twice to lead the Philadelphia Flyers past Tampa Bay 4-2 on Monday night and snap the Lightning's franchise-best nine-game winning streak. Gostisbehere, Brayden Schenn and Wayne Simmonds each scored third period goals for

the Flyers. The Flyers have 73 points and moved within two of idle Detroit for the final wild-card playoff berth in the Eastern Conference. The Flyers went 5-1 on their homestand and earned 10 of 12 possible points to key their surge in the standings.

There are 17 games left for the Flyers and two of them are against Detroit. Ondrej Palat and Vladislav Namestnikov scored for Tampa Bay in its first loss since February 16 against San Jose. The Lightning had won six straight on the road. Andrei Vasilevskiy stopped 36 shots for the Lightning.

BRUINS 5, PANTHERS 4, OT

Lee Stempniak scored his first goal as a Bruin in overtime as Boston beat Florida 5-4 while Panthers forward Jaromir Jagr moved into third on the NHL career points list. Jagr assisted on Aleksander Barkov's goal, passing Gordie Howe with 1,851 points.

Bruins coach Claude Julien moved past Art Ross to become Boston's career coaching wins leader with 388 regular-season victories. Stempniak, acquired from New Jersey at the trade deadline, also had two assists and Patrice

Bergeron scored twice for the Bruins. Brett Connolly and David Pastrnak also had goals, Brad Marchand had two assists and Tuukka Rask made 47 saves. Jiri Hudler scored twice for the Panthers. Jussi Jokinen also scored and Jonathan Huberdeau had two assists. Roberto Luongo allowed four goals on 16 shots before being replaced by Al Montoya to start the second period. Montoya stopped 15 shots.

SABRES 4, MAPLE LEAFS 3, SO

Sam Reinhart scored in the shootout to help Buffalo beat Toronto. Jack Eichel and Evander Kane scored less than 4 minutes apart in the third period to bring the Sabres back from a 3-1 deficit. It was the 22nd loss in the past 27 games for the league-worst Leafs and fifth straight one-goal defeat. For Buffalo, the victory snapped a string of six straight shootout losses. Rookie Zach Hyman scored his first career NHL goal for Toronto, and Leo Komarov and Brad Boyes also scored. Mark Pysyk had the other Buffalo goal, and Chad Johnson stopped 30 of 33 shots. Garret Sparks made 24 saves for the Leafs, who remain last in the NHL with 53 points. — AP

NHL results/standings

Philadelphia 4, Tampa Bay 2; Buffalo 4, Toronto 3 (SO); Boston 5, Florida 4 (OT); Colorado 3, Arizona 1; San Jose 2, Calgary 1 (OT); Washington 2, Anaheim 1 (SO); Los Angeles 5, Vancouver 1.

Western Conference					Eastern Conference					
Central Division					Atlantic Division					
W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS	W	L	OTL	PTS	
Chicago	41	21	5	191	160	87	Florida	36	21	9
Dallas	40	20	7	215	192	87	Boston	37	23	7
St. Louis	38	20	9	170	164	85	Detroit	32	22	11
Nashville	33	21	12	181	168	78	Ottawa	31	29	7
Minnesota	31	26	10	177	169	72	Montreal	30	30	6
Colorado	34	30	4	183	195	72	Buffalo	27	31	9
Winnipeg	27	33	5	169	194	59	Toronto	21	33	11
Pacific Division					Metropolitan Division					
Anaheim	37	19	9	165	151	83	Washington	49	13	4
Los Angeles	39	22	4	175	149	82	NY Rangers	38	22	6
San Jose	36	23	6	195	174	78	NY Islanders	36	20	7
Vancouver	25	28	12	157	188	62	Pittsburgh	34	23	8
Arizona	28	32	6	175	207	62	Philadelphia	31	23	11
Calgary	27	34	5	178	207	59	Carolina	29	26	11
Edmonton	26	35	7	167	201	59	New Jersey	31	29	7
							Columbus	27	31	8
Eastern Conference										
Atlantic Division										
Tampa Bay	39	23	4	185	159	82				

Note: Overtime losses (OTL) are worth one point in the standings and are not included in the loss column (L).

TIPPED FOR THE TOP - HK WOMEN'S ACE LOOKS TO BREAK MEN'S ELITE

HONG KONG: Women's world champion Ng On-Yee grew up beating the boys in the smoke-filled snooker halls of Hong Kong - now she's challenging for a spot among the men's elite on the sport's biggest stage.

The bespectacled Ng is training hard after earning a dream ticket to the qualifying tournament for next month's men's world championships in Sheffield, England. Ng, resplendent in her bow-tie and waistcoat, is hoping to become the first woman to reach the main draw by going one better than England's Reanne Evans, who lost in qualifying last year.

Ng shocked Evans in the semi-finals of last year's women's world championships, on her way to taking the title and gaining her invite to Sheffield.

Now she hopes to stake her place among snooker's top stars, including reigning world champion Stuart

Bingham and the colourful Ronnie "The Rocket" O'Sullivan.

"Playing at the top level, that is a dream come true for me," she told AFP in an interview, adding that her goal is to become one of the world's best players, male or female. "I wish I could be and I'm now setting the target step-by-step in getting there," she said. Ng is coached by Wayne Griffiths, son of Welsh great Terry Griffiths who won the world title at Sheffield's famous Crucible Theatre in 1979, beating Dennis Taylor in the final.

She spent her early years running around the snooker hall her parents managed in the working-class Hong Kong district of Sham Shui Po, stacked with high-rise buildings and known for its bustling street market.

SNAZZY ATTIRE

Hong Kong's dimly lit snooker venues,

hidden away from the hustle-bustle of daily life, are often cast as haunts for shady characters, and female players are a rarity.

But Ng always felt at home there and she was finally inspired to start playing aged 13, after being wowed by her father, an amateur player.

She says she remembers being entranced by his snazzy snooker attire, complete with dress shirt, black waistcoat and bow-tie.

"One day I saw him at a competition with this uniform, and I loved the uniform very much, and I thought I could be special if I wore the same thing," Ng said.

"I requested my father to teach me how to play and he was delighted," she recalled. From then on, snooker became a big part of Ng's life and she would spend five to six hours practising every day. In one exercise, she had to move the

cue hundreds of times through a small ring placed on the table to perfect her stroke. Not many girls frequent Hong Kong's snooker halls but her fellow players were supportive, Ng says, as she cut her teeth in local contests against male competitors. "There would be some other men or boys watching me play, but they didn't laugh at me... they just encouraged me," she said.

But it was at her first international tournament, the 2006 women's world championships in Jordan, that Ng was inspired to take snooker even further.

"I wished I could be like them, who can travel around the world for snooker tournaments," she remembered.

'AWESOME OPPORTUNITY'

Fast forward 10 years, and Ng has given up her studies to play full-time - with impressive results.

Now Ng will break new ground as the first Asian woman to tackle qualifying at the men's world championships, as she bids to become the only female player to reach the main draw.

"It would be an awesome opportunity to learn more as I wonder what really creates a gap between the man and the ladies," said Ng of her upcoming trip.

Griffiths, her coach, cautioned: "To reach the pinnacle of the men's game is still a massive step."

But he added: "If she can qualify for the men's tour and remain there for at least two years then anything could be possible." Ng, who will also be defending her women's world title in Britain this month, is aiming to reach the heights of snooker - but is patient about getting there. "I still have a long way to go," she said. "For me I just play snooker because I love it and enjoy the game." — AFP

AFGHANS HOPE FOR T20 GLORY IN ADOPTED HOMETLAND

NEW DELHI: Afghanistan, whose cricketing fairytale has captured the hearts of fans around the world, hope to do their own supporters proud in their adopted Indian homeland with the start of the World Twenty20.

Since overcoming the odds to compete in the 2010 World T20 in England, the Afghan team has managed to qualify for all the major international tournaments, including last year's 50-over World Cup. But this time round, the one-time nomads—many of whom were born or brought up in exile—will be playing on what is now officially home turf after they made a suburb of New Delhi their headquarters.

And with tens of thousands of Afghan expats living in the Indian capital, Asghar Stanikzai's side can expect to be cheered on by a sizeable contingent of supporters in the game's heartland.

"I have been with the team for the past 15 years and I am very satisfied with the side's progress... It's a brilliant achievement in a very short span of time," veteran batsman Mohammad Nabi told AFP during a recent nets session in Noida, a satellite city of New

Delhi. "We have seen difficult times back home, where there are no proper cricket grounds and academies. But now we are at the big stage," added Nabi, who is back in the ranks after a three-year spell as captain. Although he was born in the eastern Afghan province of Logar, Nabi moved to Peshawar in Pakistan as a youngster when his family sought shelter from the civil war that wracked their homeland.

Cricket struggled to get a foothold in Afghanistan under the Taliban, the hardline Islamist regime which was toppled in a US-led invasion in 2001.

But the millions of Afghan refugees who fled across the border into Pakistan found themselves in a cricketing crazy nation and many youngsters soon caught the bug themselves. Many grew up idolising Pakistan batsman Inzamam-ul-Haq who agreed last October to become Afghanistan's new coach with a brief to make sure the team make the second phase of a major tournament for the first time.

If they are to take on the established international teams in the second week of the tournament,

Afghanistan must top a group that includes Test nation Zimbabwe, Hong Kong and Scotland. The Scots will be their first opponents in Nagpur on Tuesday evening.

INZY IN CHARGE

Inzamam, one of the finest batsman of his generation, says his charges don't lack for talent but need greater exposure to take the next step up.

"I obviously share my experience with them, but they will only learn when put in such situations," Inzamam told AFP. "If you want to learn swimming then you will have to jump in the water, no matter how many lessons you get on the ground. They are ready for international cricket and now they just need exposure." Much of the team's hope rests on the shoulders of Mohammad Shahzad, the wicketkeeper-batsman who bludgeoned an unbeaten 118 off just 67 balls during a T20 international against Zimbabwe in January. Shahzad, who was born in the eastern Afghan city of Jalalabad, oozes with confi-

dence as he practises the 'helicopter', the trademark shot of his idol, Indian skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni. "The troubles back home are not really on our minds when we take the field," Shahzad told AFP.

"We are not here just to participate in the tournament, we have come here to do something."

As part of a deal with the Indian cricket board, Afghanistan is now based at Noida stadium where a group of fans could be seen seeking autographs.

"It's wonderful, it's a treat for us and a dream come true," said Badshah Khan, another expat living in Delhi. Batsman Nabi says the establishment of a permanent base has been a boon, allowing the side to concentrate on the task at hand rather than worry about events back home. "It's a good facility here and we faced some good cricketers here," Nabi said. "There are difficult times back home, but we tend to focus on our cricket." — AFP



KOLKATA: West Indies cricketer Chris Gayle relaxes on ground as former fast bowler and bowling coach Curtley Ambrose, second right, gestures during a training session prior to their practice match of the ICC World Twenty20 2016 cricket tournament in Kolkata, India, yesterday. — AP

SAMMY HAILS GAYLE AS T20'S ULTIMATE DESTROYER

KOLKATA: Skipper Darren Sammy hailed controversial star batsman Chris Gayle as T20 cricket's most destructive player yesterday as he insisted the West Indies' troubled build-up to the World Cup would not undermine their prospects.

Gayle was branded a sexist after trying to flirt with an Australian TV presenter live on air in January during the Big Bash League and some Caribbean fans are unhappy he is often unavailable for national duty but then plays in big money Twenty20 tournaments.

But in a press conference after his team's

arrival in India for the World T20, Sammy said the 36-year-old Jamaican was admired by his teammates for his behaviour on and off the field. "Chris is a massive figure for us, not only on the cricket field but off the field as well," Sammy said in Kolkata.

"To me he is the best T20 batsman, the most destructive one in this game so he knows his game inside out." Like several other West Indies players, Gayle has become accustomed to playing T20 cricket in Indian conditions after appearing regularly in the IPL over the last decade. Gayle racked up the highest ever score

in T20s while playing for the Bangalore Royal Challengers in the Indian Premier League three years ago, hitting an unbeaten 175 off 66 balls. He lit up the first World T20 in 2007 by notching the format's first international century and a recent 12-ball half-century in the Big Bash illustrated how his powers remain undimmed.

While the West Indies dominated Test cricket in the 1980s, they are now one of the weakest teams in the five-day game.

But they remain a force in the shortest format, winning the World T20 in 2012 and are currently joint second in the world rank-

ings, behind India. The West Indies' last visit to India ended in acrimony when the team flew back to the Caribbean in the middle of a tour after a bust-up over pay. Another pay dispute last month cast a doubt over their appearance at the World T20 and while the row has since been resolved, relations between players and board remain strained.

MISSING NARINE

To make matters worse, allrounder Kieron Pollard and off-spinner Sunil Narine both withdrew from the initial World T20 squad. Narine's

absence is a particular blow as he has been one of the standouts in the IPL but he pulled out as he felt under-prepared after serving a suspension for a suspect action.

But Sammy said all the off-field problems would be put behind them. "Once you step out on the cricket field you shouldn't be worried about contracts or other stuff. At the end of the day we are professionals but right now is the time to focus on cricket," he said. "It's always difficult to replace someone like Narine but we believe the players in the team could still come and get the job done for us." — AFP

MALINGA STEPS DOWN AS CAPTAIN FOR WORLD T20

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's World Twenty20 title defence suffered a jolt on the day the tournament gets underway with Lasith Malinga's slow recovery from a knee injury forcing the fast bowler to hand over captaincy to Angelo Mathews.

Malinga remains available for Super 10 stage matches but the paceman with blond-tinted hair and an unorthodox action may not be the same

final few matches and Malinga stepped in to lead them to glory.

"He is stepping down only from captaincy," Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) secretary Mohan de Silva told Reuters on Monday. "He has offered himself for selection only after (March) 15 because he is undergoing some treatment here in Sri Lanka," de Silva added. Test and one-day captain Mathews was named Malinga's deputy in the original Sri Lankan squad for the tournament in India. Malinga, 32, is recovering slowly from a knee injury and is not certain to play all the side's matches in India.

The defending champions also added Lahiru Thirimanne and Suranga Lakmal, replacing Jeffrey Vandersay and Niroshan Dickwella from the original squad. "We still believe we have a very good chance of winning the World Cup with this combination," SLC chairman Thilanga Sumathipala told a news conference. Sri Lanka begin their bid for a second World Twenty20 title on March 17 with a Super 10 stage match against a yet-to-be-identified qualifier in Kolkata. After the team's poor showing in the recent Asia Cup, where they lost all but one of their four matches, SLC also replaced the entire selection committee with a new panel headed by former captain Aravinda de Silva.

Batting great Kumar Sangakkara and former stumper-opener Romesh Kaluwitharana are also part of the new five-member selection panel.

Sri Lanka squad: Angelo Mathews (captain), Dushmantha Chameera, Dinesh Chandimal, Lahiru Thirimanne, Tillakaratne Dilshan, Rangana Herath, Shehan Jayasuriya, Chamara Kapugedera, Nuwan Kulasekara, Lasith Malinga, Thisara Perera, Sachithra Senanayake, Dasun Shanaka, Milinda Siriwardana, Suranga Lakmal. — Reuters



Lasith Malinga

force which has been key to Sri Lanka's progress to three World Twenty20 finals over the last four editions. The team, however, can take heart from the fact that a similarly forced change in captaincy marked their triumphant 2014 campaign when out-of-form skipper Dinesh Chandimal sat out the

DHONI PLAYS DOWN INDIA'S WORLD T20 FAVOURITES TAG

KOLKATA: Indian skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni sought to downplay expectations yesterday about his side's prospects at the World Twenty20 despite starting as roaring favourites to win the title on home turf. Dhoni's men have been on a roll since the start of the year, winning 10 out of 11 Twenty20 internationals, with the latest being a comprehensive title-winning triumph at the weekend over Bangladesh in the Asia Cup. Their recent form even led former opener Virender Sehwag to proclaim that the world's number one team had a "99 percent" chance of winning the trophy for a second time.

India won the inaugural edition in 2007 and are gunning to become the tournament's only two-time winners. Dhoni however refused to be pulled down by the weight of expectations, focusing instead on taking one game at a time. "When it comes to expectations, I don't think it is any lesser than what it was in the 2011 World Cup," Dhoni, 34, said, referring to India's winning campaign at home that year in the 50-over format. "We don't think too much about the expectations, the reason being it can put you under pressure," he said at a press conference in Kolkata. "We are looking to make a slow and steady progress, rather than think too far ahead," said the wicket-keeping batsman, who is widely expected to retire at the end of the tournament.

India, hosting the format's world cup for the first time, boast a string of players in form, starting with captain-in-waiting Virat Kohli. Kohli, who already captains India in Tests, has nine fifties in his last 14 Twenty20 innings, and aver-

ages over 50 in the format. Openers Rohit Sharma and Shikhar Dhawan have also hit a purple patch while the bowlers have impressed too, including the wily off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin. With the players looking well-settled, Dhoni said he saw no reason to tinker with team strategy. "We are running on the sixth gear (although) I know the technology has gone into the eighth gear," he quipped.

"We have to keep our intensity up and focus should be there right from the very first ball. I think everything is set. I don't think there are any more gears left for us to operate." India start their campaign against New Zealand next Tuesday followed by a much-awaited clash with archrivals Pakistan in the northern hill town of Dharamsala on March 19. The final will be played on April 3 at Kolkata's Eden Gardens. — AFP

SIBANDA POWERS ZIMBABWE TO OPENING WIN

NAGPUR: Opener Vusi Sibanda struck a fluent half-century to help Zimbabwe defeat a scandal-hit Hong Kong by 14 runs in the opening group encounter of the World T20 in Nagpur yesterday. Stung by a corruption charge prior to the start of the sixth edition of the tournament, Hong Kong had their moments in the game but failed to capitalise. Electing to field, Hong Kong's bowlers made early inroads but Sibanda held fort with a 46-ball 59 to guide his side to 158 for eight. Sibanda's 61-run fifth wicket partnership with Malcolm Waller and a late blitz by Elton Chigumbura ensured the total remained beyond the grasp of Hong Kong who in turn could only manage 144 for six in their 20 overs. The Tanwir Afzal-led side lost a couple of early wickets, but opener Jamie Atkinson put up some fight with a gutsy 53 off 44 balls, including four boundaries and

two sixes. A late flourish by Afzal (31 not out) gave the team some hope but the ever-increasing run rate proved too much for a side participating in just its second World T20.

Hong Kong's preparations were badly hit by the suspension of their all-rounder Irfan Ahmed in January as part of an ongoing corruption investigation and the opening day loss has only added salt to their wounds.

Among from the positives that Hong Kong could gather from the outing was their near-perfect fielding that forced three run-outs and yielded some good catches in the Zimbabwe innings. Other Group B members Afghanistan and Scotland are up next in the second game of the day. The top sides from Group A and B will move in to the Super 10 stage involving the eight established teams of world cricket. — AFP

Sports

Sammy hails Gayle
as T20's ultimate
destroyer

17



Curry breaks 300
3-pointers barrier
as Warriors
win again

18



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 2016

GULFRUN CAR SHOW AT MUROUJ THIS WEEKEND Page 15



MADRID: Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo, center, jumps to head the ball during the Champions League Round of 16, second leg, soccer match between Real Madrid and Roma at the Bernabeu stadium in Madrid, Spain, yesterday. — AP

RONALDO PUNISHES PROFLIGATE ROMA

MADRID: Goals from Cristiano Ronaldo and James Rodriguez left Roma ruing a host of missed chances as Real Madrid moved into the quarter-finals of the Champions League 4-0 on aggregate with a 2-0 win yesterday. Edin Dzeko and Mohamed Salah were the culprits in front of goal for the visitors before two goals in four second-half minutes ensured Madrid's first win in a two-legged tie over Italian opposition in Europe for 29 years.

Ronaldo swept home Lucas Vazquez's cross 26 minutes from time before turning provider for Rodriguez to smash home the second. Gareth Bale started for Madrid for the first time in over six weeks due to a calf injury and the Welshman began brightly as he got a rare chance to start on the left with Ronaldo through the middle in the absence of the injured Karim Benzema.

Bale's cut-back was sliced wide by Marcelo as Real

threatened early on. However, it was Roma who enjoyed the best of the chances before half-time to get back into the tie. Former Manchester City striker Dzeko failed to repay Luciano Spalletti's faith by handing him a start up front when he fired into the side-netting after Salah's pace tore through the Madrid defence.

Salah had a great chance himself as he too could only find the side-netting when clean through on Keylor Navas just before the half-hour mark.

Yet, the hosts could also easily have been ahead by the break as former Arsenal 'keeper Wojciech Szczesny was put to work in the Roma goal.

The Polish international's palms were stung by Luka Modric's long-range drive before Szczesny got down well to turn Ronaldo's low shot to safety.

Ronaldo then had Madrid's best chance of the half when he was played in by Bale, but Szczesny again scur-

ried from his line to block the three-time World Player of the Year's effort. Szczesny was forced into action once more at the start of the second period to parry Rodriguez's volley.

INSTANT IMPACT

However, the pattern of the first half was repeated as the Italians then passed up a host of chances to put themselves ahead on the night.

Salah again failed to hit the target with just Navas to beat as the Egyptian continued to find acres of space in behind the Madrid defence.

Navas then had to make two smart saves from Alessandro Florenzi and Kostas Manolas as Roma finally at least hit the target. Bale was replaced on the hour mark by Vazquez and the Spanish winger made an instant impact to tee up Ronaldo's 13th Champions

League goal of the season. Vazquez got to the byline and Ronaldo beat his marker and Szczesny to his cross to fire into the roof of the net. Four minutes later it was 2-0 as Ronaldo led a Madrid counter-attack and teed up Rodriguez to lash between Szczesny's legs.

Ronaldo missed a glorious chance for his second of the night 20 minutes from time when he slotted just wide after a brilliant Real break involving Marcelo, Rodriguez and Vazquez from a Roma corner.

Spalletti then put his recent spat with club legend Francesco Totti behind him to introduce the 39-year-old for the closing stages to a standing ovation by the home fans. And Roma were denied at least the goal their performance deserved when Navas flew to his right to claw away Diego Perotti's effort and ensure he still hasn't conceded a goal in the Champions League this season. — AFP

SCHUERRLER FIRES WOLFSBURG INTO CHAMPIONS LEAGUE QUARTERS

WOLFSBURG: Andre Schuerlle fired Wolfsburg into the Champions League quarter-finals for the first time to seal yesterday's 1-0 victory and a 4-2 aggregate win over Gent.

Having lost the first-leg 3-2 at home, Gent arrived in Germany needing to score at least twice but Schuerlle ended their hopes with a goal 16 minutes from time.

It was his Germany team-mate Julian Draxler, who scored twice in the first-leg, who danced around Gent defender Nana Asare to provide the cross which Schuerlle drilled home.

It capped a fine seven days for the Germany winger after Schuerlle hit his first Bundesliga hat-trick the previous Tuesday in a 4-0 romp over Hanover.

Hitting the winner against Gent will further raise his stock at Wolfsburg, who are now seventh-four points from a Champions League place next season in Germany's top flight.

Gent coach Hein Vanhaezebrouck said he wanted his team to unsettle the hosts, but his side was restricted to just six shots on goal Nigerian forward Moses Simon's low cross lacked a boot to turn it as Gent's best first-half chance went begging, but their challenge gradually petered out.

Wolfsburg effectively closed the game down in the first-half by restricting Gent to only a series of half chances.

Schuerlle deserved his goal and had a great chance approaching the hour mark but his shot was blocked by Gent midfielder Renato Neto. Gent centre-back Rami Gershon then blocked a Schuerlle shot, which had been heading for the back of the net, on 70 minutes. Soon after, Vanhaezebrouck brought on Mali forward Kalifa Coulibaly, who scored Gent's second goal in the first leg, to try and break the deadlock.

It was Wolfsburg who finally opened the scoring, though, when Draxler, who had scored in both of Wolfsburg's previous games, turned provider. The attacking midfielder picked out Schuerlle's arrival in the box for his team-mate to rifle home to the delight of the home fans.

In the dying stages, Gent midfielder Brecht Dejaegere fired over, but it was too little, too late. Both sides had qualified for the knock-out stages for the first time, but it is German Cup holders Wolfsburg who go into the last eight pot. — AFP



WOLFSBURG: Gent's Israeli defender Rami Gershon (L) and Wolfsburg's striker Max Kruse vie for the ball during the second-leg round of 16 UEFA Champions League football match between VfL Wolfsburg and KAA Gent at the Volkswagen arena in Wolfsburg yesterday. — AFP

SHARAPOVA FAILED DRUG TEST, PENALTY UNKNOWN

LOS ANGELES: Maria Sharapova's tennis career and Olympic hopes are in jeopardy, and she claims it's all because she failed to click on a link in an email that would have told her to stop taking meldonium.

The five-time major champion says she failed a doping test at the Australian Open in January for the little-known drug, which became a banned substance under the WADA code this year. The former world No. 1 took full responsibility for her mistake when she made the announcement at a news conference Monday in Los Angeles. Sharapova could face a lengthy ban from the International Tennis Federation, possibly ending her season and preventing her from competing for Russia at the Rio Olympics. "I know that with this, I face consequences," Sharapova said. "I don't want to end my career this way, and I really hope I will be given another chance to play this game."

The 28-year-old Sharapova received notice last week that she tested positive for meldonium, a blood flow-promoting drug she has been taking for 10 years for numerous health issues. Meldonium was banned because it aids oxygen uptake and endurance, and several athletes across international sports have already been caught using it.

Sharapova and all players were notified of the changes in the WADA banned substances list in December. Sharapova claimed she simply missed the change, neglecting to click on the link. "I take great responsibility and professionalism in my job, and I made a huge mistake," Sharapova said. "I let my fans down. I let the sport down that I've been playing since the age of 4, that I love so deeply."

Meldonium, also known as mildronate, is a Latvian-manufactured drug popular for fighting

heart disease in former Soviet Union countries. Meldonium treats ischemia, or lack of blood flow, but can be taken in large doses as a performance-enhancer.

Sharapova said she began taking meldonium for "several health issues I had back in 2006," including a magnesium deficiency, regular influenza, "irregular" heart test results and early indications of diabetes, of which she has a family history. Sharapova's penalties could range from a multiyear ban to a minimal sanction with no suspension if officials believe she made an honest mistake. WADA President Craig Reedie told The Associated Press that any athlete found guilty of using meldonium would normally face a one-year suspension.

The ITF's anti-doping program announced in a statement that Sharapova will be provisionally suspended starting this weekend while her case is examined. WADA spokesman Ben Nichols said the organization won't comment until the ITF makes a decision.

Sharapova and her attorney, John J. Haggerty, declined to say where Sharapova was put on the drug or where she gets it now, citing the ongoing process with the ITF. Meldonium is not approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

"I understand the drug is sold particularly in Eastern Europe," Reedie told the AP in a telephone interview. "You can almost get it over the counter. For stronger versions, you might need a prescription. There has been a whole rash of these cases since the 1st of January when it appeared on the banned list. This might not be happening if athletes would be taking more care of the things that are on the list."

Reedie said meldonium can be "very strong medicine." — AP



KUWAIT BEAUTIFUL & GREEN STUDENTS ART COMPETITION

March 10th Till April 14th, 2016

Organized By

Kuwait Times

Sponsored By

JW MARRIOTT.
KUWAIT CITY



الباتل
AL-BATEL

HELLO ARTISTS...

Welcome to the Student's Art Competition. I hope you are ready to paint a beautiful painting and win wonderful prizes. The theme for your painting must be related to planting and greening, basically anything pertaining to our environment. We are looking for a great painting. So, please pick up your color pencils, paint brushes, crayons or whatever you prefer and start drawing and painting.

Good luck to you, our young artists.

- Competition is open to ages from (6 - 8) (9 - 11) (12 - 14) and (15 - 17) and Special needs.
- The competition is open for all schools in Kuwait (Government and Private)
- The competition will start on January 28th and will continue till March 19th 2016.
- 10 winners from each category will receive valuable prizes.
- All participants will receive a certificate of appreciation.
- All schools participating in

- the competition will receive an appreciation plaque.
- Any school or individual interested to participate in this competition is welcome to visit the office of Kuwait Times and collect the drawing sheets.
- Drawing sheets will be given to schools FREE of charge.
- Only drawing sheets provided by the Kuwait Times will be allowed.
- You can use any kind of color pencils, paint brushes or crayons.

Participation Form

If you are interested to participate fill the form and send it to Kuwait Times.

From:

We would like to confirm our participation in the above mentioned activity with the total number of participating student's so the corresponding number of drawing sheets can be delivered to our school.

School:

Tel: Fax:

Address:

Total number of interested students are

6 - 8 years 9 - 11 years 12 - 14 years 15 - 17 years Special need

Name: Signature :

For more information contact Kuwait Times Tel: 24835616/7 Fax 24835620/1 or send an email to: ads@kuwaittimes.net

Kuwait Times BUSINESS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 2016

BoE warns of Brexit risks,
provoking eurosceptics ire
Page 23

Japan spins wheels as wary
consumers stash their cash
Page 25



China exports record
heaviest fall in years

WHO'S NEXT? ASIAN INVESTOR ACTIVISM SET TO GROW AFTER BLACKROCK CAMPAIGN

Page 26

Page 25



BASRA: A general view shows pipelines in the newly opened section of the oil refinery of Zubair, southwest of Basra in southern Iraq. Iraq's oil exports and revenue dipped in February compared with the previous month as low global crude prices offered Baghdad no financial respite. — AFP

OIL EDGES LOWER AFTER KUWAIT DENTS HOPES

KUWAIT PRODUCING 3 MILLION BPD: OIL MINISTER

LONDON: Oil prices edged lower yesterday after Kuwait said it would only agree to an output freeze if all major producers take part and Goldman Sachs analysts poured cold water over the prospects for a sustained rally. Brent crude futures were down 12 cents at \$40.72 a barrel at 0922 GMT, hovering above the \$40 mark it last traded at three months ago. On Monday the contract had climbed by 5.5 percent in intra-day trading and it has gained about 50 percent since Jan 20.

US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) futures

were down 10 cents at \$37.80 a barrel. "Prices are lower on the Goldman Sachs and Kuwaiti comments and the oil market remains oversupplied," said Tamas Varga, oil analyst at PVM in London. Kuwait's oil minister said yesterday that his country's participation in an output freeze would require all major oil producers, including Iran, to be on board. "I'll go full power if there's no agreement. Every barrel I produce I'll sell," Anas Al-Saleh told reporters in Kuwait City.

OPEC member Kuwait is currently produc-

ing 3 million barrels of oil per day, he added. On Monday the Ecuadorian government said that Latin American oil producers would meet on Friday to coordinate a strategy to halt the crude price rout. Yesterday's report by Goldman Sachs said that a recent surge in commodity prices was premature and unsustainable. "While these dynamics (rising prices) could run further, they simply are not sustainable in the current environment," the analysts wrote. "Energy needs lower prices to maintain financial stress to finish the rebalancing

process; otherwise, an oil price rally will prove self-defeating, as it did last spring."

On the demand side, China's crude imports jumped 19.1 percent between January and February to 31.80 million tons, or about 8 million barrels per day, despite overall weak trading figures released yesterday. "Higher 'teapot' (independent refinery) demand and stronger refining margins ... have contributed to increased imports. Falling domestic crude production is also supportive," said Virendra Chauhan of Energy

Aspects. Despite strong oil demand, questions about the sustainability of growing consumption weighed on markets after China's overall exports tumbled by a quarter in February. China's February vehicle sales, a key driver for gasoline demand, were down 3.7 percent year on year, data from the country's Passenger Car Association showed. "This is really a poor start for trade this year," said Zhang Yongjun, senior economist at the China Centre for International Economic Exchanges. — Reuters

DUBAI DEVELOPERS KEEP BUILDING UNDAUNTED BY CRASH MEMORIES

RIPPLES FROM OIL PRICE PLUNGE RAISE FUNDING QUESTIONS

DUBAI: Dubai developers are pressing ahead with their construction plans despite expectations that property prices will fall yet further this year, undaunted by memories of a 2008 crash. Industry consultants say that while sales volumes have slumped in the emirate, structural changes to the market such as tighter regulations together with fewer speculators and developers should ensure a much softer landing this time. But others worry about ripple effects from the dive in oil prices, even though Dubai is a small crude producer compared with fellow emirate Abu Dhabi, and wonder how all the projects that are being announced will be funded.

Dubai property prices have been more volatile in the past decade than in other centres. Residential prices in the emirate fell 50 percent from a third-quarter 2008 peak to mid-2009, suffering a second downturn in early 2010, industry consultants Cluttons estimate. Prices then rebounded from 2011 following an influx of money and people displaced by uprisings in several Arab countries, recovering to within 18 percent of 2008 peaks. But values slipped again from late 2014. Cluttons reckons they fell 3-5 percent in 2015 and forecasts a similar drop this year; rivals CBRE say prices declined about 15 percent last year and predict another 10 percent drop in 2016.

This seems to have swayed developers little. Emaar Properties says it will not change its plans despite sales revenue falling 28 percent to 7.51 billion dirhams (\$2.04 billion) in the first nine months of 2015. "Emaar is progressing as scheduled with all its projects launched," said a spokesman for Emaar, builder of the world's tallest tower, the Burj Khalifa. The company, one of four big players in the Dubai market, has a backlog of projects worth 24.1 billion dirhams in the wider United Arab Emirates. "Sales enquiries have continued to be robust, led by strong inter-

est from regional and international investors," said the spokesman.

Echoes of 2008

Property markets can be driven as much by sentiment as supply and demand, so such overt bullishness is perhaps understandable. However, it ignores a 19 percent decline in Dubai unit sales and a 24 percent drop in the combined sales value in 2015, CBRE estimates. It also echoes 2008 when that October the developer Nakheel announced plans to build a kilometre-high tower, which at almost 200 meters more than the Burj Khalifa would be a global record. Barely a year later, Nakheel sought to restructure about \$11 billion in borrowings and property prices were in free fall. Today a Dubai metro station is named after the lofty project, but the tower has yet to materialize. Dubai has doubled property transaction fees and imposed tougher deposit requirements for mortgage borrowers. While this has helped to prompt the current downturn, inflicting such short-term pain may ultimately lessen volatility by minimizing speculative trading.

This marks a significant change from 2008. "The dynamics of the market this time around are vastly different ... The fundamentals are a lot stronger," said Faisal Durrani, partner and head of research at Cluttons. DAMAC Properties, Dubai's largest independent developer, also says it has not slowed construction as there is demand waiting to be met. "There will continue to be an under-supply of completed units in the market; based on Dubai's economic growth, demand should outstrip supply," said a DAMAC spokesman. "It's very much business as usual."

Dubai officials have remained optimistic on economic growth in the emirate which has diversified into areas such as tourism more than larger oil exporters. In December, a government

official estimated 2015 growth at around four percent, close to levels of recent years. However, the UAE has said it will be hard to achieve growth of more than three percent across the emirates this year. The spectre of over-supply still haunts the property market after the crash, which was partly due to an abundance of units being completed almost at the same time.

To avoid a repeat, developers are widely thought to delay handing over units when they are completed, although of course this means they get no money from them until a sale goes ahead. Over the last five years only about 35 percent of residential units slated for handover in a given year were delivered to buyers, consultants JLL estimates, with sales delayed until subsequent years.

Oil impact

Oil is thought to constitute only about 4-5 percent of Dubai's economy, but the effect of the crude price slump will be greater than this figure implies. "There's a ripple effect (into) office demand, the amount of trade hotels get, business activity, amount of flights, retail spend," said Alan Robertson, JLL's MENA chief executive. Lower oil receipts have tightened liquidity. Government deposits in the UAE banking system fell by 56 billion dirhams in the 12 months to September 2015, National Bank of Abu Dhabi reported. "This will have a direct impact on the mortgage market, which is already very restrictive," said Clutton's Durrani. Project funding is likely to be a problem this year. "There are a lot of new projects being announced but where are they all going to get the money from?" said Craig Plumb, JLL MENA Head of Research.

Of the four developers that dominate in Dubai, three - Emaar, Nakheel and Dubai Properties - are ultimately state-controlled, making it easier to coordinate supply. — Reuters



A Hybrid car pictured in Jordan

HYBRID CARS BOOMING IN JORDAN

AMMAN: The use of hybrid cars that functions by both fuel and battery for engine power is growing in Jordan due to their moderate cost and environment-friendly aspects. Since its introduction to Jordanian markets in 2008, hybrid cars have been competing with the traditional fuel-burning and century year-old autos. In separate interviews with KUNA, a number of specialists and car owners said that hybrid cars burn fuel at a slower rate, which is important for a country that suffers an energy crisis.

They added that these cars also reduce the emission of greenhouse gases, thus limiting the negative impact on the environment. The increasing demand on hybrid cars in the country is also a result of the price difference between them and fuel-burning vehicles of the same model, that could be as high as \$14,000. Hybrid cars can also reduce the costs of fuel by 50 percent, they said.

The Jordanian government is encouraging people to use hybrid cars as part of its plan to achieve energy security by using

renewable energy sources, they said. The country aims to reduce the cost of energy by 20 percent in 2020, they also noted. Jordan is the third importer of hybrid cars after the US and Canada, while it is number one in the region, sales consultant at a Korean car agency Amro Bedis said. He added that the government imposed taxes of 25 percent for hybrid cars, compared to 92 percent for fuel-burning vehicles in order to encourage using the first type.

Meanwhile, the consultant added that hybrid engines and batteries can perform well for over seven years, due to Jordan's moderate weather. However, these cars cannot function well in the hot desert environment of the Gulf region, he said. On his part, chairman of the Energy Conservation and Sustainable Environment Ayoub Abu Deya said that gas emission from regular vehicles contributes to global warming by 20 percent. The government has provided officials with electric cars that have no emissions as part of its energy security plan, he noted. —KUNA

OUT OF BAILOUT, CYPRUS CAUTIOUS ON FUNDING UNITY

BRUSSELS: Confident of better ratings and cheaper funding as it exits a euro zone bailout, Cyprus is wary of planning major new borrowing to help fund any reunification and may not need it, its finance minister said yesterday. Haris Georgiades said Cyprus would make a "clean exit" from its 2013 program, confirming the assessment on Monday of the Eurogroup that the island's bailout program will end in March. Speaking in Brussels after a euro zone finance ministers' meeting, Georgiades said he had no need for a precautionary credit line from institutional lenders and saw no need to add further support for Cypriot banks. He expected a continuation of poli-

cies that have eliminated the public deficit to ensure further upgrades by credit rating agencies that would in turn bring down state borrowing costs—currently just over 4 percent. "We need investment-grade (ratings)," he said. A major unknown for the economy is whether and how the Turkish-backed breakaway region in the north of the island is reunited with the Greek-speaking south. Optimism is growing that negotiations to resolve one of the world's oldest frozen conflicts will produce a peace deal in the next year.

Georgiades said he was not factoring in potential positives from reunification, however, or working on funding plans for possible infrastructure

investment. "We are not there yet," he said, adding that immediate heavy investment in infrastructure might not be necessary in northern Cyprus 42 years since Turkey took control in an invasion after a brief Greek-inspired coup. It was unclear how much funding a reunification process might need, Georgiades said, adding that Cyprus might turn to multilateral lenders such as the World Bank, the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development or the EU's new "Juncker Fund" investment vehicle.

Among potential costs of any accord would be compensation for people giving up claims to land and

property lost during partition, one of the most sensitive parts of any deal and one which has yet to be negotiated. Georgiades said reunification would be "immensely positive" for the Cypriot economy and the region but that he was not budgeting for future gains, just as Cyprus was not yet assuming likely gains from new under-sea gas flows. "We are not factoring anything in of these potentially positive developments," he said. "We wanted to fix the economy ... We don't want to make any assumptions." Georgiades repeated a call for Turkey to normalize its economic relationship with Cyprus by ending a ban on Cypriot shipping trading with Turkey, which Cyprus says

breaches Ankara's customs pact with the European Union.

The dispute has led to Cyprus keeping a veto for years on several "chapters" of Ankara's long-stalled negotiations to join the bloc. EU leaders who struck a draft deal with Turkey on Monday aimed at halting the flow of migrants from Turkey to Europe have held out the prospect of reopening those areas of the talks. But Cypriot officials say Cyprus opposes linking its veto on accession talks to the migrant crisis and Georgiades said he had seen no new move from Turkey to ease its port ban. "It is high time," he said, "That Cyprus-flagged ships have access to Turkish ports and waters."—Reuters

'MOTHERHOOD PENALTY, DADDY BONUS': NEW BRITISH PARENTS JUDGED AT WORK

LONDON: If you're a new mother in Britain returning to work after having a baby here's some news for you: almost half your colleagues will think that you've become less committed to your job, according to a survey published yesterday. However, if you're a new father, a baby comes with a bonus, as many of your peers will likely think your commitment to work has actually increased, said the poll by the Fawcett Society, a campaign group promoting women's rights in the labor market. The news gets even worse for women who become mothers before the age of 33, who, according to analysis by the Trades Union Congress (TUC), Britain's largest union group—earn 15 percent less than their female colleagues who haven't had children.

"The motherhood penalty and daddy bonus are still a strong feature of our workplaces," Sam Smethers, Fawcett Society's chief executive, said in a statement. "This drives inequality and forces women and men into traditional male breadwinner, female career roles." According to the Fawcett Society survey, 46 percent of people in Britain believe women become less committed to their job after having a baby, compared to 11 percent who think the same is true for men.

Meanwhile, 29 percent of people believe new fathers become more committed to work, compared to just 8 percent who believe new mothers become more committed. The poll showed discrepancies in how men and women see their share of childcare, with men almost twice as likely as women to believe that tasks such as making sure children do their homework or washing children's clothes were shared equally.

"The lack of flexibility and pressure on dads at work means women are still doing the bulk of the caring and the work around childcare," Smethers said. "(...) until we start to see a more equal sharing of care we won't achieve equality at work and we won't close the pay gap." The survey also showed that both men and women lie to their bosses in order to spend time caring for their children. Four in 10 fathers said they were not getting enough leave time to care for their children and 38 percent said they resorted to lying to their bosses in order to spend time with their kids, compared to 28 percent of women who said they lied.— Reuters



LONDON: BMW cars line up in a showroom in London. The chief executive of Rolls-Royce has told the company's British staff that business could be harmed if the UK leaves the European Union. — AP

BANK OF ENGLAND WARNS OF BREXIT RISKS, PROVOKING EUROSCEPTICS IRE

EXITING EU COULD PROMPT BANKS TO ABANDON LONDON

LONDON: Exiting the European Union could hurt Britain's \$2.9 trillion economy and prompt some banks to abandon London's global financial powerhouse, Bank of England Governor Mark Carney said yesterday. In his strongest intervention so far in Britain's debate about EU membership, Carney said he was not making any recommendation about how to vote in the June 23 referendum but that uncertainty created by an exit could hurt the economy.

Asked about the implications of an exit for Britain's huge banking industry, he said some major financial institutions were considering a possible move if the country voted to leave the EU. "One would expect some activity to move," Carney told lawmakers in the British parliament. "I'd say a num-

ber of institutions are contingency planning for that possibility." After clinching a deal from other European Union leaders last month in Brussels, Prime Minister David Cameron asked the central bank, which is independent from the government, to set out the facts about membership.

Though Carney also said there were risks from remaining inside the EU due to the greater integration planned by the 19-member euro zone, he praised Cameron's deal. "The settlement addresses the issues the Bank identified as being important, given the likely need for further integration of the euro area, to maintaining its ability to achieve its objectives," Carney, a Canadian, said in a letter to British lawmakers.

Adding caveats to many of his

assessments, Carney said the BoE was not taking a view on the long-term implications for Britain's economy of a Brexit, as leaving is known, but there could be a short-term hit to growth if the country decides to leave the bloc. "There could be lower levels of activity because of the degree of uncertainty that could affect investment and household spending," Carney told a parliamentary committee. Under questioning by lawmakers, Carney came in for harsh criticism from one eurosceptic member of Cameron's party for a BoE report published in October which gave a positive assessment of Britain's membership of the EU. Jacob Rees-Mogg said it was "beneath the dignity" of the BoE to make "speculative" comments about the benefits of EU membership.— Reuters

News

In brief

Chevron's mega Australia project starts production

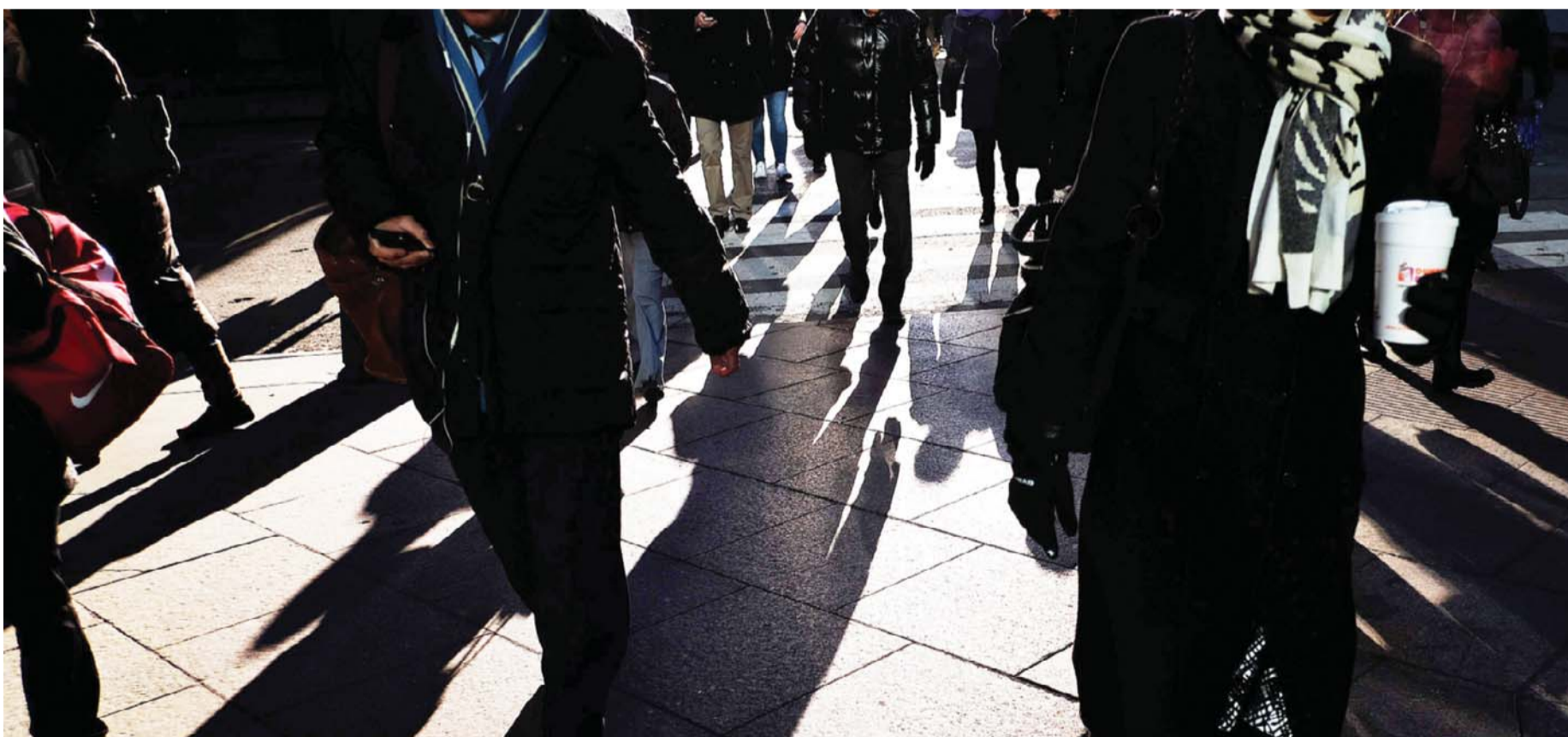
SYDNEY: One of the world's largest natural gas plants and Australia's biggest resources project has started production, Chevron said yesterday, as the market continues to battle plunging commodity prices and a supply glut. The US multinational said the US\$52 billion Gorgon liquefied natural gas (LNG) project off Australia's northwest coast, which has been hit by delays and cost overruns, was expected to ship its first cargo next week. Australia has several other LNG plants in the pipeline and is predicted to overtake Qatar as the world's biggest natural gas producer by 2020. The collapse in oil prices, which places pressure on the value of LNG, and an excess of supply has been hurting energy companies, but Chevron, the second-biggest US oil firm, said the "long-term fundamentals for LNG are attractive." "We expect legacy assets such as Gorgon will drive long-term growth and create shareholder value for decades to come," Chevron's chairman and chief executive John Watson said in a statement.

South Africa: Drought cost farmers \$1 billion

JOHANNESBURG: South Africa's agriculture sector lost a billion dollars over the past year due to the worst drought in a century, the government announced yesterday. Poor rain saw the agriculture sector contract by 14 percent, according to the latest figures from StatsSA. The drought "resulted in losses worth 16 billion rand (\$1 billion) across the sector," an official statement said. The continent's most advanced economy grew by an annualized 0.6 percent in the last quarter of 2015. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund predict that South Africa's economic growth will be less than one percent in 2016. Shortages resulting from the drought will see South Africa, the regional food basket, importing at least four million tons of the local staple maize. Earlier this year, Agriculture Minister Senzeni Zokwana said the country will need to import up to six million tons of food to avert hunger at home and meet its contractual export obligations to neighboring countries.

Ransomware aimed to shake down Mac users

SAN FRANCISCO: The bane of "ransomware" used by hackers to hold data hostage was expected to begin striking a small number of Mac computers on Monday. Researchers at US computer security firm Palo Alto Networks said that they alerted Apple over the weekend to the discovery of malicious code they named "KeRanger" crafted to infect Mac computers and deny people access to their own pictures, documents and other digital data until money is paid. "We believe KeRanger is the first fully functional ransomware on the OS X platform," Palo Alto Networks said in a blog post, referring to the operating software that powers Mac computers. Hackers got KeRanger into Mac machines by infecting the open-source program Transmission used to transfer files at a file-sharing network, according to the researchers who say they caught onto the attack shortly after it began on Friday.



NEW YORK: Photo shows morning commuters as they make their way along a street in New York. New York announced that the city's employment figures had risen to record 4.29 million jobs with 249,000 jobs added since progressive Democrat Bill de Blasio became mayor two years ago. — AFP

POST-CRISIS BANK REGULATIONS WORKED, US PRESIDENT SAYS

WASHINGTON: President Barack Obama said Monday that the tough regulations implemented after the financial crisis have strengthened the banks and the economy, rejecting critics who say "nothing changed." Speaking eight years after the failure of investment bank Bear Stearns set off a devastating crash, Obama said the main threat to financial stability is legislators seeking to roll back the sweeping Dodd-Frank legislation that forced better behavior on the banks. The Bear Stearns collapse "was a key moment in an economic spiral that eventually cost millions of Americans home val-

ues, pensions, jobs, savings. It was devastating," Obama told a gathering of financial regulators in Washington. "And it is a useful reminder of what happens when you have lax regulation on Wall Street—eventually, it migrates to Main Street."

Since then, the Dodd-Frank reforms have forced banks and other financial institutions to strengthen capital and pull back from their most risky practices, without preventing them or the economy from growing, Obama noted. "The laws that we passed have worked," he said. "So I want to dispel the notion that exists both on the

left and on the right that somehow, after the crisis, nothing happened." Obama, in the final year of a presidency that began in January 2009 at the depths of the Great Recession, was defending his record against politicians battling to succeed him, some of whom say Dodd-Frank should be dismantled while others say it did not achieve much.

"It is popular in the media, in political discourse—both on the left and the right—to suggest that the crisis happened and nothing changed. That is not true," Obama said. "Because of Wall Street reform, our financial

system is safer and stronger than it was before the crisis.... we rebuilt better and we rebuilt it stronger." He said work still has to be done, especially in cybersecurity, where the industry faces "increasing vulnerability." But the main challenge, he said, is members of Congress "who want to strip away the authorities that were granted under Dodd-Frank; who tried to weaken those regulations." Without tough regulators, he said, "these financial institutions with enormous resources and mountains of lawyers and accountants and analysts will run circles around the government."—AFP



ABUJA: Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari (right) shakes hand with his South African counterpart Jacob Zuma during their meeting at the presidential villa in Abuja yesterday. — AFP

South Africa leader Zuma visits Nigeria

ABUJA: South Africa's President Jacob Zuma begins a two-day state visit to Nigeria yesterday, which observers see as an attempt to mend fences between the continent's largest economic powers. Key events on the trip include an address to the National Assembly in the capital, Abuja, and a meeting with the South Africa-Nigeria Business Forum, Zuma's office has announced. Pretoria is putting a positive spin on the visit, talking up the pair's "good bilateral political, economic and social relations" and potential new business opportunities. But neither presidency made mention of tensions between the two countries, including most recently the massive fine imposed by Nigeria on South African telecoms giant MTN. MTN's Nigeria operation was handed a \$3.9 billion penalty in October last year for failing to disconnect 5.1 million unregistered SIM cards.

STOCK MARKETS BRUISED BY BRITTLE BEIJING DATA

EUROPEAN SHARES FALL AS WEAK CHINA DATA WEIGHS ON MARKETS

LONDON: Global stock markets fell yesterday after another batch of weak data from China reinforced persistent concerns about a possible slowdown in the global economy.

ened 0.4 percent. The safe-haven Japanese yen rose while the low-yielding euro gained against the dollar yesterday as the downbeat Chinese trade data fueled concerns about the state of global demand, weighing on appetite for riskier assets and currencies.

"At the moment we're in a bear stock market. Everyone's looking for an excuse to sell out, and the reason today for a lot of investors is the weak China data," said Andreas Clenow, hedge fund principal and trader at ACIES Asset Management. The soft Chinese

data also impacted oil and metals prices. Oil prices also eased back after Kuwait said it would only agree to an output freeze if all major producers took part. The MSCI Emerging Market index fell 0.7 percent while US stock index futures also shed around 1 percent.

The euro's outlook rests largely on expectations the European Central Bank will announce more monetary stimulus measures on Thursday to boost ultra-low inflation and sluggish growth in the euro zone. A small 10 basis point cut to push its deposit

rate deeper into negative territory is a foregone conclusion while some type of adjustment of the bank's 1.5 trillion euro asset purchase program is also near certain. Nevertheless, investors expressed uncertainty over the extent of the ECB's likely new measures on Thursday. "We think the central bank will once again struggle to beat high expectations, with the euro not likely to suffer significantly after the announcement," BNP Paribas analysts wrote in a note to clients.— Reuters

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report. Tuesday 08 March 2016. Table with columns: Index, Change, Closing, Last Closing, High, Low, Volume, Value (KWD), Number of Trades. Includes sub-sections for Treasuries, Industrials, Consumer Goods, Health Care, Telecommunications, Banks, and Real Estate.



QINGDAO: A cargo ship berths at a port in Qingdao, east China's Shandong province yesterday. China's exports saw their heaviest fall in nearly seven years in February, diving more than a quarter as feeble global trade offset the weaker yuan and raised pressure on Beijing to ramp up domestic demand as a driver of expansion.— AFP

GOLD NEARS 13-MONTH PEAK AFTER CHINA DATA

GOLDMAN SACHS KEEPS BEARISH VIEW ON GOLD

LONDON: Gold edged towards a 13-month high yesterday, supported by a weaker dollar and lower European shares after Chinese trade data fuelled concerns about the state of global demand.

how far it will go. The Fed lifted interest rates for the first time in nearly a decade in December. Gold could test \$1,300 an ounce, more than 2 percent higher than its current level, if the Fed keeps rates on hold, said Daniel Ang, analyst at Phillip Futures in Singapore.

"Uncertainty about the global economy and investor risk aversion have been a supporting theme for gold this year," said Carlo Alberto de Casa, ActivTrades' chief analyst. "The metal is challenging last week's 13-month peak, while February's high around \$1,260 has become a strong technical support level."

Fed Governor Lael Brainard, who has emerged as a leader of the central bank's dovish faction, argued for patience with regard to interest rate rises. But Fed Vice Chair Stanley Fischer warned that inflation is showing signs of accelerating, words that policymakers often use when signaling a preference for raising rates.

The next main market focus is tomorrow's policy review by the European Central Bank, followed by the US Federal Reserve's policy meeting on March 15-16. The ECB is expected to ease monetary policy, but investors are uncertain about

Supporting bullion, holdings of SPDR Gold Trust, the world's largest gold-backed exchange-traded fund, dropped slightly on Friday but stayed near the highest since September 2014 at 25.5 million ounces. Goldman Sachs is sticking to a near-term target of \$1,100 for gold. Spot silver dropped 0.1 percent to \$15.60 an ounce, while spot platinum rose 0.2 percent to \$999.33 an ounce after hitting a four-month high overnight. Palladium was down 1.7 percent at \$562.56 after touching \$580.56, its strongest since November.— Reuters

RWE GLOOMY FOR 2016 OUTLOOK; PROFITS FALL

FRANKFURT: German power giant RWE yesterday confirmed its forecast for a further decline in profits this year as Germany's transition away from conventional power continues to squeeze margins and the group announced an overhaul of its British operations.

RWE, with its sprawling portfolio of coal-fired power stations all across Europe, is feeling the pinch from the collapse in wholesale electricity prices and increased competition from suppliers of energy from renewable sources. Power utilities have complained that the cost of having to close down their nuclear power plants and the heavy subsidies afforded to renewable energy have pushed them deeply into the red.

The group's British unit Npower announced separately it would axe 2,400 jobs after posting an annual loss on fierce competition and sliding sales. Npower, which employs a total workforce of 11,500, said it suffered an "extremely disappointing" performance and would shed "around" 2,400 jobs by 2018 in a new cost-cutting drive.

Looking ahead to the current year, forecast a "considerable decline" in profits, with operating profit set to drop to 2.8-3.1 billion euros and adjusted net profit to 500-700 million euros. "One principal reason is the price-induced decline in margins in conventional power generation, which efficiency-enhancement measures will only partly offset," RWE said. "Despite the difficult economic environment, both net debt and headcount are expected to remain constant at a group level," it added. In December, RWE announced plans to spin off its renewables, grids and retail operations and take the unit public. Bigger rival E.ON is similarly splitting its conventional and renewable energies operations into separate entities.— AFP

For more information, call Global Investment House on 1 80 42 42, www.globalinvest.com

ABENOMICS 'LOSING ITS GLOSS'

TOKYO: Lipstick shades are kissing off Japan's short-lived economic recovery, and fashion industry hues are turning as sombre as a central banker after another ineffectual splurge of money printing. In the first year of "Abenomics", the economic stimulus program of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, when stocks were booming, exports rising and deflation in retreat, Shiseido Co introduced a sassy new lip gloss that reflected the new confidence.

It had been more than 20 years since a red as bright as Shiseido's Lacquer Rouge 413 had been popular, the company said, recalling the boom era before Japan tumbled into two decades of stagnation and deflation in the early 1990s. Now growth has again turned negative, inflation is flatlining and consumer spending has notched up a fifth straight month of declines, the color is

draining from Shiseido's lips. Sales are shifting to hues like Maquillage Dual Color Rouge 10, which is closer to natural Japanese lip color, and 800 yen cheaper than its hot red cousin.

Japan's fading recovery is being matched in the fashion industry. "There were hopes in society that something good would happen when Prime Minister Abe's government started," said Reiko Ohno, spokeswoman for the Japan Fashion Color Association. "That timing matched the momentum when the fashion industry was trying to introduce colorful items." Last year, though, as optimism ebbed, fashion turned to more dowdy beiges, greys and navy blues, she said. With the Bank of Japan expected to cut growth and price forecasts for next year, sources say, the palette for 2017 could be very dour indeed. — Reuters



QINGDAO: Trucks transport containers at a port in Qingdao, east China's Shandong province yesterday. China's exports saw their heaviest fall in nearly seven years in February, diving more than a quarter as feeble global trade offset the weaker yuan and raised pressure on Beijing to ramp up domestic demand as a driver of expansion. — AFP

CHINA EXPORTS RECORD HEAVIEST FALL IN YEARS

FEEBLE GLOBAL TRADE RAISES PRESSURE ON BEIJING

BEIJING: China's exports saw their heaviest fall in nearly seven years in February, diving more than a quarter as feeble global trade offset the weaker yuan and raised pressure on Beijing to ramp up domestic demand. The below-forecast reading is the latest data to raise fears of a "hard landing" in China and comes days after Beijing cut its growth target for this year, while promising reforms and higher spending to boost the world's number two economy.

Customs figures showed exports sank 25.4 percent on-year to \$126.1 billion last month, sharper than the 14.5 percent economists predicted in a Bloomberg News poll and the worst performance since May 2009 at the height of the global financial crisis. China is the world's biggest trader in goods and a key driver of international growth but its firms have been battered by weak demand from major markets as the global economy stutters. In turn, its slowing expansion has sent commodities prices plunging, battering producer economies such as Australia. Imports fell for the 16th consecutive month, plunging 13.8 percent to \$93.6 billion, overshooting the Bloomberg forecast of a 12 percent slide. Analysts with ANZ Research pointed to "weakening global trade" and "sluggish domestic demand" as factors driving the "disappointing" export and import results.

In a statement, Customs said that "imports from and exports to major trade partners declined" in the first two months of the year, specifically noting a fall in exports of labor-intensive goods, including mechanical and electrical products and apparel. Imports of iron ore and crude oil increased in volume while decreasing

in dollar value terms, it said, while coal and steel import volumes declined. "Prices of major imported commodities fell across the board," Customs added. The trade data and other indications "suggest that growth momentum weakened further in January-February", wrote Nomura analyst Zhao Yang. Beijing's fiscal stimulus plans "cannot fully offset headwinds from slowing real estate and manufacturing investment", he added.

Investors were mixed on the data, with the benchmark Shanghai Composite Index falling as much as 3.27 percent during a volatile day of trading, but closing up 0.14 percent. The sharp drop in overseas shipments—the eighth straight fall—came despite ongoing weakness in the yuan currency, which was devalued in August and January, fuelling suspicions Beijing is trying to make its exports cheaper, which it denies.

The latest figures will "absolutely" reinforce depreciation pressure on the currency, Christopher Balding, professor of economics at Peking University's HSBC Business School said. "You now have a year of pretty bad trade data, so at this point it is a trend... It's clearly declining exports and declining imports." Michael Every, head of financial markets research at Rabobank Group in Hong Kong, said the statistics pointed towards more monetary and fiscal stimulus being needed, "and that will argue against the yuan stability China craves." "It's another shocker," he added.

Fake eyelashes

China's leaders are meeting this week for the annual rubber-stamp National People's

Congress, where premier Li Keqiang set a growth target of 6.5-7.0 percent for this year. He did not give a specific target for trade growth, after values fell last year, only aiming for "a steady rise in import and export volumes" and "a basic balance in international payments".

Beijing is looking to recalibrate its economy from a dependence on exports and government spending to one driven by consumers at home, but what it calls the "new normal" has it growing at rates not seen in a quarter of a century, albeit still far higher than developed countries. Chinese trade statistics are regularly questioned for being open to distortion by practices such as over-invoicing to disguise capital outflows, and Customs have launched a "National Gate Sharp Sword" campaign to crack down on false export reports. In a separate statement Customs said officials in Dalian found that a single exporter had over-reported the value of their fake eyelash exports by five times the real figure.

One analyst attributed the trade weakness to the timing of the Lunar New Year holiday. "This weakness should soon reverse as seasonal distortions fade," Julian Evans-Pritchard of Capital Economics said in a note, saying that an unusually late holiday last year caused a February surge in exports that provided an "unflattering base" for comparison this year. Authorities have pledged further fiscal and monetary support to boost the flagging economy. The country's top economic planner declared Sunday that the world's second-largest economy "absolutely will not have a hard landing". — AFP

CHINA HITS OUT AT US RESTRICTIONS ON ZTE

BEIJING: China yesterday criticized a move by Washington to slap restrictions on one of the country's biggest telecommunications equipment companies, ZTE, for violating US trade sanctions on Iran. The US Commerce Department said ZTE Corp and related companies set up a scheme to circumvent sanctions and "illicitly export" controlled items to Iran, violating United States laws. ZTE, China's second-biggest telecom equipment maker, must now apply for permission on exports from the US to the company, it said. Such limits could hamper ZTE's ability to purchase technology hardware and software in the US.

"China expresses strong dissatisfaction and firm opposition to this," China's ministry of commerce said in a statement, quoting an unnamed official. "The US move will severely affect the Chinese company's normal business activities," it said, but added the government hoped to negotiate over the issue. Founded in 1985, ZTE offers both telecom equipment and services, with customers in more than 160 countries, according to the company.

On the sidelines of China's annual meeting of lawmakers, foreign minister Wang Yi

told reporters: "This is not the correct way to handle economic and trade disputes. It will hurt people without benefitting oneself." The case dates back to 2012 when the US Department of Commerce first began investigating the transfers of US technology to Iran, according to media reports. The US government agency said on Monday that ZTE used a series of shell companies to illicitly reexport controlled items to sanctioned countries.

In a separate statement Tuesday, ZTE said it hopes to resolve the matter. "ZTE Corporation is committed to abiding by international industry conventions and the laws and regulations of the countries it is present in," it said. The statement added ZTE "is committed to seeking a plan to resolve the matter as soon as possible." Washington in January eased several restrictions on doing business with Iran, following an international agreement over the country's nuclear program. But sanctions tied to accusations that Tehran supports terrorism remain in effect, still largely blocking US companies from business with Iran. Shares of ZTE were suspended for a second day on the Hong Kong and Shenzhen stock exchanges, where they trade. — AFP



BARCELONA: Visitors test smart phones at the ZTE stand during the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona. The United States said it is placing trade restrictions on Chinese telecommunications equipment giant ZTE due to violations of US sanctions on Iran. — AFP

JAPAN SPINS WHEELS AS WARY CONSUMERS STASH THEIR CASH

TOKYO: The world's third-largest economy is stuck in neutral, as wary Japanese consumers and corporations opt to hold onto their cash rather than spend it. The latest data, released yesterday, showed Japan's GDP contracted at a 1.1 percent annualized pace in the last quarter in further evidence the economy is failing to gain traction despite unprecedented efforts by the central bank to spur more growth. The revised figures compared with a 1.4 percent expansion in the July-September quarter. They showed a modest improvement over the previous estimate of a 1.4 percent contraction in October-December. A monthly consumer survey for February, meanwhile, showed families were likely to cut spending further following the recent spate of turmoil in financial markets.

Abenomics

But more recent data suggest Japan's growth has remained tepid in early 2016, raising the likelihood of further government moves to help boost growth. That could include further moves by the Bank of Japan to encourage lending, extra government spending and possibly a second delay in a sales tax hike scheduled for April 2017. "Companies have not been as downbeat about production in the month ahead since the 2008 recession. What's more, consumer spending fell further in January as indicated by dips in 'core' household spending and retail sales," Marcel Thieliand of Capital Economics said in a commentary. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe faces pressure both at home and abroad to deliver faster results three years after launching a recovery strategy, dubbed "Abenomics" that helped boost share prices and corporate profits but has not rekindled growth as quickly as hoped. Abe will be hosting a summit of the Group of Seven industrial nations in central Japan's Mie prefecture in May. His economy minister, Nobuteru Ishihara, said yesterday that ahead of that meeting, the government would convene several seminars with top economic experts to study the global economy and how to cope with slowing growth.

Japan's economy

Japan's economy grew 0.5 percent in 2015 after flat-lining in 2014. In quarterly terms, the

economy shrank 0.3 percent in the last quarter compared with a preliminary estimate of a 0.4 percent contraction. Business investment climbed 1.5 percent, helping to offset a decline in spending on housing. Overall public investment dropped 3.4 percent. Economists are divided on whether the Bank of Japan, which holds a policy meeting next week, will expand asset purchases that are pumping trillions of yen (hundreds of billions of dollars) into the economy to help combat deflation. Last month, the central bank began charging a fee on some commercial banks' deposits, imposing a "negative interest rate" policy that has driven bond yields and interest rates on mortgages and savings deposits lower. Stuck with diminishing returns on their savings and resistant to a newly implemented official identification system known as "My Number," many Japanese households are shifting investments

overseas or just stashing cash at home: sales of safes have soared so quickly that retailers say manufacturers cannot keep up with demand.

Bank of Japan Gov Haruhiko Kuroda defended the central bank's strategy in a speech Monday. Companies and consumers will eventually begin spending more, he said, enabling Japan to reach a 2 percent inflation target and vanquish deflation. "Japan's economy has improved significantly from three years ago," Kuroda said, pointing to low unemployment and record-high corporate profits that mostly reflect a weakening of Japan's currency thanks to the BOJ's monetary easing. Since banks' profit margins are being squeezed, "there is a strong concern that the introduction of a negative interest rate will make the situation even worse," Kuroda said. But he said he was confident that ending deflation would lead to higher interest rates in the long run. — AP



TOKYO: A man enters a store in Tokyo's Ginza shopping district. Japan says its economy contracted at a 1.1 percent annualized pace in the last quarter, stymied by slow consumer demand and weaker exports. — AP

AUSTRALIAN MINER FORTESCUE TO TEAM UP WITH BRAZIL'S VALE

SYDNEY: Australia's Fortescue Metals yesterday opened the door to joint ventures and other investment deals with the world's biggest iron ore producer Vale under an agreement aimed at serving Chinese customers. As iron ore prices jumped a record 19 percent overnight on the prospect of more Chinese stimulus, Fortescue Metals Group said it had entered into a non-binding memorandum of understanding with the Brazilian giant. "(It) will allow us to work together to deliver long-term value to our customers, through the efficient supply of an attractive and competitive new iron ore blend in China," Fortescue chief executive Nev Power said.

Fortescue, of which billionaire Andrew "Twiggy" Forrest is a major shareholder, said the memorandum of understanding proposed the formation of one or more joint ventures for the blending of selected volumes of iron ore from both companies. It also provided a framework for potential investment by Vale in Fortescue "through a minority acquisition of shares on market and/or investment in current or future min-

ing assets", a statement said. After the announcement, Fortescue issued a clarifying statement, saying the memorandum of understanding "contemplates an acquisition of its listed shares of between 5 percent and 15 percent, as agreed between the parties".

Iron ore producers had been battling a supply glut and softening Chinese demand, which has seen the price of the key steel-making ingredient plunge. But commodity markets surged on Monday with iron ore spiking 19 percent to US\$63.73 on China's weekend announcement to expand spending, with the prospect of increased steel consumption boosting iron ore. Shares in Fortescue, which exports 165 million tons of iron ore annually from its deposits in Western Australia's Pilbara region, soared 23.7 percent on Monday, but closed down 9.42 percent after Tuesday's announcement at Aus\$2.79 in an overall falling market. Fortescue said the Vale agreement, which had been under discussion for about a year, was subject to board and regulatory approvals. — AFP

VERIZON TO PAY \$1.4 MILLION IN 'SUPERCOKIE' FCC SETTLEMENT

NEW YORK: Verizon will pay a \$1.35 million fine over its "supercookie" that the government said followed phone customers on the Internet without their permission. Verizon will also have to get an explicit "yes" from customers for some kinds of tracking. The supercookies landed their name because they were hard, or near-impossible, to block. Verizon uses them to deliver targeted ads to cellphone customers. The company wants to expand its advertising and media business and bought AOL for its digital ad technology in 2015.

The Federal Communications Commission said Monday that it found that Verizon began using the supercookies with consumers in December 2012, but didn't disclose the program until October 2014. Verizon updated its privacy policy to disclose the trackers in March 2015 and gave people an option then to opt out. The FCC settlement says consumers now must opt in to letting Verizon

share data with a third party. But for data-collection and sharing within Verizon itself, the company can choose to have customers either opt in or automatically do it and give consumers the option to stop it, a less stringent requirement.

The New York company has already changed some practices that critics considered most invasive. In an emailed statement, the company said that the FCC settlement recognizes that it had already made adjustments to its ad programs that give consumers more choices. Nate Cardozo, a staff attorney at the Electronic Frontier Foundation, a privacy watchdog that had been critical of the supercookies, said the settlement was an "unqualified win" for consumers. "Today's order will mean that other companies contemplating similar involuntary tracking will think twice before proceeding without explicit consumer consent," he wrote in an email. — AP

GULF RISES WITH OIL OVER \$40; FOREIGNERS BUY IN EGYPT

Mideast Stock Markets

DUBAI: Most stock markets in the Gulf rose yesterday after oil prices firmed above \$40 a barrel, while Egypt climbed as foreign investors accumulated shares. While many regional fund managers believe Gulf stock markets could still be pressured this year by further squeezes in corporate earnings, as governments continue to tighten fiscal

policy, for now investors are focusing on the idea that the worst is over for oil prices. Riyadh's stock index added 0.7 percent in heavy trade. Petrochemical heavyweight Saudi Basic Industries advanced 1.0 percent and other oil-linked stocks also gained.

Food and agriculture shares were strong, with the largest dairy producer,

Almarai, and National Agriculture Development rising 1.7 and 7.9 percent respectively. "While Saudi Arabia's growth is expected to face a slowdown in 2016, we believe that the food and drink sector will benefit from structural factors, including favorable demographics, higher employment of locals in the private sector and increasing levels of urbanization," said a note by Riyadh-based Aljazira Capital. Dubai's index ended up 0.2 percent in volatile trade as speculators booked profits in some mid- and small-cap shares and chased after others.

Arabtec, which was up as much as 2.9 percent in early trade, ended flat. The builder fell 6.6 percent on Monday after the company said in a brief statement that rumours former chief executive Hasan Ismaik would be appointed to its board were false. Fellow construction firm Drake & Scul fell 0.8 percent. Union Properties closed up 0.8 percent at 0.92 dirham, off a session high of 0.97 dirham. Deyaar Development ended flat after trading up. Abu Dhabi's benchmark added 0.4 percent in its eighth straight session of gains, with volumes concentrated in mid-sized

companies favored by local traders.

Islamic insurer Methaq Takaful Insurance soared 14.3 percent, its daily limit, in unusually heavy trade and while Union National Bank jumped 11.7 percent. In Qatar the index added 0.5 percent for its fifth straight session of gains, cutting its 2016 losses to 0.6 percent. Property developer Ezzan Holding gained 1.8 percent after falling in early trade. But Doha Bank sank 6.1 percent after the bank's annual general meeting approved a 3 riyal per share dividend; the chairman told the meeting that the bank would revise its 2016-2018 strategic plan, particularly with regard to overseas offices and branches, but did not elaborate.

Egypt

Egypt's index rose 1.3 percent in its fourth straight day of gains as foreign investors were net buyers, bourse data showed, after being largely absent from the market in previous days. The Egyptian pound strengthened on the black market yesterday, two days after the central bank injected \$500 million into the banking system in an exceptional auction. Recently the currency

has been depreciating rapidly on the black market. Global Telecom and Commercial International Bank, shares favored by international portfolio managers, were each up by more than 1.5 percent yesterday. But Orascom Telecom, the most heavily traded stock by far, fell 1.6 percent after rising by the same percentage in early trade.

On Sunday OTMT said it would lend its subsidiary Beltone Financial 1 billion Egyptian pounds (\$128 million) to acquire the investment arm of Cairo's largest lender Commercial International Bank, CI Capital. Beltone closed 5.1 percent lower after it had soared its 10 percent daily limit in early trade. Shares in the investment firm have more than quadrupled in price since Feb 10. Telecom Egypt fell 1.8 percent. The state-owned landline monopoly reported on Monday a 111 percent jump in 2015 net profit after corporate tax changes; its shares rose 1.8 percent on Monday to 6.78 pounds in an initial reaction to the news. According to analysts polled by Thomson Reuters, the company is undervalued with a mean target price of 10.73 pounds.—Reuters



MOSUL: People shop at a market in the northern city of Mosul, Iraq.—AP

WHO'S NEXT? INVESTOR ACTIVISM SET TO GROW AFTER BLACKROCK CAMPAIGN

ASIA INVESTORS SEEK BETTER RETURNS AMID SLOW GROWTH

HONG KONG: Following a rare public campaign, BlackRock Inc voted against a deal planned by a Hong Kong firm that the world's biggest asset manager partly owns, revving up investor activism in Asia after it roared ahead in 2015. In a ballot yesterday, BlackRock rejected G-Resources Group Ltd's plan to sell its main asset, an Indonesian gold mine, saying it didn't have confidence G-Resources would use the proceeds in investors' best interests. Owning 8 percent of G-Resources, BlackRock urged other shareholders to follow suit.

G-Resources, which has said it would use the proceeds to shift its focus to financial services, reported after market hours that the sale was approved by a 59 percent majority. BlackRock's campaign, albeit unsuccessful, highlights how investors are becoming more active in seeking out better returns in Asia amid ultra-low interest rates and sluggish global growth. The trend has been given added weight by reforms in places like Hong Kong and Japan designed to enhance corporate governance and promote minority shareholder rights, giving investors ammunition to push back against company management.

"You have seen the success of activist funds in the United States improving businesses and increasing shareholder returns," said Seth

Fischer, chief investment officer at Hong Kong-based activist hedge fund Oasis Management. "They are looking for further opportunities, bringing their critical know-how to Asia and saying, 'Let's produce the same things out here.'" According to data from research firm Activist Insight, the number of companies in Asia subject to one or more public shareholder demands more than doubled over the past two years to reach 31 in 2015, with nearly half successful, up from 30 percent a year earlier.

More than 65 percent of cases were instigated by overseas investors, according to Activist Insight, with US fund Elliot Associates' ultimately unsuccessful move to challenge restructuring at South Korea's Samsung Group and Oasis Management's action tackling Japanese technology firm Kyocera Corp and videogame maker Nintendo Co Ltd among recent high-profile campaigns.

Behind closed doors

Typically, much investor activism takes place behind closed doors, especially in Asia where there is a cultural aversion to public confrontation. As Asian companies are often closely held, it is much tougher to successfully push for change in some markets in the region. But

investors said making grievances known publicly can sometimes accelerate changes - especially when faced with management intransigence.

Pru Bennett, head of BlackRock's investment stewardship team for the Asia-Pacific region, said the firm typically raises any concerns with firms in private. In the case of G-Resources, however, she said BlackRock felt airing its view in public was necessary to rally support from other minority investors. "Engagement by companies with their key stakeholders is at an early stage in Hong Kong, but increasingly we think companies are seeing the value," she added.

Public campaigns are likely to become more prevalent in the region once success rates grow, with more and more companies preparing for greater investor scrutiny, according to Angela Campbell-Noe, senior partner at Tulchan Communications, an investor relations and communications firm which advises companies on how best to handle public investor attacks. "We're increasingly doing crisis training and scenario-planning with companies, as speed and preparation are hugely important if a shareholder turns hostile," said Campbell-Noe. "Companies are starting to look at their share registers and asking, 'Could this happen to me?'" —Reuters



NEW DELHI: Indian laborers renovate the outer facade of a building in a business district of New Delhi yesterday. India is now the world's fastest-growing major economy, but two years of drought and a failure to create jobs for a burgeoning young population has left millions of rural residents struggling, and led to deadly protests in recent weeks.—AFP

MIDDLE EAST MILLENNIALS LEAD THE WAY IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

KUWAIT: A major new international report from HSBC Private Bank reveals that the Middle East is home to the highest proportion of millennial entrepreneurs globally. There search among more than 2,800 active business owners, worth between \$250,000 and \$20m, finds that the Middle East also has the youngest average age of entrepreneurship at just 26 years old. On average, an entrepreneur in the Middle East, Mainland China, Hong Kong and Singapore employs 100 staff and generates revenues of more than \$10 million. These figures are approximately double the equivalent results for enterprises in the United States, the United Kingdom, France and Germany.

The journey to entrepreneurship begins for 46% in the Middle East at school or college, which ranks the highest of any country or region. For 25%, their journey begins while in a professional career. As a region, the desire to set up in business is strong, but many entrepreneurs seek some professional experience before going it alone. Entrepreneurs in the Middle East, Mainland China, Hong Kong and Singapore define value creation not so much by personal fortune but by the size of the businesses that individuals have managed to create. By contrast, in the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany and France, personal wealth is a more important marker of entrepreneurial success.

There is a growing philanthropic impulse in the under-35s globally. In the Middle East, the younger generation of business leaders are more likely to structure their giving than their older counterparts through a foundation or an estate plan. They are also volunteering their expertise to social causes more than the older generation, whose philanthropy was defined more by regular gifts to good causes. These subtle shifts between generations and cultures are a reminder that value creation from entrepreneurial activity is interwoven into the economic and cultural fabric of society.

Commenting on the launch of the report, Sobhi Tabbara, Global Market Head of Private Banking, Middle East said: "Young people are one of the Middle East's biggest assets. Their entrepreneurial drive is reshaping and redefining the future of the Middle East's economies. Their creative forward thinking is supported by

governments intent on making it easy for small and medium business start-ups. This is a recipe for success. It's therefore no surprise the Middle East is home to the highest proportion of millennial entrepreneurs globally, with the average age for starting their business just 26 - the youngest in the world. Now is a great time to be a millennial entrepreneur in the Middle East."

Building on a heritage

Across the Middle East, Mainland China, Hong Kong and Singapore, 56% of entrepreneurs come from a business-owning background and these entrepreneurs are far more likely to join the family enterprise. In the Middle East, around 63% of entrepreneurs come from a business-owning family yet only 23% of millennial entrepreneurs state they are shareholders or executives in the family business. Instead, millennial entrepreneurs seek to prove their own business ideas and grow market share. With that said, millennial entrepreneurs still hold true to the tradition of a 'family business' as more are likely to prioritize bringing family into their business, than leaving their business to be with family.

Commenting on family run businesses, Ahmed Abdelal, Regional Head of Corporate Banking and Structured Finance, HSBC Middle East and North Africa said: "Amongst businesses in the Middle East, we see a real hybrid of young entrepreneurs involved either in the family business or breaking out to prove their own business concepts. As businesses are handed over or created through the generations, younger entrepreneurs feel empowered to take a more collaborative approach.

"This is a natural course of progression, as the business and financial landscape evolves, more options are available to them. They learn to adapt and innovate quickly and become more conscious of the tougher economic environment around them. As a result, when their growth strategies become more aggressive and require funding of a more complex nature, entrepreneurs cast their net wider than friends, family and acquaintances for investment and actively reach out to banks for financial advice and support."



NISSAN SENTRA SECURES IMPRESSIVE SALES GROWTH IN THE MIDDLE EAST

DUBAI: Nissan's compact saloon, the Sentra, has emerged as the only vehicle in the highly competitive 'C' segment to have enjoyed an increase in sales during the 2015 model year. While sales across the GCC in this segment have fallen by some 13 per cent, sales of the Nissan Sentra have risen by one per cent in the period covering December 2015 up to date VS the same period last year - testament to

the superb value for money offered by this seductively styled saloon car.

Samir Cherfan, Nissan Middle East's Managing Director, said: "The continued success of the Nissan Sentra in a declining segment shows how we are in tune with our customers, who demand style, practicality and value for money. The Sentra is good looking, is well equipped and offers class leading safety and reliability - no wonder it is continuing to

appeal to this key market while the segment is suffering decreased sales numbers."

In order to maintain the keen interest shown in the Sentra, Nissan is arranging for new buyers to be entered into an exciting prize draw. Tickets are up for grabs to the semi-finals and final of the ICC World Twenty20 tournament in India dur-

ing April this year. The tickets will include return flights and full hotel accommodation. The Nissan Sentras powered by a choice of either a 1.6-litre or 1.8-litre, naturally aspirated engine that develops up to 130hp. Either model offers excellent fuel economy and impressive interior space, along with modern and sculpted exterior styling with alloy wheels.

QALAA HOLDINGS, EFG HERMES SEAL TANMEYAH'S STAKE DEAL

CAIRO: Qalaa Holdings finalizes the sale of its 70% ownership stake in Tanmeyah Microenterprise Services, a business that it helped grow from an initial concept into an EGP 450 million operation that provides the Egyptian market with much-needed microfinance solutions. Qalaa Holdings (CCAP.CA on the Egyptian Exchange), an African leader in energy and infrastructure, announced yesterday that its business unit Finance Unlimited has finalized the sale of its entire holding in subsidiary Tanmeyah Microenterprise Services, Egypt's leading private-sector provider of microfinance solutions, to EFG Hermes in a transaction that values 100% of Tanmeyah at EGP 450 mn.

Qalaa Holdings held an effective ownership of 70% in Tanmeyah. "We are extremely proud to have played a role in building a business like Tanmeyah that provides much-needed financial solutions to companies and individuals that would otherwise effectively be cut

off from the financial system," said Qalaa Holdings Chairman and Founder, Ahmed Heikal.

It's a company that continues to have excellent growth potential within the current business environment in Egypt and we look forward to seeing Tanmeyah leverage its existing infrastructure and systems to grow its nationwide network of branches even further in the years to come," added Heikal. Established in 2009, Tanmeyah provides financial services to Egypt's large underserved micro- and very-small-enterprise tiers. Tanmeyah had EGP 509 million in loans outstanding to 108,000 active borrowers at the end of 2015. The company has more than 1,500 employees today at 114 branches across Egypt and has served more than 365,000 clients since inception.

"Qalaa Holdings has always tried to invest in businesses that spur job creation, develop human capital and provide products or services

that will have a positive impact on the lives of average citizens. While Tanmeyah directly addresses those at the base of the pyramid who have no access to the banking system, we have also invested in ECARU, a subsidiary of Tawazon, and Qalaa's energy play focusing on refused derived fuel for a variety of industries deemed vital for the Egyptian economy."

The divestment of Tanmeyah is in line with Qalaa's strategy, key elements of which include deleveraging at the holding and subsidiary company levels; acquisition of additional stakes in selective investments within its existing portfolio; and share buybacks. Tanmeyah is the latest in a series of divestments for Qalaa that also includes Misr Glass Manufacturing (MGM), Rashidi El-Mizan and ASEC Minya. CI Capital acted as financial advisor to Qalaa Holdings on the transaction.

HOPE SKY HIGH FOR HOMEMADE MALAWI HELICOPTER

GOBEDE: It has never taken off, and could well be a death trap, but a homemade helicopter built in Malawi is drawing crowds captivated by its creator's determination to succeed against all the odds. Felix Kambwiri, 45, has spent the last four months constructing his dream machine out of scrap metal and fiberglass in his garage in the village of Gobebe, 90 kilometers (55 miles) north of the capital Lilongwe. Clambering inside the one-seater cockpit, he swings the door closed, turns the key, pumps the pedals, and the 125-cc secondhand engine roars into life as orange lights flash impressively.

The rotor blades, which nearly touch the workshop's walls, increase to a furious speed, as the whole chassis starts to shake violently-but take-off remains elusive. "I would like just to fly for even five minutes to show that I am serious about this and that it is not a joke. This helicopter can fly," Kambwiri, a professional welder said. "Every day I receive many curious visitors who have heard about me." Kambwiri built the helicopter to his own design after failing to find any books to help fulfill his life's passion.

But he has been warned that he should not undertake any test flights until the civil aviation authorities have completed safety checks. "Police regularly come here to monitor progress and make sure I don't fly without permission," he explained, adding that he hopes to be airborne by June. "I can understand their concern is about my safety, and that of people who might come in their hundreds on the day I fly the helicopter. I will not take risks. I will wait until I am ready. I cannot allow anyone to take the risk for fear of an accident."

'Show the world'

The helicopter is painted white with red and blue stripes, and has plastic windows, landing skids and a second rotor blade on its tail. Kambwiri, who left school aged 16, has spent about \$350 on the project, including \$100 on its converted motorbike engine, which he hopes to upgrade if a donor comes forward with extra funds.

"Although I did not go far with school, I have tried my best. I want to show the world that we Malawians can do something and are intelligent," he said. "Some people coming here say I have gone mad, that this helicopter will kill me, or cannot fly because I am not educated. 'My imagination about building a helicopter grew when I began welding as a job,' said the former tailor and radio repairman. Among those who come to inspect progress are students from the local school who peer into the workshop as Kambwiri and his team of assistants, including an electrician, tinker with wiring.

His ambitious plan dates back to when he was a young boy and saw then president Hastings Kamuzu Banda flying around the country for campaign rallies and to visit remote villages. Kambwiri, married and father of seven children, also credits his enthusiasm for flight to watching war movies and listening to radio programs. Despite initial concerns, Kambwiri's wife Annes said she backs his efforts. "I was frightened when I first heard that my husband was developing a helicopter because he had never done it before," she said. "Later I accepted it, because everything is possible through God." — AFP



LILONGWE: Felix Kambwiri sits in the cockpit of the helicopter he built during the last four months out of scrap metal and fiberglass in his garage in the village of Gobebe, 90 kilometers north of the capital Lilongwe. — AFP



NEW YORK: New York police officers stand outside the Apple Store on Fifth Avenue while monitoring a demonstration. Protesters assembled in more than 30 cities around the world to lash out at the FBI for obtaining a court order that requires Apple to make it easier to unlock an encrypted iPhone used by a gunman in December's mass murders in California. — AP

DOES AN EXTREMIST'S IPHONE CONTAIN 'CYBER PATHOGEN'?

MASS KILLER'S PHONE MIGHT HAVE BEEN 'USED AS WEAPON'

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 AI CHALLENGE TO HUMAN SMARTS

GAME OVER?

PARIS: Every two years or so, computer speed and memory capacity doubles-a head-spinning pace that experts say could see machines become smarter than humans within decades. This week, one test of how far Artificial Intelligence (AI) has come will happen in Seoul: a five-day battle between man and machine for supremacy in the 3,000-year-old Chinese board game Go. Said to be the most complex game ever designed, with an incomputable number of move options, Go requires human-like "intuition" to prevail. If the machine wins, it will be an important symbolic moment, AI expert Jean-Gabriel Ganascia of the Pierre and Marie Curie University in Paris said.

"Until now, the game of Go has been problematic for computers as there are too many possible moves to develop an all-encompassing database of possibilities, as for chess." Go reportedly has more possible board configurations than there are atoms in the Universe. Mastery of the game by a computer was thought to be at least a decade away until last October, when Google's AlphaGo program beat Europe's human champion, Fan Hui.

Google has now upped the stakes, and will put its machine through the ultimate wringer in a marathon match starting today against South Korean Lee Se-dol, who has held the world crown for a decade. Initially confident of winning by 5-0, or 4-1 at worst, and taking home the \$1 million (908,000 euro) prize money, Lee's courage seemed to have started waning by Tuesday. He told reporters in Seoul the programme seemed to work "far more efficiently" than he thought at first, and "I may not beat AlphaGo by such a large margin".

Man vs Machine

Game-playing is a crucial measure of AI progress-it shows that a machine can execute a certain "intellectual" task better than the humans who created it. Key moments included IBM's Deep Blue defeating chess Grandmaster Garry Kasparov in 1997, and the Watson super-computer outwitting humans in the TV quiz show Jeopardy in 2011. But AlphaGo is different. It is partly self-taught-having played millions of games against itself after initial programming to hone its tactics through trial and error. "AlphaGo is really more interesting than either Deep Blue or Watson, because the algorithms it uses are potentially more general-purpose," said Nick Bostrom of Oxford University's Future of Humanity Institute.

Creating "general" or multi-purpose, rather than "narrow", task-specific intelligence, is the ultimate goal in AI-something resembling human reasoning based on a variety of inputs, and self-learning from experience. "So, if the machine can do new things when needed, then it has 'true' intelligence," Bostrom's colleague Anders Sandberg said. In the case of Go, Google developers realized a more "human-like" approach would win over brute computing power. AlphaGo uses two sets of "deep neural networks" containing millions of connections similar to neurons in the brain. It is able to predict a winner from each move, thus reducing the search base to manageable levels-something co-creator David Silver has described as "more akin to imagination".

Master or servant?

What if we manage to build a truly smart machine? For some, it means a world in which robots take care of our sick, fly and drive us around safely, stock our fridges, plan our holidays, and do hazardous jobs humans should not or will not do. For others, it evokes apocalyptic images in which hostile machines are in charge. Physicist Stephen Hawking is among the leading voices of caution, warning last May that smart computers may out-smart and out-manipulate humans, one day "potentially subduing us with weapons we cannot even understand." For Sandberg, it will be up to us to build "values" into the operating system of intelligent computers. There are more than 10 billion robots in the world today, according to Bostrom-everything from rescuers and surgical assistants, home-cleaners, route-finders, lawn-mowers and factory workers, even pets.

But while machines may beat us at Checkers or maths, some experts think robots may never rival humans in some aspects of "true" intelligence. Things like "common sense" or humor may never be reproducible, said Ganascia. "We can imagine that in the future, ever more tasks will be executed by machines better than by humans," he said. "But that does not mean that machines will be able to automate everything that our cognitive faculties allow us to do. In my view, this is a limitation that keeps the scientific discipline of AI in check." For Lee, it now seems "inevitable" that AI will ultimately defeat humans at Go. "But robots will never understand the beauty of the game the same way that we humans do," he said. — AFP

NORTH HACKS PHONES OF SOUTH KOREAN OFFICIALS

SEOUL: South Korea's spy agency said yesterday that North Korea had hacked into smartphones belonging to a number of key government officials, part of a series of cyber-attacks launched after its fourth nuclear test. The revelations by the National Intelligence Service (NIS) came as the government is seeking to push through parliament an anti-cyber terrorism law that critics say would grant the agency unmatched surveillance powers over cyberspace, including messenger servicing networks.

In a statement, the NIS said the North stole phone numbers and texts from the smartphones of dozens of key South Korean officials between late February and early March. It also attacked the server of a major software firm specialising in providing security software for Internet banking. In January and February this year, North Korean hackers sent phishing emails to employees of two provincial railway operators in order to steal their account details and passwords. The move was in preparation for mounting cyber terror attacks on the railway traffic control systems, the agency said.

"North Korea has been mounting a series of attacks against our cyberspace" following its nuclear test on January 6, the statement said, adding that they appeared to have been preparation for a major cyber assault on South Korea's banking network. "If left unchecked, it would have resulted in major financial chaos, such as paralysis of Internet banking systems and unwanted transfers of deposits", it said. According to the agency,

North Korean hackers also sent text messages to the South Korean officials, trying to lure them to links infected with malware that could capture the phone numbers of other officials.

Last year alone, North Korea contaminated some 60,000 personal computers in the South and abroad, turning them into "zombie" PCs that can be used as weapons for cyber attacks, the agency said. Presiding over a meeting Tuesday with 14 government agencies, as well as the defense ministry, Financial Services Commission and science ministry, an NIS deputy director urged them to maintain a high level of vigilance. Seoul has blamed North Korean hackers for a series of past cyber-attacks on military institutions, banks, government agencies, TV broadcasters and media websites as well as a nuclear power plant.

The United States also said the North was behind a damaging cyber-attack on Sony's Hollywood film unit over its controversial North Korea-themed satirical film "The Interview" in 2014. A spokesman for the presidential Blue House said the growing cyber threat from the North added urgency to the passage of the anti-cyber terror law, now pending in the National Assembly. But the main opposition Minjoo Party said the government was exaggerating the threat to secure surveillance powers for the NIS that could be used against political opponents. A former head of the NIS was jailed for three years in February 2015 for meddling in the 2012 presidential election. — AFP

GO MASTER: AI MAY PREVAIL BUT BEAUTY OF GO REMAINS

SEOUL: Computers eventually will defeat human players of Go, but the beauty of the ancient Chinese game of strategy that has fascinated people for thousands of years will remain, the Go world champion said yesterday. South Korean Lee Sedol, a Go master who has won 18 international titles since he became a professional player at age 12, said the risk of human error means he may not win his match this week against Google's artificial intelligence machine, AlphaGo. "Because humans are human, they make mistakes," the 33 year-old said a day before the first of the five games he is due to play against AlphaGo. "If there are human mistakes, I could lose."

It was Lee's first admission of his weakness against Google's AI machine and also a dialing down of his confidence from two weeks ago, when he had predicted a 5-0 result in his favor. After watching Google's presentation of how AlphaGo works, Lee said he thought a machine might be able to imitate human intuition, even though the intuition may not be as sharp as a person's. A loss for Lee would be a historic moment for the AI community. Human errors are not his only vulnerability. Lee said that in playing against a machine, the absence of visual cues that human players use to read the reactions and psychology of their opponents puts him in unfamiliar territory. "In a human versus human game, it is important to read the other person's energy and force. But in this match, it is impossible to read such things. It could feel like I'm playing alone," Lee said. Because the number of possible Go board positions exceeds the number of atoms in the universe, top players rely heavily on their intuition, said Demis Hassabis who heads Google's DeepMind, the developer of AlphaGo.

This has made Go one of the most complex games ever devised and the ultimate challenge for the AI

experts, who had expected that it would take at least another decade for a computer to beat a professional Go player. That changed last year when AlphaGo defeated a European Go champion in a closed-door match later published in the journal Nature. Google's DeepMind team created a system to narrow down a vast search space of near-infinite possible sequences of moves in the game. AlphaGo was first trained to mimic experts' Go moves based on data from about 100,000 Go games available online. Then it was programmed to play against itself and "learn" from its mis-

takes. The team also designed a system that enabled AlphaGo to anticipate the long-term results of each move and predict the winner. Using this approach, AlphaGo beat the European Go champion by searching through far fewer positions than those a traditional AI machine like DeepBlue, the famed IBM computer that defeated the world's chess champion in 1997, would have to consider, Hassabis said. AlphaGo also has other strengths as a machine. "I think the advantage of AlphaGo is that it will never get tired and it will not get intimidated either," Hassabis said. — AP



SEOUL: Lee Se-Dol, a legendary South Korean player of Go - a board game widely played for centuries in East Asia - poses with Google DeepMind head Demis Hassabis (on screen at left) during a joint video conference call on the Google DeepMind Challenge Match at Korea Baduk Association in Seoul. — AFP

VIETNAM FINDS TWINS WITH DIFFERENT FATHERS

HANOI, Vietnam: Vietnam has identified an extremely rare case of bi-paternal twins-twins with different fathers-a professor at a DNA testing lab in Hanoi told AFP yesterday. A set of twins born to a Vietnamese couple, whose names have not been released, were recently taken for testing because of stark differences in the children's appearances, according to local reports. "Our Center for Genetic Analysis and Technology lab has tested and found a pair of bi-paternal twins," Le Dinh Luong, president of the Genetic Association of Vietnam, told AFP. "This is rare not only for Vietnam, but for the world," he said, explaining that the two children had different fathers but the same mother.

The discovery

This can happen if two eggs from the same mother are fertilized by sperm from two different men during separate acts of sexual intercourse within the same ovulation period. According to the state-run Tuoi

Tre newspaper, the Vietnamese husband requested genetic testing at the Hanoi lab to determine whether he was the biological father of both his wife's twins. The man's relatives pressured him to take the test because one of the babies looked strikingly different from him and the other child, the report said. The results indicated that the man was related to only one of the babies.

Ruling out a hospital mix-up, his wife was found to be the biological mother of both children, Tuoi Tre reported. According to Dan Tri online news site, the twins were the same sex, born on the same day just a few hours apart, but look completely different. The report said the twins are now two years old and one of them has thick, wavy hair while the other has thin, straight hair.

Another rare case of bi-paternal twins was reported in the United States last year, when a court ruled that a man was only required to pay child support for one girl in a set of twins after DNA tests proved he was not the father of both. —AFP

'DENTIST OF HORROR' ON TRIAL FOR MUTILATING FRENCH PATIENTS

NEVERS, France: A Dutch man dubbed by French media the "dentist of horror" went on trial yesterday after allegedly causing horrific injuries to the mouths of more than 100 patients in France.

Jacobus van Nierop, 51, ripped out healthy teeth and left dozens of patients in a remote French village with broken jaws, recurrent abscesses and septicemia. He is charged with aggravated assault, as well as fraud over claims that he tried to rip off patients and insurance companies, and faces up to 10 years in prison and a 150,000 Euros fine if found guilty.

Although he is not required to offer a plea under French law, Van Nierop has previously sought to deflect responsibility, saying he suffers from "psychological problems" including gender identity issues and suicidal tendencies. He hid his face under a blanket as he arrived at the court in Nevers in central France, near the rural area of Chateau-Chinon where he came to work in 2008. He has already been detained for 18 months in the case.

Van Nierop, who went by the first name of Mark, was hired by a head-hunter and was initially welcomed by locals who were sorely lacking in medical services. A neighbor recalled the arrival of a smiley, larger-than-life character, with a "big 4x4, a big dog, a big cigar." But by 2011, the authorities were starting to question some of his accounting, and patients were starting to compare notes on his dentistry.

Patients' testimonies

Sylviane Boulesteix, 65, visited the dentist in March 2012 to have braces fitted. "He gave me seven or eight injections, and

pulled out eight teeth in one go. I was gushing blood for three days," she said.

An 80-year-old, Bernard Hugon, said the dentist left "pieces of flesh hanging everywhere" after tearing out a tooth. "Every time, he would give us what he called 'a little prick' and we were asleep, knocked out," said Nicole Martin, a retired teacher who lost several teeth to abscesses caused by the horrific operations. "When it was over, we would find a Post-it note saying to come back for an appointment the next day or the day after," she added.

Fled to Canada

With the help of one of Van Nierop's assistants, Martin set up a victims' group in early 2013 to press charges, and it soon swelled to 120 members. In June of that year, police arrested Van Nierop but left him free pending trial, and he fled the country the following December. He was eventually tracked down to a small Canadian town in New Brunswick and arrested under an international warrant in September 2014.

Local media reported that he tried to slit his throat when police came for him. Van Nierop tried to block his extradition first to the Netherlands and then France on psychological grounds, but was eventually placed in a prison psychiatric unit in the Loiret department, south of Paris. "He claimed to have killed his first wife, he played crazy, he said he was trans-sexual. He tried everything" to avoid extradition, Martin said. According to Dutch media, Van Nierop had already come under investigation at home over his working practices before coming to France. —AFP



CLEVELAND: Lindsey and her husband Blake stand with Cleveland Clinic medical staff as they announce she was the nation's first uterus transplant patient. —AP photos

WOMB TRANSPLANT RECIPIENT GRATEFUL FOR CHANCE AT PREGNANCY NEW TREATMENT GIVES HOPE TO HOPELESS WOMEN

CLEVELAND: The recipient of the nation's first uterus transplant said Monday that she prayed for years to be able to bear a child, and is grateful to the deceased donor's family and surgeons who've given her that chance.

Doctors at the Cleveland Clinic said Monday that the 26-year-old woman is recovering well after receiving the uterus late last month. The experimental surgery is part of a new frontier in transplantation that, if it works, might be an alternative for some of the thousands of women unable to have children because they were born without a uterus or lost it to disease.

The woman, identified only as Lindsey to protect her family's privacy, appeared briefly at a news conference with her husband. She said she already is a mother to three "beautiful little boys" adopted through foster care and that she was told when she was 16 that she wouldn't be able to bear children. "From that moment on, I've prayed that God would allow me the opportunity to experience pregnancy," she said. "And here we are today, at the beginning of that journey."

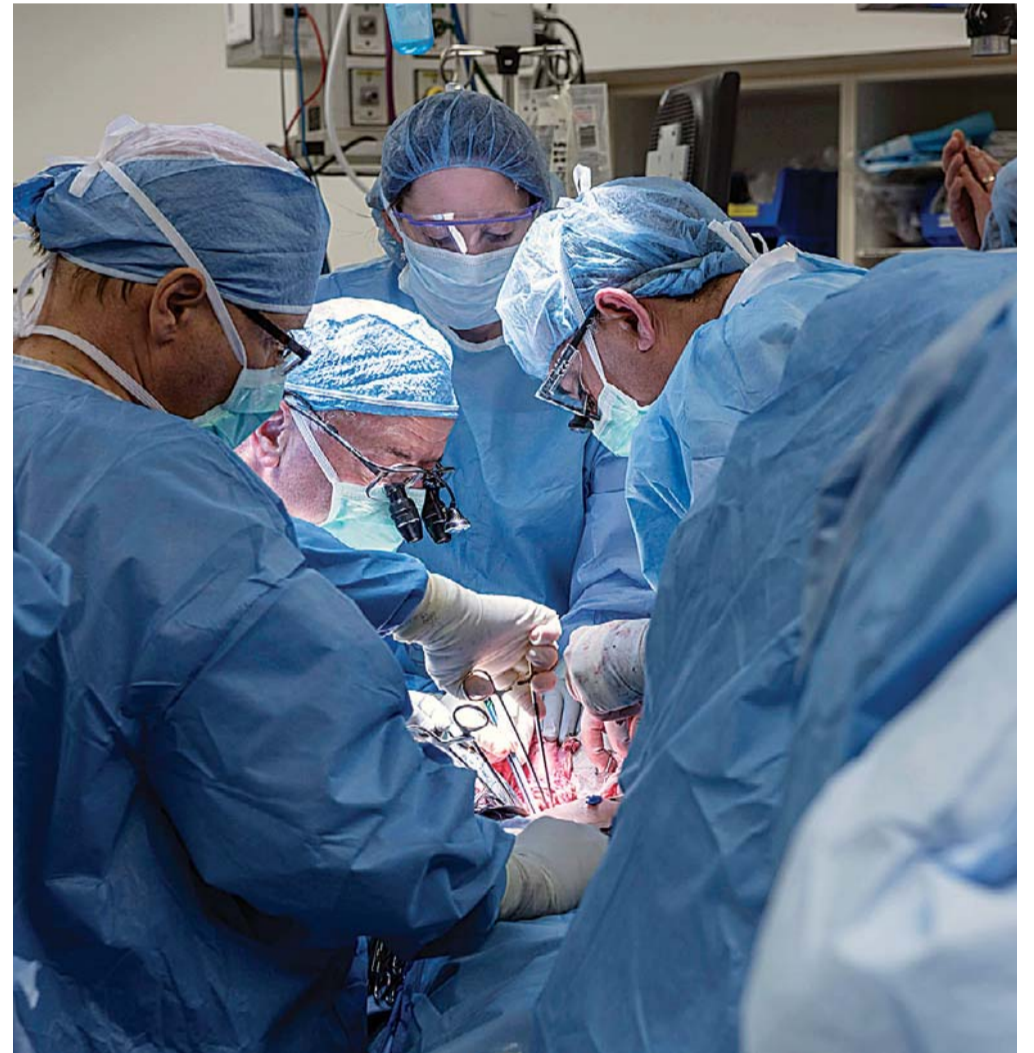
Requirements

The woman must wait at least a year to ensure the new uterus is healthy enough to try getting pregnant through in vitro fertilization, using embryos frozen ahead of the operation. To monitor the transplant, she will undergo monthly examinations.

Other countries have tried womb transplants. Sweden reported the first successful birth in 2014, with a total of five healthy babies from nine transplants so far. The transplant team at the Cleveland Clinic, which has been exploring the possibility of performing uterus transplants for 10 years, trained with the Swedish surgeons. The hospital has screened more than 250 women to identify 10 who qualify for the clinical trial, those lacking a functional uterus but with healthy ovaries that produce eggs. They must understand the risks - complications from abdominal surgery, plus the possibility that the transplant will fail - and that it's

Experimental

"We must remember a uterine transplant is not just about a surgery and about moving a uterus from here to there. It's about having a healthy baby," said Cleveland Clinic surgeon Dr Rebecca Flyckt. One concern, both medically and ethically, is the effect that necessary anti-rejection drugs have on a developing fetus, the doctors said Monday. Dr Andreas Tzakis, a transplant surgeon who is leading the study, said many women who've had kidney transplants have delivered healthy babies while taking anti-rejection drugs.



CLEVELAND: A team of Cleveland Clinic transplant surgeons and gynecological surgeons perform the nation's first uterus transplant during a nine-hour surgery in Cleveland.

Births will be by cesarean section. The transplanted uterus will be removed after the woman has had one or two babies so that she won't need those drugs the rest of her life. The United Network for Organ Sharing, which oversees US transplants, said Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas and Boston's Brigham and Women's Hospital have also been approved for uterine transplants.

A uterus donation requires a separate consent from a deceased donor's family, like donations for other new procedures such as hand and face transplants, said UNOS chief medical officer Dr David Klassen. The donor for the Cleveland Clinic transplant was described as a healthy woman in

her 30s who'd had children and had died suddenly. Sweden has used living donors for transplants there, but the Cleveland Clinic trial, to avoid any risk to a donor, decided to start with donors who have died. The Cleveland Clinic patient, Lindsey, said she was grateful to that donor's family. "They have provided me with a gift that I will never be able to repay."

Dr Mats Brannstrom of Sahlgrenska University Hospital at the University of Gothenburg said the Cleveland surgery marked the 13th transplant worldwide. According to Brannstrom, Saudi Arabia and Turkey previously reported attempts and China performed one in November, but Sweden so far has the only births. —AP



CHATEAU-CHINON, France: Dutch dentist, Jacobus Van Nierop, is pictured in his dental office. —AP photos

ZIKA LINKED TO PARALYZING MYELITIS

PARIS: The Zika virus, suspected of causing brain damage in babies and a neurological disorder in adults, has also been linked to the paralyzing myelitis disorder, French researchers said yesterday. A 15-year-old girl diagnosed with acute myelitis in

Guadeloupe in January, had high levels of Zika in her cerebrospinal fluid, said Annie Lannuzel of the University Hospital Center Pointe-a-Pitre in Guadeloupe-the first-ever published "proof of a link" between the virus and the disease. —AFP

BEYOND SCALES, FITNESS AND BODY FAT KEY FOR HEALTH

WASHINGTON: The bathroom scale may show a good number but how much of that weight is fat, not muscle? New studies are adding to the evidence that the scale doesn't always tell the whole story when it comes to weight-related health risks.

Keeping body fat low is more important for healthy aging than a low overall weight, researchers reported Monday in the journal *Annals of Internal Medicine*. A separate study found young people who aren't physically fit are at greater risk of developing Type 2 diabetes later in life even if their weight is healthy.

Here are some things to know: Isn't BMI important?

Yes. Body mass index, or BMI, is a measure of a person's weight compared to their height. For many people, that's plenty of evidence to tell if they're overweight or obese and thus at increased risk of heart disease, diabetes and premature death. Generally, a BMI of 25 and above indicates overweight, while 30 and above indicates obesity. Someone who is 5 feet, 9 inches would hit that obesity threshold at 203 pounds.

But it's not a perfect measure

Some people have a high BMI because they're more muscular. More common are people who harbor too little muscle and too much body fat even if their BMI is in the normal range.

Body composition shifts as we age, with the proportion of muscle decreasing and the proportion of body fat increasing. That slows metabolism, making it easier to put on pounds in middle age even if people haven't changed how they eat or how much they exercise.

Fat findings

Dr William Leslie of the University of Manitoba wondered if poorly measured body fat might help explain the controversial "obesity paradox," where some studies have suggested that being moderately overweight later in life might be good for survival. He tracked 50,000 middle-aged and older Canadians, mostly women, who'd undergone screening for bone-thinning osteoporosis. Those screening X-rays - known as DXA for dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry - measure bone and also allow an estimation of fat.

A higher percent of body fat, independent of the person's BMI, was linked to reduced survival, Leslie reported. Risk began rising when body fat was in the range of 36 percent to 38 percent. Interestingly, being underweight also was linked to reduced survival, possibly reflecting age-related frailty. "It's not just the amount of body you've got, but what you're actually made of," Leslie concludes.

And fitness counts

A high BMI is one of the biggest risk factors for Type 2 diabetes. But a second study reported in *Annals* Monday

suggests people can still be at risk if they're skinny but not physically fit. Researchers in Sweden and New York checked records of about 1.5 million Swedish men who at age 18 received medical exams for mandatory military service, and tracked how many developed diabetes many years later.

Low muscle strength and low aerobic fitness each were associated with an increased diabetes risk - regardless of whether the men were normal weight or overweight. Scoring low on both added to the risk.

What do the findings mean?

For diabetes, "normal-weight persons may not receive appropriate lifestyle counseling if they are sedentary or unfit because of their lower perceived risk," wrote obesity specialist Peter Katzmarzyk of Louisiana's Pennington Biomedical Research Center, who wasn't involved in the study. That study also suggests fitness in adolescence can have long-lasting impact. And Leslie said doctors should consider patients' body composition, not just weight, in assessing their health.

How to tell

Most people won't benefit from a DXA scan for fat, stressed Dymna Gallagher, who directs the human body composition laboratory at Columbia University Medical Center and thinks those tests are more for research than real life. —AP



CHICAGO: In file photo, a waist is measured during an obesity prevention study at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago. —AP

LITTLE RESEARCH INTO BENEFITS OF WEARING EARPLUGS TO CONCERTS

NEW YORK: A review of the literature turned up only two high quality studies that looked at whether wearing earplugs to music venues will prevent hearing loss and tinnitus directly afterward. Dr Wilko Grolman and colleagues at University Medical Center Utrecht in The Netherlands searched for published studies containing the keywords "music" and "earplugs" and screened 228 resulting papers. All but four were not eligible for inclusion in the review and only two were highly relevant and did not have a high risk of bias, in the reviewers' estimation.

Two studies simply examined people who chose on their own to wear or not wear earplugs, while two randomized controlled trials tested what happened when participants were assigned to wear earplugs or not. Two studies reported on hearing loss

and tinnitus while one only reported hearing loss. The two best studies were different enough that the researchers couldn't combine their data and analyze the results, the reviewers wrote. Both included 29 concert attendees and performed audiometry before and after the concerts. In one study, participants were allowed to choose whether or not they wore earplugs, and only three chose to wear them.

Systematic review

"Frankly, with such a small comparator group between three subjects and the others, it would be hard to assess validity of plugs or not," said Dr Jennifer Derebery, president of the Los Angeles Society of Otolaryngology and lead author of the first study. "We had trained them all in proper insertion, and encouraged but not required wearing

them," Derebery told Reuters Health by email. In the other study, 15 participants were assigned to the earplug group. In general, wearing earplugs did reduce hearing loss directly after the concerts, but did not eliminate it completely, as reported online March 3 in JAMA Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery.

"Ear plugs are effective in preventing hearing loss when they are used both correctly and consistently," said Colleen G Le Prell, the Emilie and Phil Schepps Professor of Hearing Science at the University of Texas at Dallas, who was not involved in the review. "This systematic review highlights the very limited data on prevention of recreational music-induced hearing loss using earplugs," Le Prell told Reuters Health by email.

"At younger ages, loud toys, firecrackers, loud video games, personal

stereos or personal music players, lawnmowers or leaf blowers, sporting events or air shows, or other non-music events might be more likely noisy activities than music venue attendance," Le Prell said. "A significant number of youth are also involved in target shooting activities, which children can get involved with through Boy Scouts or other organizations."

Amplified music

For teens and young adults, repeat exposures to amplified music at clubs, concerts, festivals, or other related events may damage the inner ear and result in hearing loss, she said. "Most concerts are both loud enough, and long enough, that they are likely to exceed the total daily exposure allowed by workplace safety regulations," she said. "Sound

exposure also commonly occurs via loud music delivered via personal listening devices, at sporting or other recreational events, and at jobs that involve lawn-mowing, use of power tools, or construction services."

For workplace noise exposure, "we are not doing a very good job achieving correct and consistent use of hearing protection devices (HPD), including both ear plugs and ear muffs," she said. "In the United States, it is relatively uncommon for music venues to provide ear plugs at no charge," Le Prell said. Even if they were provided, people may need to be educated in why using them is important and in how to use them correctly, she said. "As a neurotologist, it really is upsetting to see these kids coming in younger and younger with a completely preventable hearing loss," Derebery said. —Reuters



CHINA: A child walks near government propaganda one of which reads "1.3 billion people united" on the streets of Beijing yesterday. —AP

CHINA: NO PLAN FOR COUPLES TO HAVE AS MANY KIDS AS THEY WANT

BEIJING: China has no plans to allow couples to have as many kids as they want after changing the rules to allow all couples to have two children rather than one, a health official said yesterday.

China's population reached 1.375 billion last year and it has to consider its large population and stress on resources when making decisions, said Li Bin, director of the National Health and Family Planning Commission.

Starting this year, China has relaxed its decades-old family planning policy to allow all married couples to have two children. Before, it limited most urban couples to one child and rural couples to two if their first was a girl. "We don't have a specific timetable" to abolish the family planning policy, "a basic state policy," Li told reporters at a news conference during an annual meeting of China's legislature. —AP

INDIAN STATE OF PUNJAB REPORTS 61 SWINE FLU DEATHS

NEW DELHI: A high level health official in the government of north-western Indian state of Punjab announced yesterday that the death toll due to Swine Flu in the state has reached 61 people in the last two months alone. The Press Trust of India quoting Punjab health ministry's Nodal Officer for Swine Flu Dr Gagandeep Singh Grover as saying that "as 30 people succumbed to death due to H1N1 virus in the last one month alone, the death toll from the swine flu in the state has reached 61 people this season." He added that the total number of people infected by the H1N1 virus stands at 163. Most affected districts in Punjab include Bathinda, Ferozepur, Faridkot and Ludhiana, the official said, underlining that his government is planning to issue a

notification to make reporting the disease to the health department mandatory in order to help the authorities to monitor the disease and provide early warning of possible outbreaks. Haryana Health Ministry had earlier announced that the Swine flu claimed 34 lives in the state while other North Indian states of Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh also witnessed the swine flu claiming many lives in addition to a number of affected people. This led the Health Ministry under the central government issue medical advisory to all the state governments seeking to strengthen the precautionary measures against the deadly disease. Last year, Swine flu had claimed more than 1,500 lives in India in the first three months of 2015. —KUNA

FOR RANCHER NEAR FUKUSHIMA, TENDING HERD IS ACT OF DEFIANCE

'I SAID I WAS NOT GOING TO LET ANY MORE COWS DIE ON MY RANCH'

NAMIE, Japan: Since the 2011 meltdowns ended their future as prized black "wagyu" beef, a rancher near the Fukushima nuclear power plant has given his cattle a new mission: They've become protesters.

Defying both government evacuation and slaughter orders, 62-year-old Masami Yoshizawa returned to his ranch 14 kilometers from the plant to keep his cattle alive as living proof of the disaster. He and his cattle are no doubt a nuisance for the government as Japan gears up to showcase Fukushima's recovery ahead of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. "An effort to eliminate a negative reputation is nothing but a cover-up," he said. "This is a farm that chronicles and tells the story of Fukushima's radiation contamination disaster. We'll stay here at the Ranch of Hope, and keep sending our message."

Tsunami aftermath

The March 11, 2011, earthquake and tsunami swamped the Fukushima plant, knocking out power to vital cooling systems. When Yoshizawa heard explosions at the plant, he feared the ranch he inherited from his father was finished. Within weeks, thousands of cattle in the evacuation zone around the plant died of starvation, including 200 of the 330 Yoshizawa had left at his ranch. Memories of the rows of dead cows at abandoned farms, collapsed after being reduced to skin and bones while waiting for food, still haunt him.

Surviving cows that escaped their ranches were roaming for food, damaging houses and disrupting traffic. Two months after the accident, the agriculture ministry ordered their slaughter, to keep their meat from secretly entering the market. Neighborhood ranchers were divided. "I said I was not going to let any more cows die on my ranch," said Yoshizawa. His mostly lone resistance hasn't been easy. Authorities tried to block his feed transport, and kept trying to persuade him to kill his cows.

Location location

The location of his ranch, on the border between two towns - Namie and neighboring Minamisoma - may have worked in his favor. Both towns have looked the other way and virtually given up. A prefabricated hut on a driveway to the Ranch of Hope - which Yoshizawa renamed after the accident with the hope of establishing a nuclear-free society - serves as a tiny office for what he calls his "nuclear rebellion." Skulls of cattle

that died early in the crisis decorate the exterior. His cows keep him company, mooing and grazing. Radiation levels at the ranch measure about 10 times the safe benchmark. Yoshizawa has taken DNA tests twice and had his exposure level checked 20 times. So far, no major health problems have been detected. Yoshizawa is not married and his relatives now live near Tokyo.

Recovery

The cattle population at Yoshizawa's ranch has grown back to 330, as he took in home-

cattle undergo health checks once a month.

Tohoku University pathologist Manabu Fukumoto, who has been monitoring the cattle, said the animals' internal organs and reproductive functions showed no significant abnormality linked to their radiation exposures, and that other studies, including the impact of radiated feed, are underway. He urged further monitoring and dose evaluation, citing a spike in thyroid cancer cases in Chernobyl few years after the 1986 accident.



NAMIE, Japan: Cattle are fed at the Ranch of Hope, run by rancher Masami Yoshizawa. —AP photos

less cows from the neighborhood and other farms. They live on contaminated feed donated from towns in the area, which he said is the most ecological way to get rid of radioactive waste. Over the past year, some of the cattle have developed tiny white spots on their bodies, which Yoshizawa believes is linked to radiation from eating contaminated grass and feed. Scientists he works with, however, say the livestock have a good appetite and that the spots could be stress-related. The

The future

Within one year, the government plans to open part of his town of Namie for residents to return. The town predicts only one-quarter of its current population of 19,000 would come back, most of them senior citizens, as has been the case in other reopened towns. Families with children face a higher radiation risk, and surveys show about half of the remaining 100,000 Fukushima evacuees have decided to resettle elsewhere. Yoshizawa plans to stay at least another five years - or as long as his herd lives. —AP

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times

248 33 199

Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
فهد علي المخيزيم

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

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

AL-MULLA EXCHANGE SPONSORS QUEUING MACHINE AT THE PHILIPPINE EMBASSY



Al-Mulla Exchange has always shared cordial relations with the Philippine Embassy. Right from having excellent products and services, arranging events free for their Filipino clients, having a good number of Filipino staff in their branches, Al-Mulla Exchange has emerged as the number one Exchange of choice for the community in Kuwait. Now they have taken a step forward and a Q-matic system at The Philippine Embassy in Kuwait. At the 'Deed of the Nation' signing ceremony of the event, Rajesh Gairola, Divisional General Manager Exchanges of Al-Mulla Group commented by saying: "Sponsoring of the Q matic machine is yet another illustration of our strong ties with the Philippine Embassy and the community as a whole. We hope this will take us still further close to this wonderful community".



Renato P O Villa, Ambassador of Philippines to Kuwait commented that "We are pleased that Al-Mulla Exchange has come forward and taken the initiative to install the Q matic machine at the Embassy. This will go a long way to help the community and the Embassy staff to organize the flow of the people in the embassy. With this we will be able to address the issues much more effectively and efficiently".



Al-Mulla Exchange now has 65 branches across Kuwait and with the latest ongoing promotion customer could get a chance to win 1 KG Gold.

AOU HOSTS GULF COMPARATIVE EDUCATION SOCIETY SYMPOSIUM

The Arab Open University in Kuwait (AOU Kuwait) is hosting the Seventh Annual Gulf Comparative Education Society (GCES) Symposium. The theme of the 2016 conference is "Innovation and Transformation: Values, Challenges, and Prospects for Education in the GCC." The Symposium is also sponsored by the GCES Secretariat, the Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al-Qasbi Foundation for Policy Research, based in Ras Al-Khaimah in the United Arab Emirates.



Abdullah Al-Ajami

The forum will take place from April 5-7, 2016 at AOU Kuwait.

The Chairman of the Conference and President of the GCES, Dr Abdullah Al-Ajami, said: "The conference comes in harmony with three main institutions, AOU Kuwait, UNESCO, and the GCES. Firstly, the conference is tied to the goals of AOU Kuwait as the university encourages innovation through its use of open education and embraces innovation everyday through its learning and teaching. Secondly, this year's Symposium theme was inspired by a 2015 UNESCO 'Call for Action' to governments, institutions, faculty members, and students around the world to address the need for recognizing and reinforcing the practices fundamental to the UN goals of Education for Sustainable Development and Education for All. Thirdly, this Symposium is a fundamental part of the GCES as each year the Society hosts a conference to explore context-specific educational issues in the Gulf region. This year, the Symposium will bring together academics, policymakers, educators, and others to discuss the use of innovation to transform education across the Gulf countries.

Dr Ajami noted that the conference will be spread over three days. The first day, April 5, will include workshops run by professors and specialists from AOU Kuwait and the Public Authority for Applied Education, who will speak about innova-

tive methods related to teaching, academic research, and integrating traditional education with open education. The second and third day, April 6-7, will comprise of presentations by roughly 50 academics from global and local institutions, including from Columbia University, Harvard University, University of Sydney, many Gulf universities, UNESCO, and ministries of education. The event will feature well-known academics in the education field, such as keynote speakers Dr Suad Al-Shabo and Dr Gita Steiner-Khamsi.

Dr Ajami said that the conference contains several panels focused on transformation and the process of change in educational institutions, often citing the case of Kuwait and the Gulf region more broadly. Dr Ajami believes the Symposium will highlight the importance of the knowledge economy within educational policy and of social development in the region. In conclusion, Dr Ajami welcomes those who are interested in attending the conference to register at <http://gulfcoped.ning.com/page/registration-for-2016-symposium>.



MAKE MARINA HOTEL KUWAIT YOUR ONE-STOP-DESTINATION FOR WEDDINGS

The magnificent Shaikha Salwa Sabah Al-Ahmad Theater and Hall of Marina Hotel Kuwait, nestled in the heart of Salmiya with a spectacular seaside location, is your one-stop-destination for all weddings. No matter what size wedding you are planning, Marina Hotel offers couples a truly memorable wedding to suit any type of wedding festivity.

Having a great layout and capacity of up to 500 persons, the Shaikha Salwa Sabah Al-Ahmad Theater and Hall is an ideal place for your special event. The hall unravels beauty and flexibility with its expert wedding planning team who devote their attention to every detail ensuring that your wedding will surpass all expectations. The package is further complemented with an award winning culinary team comprising of dedicated chefs who constantly explore delivering tailor made menus and bringing to the hotel's

guests a wide range of exciting experiences to each event. Wedding guests can enjoy the wide variety of scrumptious delicacies from the elaborate buffet at Shaikha Salwa Sabah Al-Ahmad Theater and Hall.

The memories of your wedding day will last a lifetime and Marina Hotel Kuwait will ensure that your special day is perfect. The hotel is delighted to offer guests exclusive wedding packages across the year, which include accommodation for one night in a beautiful superior room and a romantic candle-lit dinner and breakfast in the room for the bride and groom. For the wedding celebrations, a custom-made, three-tier wedding cake is offered.

Such a momentous occasion that unites husband and wife must be conducted in a venue that can provide only the finest setting. This includes the most delightful cuisine and a mag-

nificently decorated ballroom. With a venue that can also bring back treasured memories of lavish wedding celebrations from previous generations, today's weddings at the Shaikha Salwa Sabah Al-Ahmad Theater and Hall are among the most extravagant and memorable weddings imaginable.

Combining unparalleled excellence in service and hospitality with outstanding presentation and personal service, the hotel holds a reputation as an expert in turning your wedding celebration into a truly magnificent event. If you are looking for a beautiful wedding ceremony venue, the wedding package at Marina Hotel is available all through the year. For more information, please visit our website: www.marinahotel.com



JUMBO TRAVELS BRINGS THE MAGIC OF DISNEYLAND PARIS, DISNEY CRUISE LINE

By Ben Garcia

A roadshow by Disneyland Paris was held yesterday at the Sheraton Hotel by Jumbo Travels, attended by travel agents and the local media. Disneyland Paris announced six highlights for 2016 including new shows and events, while Disney Cruise Line presented its 2016 summer itineraries and the latest updates on its fleet.

At her presentation, Brigid MacDonnell, Disney International Sales Manager, showcased Disneyland Paris' new shows and events, including Star Wars experiences that are sure to awaken the Force. "This spring, prepare for a brand new Broadway-style show 'The Forest of Enchantment', a Disney musical adventure. Summer will see the return of the hugely popular Frozen sing-along and the launch of a sparkling new show titled 'Mickey and the Magician'. Finally, get active during the back-to-school period with the inaugural Disneyland Paris half marathon weekend," she said.

Disneyland is a place where dreams come true for all the kids in the world. "Imagine a place where fun and adventure come true; imagine a place full of magical moments and fantasies, imagine a place where excitement never ends; you can only find them in Disneyland," MacDonnell noted.

Your dream is just a call away and much closer to reality with Jumbo Travel, said Mansoor Pasha, Senior Business Development Manager for Holidays and Retail. "With the one night and one day free + free for kids under seven offer that is valid for purchase until April 12, 2016, we urge families to plan ahead and book now for the summer season to enjoy up to six new shows and events. Booking early helps avoid missing out due to massive demand," Pasha said. Jumbo Travels is proud of its direct association with Disneyland Paris as it continues to build a strong, fruitful and lasting relationship with the largest and one of the most valuable entertainment brands in the world. "We provide easy access to Disney products for consumers and travel agents alike in Kuwait, while affirming our commitment to promote these spectacular family-themed Disney destinations through a hassle-free travel experience," said Marie-Anne Benedetti, Managing Director at Jumbo Travels.

All travelers can enjoy a spectacular holiday by experiencing the magic of one of the Disney parks and resorts or take a two- or three-night Disney holiday as part of their summer vacation, or even sail aboard the amazing Disney Cruise Line in the Mediterranean, Northern Europe, Alaska, Caribbean or the Bahamas on a 3 to 5 or 7 to 12-night cruise.



The Embassy of Japan in the state of Kuwait organized a meeting session in cooperation with Plamo con, and KNCCAL. The meeting took place on Sunday March 6, 2016 at Kuwait National Library. The meeting hosted a famous Japanese artist Suda Masami, the animator of 'Fist of North Star' and the famous Lebanese voice actor Jihad Al-Atrash, the voice actor of the famous 'Duke Fleed' from 'Grendizer'. 50 special guests attended the meeting session. They got the chance to meet these two famous persons, talk to them, get their signature, take photos, and listen to the highlights of their lives throughout their careers.



AMC

- 00:55 Bright Lights, Big City
02:40 NED Kelly
04:25 A Guy Thing
06:10 Hoosiers
08:05 The Watsons Go To Birmingham

- 11:00 Global Business
12:00 News Update
12:30 Culture Express
13:00 Africa Live

- 11:20 Deadly Affairs
12:10 True Crime With Aphrodite
13:00 The Will
13:50 I Almost Got Away With It

ANIMAL PLANET HD

- 00:50 River Monsters
01:45 I Was Bitten
02:40 Wild Capture School
03:10 Wild Capture School

CNBC

- 01:00 Investing In India
01:30 The Edge
02:00 U.S. Squawk Alley
03:00 Asia Squawk Box

DISCOVERY SCIENCE

- 00:35 Race To Escape
01:20 How It's Made: Dream Cars
01:44 How It's Made: Dream Cars
02:08 Food Factory



LAGGIES ON OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

- 09:45 Austin & Ally
10:10 Austin & Ally
10:35 A.N.T. Farm
11:00 A.N.T. Farm

- 00:00 Programmes Start At 7:00am KSA
07:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
07:25 K. C. Undercover

- 11:30 The Pioneer Woman
12:00 Chopped
13:00 Guy's Big Bite

BBC FIRST

- 00:10 Doctors
00:40 Unforgotten
01:30 Unforgotten
02:20 Luther

CRIME & INVESTIGATION NETWORK

- 00:00 Killer Kids
01:00 Martina Cole's Lady Killers
02:00 Fatal Vows
03:00 Diabolical Women

DISCOVERY WORLD

- 00:40 Modern Sniper
01:30 Zero Hour
02:20 Origins
02:40 Chasing Classic Cars

BLOOMBERG TELEVISION

- 00:00 What'd You Miss?
01:00 Charlie Rose
02:00 First Up With Angie Lau

DISCOVERY CHANNEL HD

- 00:20 Fast N' Loud
01:10 The Island With Bear Grylls
02:00 Men, Women, Wild
02:50 So You Think You'd Survive?



THE DEPARTED ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

- 03:00 First Up With Angie Lau
04:00 Trending Business
05:00 Trending Business
06:00 Asia Edge

- 12:15 So You Think You'd Survive?
13:05 What's In The Barn?
13:30 The Liquidator
13:55 Garage Gold

- 20:30 Secrets Of The Arsenal
21:20 Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations
22:10 Extreme Engineering

CCTV NEWS

- 00:00 News Update
00:30 Dialogue
01:00 News Update
01:15 China 24

ID INVESTIGATION DISCOVERY

- 00:40 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
01:05 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
01:30 The Haunted
02:20 Ghost Lab

- 00:00 Violetta
00:45 The Hive
01:00 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch

DISNEY JUNIOR

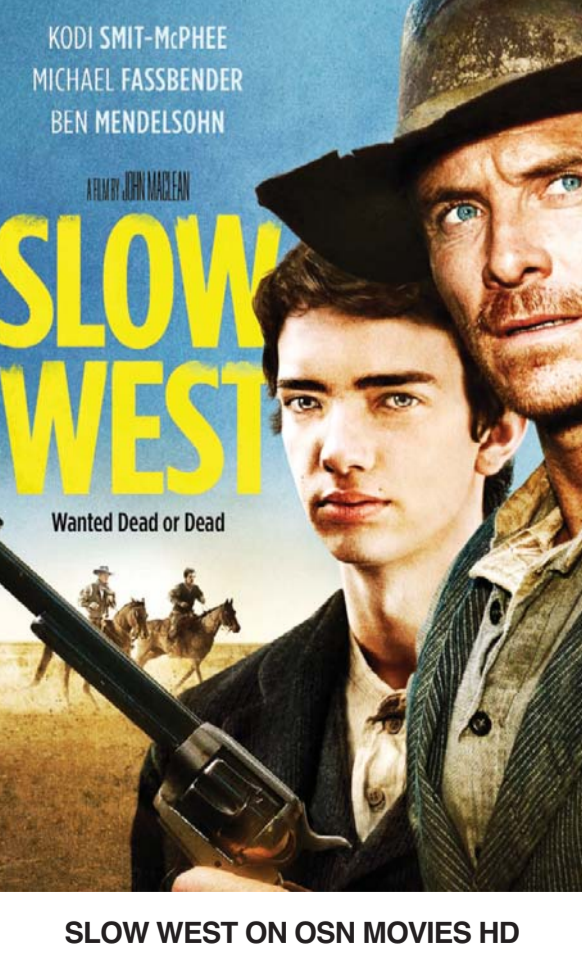
- 00:05 Henry Hugglemonster
00:20 Calimero
00:35 Zou
00:50 Loopydoo

EHD

- 00:00 Stewarts And Hamiltons
00:55 The Grace Helbig Show
01:25 Keeping Up With The Kardashians

ITV CHOICE

- 00:10 The Chase
01:05 Emmerdale
01:30 Eggheads



SLOW WEST ON OSN MOVIES HD

- 02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 Big Star's Little Star
03:25 Shelland
04:20 Hiding

- 19:00 The Last Man On Earth
19:30 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon

OSN FIRST HD

- 00:00 In Treatment
00:30 In Treatment
01:00 Big Love

NAT GEO people HD

- 00:10 Eat Street
00:35 Eat Street
01:00 Chasing Time
01:25 Bondi Rescue

OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

- 00:30 Punisher: War Zone
02:30 Abandoned Mine
04:15 Don't Look Back

OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

- 00:00 Cadillac Man
02:00 At Middleton
04:00 Idiocracy

OSN MOVIES HD

- 01:00 The Millennium Bug
03:00 Trigger Point
05:00 Sophia Grace And Rosie's Royal Adventure

OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL

- 01:30 Atlas Shrugged Part 2: The Strike
03:30 Frankie & Alice
05:30 See Girl Run

OSN SPORTS 1 HD

- 01:00 NRL Premiership
03:00 Super Rugby
05:00 World Golf Championships

OSN SPORTS 2 HD

- 00:00 World Golf Championships Highlights
01:00 Darts UK Open
04:30 Top 14 Highlights

OSN SPORTS 3 HD

- 00:05 Trans World Sport
01:00 Top 14 Highlights
01:30 Inside Sailing

CLASSIFIEDS



KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (03/03/2016 TO 09/03/2016)

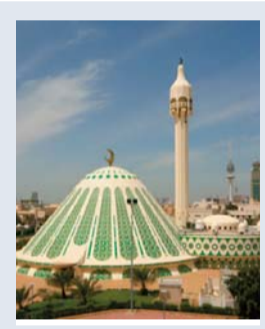
Table with columns for program name, time, and details. Includes categories like SHARQIA-1, SHARQIA-2, MUHALAB-1, MUHALAB-2, MUHALAB-3, FANAR-1, FANAR-2, FANAR-3, FANAR-4, FANAR-5, MARINA-1, MARINA-2, MARINA-3, AVENUES-1, AVENUES-2, AVENUES-3, AVENUES-4, and AL-KOUT.1.

CLYDE IP SERVICES

is looking for a Government Liaison Officer and IP Administration Assistant based in Kuwait to support our IP professional team in Dubai with trade mark prosecution work. You need to be a Kuwaiti national and will ideally have 2 - 3 years' of government liaison/ administrative experience, fluent Arabic and English, excellent organisation skills and attention to detail.

For a detailed job description and to apply, please send your CV to

Mena.Recruitment@clydeco.ae



Prayer timings

Table with prayer times: Fajr: 04:48, Shorook: 06:07, Duhr: 11:59, Asr: 15:21, Maghrib: 17:52, Isha: 19:08

Embassy of Bangladesh, Kuwait

Job Opportunity

Bangladesh Embassy, Kuwait is seeking dynamic & qualified persons for the following position:

Translator

Pay Scale 340-10x10-440. Bangladeshi nationals & Native-Arab nationals residing in Kuwait are eligible to apply (applicants with Arabic as 1st language will be preferred). Age limit 45 yrs. Must have speaking, listening, writing & reading fluency in Arabic & English languages. Must have educational qualification of minimum Bachelor Degree/equivalent level or above. Job experience in Embassy or government offices will be preferred. Ability to work with computer applications (Excel, M/S Word & PowerPoint) is a must. Should have knowledge in Muslim, Sharia & labour laws in Kuwait. Must have transferable valid Kuwait residency & must have valid driving license in Kuwait.

02. Applicants have to apply with a latest C.V. along with two passport size recent photographs & copies of educational, professional & experience certificates attested from the concerned Embassy/Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh. The deadline for submitting applications is by 4 pm on 18 March, 2016.

The application should be submitted to the Head of Chancery, Embassy of Bangladesh, House # 11, Street # 29, Block # 02, Khalidiya, Kuwait or with email addresses: (i) mahbub50@yahoo.com, (ii) bdoat@kems.net

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

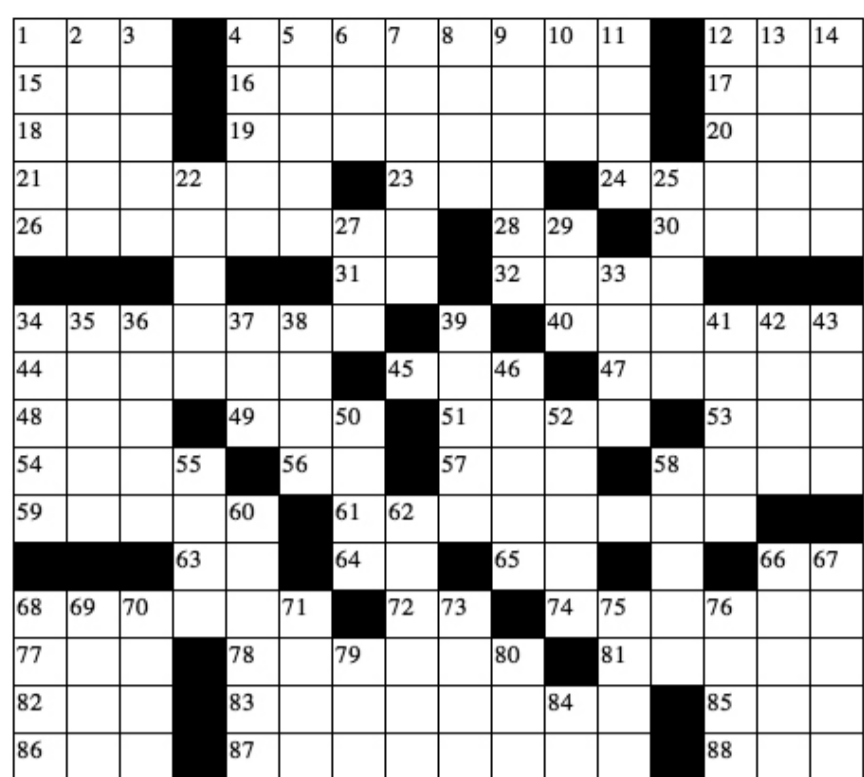


In case you are not travelling, your proper cancellation of bookings will help other passengers to use seats

Large table with columns for Airlines, Flt, Route, Time, and Destination. Divided into Arrival Flights on Wednesday 9/3/2016 and Departure Flights on Wednesday 9/3/2016.

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

CROSSWORD 1190



ACROSS

1. Domestic swine.
4. A major school of Buddhism teaching personal salvation through one's own efforts.
12. European cave-dwelling aquatic salamander with permanent external gills.
15. (Babylonian) The sky god.
16. Too old to be useful.
17. Seed of a pea plant.
19. Cactus of the southwestern United States and northern Mexico having edible juicy fruit.
20. An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.
21. A small chin beard trimmed into a point.
23. Game in which matchsticks are arranged in rows and players alternately remove one or more of them.
24. Deciduous shrub of North America.
26. Alligator lizards.
28. Being one more than one.
30. A Lolish language.
31. The syllable naming the fourth (subdominant) note of the diatonic scale in solmization.
32. A member of an Algonquian people living in central Canada.
34. Of or relating to a taxonomic order.
40. English historian noted for his constitutional history of medieval England (1825-1901).
44. An island in the southern Mariana Islands that is the administrative center of the United States Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.
45. A transuranic element.
47. Goddess of dawn.
48. An emergency procedure consisting of external cardiac massage and artificial respiration.
49. An authoritative direction or instruction to do something.
51. Small deciduous Asiatic tree bearing large red or orange edible astringent fruit.
53. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
54. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
56. A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.
57. (Irish) The sea personified.
59. A summary that repeats the substance of a longer discussion.
61. A kind of sideboard or buffet.
63. A hard gray lustrous metallic element that is highly corrosion-resistant.
64. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
65. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
68. An esoteric or occult matter that is traditionally secret.
72. Being nine more than ninety.
74. The bottom of a sea or ocean.
77. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
78. Pleasantly occupied.
81. Jordan's port.
82. The 21st letter of the Greek alphabet.
83. Grown for its thickened edible aromatic root.
85. A decree that prohibits something.
86. Take in solid food.
87. Fix firmly or securely.
88. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

1. A large heavy knife used in Central and South America as a weapon or for cutting vegetation.
2. The craniometric point that is the most prominent point at the back of the head (at the occipital protuberance).
3. A Russian prison camp for political prisoners.
4. A populous province in northeastern China.
5. Overgrown with ivy.
6. Remaining after all deductions.
7. A genus of orb-weaving spiders including common garden spiders and barn spiders.
8. A member of an extinct North American Indian people who lived in the Pit river valley in northern California.
9. (of reproduction) Not involving the fusion of male and female gametes reproduction".
10. French marshal in the Napoleonic Wars (1769-1815).
11. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
12. A drama set to music.
13. Carnivorous or bloodsucking aquatic or terrestrial worms typically having a sucker at each end.
14. A Portuguese province on the south coast of China and two islands in the South China Sea.
22. Any of numerous perennial bulbous herbs having linear or broadly lanceolate leaves and usually a single showy flower.
25. Blockage of the intestine (especially the ileum) that prevents the contents of the intestine from passing to the lower bowel.
27. A federation of North American labor unions that merged with the Congress of Industrial Organizations in 1955.
29. The bureau of the Treasury Department responsible for tax collections.
33. Small ornamental ladies' bag for small articles.
35. A ridge that forms a seam between two parts.
36. English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).
37. Tag the base runner to get him out.
38. A blue dye obtained from plants or made synthetically.
39. A linen tape used for trimming as a decoration.
41. God of wealth and love.
42. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
43. An antidepressant drug that acts by blocking the reuptake of serotonin so that more serotonin is available to act on receptors in the brain.
46. A member of a seafaring group of North American Indians who lived on the Pacific coast of British Columbia and southwestern Alaska.
50. Small European freshwater fish with a slender bluish-green body.
52. English biochemist (born in Germany) who discovered the Krebs cycle (1900-1981).
55. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
58. A member of a Turkic people of Uzbekistan and neighboring areas.
60. A large and stately mansion.
62. A bridge partner who increases the partner's bid.
66. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
67. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
69. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
70. Anything that serves as an enticement.
71. A primeval personification of air and breath.
73. Wrap us in a cerecloth, as of a corpse.
75. (used of count nouns) Every one considered individually.
76. A small cake leavened with yeast.
79. In or of the month preceding the present one.
80. A loud harsh or strident noise.
84. A radioactive element of the actinide series.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

The people that speak with authority today may not be the ones you are used to working with but they have the same pull as past authority figures. You will work to eliminate any confusion in the workplace. By quitting time this evening you will discover that you have a couple of new friends. You encourage others to use their imagination and you encourage confidence-giving them incentive. Personal priorities become important this afternoon as you interest family and friends in some fun activity. Perhaps you will entertain friends in your own home or at least make plans for a springtime sort of party. You create opportunities to enjoy life and relax at home this evening. Sing a happy tune; this is a good day.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

If you are not working right now, you have many talents and avenues in which to earn money. If you are working now, you may decide that now is the time to reevaluate what you want to realistically be earning, against what you are earning now. You may be motivated to begin thinking toward a change. One of the most important issues for the next few weeks is an attitude of positive outcomes. Problems or challenges are opportunities to excel beyond your average potential. Now is the time for you to form a plan. Your domestic life is on an even path and cooperation with others will maintain good relations. If you are not the main cook for the family, you may volunteer to be the cook tonight. After all, others may enjoy your culinary creativity.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

A clear-minded insight into your own plans and methods is available to you now. Tactfulness is the key word for this day, especially when talking to someone about his or her mistakes. You may be the person in charge of a small group; higher-ups are watching. Companionship with others is most rewarding this afternoon and you should take every opportunity to be with friends. Stress later in the year could put your energy to periodic testing. This would be a good time to be conscientious about a consistent exercise program to build your strength and stamina. Overexertion or overeating can be a threat to your health. Learn ways in which to keep a positive frame of mind. Lots of people depend on your opinion.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

An employee review or a presentation may bring the topic of a pay increase to your attention. You could express yourself quite well if you become focused. Set your review or meeting for the afternoon so the person you speak to will be relaxed; you are most clear with your proposal. Fine-tune your thoughts and if you get the chance, practice what you will say when it comes time to ask for a raise. Spending and earning money brings you pleasure this month. Some of the interests for this evening are on writing, classes and conferring with close kin and neighbors. Problems now are valued for the lessons they represent, rather than perceived as obstacles. You feel good, ready to accomplish anything set before you.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your personal charm impresses others. This can be a key to increased earnings and dynamic social success. Your enthusiasm is high and the creative juices are flowing, ready to be applied to your work. If you give your best effort now, considerable success will follow and you may unconsciously help a close friend through your efforts. Lovers, children and other people or things dear to your heart are emphasized now. Being appreciated and admired for your gifts and talents are powerful needs. Taking chances can bring big rewards. Do not hurry today-you could forget what your purpose was in the first place. Stress may play a part in the afternoon but you enjoy the activity that is around you now.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You may get the news you have been waiting for today. This could mean travel or the approval of some recent request. The positive news at the beginning of this day will keep you positive all day long. You have an opportunity to work in groups and may enjoy giving a lecture or guiding others with some new approach to a technical difficulty. You can usually communicate well when it has to do with something you are really knowledgeable about; the subject today is certainly in your field of expertise. You could be helpful in uncovering some new solutions or inventions. Someone close to you appreciates and loves you and may want to treat you to some special entertainment this evening. This could mean a new movie or some other fun.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your feelings may be a bit emotional today. If you have dealt with your feelings in the past and understand your emotional nature, then today could bring valuable insights. All that passion could backfire-careful. It is important to gather all the pertinent facts before making decisions today. Be open to new concepts and methods. Gather information and see how everything fits together. There are better financial prospects this year and you may find yourself in a lecture or library studying your options. You enjoy getting out and meeting new people. This adventure to learn more about financial stability puts you in a great mood. This evening there are errands, calls, writing, reading and paperwork, or just staying in touch keeps you busy and informed.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

The planet of inspiration and creativity enters your professional sector now. Your attitude is that there must be something else out there for you to discover! You seem to have the motivation of two people today. You organize people so that they do their best and you are good at keeping up-to-date with new technology. Now is a good time to sign-up for a class or teach a class within the field that you love the most. Trade shows, classes after work, or even working to achieve a degree or update in your particular field of education is an option this year. A wonderful adventure is in the works and your friends and family work to clear their agenda so they stay close to you, as they do not want to take a chance on missing anything!



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You push in the workplace when it comes to competition-not politics, just some good old healthy competition. There are rewards for your good works today. Also, a secret admirer will slip and allow himself or herself to be known to you. This could happen on a trip or in a classroom. You may notice that others appreciate you and may try to mirror the way you get things done so quickly. You will be dealing with all types of personalities today-you seem able to handle most any situation that comes your way. You have a way of communicating in friendly, helpful tones to all you come into contact with today. You appreciate your particular situation and enjoy support from those around you. Enjoy some relaxation time this evening.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Good luck may increase your finances but a lot of wisdom will make it grow. This is a time that holds plenty of opportunities for you to expand your financial and personal horizons-patience. With your patience being tested, you will make more progress than you think when you see the fruits of your labor. A friend in banking may help you now-if you need the help. New methods or new machines may take a bit of time to get used to this afternoon. Learn from a boss or mentor today. Take your time and study what is presented. You have valuable information to digest that will serve you well in the future. Don't be too surprised when others come to you for answers regarding some new equipment or method of working.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Good luck may increase your finances but a lot of wisdom will make it grow. This is a time that holds plenty of opportunities for you to expand your financial and personal horizons-patience. With your patience being tested, you will make more progress than you think when you see the fruits of your labor. A friend in banking may help you now-if you need the help. New methods or new machines may take a bit of time to get used to this afternoon. Learn from a boss or mentor today. Take your time and study what is presented. You have valuable information to digest that will serve you well in the future. Don't be too surprised when others come to you for answers regarding some new equipment or method of working.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You could be on the track of some new herb or fruit and you will enjoy growing sprouts in little pots on your desk. When they begin to sprout, you could trade out with the ones from home and eventually show them off at either place. Work projects may not move particularly fast just now. This would be a good time to clear away the things from the back of your drawers or in those folders sitting on your desk. The price of success may mean that you must have patience. Planning instead of giving into frustrations will work best. Try outlining the steps you need to accomplish your goals. Romance comes into full bloom this evening. Between now and the twenty-eighth, relationships will have new strengths.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Sewing

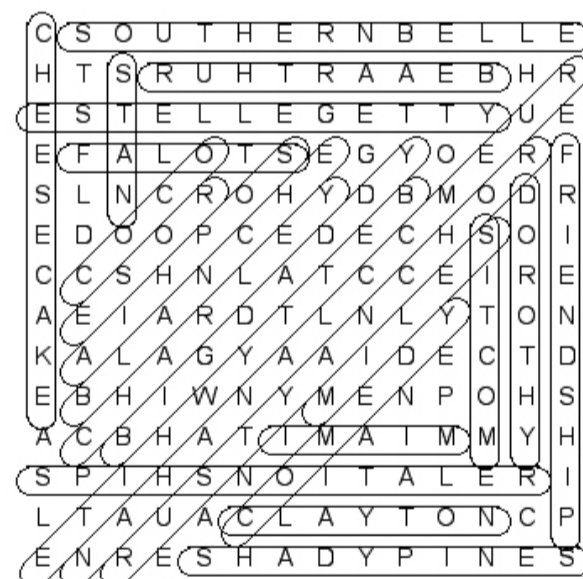
Find and circle all of the Sewing words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an old saying.



- | | | | |
|------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|
| AWL | HEM | PINS | SPOOL |
| BOBBIN | HOOKS | QUILTING | STITCH |
| BUTTONS | LACE | RIBBON | TAILOR |
| CLOTH | MAGNIFYING GLASS | RIPS | TAPE MEASURE |
| DARNING | MENDING | ROTARY CUTTER | TEARS |
| DRESSMAKER | NEEDLES | SCISSORS | THIMBLE |
| ELASTIC | PATCH | SEAM RIPPER | THREAD |
| EMBROIDERY | PATTERN | SEAMSTRESS | TRACING PAPER |
| EYES | PENCIL | SHEARS | TRACING WHEEL |
| FABRIC | PINCUSHION | SNAPS | ZIPPER |
| GROMMETS | | | |

Yesterday's Solution

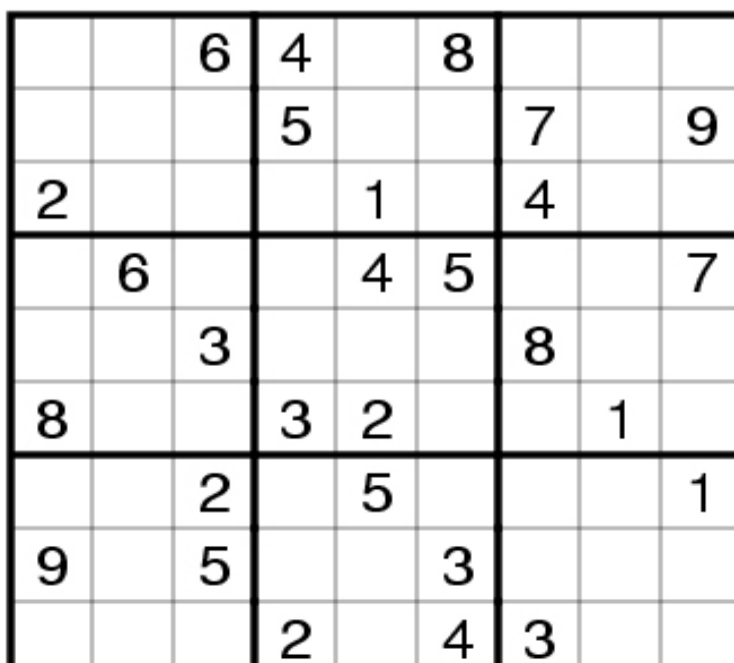
The Golden Girls



- | | | |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|
| BEA ARTHUR | COMEDY | RUE MCCLANAHAN |
| BETTY WHITE | DOROTHY | RUSTY ANCHOR |
| BIG DADDY | ESTELLE GETTY | SHADY PINES |
| BLANCHE | FRIENDSHIP | SITCOM |
| CHARLEY | MIAMI | SOPHIA |
| CHEESECAKE | MILES | SOUTHERN BELLE |
| CLAYTON | RELATIONSHIPS | ST OLAF |
| COCO | ROSE | STAN |

The hidden phrase is: THE GOLDEN PALACE

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



Bob Dylan returns with new album, tour

Bob Dylan on Monday announced a new album and accompanying tour as the rock legend showed little interest in slowing down at nearly 75. Dylan said that his 37th studio album, "Fallen Angels," would come out on May 20 — four days before his birthday-but revealed little else. The icon of 1960s counterculture revealed the forthcoming album only in passing as he announced a summer tour, writing on Facebook that each pair of tickets would include the CD as a bonus.

"Fallen Angels" comes barely a year after Dylan's last album, "Shadows in the Night," a collection of pop standards that had been performed by Frank Sinatra. Dylan has remained active and has not offered any hint of impending retirement. His

2012 album was entitled "Tempest," leading some fans to speculate incorrectly it would be his last work as it shared the title of Shakespeare's final play.

But Dylan has also increasingly looked at preserving his legacy. Last week he announced that he was selling his archives to the University of Tulsa in Oklahoma, where his notebooks and other memorabilia will go on display near the museum of one of his heroes, folk singer Woody Guthrie. Dylan in 2014 released an exhaustive boxed set of all the recordings from his celebrated 1967 "basement tape" sessions recorded as he recovered from a motorcycle accident.

The rock legend announced that his latest US tour would open on June 4 at the amphitheater of the Chateau Ste.

Michelle winery near Seattle. The two-month tour-with support from another celebrated septuagenarian artist, R&B singer Mavis Staples-will focus on outdoor venues and include Tanglewood, the summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Dylan has already announced a 15-date tour of Japan in April. — AFP

This file photo shows musician Bob Dylan as he performs onstage during the 17th Annual Critics' Choice Movie Awards held at The Hollywood Palladium in Los Angeles, California. — AFP



Rihanna, Beyonce rule women on Spotify

Beyonce sang that girls "run the world" but she is not alone in ruling Spotify, where Rihanna is giving her a strong challenge. The leading streaming service released a list of the most popular female artists for International Women's Day and found that Rihanna was the most listened to globally. The Barbados-born singer's 2012 hit "Diamonds" has been streamed nearly 240 million times and "FourFiveSeconds," her collaboration with Paul McCartney and Kanye West, has more than 282 million listens.

But Spotify said that Beyonce was the most popular among listeners who identified as female. Beyonce also was number one among Spotify users in the United States. "Drunk in Love," Beyonce's ode to marital bliss with husband Jay Z, has been streamed more than 180 million times. Second to Rihanna on the global level was Ariana Grande and then Beyonce, followed by English singer Ellie Goulding and then Katy Perry. Leading female hip-hop star Nicki Minaj, who did not figure in the global top 10, ranked second in the United States.

Incidentally, Beyonce and Rihanna are two of the most prominent artists trying to promote Spotify's upstart rival Tidal, which is led by Jay Z. Taylor Swift, a top-selling woman in music, refuses to stream on Spotify due to criticism over the compensation. British ballad star Adele, who has not made her latest blockbuster album "25" available for streaming, placed eighth both globally and in the United States. — AFP



This file photo shows singer Rihanna as she poses on the red carpet after arriving to attend the BRIT Awards 2016 in London. — AFP

Rapper Mos Def in S African court over 'world passport'

American rapper Mos Def appeared briefly in a South African court yesterday on charges of presenting a "world passport" when trying to fly out of the country. The 42-year-old hip hop artist, actor and activist, whose real name is Dante Terrel Smith, was first turned away from the court because he refused to remove a turban he was wearing.

As a small group of photographers and video journalists recorded the incident, he left and returned later with a loose scarf draped over his head and shoulders, which allowed a security search. Mos Def, who was listed on the court roll under one of his other names, Yassin Bey, was accompanied by a small group of friends into the magistrates' court in the working class suburb of Bellville in Cape Town.

He refused to speak to reporters, and waited expressionlessly among groups of glum witnesses and suspects waiting to be called for cases such as theft and assault. When he was called, Bey, bearded and wearing dark glasses, a striped headscarf and loose black outfit under a charcoal jacket, loped into the dock and stood quietly, leaning forward on the wooden rails. Prosecutors requested a two-week postponement of the hearing and he will remain free on bail of 5,000 rand (about \$300) until his next hearing on March 24. He was not required to speak. Bey was arrested in Cape Town in January while attempting to board a flight to Ethiopia. The Department of Home Affairs said the actor had entered South Africa with a legitimate US passport in November, and had a visitor's visa valid until February. But he tried to leave using a "World Government of World Citizens" passport, which is not recognized, home affairs director general Mkuseli Apleni told reporters. The World Government of World Citizens was established in 1953 by the late peace activist Garry Davis, an American who renounced his citizenship after World War II. — AFP



Us hip hop artist and actor, Yassin Bey, popularly known as Mos Def, walks out of the Bellville Magistrates Court. — AFP



Former bass player of the British band the Rolling Stones, Bill Wyman (right) with his wife Suzanna (left) arrive at St Bride's church on Fleet Street in central London. — AFP

Former Stones bassist Wyman treated for cancer

Bill Wyman, bassist with the Rolling Stones for over 30 years, is undergoing treatment for prostate cancer, a spokesman for the musician announced yesterday. "He is undergoing treatment and is expected to make a full recovery as it was caught in the early stages," the spokesman said in a statement. Wyman, 79, was a member of the iconic rock band when it formed in 1962, eventually leaving in 1993, and now records and tours with his own band, Bill Wyman's Rhythm Kings.

He was born William Perks in Lewisham, south London, in 1936, legally changing his name in 1964. The bassist hit the front pages in 1989 when, aged 52, he married 18-year-old Mandy Smith, whom he had been dating since she was 13. Wyman attended the wedding celebration in London on Saturday of Australian-born media tycoon Rupert Murdoch and former model Jerry Hall, who had four children with Stones frontman Mick Jagger. — AFP

Malabar Gold & Diamonds showcasing a variety of earrings from over 20 countries

Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the leading jewelry retailer announced the details of its unique campaign- "Studs & Drops Festival" in the Outlets in Malaysia, Singapore, UAE, Oman, Kuwait & KSA showcasing an extensive collection of earrings, giving their customers a unique chance to witness and own studs and drops from over 20 countries in Gold and Diamonds. This 32 days long festival runs from 10th March to 10th April 2016.

The jewelry chain presents a marvelous range of earrings and studs for today's woman, keeping in mind the different roles she plays at work and at home and the way she adorn herself differently on special occasions and in everyday life. This exclusive festival gives their customers a unique chance to choose from a stunning collection of earrings designed and handcrafted by skilled artisans around the world, ranging from lightweight, daily wear to party wear in traditional as well as international designs to suit every occasion.

Apart from these, Malabar Gold & Diamonds also showcase an incredible collection of unique designs in gold and diamond jewelry from Italy, Turkey, Bahrain and India to suit the tastes and budget of its different customers. Customers can also choose gifts to their loved ones from their branded jewelry segment that includes Era - Uncut Diamond Jewelry, Ethnix - Handcrafted Designer Jewelry, Mine - Diamonds Unlimited, Precia - Precious Gem Jewelry and Divine - Indian Heritage Jewelry & Starlet - Kids Jewelry.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds is always at the forefront when it comes to promotions and festivals. The immaculate collection of Studs and Drops are available at their outlets in UAE, Oman, Kuwait, KSA, Singapore & Malaysia with their unique exchange offers and buyback policies. The jewelry chain offers lifetime free repair and maintenance service for all its products. In Kuwait Malabar Gold & Diamonds operates 4 showroom at Dajeej, Al-Rai, Maliya and Fahaheel.

AC/DC singer risks deafness, halts tour

Australian rock elders AC/DC on Monday postponed remaining dates on their US tour after singer Brian Johnson was warned he risked total deafness. The 68-year-old Johnson "has been advised by doctors to stop touring immediately or risk total hearing loss," the band said in a statement. AC/DC, famous for playing at painfully high decibels, said it would play the 10 remaining US shows at later dates but "likely with a guest vocalist."

Johnson, known for his trademark cap and a voice that strains the vocal cords, joined the band in 1980 after singer Bon Scott died following a night of heavy drinking. The delayed shows include a concert due Tuesday in Atlanta as well as an April 4 show at Madison Square Garden in New York. It remained unclear whether the band would be able to pursue the European leg of their "Rock or Bust" tour that is scheduled to begin on May 7 in Lisbon. The tour had been due to end with a concert on June 12 at a 46,000-capacity park in Aarhus, Denmark.

The rockers had added the additional dates after a busy 2015 that included a headliner appearance at Coachella in California, one of the world's leading festivals. But Johnson's vocal problems are just the latest of the band's woes. AC/DC's latest album "Rock or Bust," released in 2014 after a six-year gap, is the first without founding member and rhythm guitarist Malcolm Young, who has retired due to dementia. Young's brother Angus remains the lead guitarist-known, even at age 60, for sporting his signature schoolboy outfit. The band has also parted ways with drummer Phil Rudd, who was convicted in New Zealand of threatening to kill an employee. AC/DC has sold more than 200 million albums since 1973 with "Back in Black" among music history's top sellers. — AFP



In this file photo, Brian Johnson, left, and Angus Young perform with AC/DC on the Rock or Bust Tour in Chicago. — AFP

New York Philharmonic explores complex great Messiaen

Among the great modern composers, Olivier Messiaen wrote from an especially intense worldview-he was a devout Catholic, found inspiration in the songs of birds and perceived colors in musical harmonies. The New York Philharmonic is looking to explore the range of the French master, from his celebrated works to the more obscure, with a week of Messiaen that opened Monday. While there is no obvious anniversary for Messiaen, who lived from 1908 to 1992, the Philharmonic's outgoing music director Alan Gilbert has described the composer as a personal hero for his ability to reach a spiritual dimension.

Gilbert will swap his conductor's baton for the violin to perform Messiaen's emblematic "Quartet for the End of Time" on Sunday. Composed in 1940, when Messiaen was a German prisoner of war, the eight-movement piece evokes the apocalypse as predicted in the Book of Revelation. Yet in contrast to many artists who were driven by World War II to question their faith, Messiaen's work, which opens to the sound of birds, builds into a rousing affirmation of God.

Complementing the other-worldly nature of the work, the Philharmonic's performance will take place in the Temple of Dendur, the Roman-era Egyptian shrine transported to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The temple brings "this feeling of being very aware of time but also completely unaware-being beyond time-and I think

"Floats in its own sphere" Brey said. "Quartet for the End of Time" was written for piano, violin, cello and clarinet-the four instruments available to Messiaen at the sprawling Stalag VIII-A prison camp in eastern Germany. Carter Brey, the principal cellist of the Philharmonic, said that Messiaen mastered a way to communicate "a kind of passion that is completely non-sexual" and showed his striking originality. "It's a very weird piece of music. It is like nothing else that came before or after. It seems to float in its own sphere," Brey said.

He said that the Temple of Dendur carried a special musical significance due to its proximity to Central Park-within earshot of birds, whose singing Messiaen so meticulously studied. The full Philharmonic will on Thursday put on another of Messiaen's signature pieces, "Turangalila-symphonie," a landmark in the development of modern music. With touches from classical Indian ragas and use of the ondes Martenot, an early electronic instrument, "Turangalila-symphonie" broke away from traditional Western rhythmic structure and helped set the course for the post-World War II serialism movement. — AFP



This file photo taken on November 26, 1965 shows French composer Olivier Messiaen as he signs the book 'Olivier Messiaen' written by Pierrette Mari and edited by Seghers in Paris. — AFP

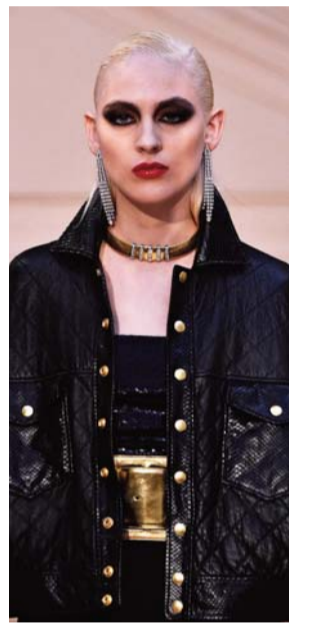
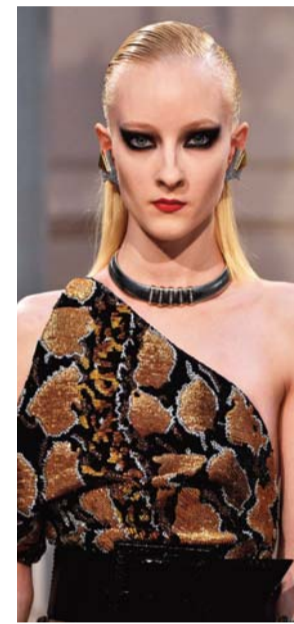
that is what the piece is about," said pianist Inon Barnatan, who will play in the quartet.

The increasingly prominent pianist, who is in a three-year residency as the Philharmonic's first artist-in-association, said he was moved by Messiaen's own experience as he wrote "Quartet for the End of Time." "However, I do think that music, like all other art, should stand on its own without the back story. You should be able to look at a painting and somehow be affected by it without reading the plaque," Barnatan told AFP. "The spirituality translated itself to the music. So it's not linked to any religion as such; it's more the idea that religion is trying to channel a feeling of something bigger," he said.





Celebrities, guests marvel at YSL fashion mansion in Paris



Saint Laurent unveiled its newly restored 17th century mansion atelier to a pack of astounded celebrities and fashionistas Monday, capping a vivacious day of ready-to-wear collections. Here are the fall-winter 2016 show highlights, including show reports from Saint Laurent, Giambattista Valli, Hermes and Stella McCartney.

Saint Laurent unveils couture mansion

It's no secret that designer Hedi Slimane is a secretive man. But celebrities including David Furnish and Catherine Deneuve were bowled over Monday night as the designer unveiled the previously unannounced restoration of a 17-Century mansion - YSL's new couture house and the venue for the ready-to-wear show. The revamp - with sparkling marble staircases and crystal chandeliers - had quietly been underway in the prestigious Left Bank for the last year and a half unbeknown to the fashion press.

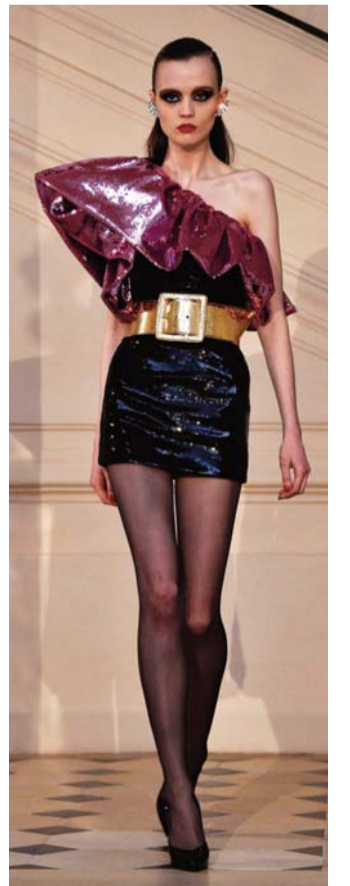
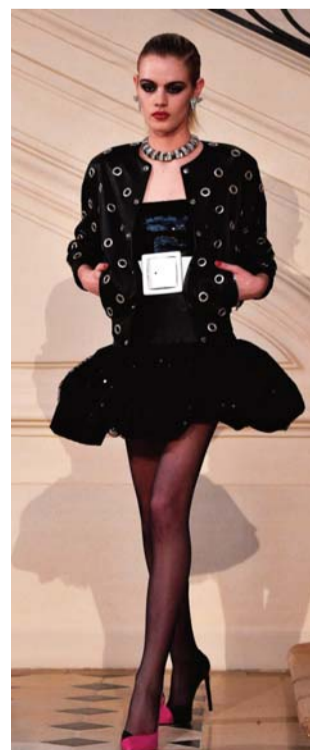
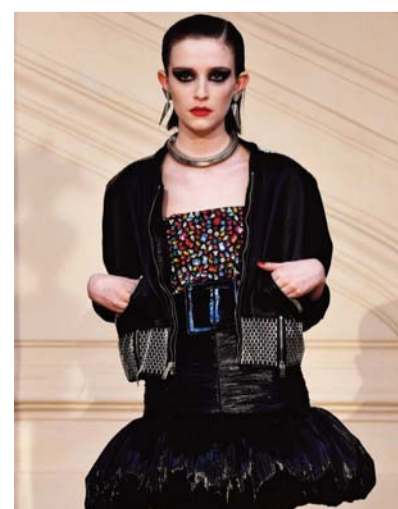
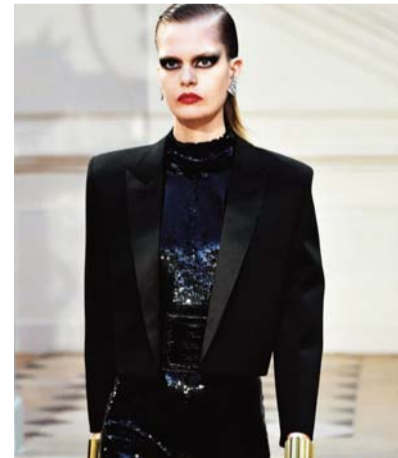
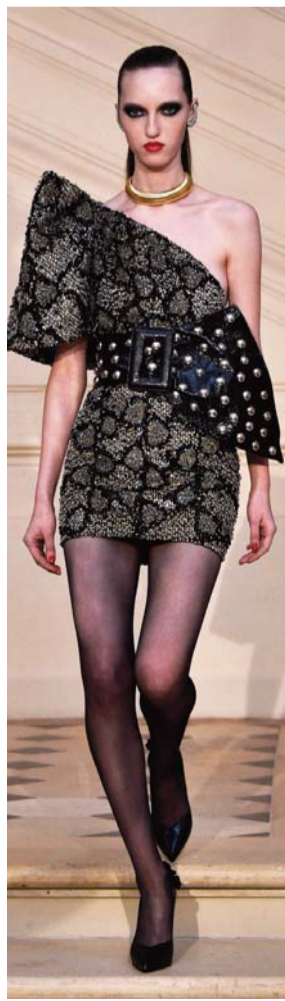
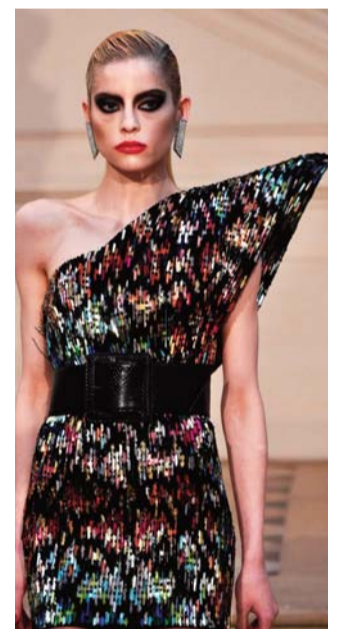
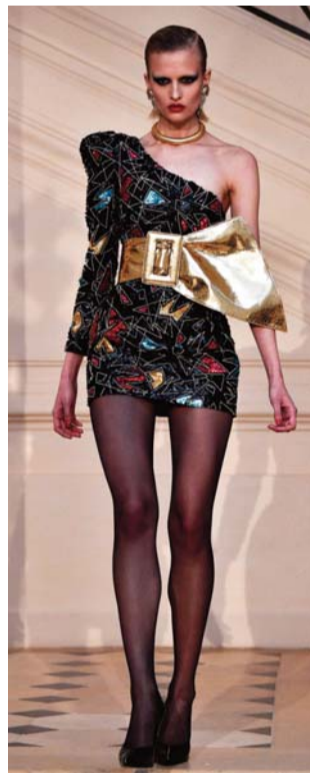
In keeping with the classicism of the venue, Slimane chose to model the fall-winter show on Monsieur Yves Saint Laurent's famed couture presentations. With no music and models walking the runway slowly and with poise, each look was announced by the iconic Benedicte de Ginestous, who announced all the YSL looks between 1977 and 2002, the year when the couture line finally closed down.

Saint Laurent's disco dresses

Well and truly gone are the days of grunge. Monday's Saint Laurent show made sure of that with Hedi Slimane's shimmering ode to the big-shouldered era of Eighties disco. Almost each and every one of the 42 looks featured a micro mini. Hair was slicked back, and the garish thick black eye makeup set the fashion dial firmly to the time of the New Romantics. But though this collection was fun - a Slimane trademark - with its touches of giant blue fox fur coats and fake-snake embroidered bronze silk minis, it was

also replete with clever visual twists and accomplished artistry in the shoulder silhouette.

The sometimes asymmetrical huge shoulder flourishes at times visually overpowered the signature uber-skinny models in an interesting and exaggerated style. Elsewhere, a one shoulder micro dress embroidered with metallic snake scales had a diagonal cut in the bodice which was picked up by a giant 80's leather belt with big metallic studs. Slimane must have savored the irony between the lofty venue and the sparkling disco glitter of the clothes.





Stella McCartney's oversized abstractions

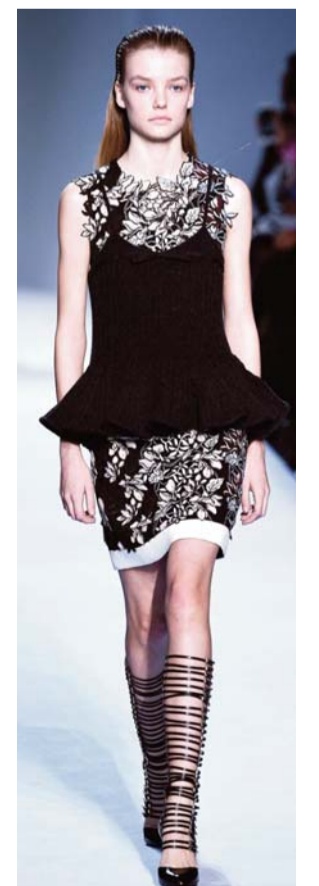
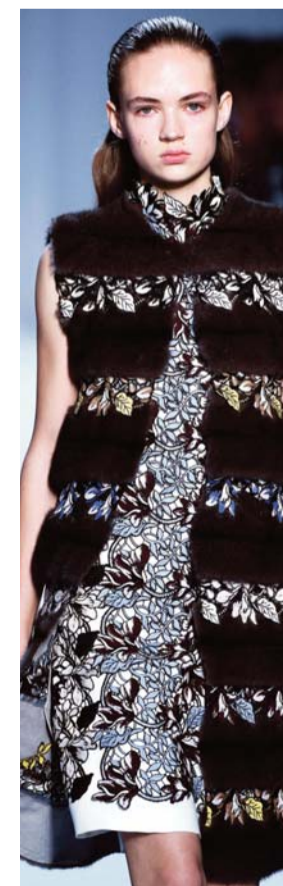
Stella McCartney channeled the unexpected. In a highly imaginative show that was more daring than usual, the British-American designer Monday morning took familiar garments and styles and gave them a funky and glamorous twist. Huge truncated bubble jackets bounced by alongside enveloping turtle neck gowns and huge wrap around denim jackets. The first look was among the best - a huge sleeveless bubble jacket in red velvet that oozed contradictory glamour.

Its stripy accordion pleats in the silk skirt riffed nicely on

the model's short hair - evoking the Roaring Twenties as immortalized by F. Scott Fitzgerald in the Great Gatsby. The opulence of the venue - the grand, gilded hall of the Paris Opera - only added to the glitz. But this collection also boasted hidden gems - one delicate peach gown with lace, pleats and a sheer section which sensually showed off the leg. Proud father Sir Paul McCartney cheered from the front row next to his wife Nancy Shevell, who wore embroidered Stella McCartney jeans with a ruffled cardigan and terracotta coat.



Models present creations by Stella McCartney during the 2016-2017 fall/winter ready-to-wear collection.



Giambattista Valli's fine needle

Lauded Italian designer Giambattista Valli got out his finest couture needle this season. The result was an intricate and delicate collection of stripes and textures - that was both feminine and complex and peppered with flowers. Myriad patterns on a tight fitting Sixties skirt suit and coat-dress created a blurry, marbled image in black and white and blue.

The optical play was then further evoked with a boot-style that was used throughout the 47-piece show that featured dozens of fine black straps fastening all the way to the knee. Silhouettes didn't stray from Valli's bread-and-butter A-line mini look and floor length cocktail gowns - but there were some stylish variations, such as a white A-line bib that hung like a fringe on a look worn by model-of-the-minute Gigi Hadid.

Models wear creations as part of Giambattista Valli's Fall-winter 2016-2017 ready to wear collection.

Fashion

Hermes' softness

Designer Nadege Vanhee-Cybulski showcased an archetypically soft, luxuriant show for style powerhouse Hermes. A recurrent theme was angular sectionality. The first looks - they were the fall-winter collection's strongest - in softest yellow ochre. A stiff, three-dimensional sleeveless top sported flat interlocking panels above an ankle length skirt with stylish angular planes that evoked the motif of a herringbone floor.

While a stiff silk coat, made of interlocking sections, features grooves going in different directions. Elsewhere, the French designer showed off her talent for the delicate. A huggable fur tank top was tied with a soft black leather Obi-belt and the fabric used in a series of cinched waist gray wool looks was so soft, it looked like the material had melted onto the model.

Paris hotels promote fashion through food

In support of fashion, Paris hotels are collaborating more and more to promote up-and-coming designers. In its first edition, Hilton Opera Paris has opened up a suite for the length of ready-to-wear to showcase the talents of several fashion and accessories designers - and have created special food and drinks menus inspired by the artistic creations. One seafood dish that was inspired by Dutch eyewear designer Ralph Vaessen featured a lobster in coconut shell with giant edible sun shades made from potato skin. The menu and cocktails change each day in support of the five designers, who include Tomas Blakk, Neith Neyer, Electric co and Bettina Vermillon. — AP



Models present creations for Hermes during the 2016-2017 fall/winter ready-to-wear collection.



Social activist and event organizer Narjis Al-Shatti.

Celebrating textiles and garments from the Islamic world

By Athoob Al-Shuaibi

On the occasion of International Women's Day and as a part of the celebrations of Kuwait as the Capital of Islamic Culture 2016, a show of textiles from the Islamic world was organized by the International Women's Group in cooperation with Tareq Rajab Museum and hosted by the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters at Crowne Plaza hotel yesterday. The event was held under the auspices of Sheikha Aida Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, the wife of the foreign minister. The event was attended by a number of ambassadors, public figures and society elites.

Social activist and event organizer Narjis Al-Shatti said all the wives of ambassadors decided to work on an event highlighting women on International Women's Day. "We

determined that the most beautiful thing that can be shown is the traditional Islamic dress. The event is part of the celebrations of Kuwait as the capital of Islamic culture this year," she added.

The ceremony began with a speech by Shatti followed by a presentation of the traditional fashion of participating countries including India, Kazakhstan, Egypt, Turkey, Palestine, GCC countries, Sudan, Iran, Russia, Senegal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan, Brunei, Indonesia and Kuwait, accompanied by folk music. The models walked into the auditorium on an elevated catwalk wearing their traditional garments, and were given a round of applause from the attendees. The event concluded with a performance by the Kuwait's Women Orchestra and a gala dinner.

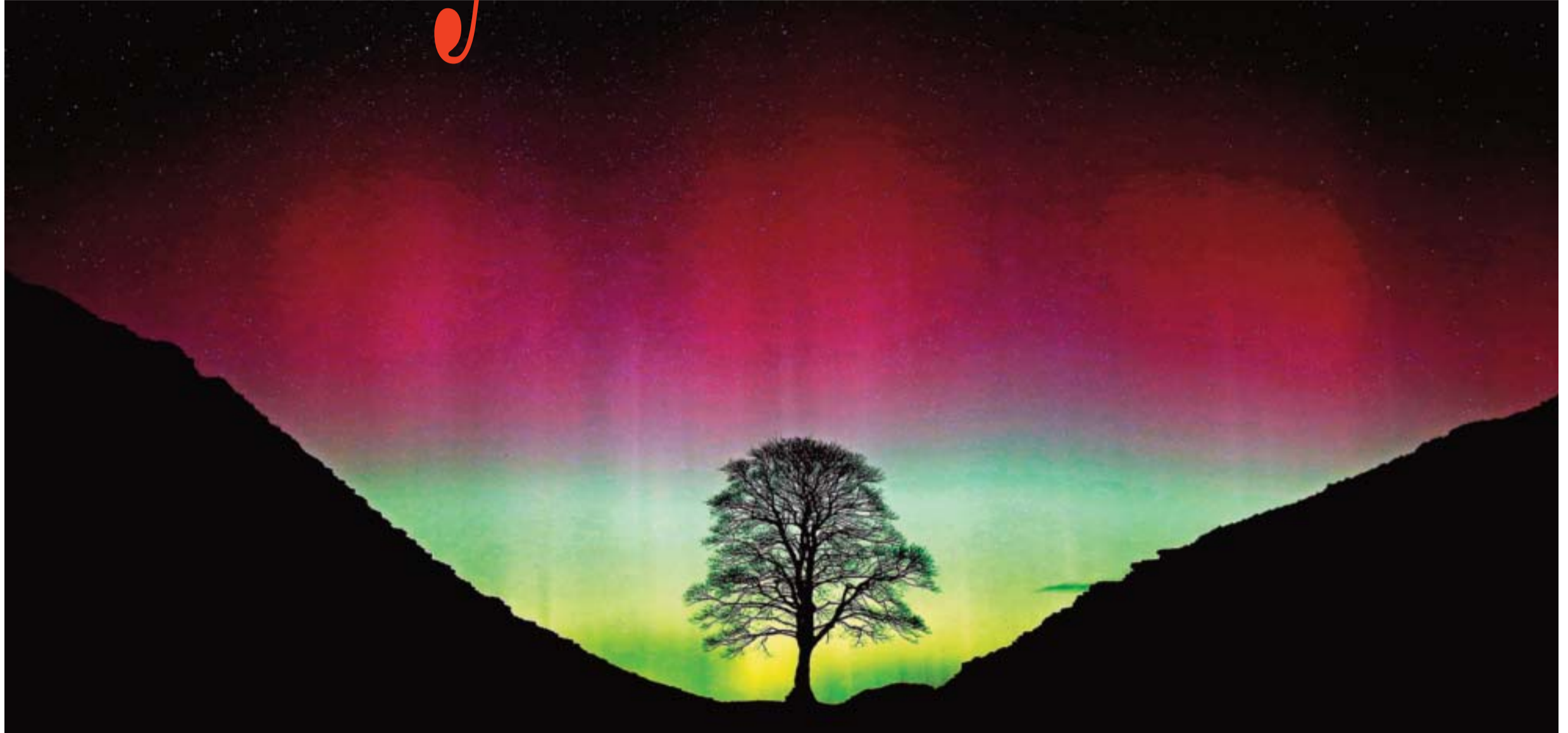


Models present creations on stage. —Photos by Joseph Shagra



Ambassador Ali Ahmed bin Shukr Al-Zaabi and Ambassador Abdou Lahad Mbacke.





The Northern Lights, or Aurora Borealis, shine over the Sycamore Gap at Hadrian's Wall in Northumberland, northeast England early Monday March 7, 2016. — AP

Afghan women's radio returns after Taliban attack



In this photo, broadcasters of Radio Shaesta prepare themselves to go on-air, in Kunduz, Afghanistan.



Zarghona Hassan prepares to go on-air.



Zarghona Hassan, an activist and the founder of Radio Shaesta station prepares to go on-air, in Kunduz, Afghanistan.



A broadcaster of Radio Shaesta works at the station. — AP photos

Six months after fleeing a Taliban assault on her city, the owner of an Afghan radio station devoted to women's rights is back home and returning to the airwaves. Zarghona Hassan is a lifelong activist and the founder of a radio station in Kunduz that until last year reached hundreds of thousands of listeners across northern Afghanistan, where the vast majority of women are illiterate and largely confined to their homes.

Radio Shaesta - Pashto for "beauty" - had sought to educate women about their rights and address taboo subjects like reproductive health and domestic violence. A program called "Unwanted Traditions" took a critical look at centuries-old Afghan customs, like the forced marriage of young girls in order to resolve disputes. "Introducing Elites" featured interviews with women who have succeeded in politics and activism, and those who have helped other women in their communities.

"We have had an enormous impact on the lives of women, raising their awareness of their rights, of what they can achieve, encouraging women to take part in politics, to vote and to put themselves forward for

provincial council seats," Hassan said. Programming also encouraged women to take an active role in ending the country's 15-year war by exhorting their brothers and sons to lay down arms, she said. Radio is a powerful medium in Afghanistan, where the literacy rate is less than 40 percent and much of the population lives in remote communities. Wind-up radios requiring no batteries are popular and widely accessible in communities where electricity is erratic or non-existent.

In northern Afghanistan, where just 15 percent of women can read and write, radio is a rare portal to the outside world. The UN Development Program says Shaesta reached up to 800,000 people. "I've met illiterate women weaving carpets with the radio on because they can listen and it doesn't interrupt their work," Hassan said. "I once met a farmer out in his field who had a radio hooked over the horn of one of his cows." Hassan often invited Islamic scholars onto her programs to give their seal of approval. But the Taliban, who espouse a harsh version of Shariah law, view her and other women's rights activists as purveyors of Western influence who threaten the country's moral fabric.

Civil society

She has received more death threats than she can count, one of which even specified an exact date. So when the insurgents stormed into Kunduz on Sept 28, she knew she had to run. "The Taliban had a list of all the women who were working in the government, civil society, media, women's organizations," she said. "I knew they were going to come for me." She hid in a relative's basement for two days before donning an all-covering burqa and fleeing the city.

The Taliban held Kunduz for three days, during which they looted businesses and hunted down activists and journalists. Afghan forces backed by US airstrikes pushed them out more than two weeks later, but by then the militants had looted Shaesta and burned it to the ground, along with another radio outlet run by Hassan that was oriented toward youth. Now, six months later, she has returned to Kunduz, and Shaesta has come back on air in time for International Women's Day on March 8. She was able to rebuild the station with a \$9,000 grant from the UNDP, which said it hopes to encourage a "courageous voice for change." "Women's rights are a key lever toward improving the lives of the

entire community," said UNDP country director Douglas Keh. "When women and girls have the same opportunities (as men and boys) in education, and the same economic opportunities, society as a whole benefits." — AP



Zarghona Hassan receives new equipment at her station.



People release sky-lanterns on the eve of International Women's Day in Manila on March 7, 2016. The event calls for the end of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls. — AFP

Saudi women are succeeding, author says

A Saudi Arabian sociologist aims to counter stereotypes about her country with a coffee table book profiling successful Saudi women, she said on the eve of International Women's Day. Misperceptions about the kingdom's women have distorted their image in Western countries, the author and photographer, Mona Al-Munajjed, said late Monday during a ceremony at the French ambassador's residence.

"We are facing challenges but we are succeeding," she said at the book signing for her work "Saudi Women: A Celebration of Success." The large-format book features her interviews with 40 Saudi women from a variety of fields, alongside their photographs. Al-Munajjed said she chose her subjects, in Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam, because they are "pioneering women." Saudi Arabia has some of the world's tightest restrictions on women, who must cover themselves in black from head to toe when they appear in public.

Women must get permission from male family members to travel, work or marry, and Saudi Arabia is the world's only country where women cannot drive. A slow expansion of their rights began under the late king Abdullah who in 2013 appointed women to the Shura

Council which advises the cabinet. He also announced that women would be able to participate in municipal elections. Their first ballot as voters and candidates occurred last December, when about 20 were elected to local councils and several others were appointed.

Al-Munajjed said Saudi women have assumed prominent positions in government, business, journalism and other areas. "They are outstanding, successful and very influential," said the author, who has worked with United Nations agencies. Arabian Business named her among the top 10 most powerful Arab women in 2013. In a conservative country founded little more than 80 years ago, change will come, but slowly, she said, noting that women make up more than half of the kingdom's university students. Social reform "can come only gradually and only from within their own society," Al-Munajjed said. That includes driving. Al-Munajjed said the message on that topic from the women she interviewed is: "They do not believe in forcing things... change will happen soon, and it is just a matter of time." —AFP